

Editorial

In December 2007, ECNC's Executive Director Rob Wolters and European House Chairman Rob Maessen welcomed Mrs Marieke Moorman, Tilburg's Deputy Mayor and Alderman of Environment, and Mr Paul van der Pol, Head Environment, on a visit to ECNC. Fruitful discussions were held on the existing cooperation between ECNC and the City of Tilburg and possibilities for the future. The full Council of Mayor and Aldermen will visit ECNC on 22 April this year.

Local biodiversity initiatives were the subject of a workshop as part of the project 'Biodiversity works in the region', which ECNC is coordinating. The aim is to create an information network for local and regional authorities in the Netherlands as a support to reach the 2010 target. See page 5 for a report on the workshop, which was chaired by Mr Wim van Gelder, former Queen's Commissioner in the Province of Zeeland, the Netherlands, and Vice-Chairman of NatureNet Europe.

In the execution of projects and programmes, ECNC makes use of interactive techniques, such as facilitation, in order to ensure that participants become involved. We have decided to offer our services as facilitators and can also provide training courses in facilitation techniques. For full details, see page 9 of this issue.

*On behalf of the Editorial Team
Glynis van Uden*

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Tilburg's Deputy Mayor/Alderman of Environment Mrs Moorman visits ECNC

7 December 2007, Tilburg, the Netherlands

On 7 December 2007, Mrs Marieke Moorman, Tilburg's Deputy Mayor and Alderman of Environment, and Mr Paul van der Pol, Head Environment, visited ECNC. They were welcomed by ECNC's Executive Director Rob Wolters and European House Chairman Rob Maessen. Also present were ECNC's Deputy Director Ben Delbaere and ECNC's Brabant-Europe Manager Peter von Meijenfeldt.

Mrs Moorman was informed about ECNC, the European House for Biodiversity and Sustainability, and the cooperation between ECNC and the City of Tilburg. She referred to issues of special interest to the City of Tilburg, including climate change, involvement of local stakeholders in biodiversity, and business and ecology. Mr Wolters congratulated the Deputy Mayor on Tilburg's active role in Countdown 2010, climate issues and sustainable development.

It was concluded that over the years the cooperation between Tilburg and ECNC has become strong, and that there is room for it to expand. Among the important topics of

cooperation are biodiversity, Countdown 2010, climate change, business, investment and biodiversity, including the landscape integration of industrial estates.

Following this constructive meeting, the Council of Mayor and Aldermen of Tilburg will visit the European House on 22 April.

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



From left to right: Mr Rob Maessen, Mrs Marieke Moorman and Mr Rob Wolters.
(Photo: Hanneke Wijnja)

World protected areas meeting held in Rome

From 11 to 15 February 2008, the second meeting of the Ad-Hoc Open Ended Working Group on Protected Areas of the Convention on Biological Diversity took place at the FAO in Rome, Italy.

The global meeting focused, inter alia, on reviewing the implementation of the work programme on protected areas, innovative financing of protected areas and criteria for marine and coastal areas.

ECNC was represented at the meeting by Rob Wolters, Executive Director, and Ágnes Bruszik, Project Manager. ECNC participated

in the main events and various side events. ECNC had a stand on ecological networks and protected areas, with a poster on two ecological network projects about stakeholder involvement and the role of physical planning. The ECNC delegation held various meetings with other delegates on the issue of protected areas and cooperation.

The financing of protected areas was again one of the major topics of the meeting, and demonstrated the varying positions of delegates. Slovenia, on behalf of the EU, voiced concern over the lack of full consideration of financing needs, including innovative

financing mechanisms and public-private partnerships.

The second meeting of the Ad-Hoc Open Ended Working Group resulted in two (bracketed) recommendations for the Ninth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in May 2008 in Bonn, Germany. These recommendations address the Review of Implementation of the Programme of Work on Protected Areas, and

Options for Mobilizing Financial Resources for the Implementation of the Programme of Work.

For more information on the meeting, please consult the Earth Negotiations Bulletin on <http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/wgpa2/> or the CBD website <http://www.cbd.int/protected/>

Nature and Society

Mini-seminar and study visit for 'Communicating nature conservation' project

12 & 13 December 2007

In December 2007, ECNC's Croatian and Macedonian partners in the project 'Communicating nature conservation in Croatia and FYRO Macedonia' paid a two-day visit to the Netherlands for a programme that included a mini-seminar and site visits. The participants gained insights into the role of stakeholders in the management of nature areas, and saw how communication and stakeholder involvement are taken up in the management of Natura 2000 areas in Europe and in Dutch nature areas.

