

Editorial

There was an impressive turnout of almost 400 people for the 'Brabant Pearls of Biodiversity' fair, held on 17 November at the Province House in 's-Hertogenbosch, the Netherlands. The fair highlighted efforts undertaken in Noord-Brabant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity during the International Year of Biodiversity, and brought together demand and supply in biodiversity-related initiatives. For further details, see page 4 of this issue of the *ECNC Update*.

The participants of the annual European Seminar on ELN-FAB held fruitful discussions on topics related to functional agrobiodiversity and how it works in practice. For a report on the Seminar, which took place on 11 and 12 November in Slovenia, see page 6.

On behalf of the Editorial Team
Glynis van Uden

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Science Café discusses biodiversity

26 October 2010, Tilburg, the Netherlands

On 26 October 2010 ECNC's Executive Director Rob Wolters was one of two speakers invited to address a seminar at the Science Café in Tilburg, the Netherlands, on the issue of biodiversity.

In a presentation entitled 'Biodiversity: Green passion', Rob Wolters explained what biodiversity is and why it is important, and measures that are being taken to preserve biodiversity, both in Europe and worldwide. Mr Ton Bruins, EH&S



Regulatory Affairs Leader of Dow Chemical, focused on the role of businesses, in particular Dow Chemical, as regards biodiversity conservation.

The seminar, organized in the framework of the International Year of Biodiversity 2010, was attended by over 100 participants from science, the local community, volunteers and companies. There was an intensive debate about the role of biodiversity for businesses, the responsibilities of businesses and politicians, and the ethical and economic basis for species protection and biodiversity.

For more information: Hanneke Wijnja, Communication Officer; wijnja@ecnc.org

The Science Café discussed the protection of biodiversity, focusing on the role of business and of individual citizens.

(Photo: Wikimedia Commons - Color Line)

Policy Support

Ecosystem services and biodiversity: What is the link between the two?

3 & 4 November 2010, Vienna, Austria

Along with over 90 other delegates drawn from different disciplines from within ALTER-Net and non ALTER-Net organizations and invited experts from research, policy and international conservation communities, ECNC staff participated in the conference: 'Ecosystem services and biodiversity: What is the link between the two?', held at the French Cultural Institute, Vienna, on 3 and 4 November 2010.

The main objectives of the conference were to explore the links between society, ecosystem services and biodiversity and how they affect each other, and to identify means and future possibilities for the management of ecosystem services in a way that promotes ecological sustainability.

ECNC facilitated the working group sessions, whose main goal was to gain the maximum advantage of the experience and knowledge of the participants in relation to the future work of sustaining ecosystem services and protecting biodiversity. In addition, ECNC presented a poster on: 'Gaps in ecosystem services information identified in producing the EU 2010 biodiversity baseline' during the poster presentation session.

Results of the discussion and working groups included identification of research gaps where more work is needed, in particular in relation to: ecological knowledge relationships between biodiversity structure, biodiversity function and ecosystem services; and cultural ecosystem

services. It was felt that it was particularly important to involve stakeholders (in particular, 'resource extractors' such as fishery, forestry and agriculture) in permanent dialogue and two-way interaction including about research questions. One route to this will be the development of crystal-clear universal definitions and concepts. Communication actions proposed included training biodiversity ambassadors,



Local actions matter for biodiversity!

21 October 2010, Nagoya, Japan

The tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP10) was held in Nagoya, Japan, from 18 to 29 October 2010. At the Fair on experiences and best practices in Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA Fair), held parallel to COP10, ECNC organized a side event on Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPs) in the Western Balkans. The CEPA Fair offered a platform to its parties for highlighting activities that contribute to biodiversity conservation. The LBAP project is considered a strategic tool of the CBD and a best practice in Communication, Education and Public Awareness, and thus offered a unique opportunity to highlight ECNC's contribution to the implementation of the CBD. The side event was presented by Ms Ayşegül Çil, the leader of the project, which is being implemented together with the Regional Environmental Center, with funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland.

participatory approaches for defining issues and encouraging engagement.

One of the expected outcomes of the conference is a Summary Statement with key messages and advice to the European Commission with respect to post-2010 targets on halting biodiversity loss, to be delivered to the European Commission, the scientific community and relevant stakeholders.

