

Editorial

In October Noord-Brabant's new Regional Minister for Ecology, Mr Onno Hoes, visited the European House for Biodiversity and the ECNC offices. Mr Hoes outlined the Province's new policy strategy, and discussed common areas of interest with Rob Wolters, Executive Director ECNC, and Gernant Magnin, Director Eurosite. Read more about the meeting, which was considered successful by all concerned, on page 2.

In this issue we report on the conclusion of two innovative projects. In November the 'Countdown 2010: Community Involvement in Biodiversity Assessment in Zagreb' project closed with a seminar and photo exhibition. The results of the programme will be used to enable other regions in Croatia to promote understanding of biodiversity 2010 targets. The SEENET programme, which has done much to facilitate the implementation of the Pan-European Ecological Network (PEEN) in South-East Europe and the Black Sea region, also ended in November.

At ECNC's Board meeting, held in November 2007, the Board approved a new Network partner: the Macedonian Ecological Society (MES). The MES is ECNC's first Network partner in Macedonia. ECNC now has 46 partners in 23 European countries. See page 10 for an introduction to MES.

The new ECNC brochure *for a Beautiful Europe* was warmly welcomed by ECNC's Board. You can download the brochure from the ECNC website www.ecnc.org

On behalf of the Editorial Team
Glynis van Uden

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Support to International Organizations and Policy Initiatives

Brabant's new Regional Minister for Ecology visits ECNC

30 October 2007, Tilburg, the Netherlands

On 30 October Noord-Brabant's new Regional Minister for Ecology, Mr Onno Hoes, visited the European House for Biodiversity and the ECNC offices. He was welcomed by ECNC's Executive Director Rob Wolters and Eurosite's Director Gernant Magnin.

Mr Hoes presented the new policy strategy of the Province, including the 'Clean Brabant' and 'Beautiful Brabant' programmes, which focus on practical results, innovation, stakeholder and civic involvement, and the development of new coalitions.

Mr Onno Hoes, his Director Ecology Mrs Marly Bloem and Head of Programmes Mr Loet Visschers talked to the staff of ECNC and Eurosite, who presented their work. The Brabant delegation said that they were impressed with the wide expertise and networks of the organizations in the European House, and their truly international character.

It was agreed that the existing cooperation between the Province of Noord-Brabant and ECNC will continue and expand to new areas of mutual interest, such as the involvement of business in ecology including biodiversity and the interaction between biodiversity and other stakeholders, such as regional

planners, and the banking and infrastructure sectors. The economic valuation of biodiversity, civic and school children's involvement in biodiversity, interregional cooperation via projects such as LIFESCAPE - YOUR LANDSCAPE, and issues related to Natura 2000 were also mentioned as areas of common interest.



From left to right: Marly Bloem, Rob Wolters, Loet Visschers, Onno Hoes, Gernant Magnin, Peter von Meijenfildt. (Photo: Hanneke Wijnja)

For more information: Rob Wolters, Executive Director ECNC; wolters@ecnc.org

Nature and Society

How is community involved in urban biodiversity assessment? Results from Zagreb...

28 November 2007, Zagreb, Croatia

On 28 November 2007, the final workshop was held for the ECNC project 'Countdown 2010: Community Involvement in Biodiversity Assessment in Zagreb'. The participants were welcomed by a representative of the Ministry of Culture, Ms Ivana Jelenic, and of the Netherlands Embassy, Mr Oscar Meuffels. Mr Ben Delbaere, Deputy Executive Director ECNC, presented the concept of urban biodiversity and Ms Aysegul Cil, project coordinator, presented the project. The workshop was well attended and the participants felt that it was an effective way of disseminating knowledge to a wider audience in Zagreb.

Through this ECNC project, a partnership in support of urban biodiversity was established between the City of Zagreb, ICLEI, the Croatian Natural History Museum, the Croatian Ornithological Society, Zagreb University Faculty of Science, and local authorities in Zagreb. During the past two years, a community-based monitoring scheme for urban biodiversity was designed that involved citizens as volunteers in biodiversity monitoring. This resulted in an initial inventory of urban biodiversity with a special focus on the occurrence in Zagreb of species of international importance. As a result of the efforts on

public awareness and community involvement in biodiversity and nature protection in the region, the city has increased its capacity to integrate biodiversity aspects into local planning and policy implementation.