The mini-seminar on 12 December started with a presentation by Ms Catherine O'Neill of Eurosite on Eurosite's experiences and the lessons learned in the Natura 2000 Networking Programme. Mr Jac Hendriks, Senior Officer for Rural Development of the State Forestry Agency in Tilburg, gave an analysis of the management planning process in the Province of Noord-Brabant. Participants Mrs Robertina Brajanoska (Macedonian Ministry of Environment), Mr Goce Anastasoski (Mavrovo National Park), Mr Kristijan Civic and Mr Goran Krivanek (both of the Croatian State Institute for Nature Protection) shared their experiences and views during the discussion part of the seminar.

On 13 December, the site visits commenced in the Biesbosch National Park. Park Manager Mr Dirk Feij talked about the management of the nature areas and Natura 2000 Reserve, and the development of new nature in the vicinity of the National Park and the role of stakeholders. The participants then visited the Loonse en Drunense Duinen National Park. Mr Frans Kapteijns, Park Manager, informed them about the management of this nature reserve and the role of stakeholders (agricultural management of nature and



At the Biesbosch museum.
(Photo: Aysegul Cil)



Visiting the Loonse en Drunense Duinen.
(Photo: Peter von Meijenfeldt)

'Communicating nature conservation' in South-East Europe: Final project phase successfully launched

This project, funded by the Norwegian Government, has entered its final phase, running from January to September 2008. The final phase was officially launched during two kick-off meetings in Zagreb (Croatia) and Mavrovo National Park (FYRO Macedonia). The main objective of this last phase is to consolidate the domestic capacity in communicating for nature conservation by training local project partners. These trained partners will have the skills to train fellow conservationists from the public and non-governmental bodies working in the field of nature conservation. It is expected that in this way the knowledge and capacity will remain in the country after the finalization of the project.

During the kick-off meetings in Zagreb and Mavrovo National Park, the suggested working methods and planning for the project were discussed. In this phase, selected participants in the earlier courses will receive a refresher course that will focus on acquiring and further developing the skills to train fellow conservationists in communication and facilitation. This training, which will take place in Tilburg in early spring, will be followed by two in-country training workshops for 30 participants each. Finally, a closing workshop planned in September will provide master classes and keynote speeches on specific communication and facilitation issues (such as conflict resolution or

landscape, green-blue services, regional products). This field visit illustrated the management aspects of visitor activities aimed at balancing the needs of nature and man.

This project is funded by the Norwegian Government.

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



Korab Mountains near the village of Bibaj in Mavrovo National Park, FYRO Macedonia.
(Photo: Mark Snethlage)

negotiation techniques) to a selection of the best participants.

Since the end of 2007, a process of consultation among key stakeholders has been taking place in the Neretva Delta region (Croatia). The aim of this consultation is to find common grounds for the sustainable use and protection of the delta's natural resources. One of the outcomes of the stakeholder processes was to communicate the baseline survey results through a brochure for wider dissemination in the region.

In Mavrovo National Park (FYRO Macedonia), ECNC assisted the Park management in developing a vision and communication

strategy for the Park based on a participative process with the different stakeholder groups. Products include a general information set about the natural values of the Park including a DVD, a poster and a brochure, to be widely disseminated among interested groups.

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



Kick-off meeting at Mavrovo National Park Headquarters, FYRO Macedonia.
(Photo: Mark Snethlage)

Workshop on 'Biodiversity works in the region'

12 December 2007, Dordrecht, the Netherlands

Local and regional stakeholders from the south-western provinces of the Netherlands gathered in Dordrecht on 12 December 2007, to discuss local biodiversity initiatives and to share experience and examples of good practice.

The project 'Biodiversity works in the region', which ECNC coordinates for the Netherlands Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, aims to further the creation of an information network for local and regional authorities in the Netherlands as a support to reach the 2010 target. It stimulates the target groups to take action, collects best practice projects in an online register, stimulates an active network of partners and is organizing a contest for successful projects.