The conference was organized by ALTER-Net, the long-term biodiversity, ecosystems and awareness network, and the Scientific service of the French Embassy / French Cultural Institute in Austria as a contribution to the International Year of Biodiversity 2010.

For more information: Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters, Senior Programme Manager - Green Infrastructure / Ecosystem Services & Biodiversity Assessment (joneswalters@ecnc.org) or Amor Torre-Marín, Project Manager (torremarin@ecnc.org); visit the ALTER-Net website at <http://www.alter-net.info>

ECNC's poster highlighted gaps in ecosystem services information.

The project introduces biodiversity and the benefits it provides to local communities in terms of goods and services (e.g. pollination, water purification, sustainable forestry, ecotourism) as a cross-cutting issue in local development policies and actions. This is achieved through the development of Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPs), which identify the main biodiversity conservation issues (Red List species, ecosystems at risk, future pressures) and search for opportunities for sustainable development associated with their conservation. Ten partner municipalities in six Western Balkan countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo) are currently developing their biodiversity action plans under this project.

The side event enabled other countries facing similar issues at the local level to benefit from the project approach and results. During the



Conference, CEPA promoted the selected side-event initiatives through a series of workshops, presentations, panel discussions and fair exhibitions.

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

ECNC organized a side event at the CEPA Fair, held parallel to COP10, highlighting its work and contribution to the implementation of the CBD. (Photo: A. Çil)

Nature and Society

Numerous matches made at bustling Biodiversity Marketplace

17 November 2010, 's-Hertogenbosch, the Netherlands

On 17 November the main hall of the Province House in 's-Hertogenbosch, the Netherlands, was transformed into a bustling Biodiversity Marketplace. Almost 400 participants were introduced to over 50 initiatives which demonstrate that biodiversity can provide solutions for many social issues.

The Marketplace was the crowning moment for activities undertaken in Brabant during the International Year of Biodiversity. The plenary



Special intermediaries facilitated trading in the Marketplace. (Photo: ECNC)

session preceding the Marketplace emphasized the economic importance of biodiversity and its value for human well-being. In addition to the current economic crisis there is also a biodiversity crisis, and attention was drawn to the importance of local initiatives as a response to these global issues. The variety of local projects at the Marketplace shows that there is enough inspiration in society to make a start.

Organizations from Noord-Brabant and elsewhere in the Netherlands presented their successful and inspiring projects in which biodiversity is related to: education; education and childcare; health care; citizen participation; leisure; living and working environment; agriculture; nutrition; and sustainable development.

There was brisk trading in knowledge and ideas, as well as considerable networking with a view to future cooperation and joint project development. When the gong sounded to close the Marketplace, no fewer than 176 matches - agreements for future cooperation - had been made!

Descriptions of all the projects presented at the Marketplace can be found in the programme booklet (in Dutch) that was created specially for this event. A detailed summary of the results will soon be available at

<http://www.biodiversiteitbrabant.nl/beursvloer>.



Participants browsed information on over 50 biodiversity initiatives. (Photo: Frank van Engelen)

The Marketplace was also an opportunity for a light-hearted presentation of the first results of the NME programme 'Brabant Pearls of Biodiversity'. Master chef Albert Kooy then gave a special presentation on sustainable Dutch cuisine of the future.

The Marketplace was organized by ECNC, in cooperation with the Province of Noord-Brabant and IVN Consulentenschap Brabant.

For more information: Mark Sneathlage, Project Manager; sneathlage@ecnc.org

Revitalizing the European Green Belt Initiative

6 October 2010, Kuhmo, Finland

The European Green Belt initiative aims to create the backbone of an ecological network that runs from the Barents Sea to the Black Sea, spanning some of the most important habitats for biodiversity and almost all distinct biogeographical regions in Europe. ECNC participated in the 4th European Green Belt Conference, held in Kuhmo, Finland on 6 October 2010.