During the workshop, Croatian project partners presented the results of their activities. These results will be used as a 'showcase' to enable other regions in Croatia to increase understanding and commitment to reach biodiversity 2010 targets.

At the end of the event a photo exhibition for the general public was opened by the Natural History Museum.

The project was funded by the BBI Matra fund of the Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



ECNC's Ben Delbaere explains the concept of urban biodiversity. (Photo: Aysegul Cil)

For more information: Aysegul Cil, Programme Manager – Nature and Society; cil@ecnc.org

Second project team meeting Knowledge for Ecological Networks

4 December 2007, Berlin, Germany

ECNC's project Knowledge for Ecological Networks (KEN), which focuses on the practical implementation of ecological networks in Europe, has started to develop country studies in order to identify the current status of knowledge by conducting a survey and interviews with relevant stakeholders.

The second project team meeting, organized by KEN project partner Rosemarie Siebert of the Leibniz-Centre for Agricultural



KEN project team members at the meeting in Berlin. (Photo: Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters)

Landscape Research, was held on 4 December 2007 in Berlin. KEN partners Roger Catchpole (United Kingdom), Rob Jongman (the Netherlands), Mart Kùlvik (Estonia), and Raymond Lebeau (Switzerland) participated in the meeting.

The focus of this meeting was to reveal the preliminary results of the country reports. In the survey study, the initial results of the interviews and the processes were also discussed. ECNC's Programme Manager and KEN Coordinator, Aysegul Cil, reported the results of the Steering Committee meeting, which was held on 16 October 2007 in Tilburg jointly with the ECNC project Spatial Planning and Ecological Networks (SPEN). The Steering Committee, chaired by Peter Bos of the Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, reviewed each of the project work packages and gave advice on a wide range of issues relating to the further development of the projects in order to create synergies and cooperation between the two projects. ECNC's Senior Programme Manager and Coordinator of the SPEN project, Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters, introduced the

project to the KEN partners and discussed potential areas for cooperation and joint working. Mark Snethlage, ECNC Project Manager, further discussed the activities foreseen in the projects, such as the project website and communication plan to ensure durable results in the project span.

The KEN project is funded by the Research Programme of the Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality.

LIFESCAPE Final Event: presentation of the LIFESCAPE project results *29 November 2007, Brussels, Belgium*

On 29 November 2007, a large and diverse audience learned about the LIFESCAPE - YOUR LANDSCAPE project at the LIFESCAPE Final Event, which took place in Brussels.

Guided tours in various languages through the LIFESCAPE exhibition facilitated learning from the concrete project results. Furthermore, the outcomes of LIFESCAPE for the participating regions were highlighted in speeches using the four LIFESCAPE thematic areas of transnational cooperation:

- enjoyment and learning in landscapes;
- exploring business opportunities;
- involving local people and communities;
- financing rural areas.

Mr Mark Thomasin-Foster, President of the European Landowners' Organisation, welcomed the LIFESCAPE project outcomes, as they indicate the potential for landowners to conserve our European landscapes and generate sufficient income at the same time.



Regional Minister Mr Onno Hoes (centre) attended the Final Event. (Photo: Rob Maessen)

*For more information: Aysegul Cil,
Programme Manager – Nature and Society;
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Business and Biodiversity



After tasting regional products that are directly and indirectly supported by the LIFESCAPE project, the LIFESCAPE book was launched by Noord-Brabant's Regional Minister for Ecology, Mr Onno Hoes. More information on this book, *A European journey of our experiences 2004-2008*, can be found on page 10.



Participants were able to enjoy a taste of regional products. (Photo: Rob Maessen)

All in all, the LIFESCAPE Final Event was an excellent opportunity to learn from the LIFESCAPE project outcomes and to discuss future activities to sustain European landscapes.

ECNC is technical coordinator and an active partner in the project, which is led by the Province of Noord-Brabant. LIFESCAPE - YOUR LANDSCAPE is co-funded by the EU INTERREG III B Programme for North-West Europe.