The workshop was chaired by Mr Wim van Gelder, former Queen's Commissioner in the



Mr Wim van Gelder.
(Photo: Hanneke Wijnja)

Province of Zeeland, the Netherlands, and Vice-Chairman of NatureNet Europe. In his opening speech he stressed the importance of local and regional action regarding the 2010 target, and the many chances biodiversity offers for local sustainable social and economic development. He also underlined the need to continue communicating about nature and its important role for society, if any progress is to be made.

During workshops on the themes 'communication and awareness', 'financing biodiversity' and 'biodiversity projects in urban areas', participants were able to express positive as well as negative experiences. This resulted in a collection of valuable practical information and it made clear that much work had already been done. However, the participants also expressed their continued need for support, advice and cooperation.

These preliminary results will be combined with those to be obtained from three future workshops to be held in the first half of 2008. This will result in an online overview of exemplary, innovative and inspiring biodiversity projects, and give a better insight into the needs for support and information of the relevant stakeholders active in the field of biodiversity.

For further information, contact Mark Snethlage, Project Manager ECNC; snethlage@ecnc.org

Successful completion of BTAU Phase I

In December 2007, ECNC together with project partners RSPB and Birdlife partners in Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria, successfully finalized Phase I of the EU-funded pilot project 'Biodiversity Technical Assistance Units in Bulgaria, Poland and Hungary'.

During 2007, the implementation structure for the project was set up. Three BTAUs were established in the project countries; a BTAU is a specialized group of experts whose prime purpose is to proactively accelerate the market towards pro-biodiversity businesses. Pipelines of bankable biodiversity projects were identified, the project website was launched and support documents were prepared, including a company assessment toolkit, a project leaflet and brochure for entrepreneurs, and a handbook for identifying, developing and implementing pro-biodiversity projects.

The final project meeting and discussion of the first year's outputs and results took place on 12 and 13 December 2007 at ECNC Headquarters in Tilburg. The meeting was attended by Rob Wolters, Vineta Goba and Lawrence Jones-Walters from ECNC, project leader Zbigniew Karpowicz of RSPB, independent BTAU evaluator Jack Foxall, and representatives from BTAUs: Zenon Tederko

(Poland), Miroslava Dikova and Rouja Johnstone (Bulgaria), and Denes Nagy (Hungary). The project team reviewed and discussed the main achievements and status of work in the BTAU countries, the final draft of the handbook, and the independent evaluation of BTAUs. Preliminary ideas on the scope of work for Phase II were also exchanged.

Andras Demeter of EC DG Environment participated in the meeting on 12 December, outlining the EC's perspective and expectations for project results. Shortly after the final meeting, the project team was informed that the European Commission will grant funding for the next phase of work in 2008.

By promoting small and medium-sized enterprises, the BTAU project contributes to the European biodiversity target, and to the environmental, social and economic targets of the Lisbon Strategy. It is expected that the project will open up the biodiversity investment market in Europe, and put a Biodiversity Finance Facility into practice.

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

New ECNC project – promoting the business case for biodiversity in Europe

At the end of 2007, ECNC was awarded the project 'Promoting the business case for Biodiversity in Europe', funded by the Swiss Government.

From a business perspective, biodiversity has traditionally been seen as one of a range of social and environmental risks that a business must manage in order to retain its social licence to operate. However, in recent decades this perception has been changing rapidly. There is a new thinking that biodiversity does not necessarily pose a risk to businesses, but can be an important success factor for increasing product quality, raising a

company's image and creating new business opportunities.

The new project will explore the implications of selected companies on biodiversity and look for ways to improve current practice. The work will be based on similar experiences in Europe and worldwide, and will aim to put this knowledge into practice and translate it into concrete results. The results will be made available for the business community in Switzerland, as well as for national and international biodiversity policies. In the framework of the project, partnerships will be established with selected Swiss companies,

with the aim of integrating biodiversity concerns in their operations.

IUCN – the World Conservation Union, of which ECNC is a member, is starting similar projects in Switzerland in 2008. Therefore, ECNC has made arrangements with the IUCN Regional Office for Europe/Countdown 2010 Secretariat to cooperate, exchange information and undertake joint planning and execution of projects in Switzerland during 2008.