The Conference was attended by a range of stakeholders, including the Regional



Coordinators and Focal Points for the European Green Belt, as well as those involved with European Green Belt projects on the ground, both research and applied. The Conference's main objective was to share information on achievements and best practices, and to encourage discussion about new opportunities and desirable next steps. Ms Ayşegül Çil, Programme Manager - Nature and Society, presented ECNC's work related to ecological networks at the pan-European scale and its relevant project experience. The Conference also discussed success stories and successful project implementation around Europe, and looked forward to future steps and the further development of the Green Belt.

For more information: <http://europeangreenbelt.org>

The conference was held in Kuhmo, Finland.
(Photo: ECNC)

Dinaric Arc Initiative more important than ever

9 & 10 November 2010, Ulcinj, Montenegro

ECNC is a member of the Dinaric Arc Initiative (DAI), which was founded in 2004 with the aim of providing added value to ongoing work aimed at securing the long-term conservation and sustainable development of the Dinaric Arc and of monitoring eco-regional processes. Regular meetings are held to enable exchange of activities and projects, ideas and good practices in the Dinaric Arc.

The 13th DAI meeting was held in Ulcinj, Montenegro on 9 and 10 November 2010. The participants agreed that it is important to focus on the critical success factors of the Initiative, to further discuss areas to improve, and to draw up recommendations for the future.

Following a number of presentations, the meeting participants brainstormed constructively about the Initiative's achievements and activities. They felt that DAI is now more important than ever in safeguarding the natural and cultural heritage of the Dinaric Arc, and agreed that DAI should be maintained and its vision and governance should be upgraded. At the end of the meeting several recommendations were elaborated and decisions were made on concrete activities; these will act as guidance for the next meeting, due to be held in spring 2011.

For more information: Ayşegül Çil – Programme Manager, Nature and Society; cil@ecnc.org; visit the Dinaric Arc Initiative website at <http://www.cbddinaricarc.com>

Productive discussions at European Seminar on ELN-FAB

11 & 12 November 2010, Ljubljana, Slovenia

On 11 and 12 November 2010 the annual European Seminar on the European Learning Network on Functional AgroBiodiversity (ELN-FAB) was held in Ljubljana, Slovenia. The aim of the meeting was to bring together representatives of various stakeholder groups and national and international organizations throughout Europe to collect and exchange experience about functional agrobiodiversity.

Among the speakers who addressed the seminar was Dr Ladislav Miko, Director of Directorate B: Nature, DG Environment. His presentation dealt with 'Functional agrobiodiversity and the new biodiversity strategy and CAP reform'.

The 44 participants, from 14 European countries, actively contributed to the workshop discussions, which focused on the following themes: 'How to put the concept of FAB into practice: What works and what doesn't?'; 'Functioning of the network – the role of stakeholders and partners. How can you contribute?'; and 'The economic and social aspects of the role of FAB for a more sustainable agriculture'. The outcome of the productive discussions will provide input into the planned handbook on FAB, which will help the stakeholders to



strengthen the role of FAB in their operations and identify what is needed.

The conclusions of the seminar were presented by Dr Felix Wäckers, chairman of the ELN-FAB steering group, at the opening session of the conference 'How can we green the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)? - A contribution to the dialogue based on the views from the New Member States and countries aspiring to EU membership'. This conference was held from 12-14 November 2010 in Bled, Slovenia, and organized by Avalon (<http://www.avalon.nl>).

The annual European Seminar on ELN-FAB was organized by ECNC in cooperation with DIVERSITAS and the European Environment Agency (EEA), and hosted by the Agricultural Institute of Slovenia (KIS).

The ELN-FAB project is currently financially supported by the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM), the Netherlands; Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN), Switzerland; Flemish Land Agency (VLM), Belgium; Ministry of Agriculture, Estonia; and the European Environment Agency (EEA). The further support of funders is being sought in order to expand the Network in the long term.

For more information: Veronika Mikos, Project Manager (mikos@ecnc.org) or visit <http://www.eln-fab.eu>

One of the workshop discussion groups.
(Photo: ECNC)

Green Infrastructure

A Green Infrastructure for Europe

19 November 2010, Brussels, Belgium

The auditorium was completely full at the Centre Borschette in Brussels on 19 November, for the European Commission-organized conference on Green Infrastructure Implementation. The confe-

rence aimed to pursue the ongoing discussion process and to support further work on green infrastructure. There is no doubt that it lived up to its objectives, which were to share views and

discuss the state of green infrastructure implementation, to identify gaps in implementation and to highlight the strong linkages to climate change adaptation and mitigation as well as to share good practices and lessons learned.