To learn more about LIFESCAPE, visit www.lifescapeyourlandscape.org

*For more information, contact Yuca Waarts,
Project Manager Business and Biodiversity;
waarts@ecnc.org*

EU high-level conference 'Business and Biodiversity'

12 & 13 November 2007, Lisbon, Portugal

On 12 and 13 November 2007 the EU high-level conference 'Business and Biodiversity' was held in Lisbon, Portugal. The Conference was attended by 450 participants, more than 200 of whom were representatives of major European businesses, and resulted in support for the development of an EU Business and Biodiversity Initiative, with due attention for the relevance of the contribution of SMEs to biodiversity conservation and wise use.

The Conference issued a 'Message from Lisbon', calling on business, governments, the EU and NGOs to:

- continue raising awareness of the strong competitive advantage companies can gain from conserving biodiversity;
- promote the use of market, corporate responsibility and regulatory schemes;
- support business (especially small and medium sized companies) with operational tools for biodiversity conservation and performance measuring;
- encourage new incentives to develop and strengthen partnerships between companies, governments at all levels, NGOs and academia.

In his keynote closing speech to the Conference, ECNC President Sir Brian Unwin stressed the importance of concrete commitments and follow-up actions. He said that a network of European 'business leaders for biodiversity' should be established, which should actively support the implementation of the Business and Biodiversity Initiative. He referred to a number of successful developments of finance and biodiversity initiatives in which ECNC is involved, together with

RSPB and others. Sir Brian offered the support of ECNC and of the European Task Force on Banking, Business and Biodiversity, of which he is Chairman.

At the Conference, the ECNC delegation discussed options of business and biodiversity cooperation with Mr M. Brooks, Vice-President of the European Investment Bank, the CBD Secretariat and various other organizations.



Rossio Square fountain, Lisbon.
(Photo: Vineta Goba)

The Conference was organized by the Portuguese EU Presidency in office and the European Commission, with support from Countdown 2010. ECNC was also involved in the Conference preparations.

More information: Vineta Goba, Programme Manager – Business and Biodiversity; goba@ecnc.org; see http://countdown2010.net/business_for_the_Message_from_Lisbon.

Seminar on pro-bio-business opportunities

27 November 2007, Zagreb, Croatia

As part of the ECNC project 'Promoting Pro-biodiversity business opportunities in Bulgaria and Croatia' a seminar was held in Zagreb on 27 November 2007. The seminar was held at the offices of project partner Green Action, and was attended by over 30 people: representatives from government, NGOs, UNDP Croatia, as well as local entrepreneurs, bankers and media.

During the seminar, Vineta Goba of ECNC gave a presentation on developments in pro-biodiversity business and similar projects in Europe. Other presentations were given on the UNDP COAST project (by Ognjen Skunca, UNDP Croatia) and on enterprise and banking sector analysis in Bulgaria (Ludmila Dimitrova and Emil Yotov, Ecolnnovation, Bulgaria) and Croatia (Petra Djuric, Jagoda Munic, Green Action, Croatia). The seminar concluded with a SWOT analysis session to ascertain the potential for the development of pro-biodiversity business in Croatia. The SWOT analysis will be developed into a discussion paper aimed at the development of pro-biodiversity business in both countries.

The seminar results will also provide a baseline for the preparation of an outline micro-finance facility, which will be prepared in the coming months and proposed for implementation of pro-biodiversity business in both countries.



Vineta Goba of ECNC giving a presentation at the seminar. (Photo: Daniela Jovanova Ivankovic)

This project is funded by the BBI Matra fund of the Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

For more information: Vineta Goba, Programme Manager – Business and Biodiversity; goba@ecnc.org

European Ecological Network

Experts meet in Strasbourg to take forward Pan-European Ecological Networks

19 October 2007, Strasbourg, France

On 19 October 2007 the Committee of Experts for the Development of the Pan-European Ecological Network met at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, France. Their objective was to consider the progress of the Pan-European Ecological Network (PEEN) and to think about the future direction of the initiative. It was clear that there has been much progress. This has been detailed in a recent report: *The Pan-European Ecological Network: taking stock* (Bonnin *et al.*, 2007), now available in several languages from the Council of Europe. For instance: ecological

network maps have been created that now cover almost all of Europe; there are increasingly greater numbers of actual implementation of networks in practice; and there is widespread involvement of stakeholders in the process. ECNC is currently coordinating two multi-partner projects funded by the Netherlands Government, to look at the integration of ecological networks in spatial planning and practical knowledge about the implementation of ecological networks. Together with many other initiatives that are being taken forward, at a variety of levels, it is therefore apparent that Pan-European Ecological Networks are in good health – and to celebrate the fact the experts even had a special cake to mark the occasion!