Current project activities include research on similar activities, pre-selection of companies and coordination of work plans between ECNC and IUCN. On behalf of ECNC, the work will be coordinated by Vineta Goba, Programme Manager – Business and Biodiversity.

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

State of European Nature and Biodiversity

ECNC coordinating new project on impacts of climate change in South-East Europe

ECNC is coordinator of a project to assist and increase the capacity of five countries in South-East Europe (SEE) in taking the necessary measures to maintain the quality of their biodiversity and to avoid, where possible, further damage to ecosystem services on which local communities depend. The countries are: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey. ECNC is implementing the project together with the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe (REC).

The project results could also feed into the discussions on climate change and biodiversity in the framework of the EU, the 'Environment for Europe' process and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

A conference will be organized, bringing together experts and policymakers from the SEE region, and experts and expertise from other European countries, in particular Spain. Focusing mainly on the five countries involved, the conference will form the basis for:

- a background document containing easily accessible scientific information about the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and ecosystem services;
- the conference proceedings;
- practical and tailor-made recommendations to mitigate the effects of climate change on biodiversity and to increase the resilience of ecosystems in SEE;

- a platform to increase the networking between stakeholders in order to enhance information exchange and the creation of synergy and innovation;
- the dissemination of project results to the EU, CBD, the Council of the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS) and other relevant forums and stakeholders.

Links or cooperation will also be established with other relevant and active networks and communication vehicles in the region with the aim of utilizing them as the basis for a self-sustaining network for the exchange of written information and knowledge.

The project started in September 2007 and will run until 1 December 2008. It is funded by the AECI (Spanish Agency for International Cooperation) through the Azahar programme.

To learn more about this project, visit: http://www.ecnc.org/StateOfEuropeanNature/ImpactsOfClimateChan/Index_765.html
For more information, contact Ana Nieto, Project Manager; nieto@ecnc.org

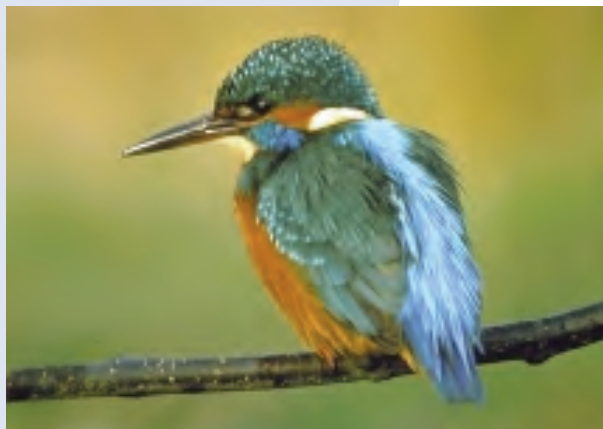
ECNC attends first meeting of SEBI2010 Expert group on 'Indicators on impact of climate change on biodiversity'

On 5 and 6 February 2008 the first meeting of the SEBI2010 Expert group 2 on 'Indicators on impact of climate change on biodiversity' was held in Paris, hosted by the European Topic Centre on Biodiversity (ETC/BD).

The goal of the meeting was to further Streamlining European 2010 Biodiversity Indicators (SEBI 2010) by making a first selection of the indicators on the impact of climate change on biodiversity.

To make this selection a review paper, compiled by ECNC for the ETC/BD and presented at the meeting, provided the platform for discussion.

In this review paper, ECNC analysed 26 existing indicators of the impact of climate change on biodiversity that had been compiled under different European frameworks. The paper concluded that no single indicator is sufficient according to the agreed criteria (SEBI2010 criteria) and that it is necessary to use a set of complementary indicators to detect the impacts of climate change on biodiversity.



At the meeting, other indicators that had not been addressed in the review paper were presented by the participants and considered for future assessment.

After two days of fruitful discussions, a set of potential indicators and the next steps were agreed upon. Later this year another meeting will be held in order to make a final selection of indicators, so that these indicators are ready before 2010.

More information: Ana Nieto, Project Manager; nieto@ecnc.org

European Ecosystem Assessment – EURECA launched

More than 40 international experts gathered at the headquarters of the European Environment Agency (EEA) in Copenhagen on 28 and 29 January 2008. Coming from as far as Australia, South Africa and the United States, they were there to participate in the inaugural expert meeting of the European Ecosystem Assessment project – EURECA. Driven by the EU target to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2010, the initiative takes up the challenge to identify and economically value ecosystem services to human society.