The conference was opened by Dr Ladislav Miko, Director of Directorate B: Nature of the Directorate-General Environment, European Commission. He stressed the need for an overarching but flexible concept of green infrastructure that emphasizes the importance of ensuring the provision of ecosystem goods and services for society and the value of functionality and spatially connected, healthy ecosystems. Speakers from EU Member States, and European and North American experts provided a number of inspirational examples of policy and best practice for the maintenance, restoration and creation of green infrastructure. These included national and transnational initiatives, green infrastructure as a tool for working with nature and providing multiple benefits for society, and the integration of green infrastructure into core land-use policies. The

The Macedonian Ecological Network project makes excellent progress

12 October 2010, Tilburg, the Netherlands

The second and final Steering Group meeting of the project 'Development of a National Ecological Network in Macedonia' (MAK-NEN) took place at ECNC headquarters in Tilburg, the Netherlands, on 12 October 2010.

The meeting was chaired by Mr Filip Ivanov, Director of Administration of Environment, Macedonian Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning. In addition to the project team from ECNC and the Macedonian Ecological Society (MES), the meeting was attended by representatives of the Macedonian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy and the Council of Europe.

The Steering Group was very satisfied with the achievements of the project, which has already delivered more activities than foreseen in the original project proposal. An example is an educational awareness-raising programme for 5- to 6-year-olds in kindergarten, which has included activities about the brown bear, nature in general and the idea of green bridges and ecological connectivity. The Steering Group was also very pleased with the scientific background

conference was wrapped up by Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters of ECNC.

Green infrastructure has a vital role to play in the conservation of biodiversity in tackling fragmentation. It also contributes to climate change mitigation and adaptation and thereby increases resilience and reduces vulnerability to natural disaster risks such as floods, coastal erosion, water scarcity and forest fires. Its growing importance in the policy arena is evident from its inclusion in the 2009 Commission White Paper on adapting to climate change and it is covered within the European post-2010 biodiversity strategy. The concept was presented during Green Week 2010 and it is seen as a potentially powerful instrument to achieve the target on restoration adopted at CBD COP10 in Nagoya this year.

For more information: Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters, Senior Programme Manager – Green Infrastructure / Ecosystem Services & Biodiversity Assessment; joneswalters@ecnc.org



incorporated in the production of the MAK-NEN map and the level of stakeholder involvement. It was agreed that towards the end of the project there will be a series of training workshops for the sectors that include the main stakeholders in the ecological networks implementation process in Macedonia (spatial planners, transport and rural development sectors).

The Steering Group agreed that adequate profiling of the project results is important. Therefore, a large final event will be organized, involving the Minister of Environment personally, in order to attract media attention and to place the issue of the National Ecological Network as high as possible on the agenda of other relevant ministries.

Future options for project follow-up work were considered. It was agreed that climate change issues should be given further consideration in

relation to what ecological networks can offer to the process of adaptation; increased sectoral integration and the role of education were recognized as additional fields to focus on when thinking about follow-up.

For more information: Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters, Senior Programme Manager – Green Infrastructure / Ecosystem Services & Biodiversity Assessment (joneswalters@ecnc.org) or Kristijan Čivić, Project Coordinator (civic@ecnc.org)

New ECNC project on integrated peatlands in the Russian Federation

ECNC is providing input to a new project on integrated peatlands management and conservation in the Russian Federation. Its role will be to prepare an overview of the current state of



implementation of ecological networks in Europe and to advise on the best practice examples in Europe regarding the inclusion of peatlands in ecological networks and their possible role.

This project is being implemented by Wetlands International, and funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality.