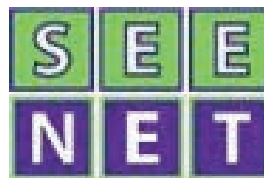


Jan Willem Sneep, outgoing President of the PEEN Committee of Experts, cuts the PEEN cake.

More information: Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters, Senior Programme Manager – Biodiversity and Ecological Networks; joneswalters@ecnc.org

The SEENET programme comes to an end

The SEENET programme, which has done much to facilitate the implementation of the Pan-European Ecological Network (PEEN) in South-East Europe and the Black Sea region, ended in November 2007.



The programme's achievements include:

- Development of an extensive network of experts (see <http://www.seenet.info/html/organisations/listorganisations.php>), and knowledge of ongoing activities in the field of ecological networks in the region.
- Establishment of a clearing-house mechanism to distribute information and serve as a doorway to the world of ecological networks.
- A website (www.seenet.info), with 5,000 visitors per month from the region.
- Provision of opportunities for stakeholder groups to participate in national or international fora, events, training and seminars in the region (see <http://www.seenet.info/html/training/training.php>) or in EU bodies and institutions where experts were able to represent their region.
- Development of communication materials on PEEN, and stakeholder involvement in ecological networks, and sectoral brochures on ecological networks in forestry, freshwater ecosystems, agriculture, transport, and fisheries (see <http://www.seenet.info/html/promotional/promotional.php>).
- Inclusion of essential stakeholder groups involved in the implementation of ecological networks, such as the spatial planning sector: a stand was set up to promote ecological networks at the 5th International Congress for Spatial Planning, held in Malaga, Spain, in November 2007.
- Schools in the SEE region were targeted and pupils were asked to design posters to illustrate their views on ecological connectivity. (See the previous issue of the *ECNC Update* for a report on the poster competition.)
- Representation of the region at fora, e.g. PEEN Committee of Experts, EU Habitat Forum, PEBLDS Council and Bureau, Environment for Europe Conference, and CEMAT.

The SEENET programme ran for two years and was funded by the BBI Matra fund of the Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

State of European Nature and Biodiversity

EIONET Biodiversity Workshop

29 & 30 October 2007, Copenhagen, Denmark

More than 50 delegates attended the EIONET Biodiversity Workshop in Copenhagen on 29 and 30 October 2007. EIONET, the European Environment Information and Observation Network, is a partnership network of the European Environment Agency (EEA) and its member and participating countries involving approximately 900 experts and more than 300 national institutions. The network supports

the collection and organization of data and the development and dissemination of information concerning Europe's environment.

Biodiversity is a key reporting area for the European Member States and beyond, and the delegates heard about progress that has been made with a number of indicators, ranging from the status and condition of the

Natura 2000 site series to climate change impacts on biodiversity. The delegates actively participated in workshops to consider a number of the indicators associated with the successful SEBI 2010 project – Streamlining European 2010 Biodiversity Indicators. The feedback to the plenary revealed that a huge amount of work is going on at national level. A discussion followed on the communication of the findings of the biodiversity indicators to a wider audience and the need to tell convincing stories that will capture the imagination of politicians and policymakers. Great interest was shown in the EEA's proposed European Ecosystem Assessment (EUREKA), a major

new initiative which will which begin to involve key stakeholders through a series of workshops starting in January 2008. The workshop was closed by Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters, Senior Programme Manager at ECNC, who reflected on the enthusiasm and commitment of the delegates and the great progress that has been made in the participating countries.

More information: Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters, Senior Programme Manager – Biodiversity and Ecological Networks; joneswalters@ecnc.org

European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity meets in Tilburg

14 & 15 November 2007, Tilburg, the Netherlands

For the first time since its establishment in 1995 the European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity (ETC/BD) held its Management Committee meeting in Tilburg.

ECNC has been a member of the ETC/BD consortium – part of and funded by the European Environment Agency – from the very beginning. The nine consortium partners are represented in the Management Committee and meet twice per year to discuss progress in implementation of the work plan. This meeting, on 14 and 15 November, focused on the EEA's plans for 2008 and ETC/BD's role in implementing them.