EURECA will build on the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and links to the Streamlining European 2010 Biodiversity Indicators project (SEBI 2010). It will focus on the assessment of ecosystem services in the

specifically European context of traditional, cultural and multifunctional landscapes; it will therefore have to address sectors such as agriculture, transport and energy and take social and economic factors into account. The project will be completed by 2012.

The EEA decided on an inclusive, multi-stakeholder approach from the start and the delegates were involved in a number of presentations and workshops to explore concepts, approach and desired outcomes. Representing the European Topic Centre for Biodiversity, Ben Delbaere and Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters of ECNC assisted in the facilitation of workshops and interactive sessions. There was a high level of energy throughout and the delegates showed great enthusiasm

for the project. They generated a wealth of ideas and creativity and, of particular value, empirical knowledge and experience. Thanks to the openness of the approach, the two days ended on a very positive note and the next steps by the EEA are keenly awaited.

For more information: Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters, Senior Programme Manager, ECNC; joneswalters@ecnc.org

ECNC Organizationally

New ECNC service: facilitation and facilitation training

ECNC has for many years been involved in capacity-building projects for professionals in the fields of nature conservation and environmental sustainability. Increasingly, skills are required in the fields of communication and stakeholder participation. One of the best ways to involve people is through interactive techniques such as facilitation. These methods can be applied in training courses, group meetings and public participation. In order to expand and strengthen this service all of our operational staff have therefore recently received specialist training to refresh their skills and expand their knowledge of relevant facilitation techniques. The training was delivered by Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters, a member of ECNC's staff and a recognized expert in the field of knowledge-based facilitation, whose services have been used by the European Environment Agency and the governments of various Eastern

European countries through the implementation of various projects and programmes.

Whilst we will continue to utilize these skills in project and programme delivery, we would also like to offer our services as facilitators in a wider context. This might include: in project planning, where the meeting of prospective partners to define and agree the scope of potential projects is often assisted by knowledge-based facilitation; in meetings and workshops; and in stakeholder participation processes. We can also offer training in facilitation skills; our courses last up to three days and can be based around specific subjects – using a 'learning by doing' approach, or a theme, such as team building.

If you are interested contact Ben Delbaere at ECNC (delbaere@ecnc.org) who will put you in touch with the relevant member of ECNC staff.

Staff news

Grégoire Loïs left ECNC at the end of December 2007. In 2001 Grégoire was seconded by ECNC to the core team of the European Topic Centre on Biodiversity in Paris. There he worked on biodiversity information systems and databases.

In January 2008 Merijn Biemans started a four-month traineeship with ECNC. This year Merijn will be completing his studies at the University of Wageningen (M.Sc. in Forest and Nature Conservation). At ECNC he is assisting in the programme areas on European nature and biodiversity and the European Ecological Network, working in particular on SEBI2010 and the spatial planning and ecological networks project.

In February Wim Kersten rejoined ECNC as a volunteer. He is working on motivating companies to become involved in the Countdown 2010 activities, with a focus on Noord-Brabant.

New ECNC publications

From 10 to 12 October 2007 the Sixth Ministerial Conference 'Environment for Europe' took place in Belgrade, Serbia. ECNC organized or co-organized the two official PEBLDS side event seminars at Belgrade, and the proceedings of these side events have now been published:

Cil, A., A. Vogt and H. Wijnja (Eds) (2007) *Regions and local authorities as champions for biodiversity 2010*. – Tilburg/Brussels.



Nieto, A. (Ed.) (2007) *Connecting nature and putting the Pan-European Ecological Network into practice*. – Tilburg/Brussels.



These documents can be downloaded here:
<http://www.ecnc.org/jump/page/698/6th%20Ministerial%20Environment%20for%20Europe%20Conference.html>

ECNC, LEI, ZALF, IfL and CEU (2007) *Scenar 2020: Scenario study on agriculture and the rural world*. – Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg. ISBN 978-92-79-05441-9

The European Commission has just released the hardcopy version of this report that presents the results of a one-year study, led by ECNC, that examined the future of agriculture and the rural world in Europe. The full report can be downloaded from the Commission's website at

http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/publi/reports/scenar2020/index_en.htm



ECNC Update Volume 15, No. 1

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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