For more information: Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters, Project Coordinator; jones-walters@ecnc.org

Peatlands are a vital resource for global biodiversity and provide a range of important ecosystem services. (Photo: L. Jones-Walters)

Ecosystem Services and Biodiversity Assessment

New projects soon to kick off for ECNC

ECNC is expecting a new project to kick off soon: **KNEU** - Developing a **K**nowledge **N**etwork for **E**uropean expertise on biodiversity and ecosystem services. The project, with 18 European partners, has the aim of developing a network approach to better access scientific and other knowledge on biodiversity in Europe in order to inform policymakers and other decision-makers. The project will function as a coordinating mechanism involving not only the partners in the project, but also the whole biodiversity knowledge community in Europe. For this, a prototype 'network of knowledge' will be developed and tested in different case studies. The work will include direct interaction with existing interfaces from the national to the international level. The project, which will run for 29 months, is funded under the Seventh Framework Programme for EU research (FP7), which is the European Union's main instrument for funding research in Europe.

ECNC has also been involved in securing two framework service contracts from the European Environment Agency. The first, led by ECNC, is to provide support on agriculture; the second, led by the European Forestry Institute (EFI) with ECNC one of two other main partners, will provide support on forests. Both contracts relate to the provision of integrated analysis and assessment, inputs for monitoring and reporting processes, policy evaluation, and outlook studies related to agriculture and forest ecosystem functioning and provisioning of ecosystem goods and services under current and future environmental conditions.

It is anticipated that all of the projects will be fully under way by January 2011.

For more information: Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters, Senior Programme Manager – Green Infrastructure / Ecosystem Services & Biodiversity Assessment; joneswalters@ecnc.org

ECNC becomes a partner in the 'Rewilding Europe' initiative

The 'Rewilding Europe' initiative was formally launched on 18 November 2010 in Brussels, in an event chaired by Princess Laurentien of the Netherlands. The initiative's ambitious goal is to 'rewild' at least one million ha of abandoned agricultural land into wilderness by 2020. In order to kick off this process, five pilot projects have been identified: in the Eastern



Carpathians, Southern Carpathians, Danube Delta, Velebit and Western Iberia.

The initiative aims to turn a problem (land abandonment and related socio-economic problems such as depopulation) into an opportunity that will also serve to revitalize local communities, for instance via wilderness-oriented tourism.

'Rewilding Europe' was initiated by WWF, Ark Foundation and Wild Wonders of Europe. Initial funding is provided by WWF NL, the Dutch Postcode Lottery, and Adessium Foundation. ECNC is a formal partner of the 'Rewilding Europe' initiative in two ways: via ECNC and via the ECNC-coordinated Large Herbivore Network.

For more information: Rob Wolters, Executive Director ECNC; wolters@ecnc.org; or visit the website <http://rewilding-europe.com>

The Griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus*) is one of the species that the initiative will focus on in Western Iberia.

(Photo: Wikimedia Commons-Thermos)

News About Other Members of the ECNC Group

EUCC News – EUCC reaching out to the public

EUCC has ample experience in awareness raising, directly reaching European citizens, e.g. through the QualityCoast Awards, Odra Delta Nature Park of EUCC-Poland, the magazines *Meer & Küste* of EUCC-Germany and the Dutch website Kustgids.nl (million visitors) and magazine *Kust&Zee Gids* (120,000 copies since 2005). Since April 2010 EUCC's Dutch branch (Kust & Zee) has its own exhibition room in SEA LIFE Scheveningen, that has already been visited by 250,000 people this year; as a follow-up to this, EUCC and the Pier of Scheveningen signed a 5-year contract to realize a large

exhibition about coastal & marine biodiversity and sustainability issues on the Netherlands' only pier which receives 2 million visitors per year.

For more information, please contact Robert Steenbergen; r.steenbergen@eucc.net

For more news from EUCC, see Coastal & Marine-News at <http://www.eucc.net/en/news>

Staff news

ECNC's Executive Director Rob Wolters was invited to become the new Chairman of the Steering Committee for the Research Programme 'Biodiversity Works' of the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO). He was officially appointed in October

2010. The steering committee comprises representatives of the parties funding the research and an independent chairman. The programme aims to generate new knowledge on policy themes, focusing on research related to dynamic nature, ecosystem functions and/or land scarcity.

New issue of *Journal for Nature Conservation*

Volume 18, issue 4 of the *Journal for Nature Conservation* (published by Elsevier in affiliation with ECNC) was published in December 2010.

For further information, please consult:
<http://www.ecnc.org/publications/journal-for-nature-conservation>



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