The ETC Management Committee.
(Photo: Astrid van Hemert)

The discussions covered, amongst others, work related to national reporting on article 17 of the Habitats Directive, the construction of the Biodiversity Data Centre as a component of the Shared Environmental Information System, the process of Streamlining European Biodiversity Indicators for 2010, and the plans for a European Ecosystem Assessment. ECNC's Ben Delbaere was re-elected to be the Committee's chair in 2008.

After the meeting, which was held in Tilburg city centre, the Committee members visited ECNC's offices, where a short presentation was given on ECNC by Executive Director Rob Wolters and on Eurosite by Deputy Director Neil McIntosh.

Earlier this year, on 4 October, ETC/BD Manager Carlos Romão and Ben Delbaere attended the meeting of the EEA Scientific Committee in Copenhagen. At this meeting all five ETCs of the EEA presented their consortia and work.

More information: Ben Delbaere, Head of Programme Development; delbaere@ecnc.org

ECNC Scientific Council meeting

17 October 2007, Tilburg, the Netherlands

The ECNC Scientific Council held its latest meeting at the ECNC offices in Tilburg on 17 October 2007. At this meeting Dr Eeva Furman was welcomed as new member of the Council (see previous *ECNC Update*).

The Scientific Council proposed some ideas for a stronger integration of the Council in ECNC's project work. It discussed the possible role that ECNC can play in relation to biofuels and biodiversity, also with respect to ECNC's core activities on ecological networks, stakeholder involvement and integration into sectors.

Each Programme Manager presented the main activities and outcomes of the current work in ECNC's five Programmes: Nature and Society, Business and Biodiversity, European

Ecological Network, State of Nature and Biodiversity, and International Policy Support. Plans for next year's work and a draft annual work plan were discussed and approved by the Council.

Dr Sjur Baardsen, Chair of the Scientific Council, presented the outcome of this meeting at the ECNC Board meeting.

For further information: Ben Delbaere, Deputy Executive Director ECNC; delbaere@ecnc.org

ECNC Board meeting in Belgium welcomes new member

9 November 2007, Meise, Belgium

This year, ECNC's annual Board meeting took place in the National Botanic Garden in Meise, Belgium. The meeting was hosted by Prof. Dr Jan Rammeloo, ECNC Treasurer and Director of the Botanic Garden.

The ECNC Board welcomed Prof. Dr Mustafa Kemal Yalinkiliç as a new ECNC Board member. He is Director-General of the Turkish Ministry of Environment and Forestry, and brings extremely valuable expertise and networks to ECNC and its Board.

The Board also accepted the Macedonian Ecological Society as a new ECNC Network Partner (see also the following article).

The Board discussed various promising opportunities for ECNC involvement in topical issues, such as biofuels, climate change and alien species. Decisions were made concerning the intensification of ECNC's involvement in various new topics. The annual work plan and budget for 2008 were approved and the advice of ECNC's Scientific Council was welcomed, and integrated into ECNC's planning and operations.

The Board visited the National Botanic Garden and was told about how botanical gardens contribute to conservation and awareness-raising on biodiversity among the public. The Board was impressed with the extensive collections and the active international conservation activities of the National Botanic Garden of Belgium (<http://www.botanicgarden.be/>).

For further information: Rob Wolters, Executive Director ECNC; wolters@ecnc.org



From left to right: Mr Ronald Loudon, Sir Brian Unwin and Prof. Dr Mustafa Kemal Yalinkiliç.

New ECNC Network partner

At its meeting on 9 November 2007 the ECNC Board approved the application of the Macedonian Ecological Society (MES) to become a Network partner, bringing the number of Network partners to 46 in 23 European countries. (See http://www.ecnc.org/EcncNetwork/Index_27.html for a complete list.)

MES is a non-governmental organization based in Skopje, Macedonia. It was established in 1972 with the aim of uniting ecologists and environmental workers in Macedonia to resolve ecological and environmental problems and promote nature conservation. MES has about 100 active members – experts working in many areas of ecology and environmental protection, such as fundamental ecology (terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems), biodiversity, agroecology, landscape

ecology, pollution, monitoring, measures to protect the environment, and ecological education. For more information on MES, visit their website: www.mes.org.mk

Contact persons: Prof. Dr Ljupcho Melovski (melvoski@iunona.pmf.ukim.edu.mk) and Robertina Brajanoska (brajanoska@mes.org.mk).



New ECNC publications

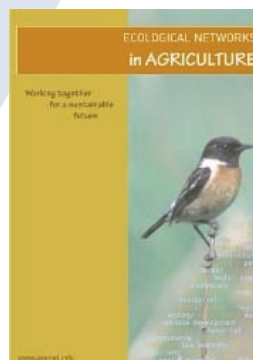
LIFESCAPE Partnership (2007) *LIFESCAPE - YOUR LANDSCAPE; a European journey of our experiences 2004-2008*. – 's-Hertogenbosch, Provincie Noord-Brabant.

This book presents messages, stories and outcomes derived from the LIFESCAPE project for combining landscape enhancement and regional development. An interactive DVD is included with the book, presenting all the LIFESCAPE project results in four thematic areas of transnational cooperation. The book and contents of the DVD will shortly be uploaded to the LIFESCAPE website (www.lifescapeyourlandscape.org). If you are interested in the book and/or DVD, contact Yuca Waarts, Project Manager Business and Biodiversity; waarts@ecnc.org.

Petersen, L.K., J. Lyytimäki, B. Normander, L. Hallin-Pihlatie, P. Bezák, A. Cil, R. Varjopuro, B. Münier, and N. Hulst. (2007) *Urban lifestyle and urban biodiversity*.

This ALTER-Net report, aimed at professionals in urban and spatial planning and public administration, is concerned with the

relations between lifestyles of urban populations on the one hand and protection of biodiversity in urban areas on the other. It can be downloaded from the ALTER-Net website: http://www.alter-net.info/POOLED/ARTICLES/BF_DOCART/VIEW.ASP?Q=BF_DOCART_196115



The SEENET programme has prepared a series of five brochures on the involvement of ecological networks in forestry, freshwater ecosystems, agriculture, transport, and fisheries. The brochures explain the relevance of ecological networks in the ecosystem concerned, and possible measures management can take to ensure that the elements of eco-

logical networks are managed in a sustainable way. They present examples of best practices, policy relevance and ongoing initiatives, and a few species examples with connectivity requirements specific to the ecosystems concerned. Download the brochures in English (PDF files):

<http://www.seenet.info/html/promotional/promotional.php>

Bonnin, M., A. Bruszik, B. Delbaere, H. Lethier, D. Richard, S. Rientjes, G. van Uden and A. Terry (2007) *The Pan-European Ecological Network: taking stock*. – Council of Europe, Nature and Environment, No. 146.

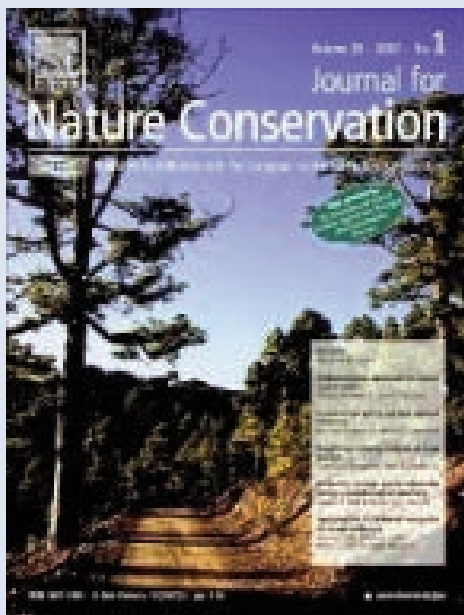
ECNC contributed to the preparation of this report, which examines the implementation of the Pan-European Ecological Network in the 55 Member States concerned and the progress achieved.

Recent issues of *Journal for Nature Conservation*

Volume 15, issue 3 of the *Journal for Nature Conservation* (published by Elsevier in affiliation with ECNC) was published in October, and Volume 15, issue 4 was published in December.

For further information, please consult:

http://www.ecnc.org/JournalForNatureCons/Index_36.html



ECNC Update Volume 14, No. 6

ISSN 1388-0039

ECNC Update is the newsletter of ECNC-European Centre for Nature Conservation

• Editor: Glynis van Uden • ECNC Update is freely available from the ECNC website (www.ecnc.org).

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