

Editorial

A successful study tour for English nature conservation managers was recently organized by ECNC, the Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality and the Province of Noord-Brabant. The visitors learned about ecological networks in the Netherlands, the Dutch and Noord-Brabant approach to living with rivers and water management, and Dutch thinking on the relationship between people and nature and stakeholder involvement, including the role of volunteers. An earlier tour in 2002 had a significant effect on UK thinking in relation to nature policy. We hope that the discussion and the subsequent innovation and learning points from this tour will have a similar groundbreaking effect.

Nowadays more and more projects involve an element of information technology. ECNC is participating in a new project that aims to develop a knowledge-sharing and anchoring system for experts and the general public in relation to biodiversity and other environmental subject material. The name of the project is KYOTO – Knowledge Yielding Ontologies for Transition-Based Organization, and to find out just what this means, go to page 8!

*On behalf of the Editorial Team
Glynis van Uden*

PAGE

In this issue

- 2 UK study tour breaks new ground in the Netherlands
- 2 EAZA European Carnivore Campaign
- 3 Refresher course for 'Communicating nature conservation in the Balkan Region'
- 4 Another 10 municipalities and organizations in Brabant support Countdown 2010
- 5 Final workshop of project 'Promoting pro-biodiversity business in Bulgaria and Croatia'
- 6 Feels Like Home event a successful pilot for the LIFESCAPE philosophy
- 7 Communicating biodiversity and streamlining indicators in Copenhagen
- 8 KYOTO – a new kind of project involvement for ECNC
- 8 Lively fourth ALTER-Net Advisory Committee meeting
- 9 Staff news
- 9 New ECNC publications
- 10 New issue of *Journal for Nature Conservation*

UK study tour breaks new ground in the Netherlands

Over 30 delegates from the National Trust, the biggest countryside related NGO in the UK, the Forestry Commission and Natural England, plus chief executives from three English wildlife trusts enjoyed a highly successful study tour to the Netherlands from 15 to 19 April 2008. The tour was at the invitation of the Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, and was organized by ECNC, together with the Ministry and the Province of Noord-Brabant. The tour objectives included: to exchange knowledge and experience, to understand the Dutch approach to integrated land use and combining people-profit-planet, to look at the Dutch approach to the development of nature conservation policy and practice, and to visit key sites within the Netherlands which demonstrate radical new approaches to nature conservation and water management.

During the site visits the delegates saw best practice and experimentation in the field, and heard from the experts who had been involved in the planning stages of policy formation and those involved in the delivery of that policy and the direct management of the sites. Highlights included: a visit to Oostvaardersplassen, a wholly human created wet and nutrient rich site full of marshy areas, grazed by wild ponies and red deer (where the participants were lucky enough to see three white tailed eagles – including a nest); the Biesbosch National Park, where they considered topics such as flood protection through nature development, water management, and the EU Water Framework Directive; and the Loonse en Drunense Duinen National Park, an area of shifting inland dunes, where the discussion

focused on ecotourism, agricultural nature management (green-blue services) and regional products (branding), and the valley of the River Beerze. Here they saw the progress in transforming Small and Great Beerze and the role of a water board in this process. The delegates also visited the Feels Like Home event in Boxtel (see page 6).

The study tour concluded with an evaluation of the key learning points, which will be made available in report form. Such was the value of the exchange of knowledge and the learning experience, that it was decided to consider the organization of another study tour in two to three years' time.

For more information: Peter von Meijenfeldt, Brabant-Europe Manager; vonmeijenfeldt@ecnc.org

The English delegates listening to a presentation. (Photo: Lawrence Jones-Walters)



Nature and Society

EAZA European Carnivore Campaign

Every year the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) develops a campaign for its member zoos. For 2008-2009, it has chosen a European Carnivore Campaign,

focusing on European carnivores and their interaction with humans. ECNC has a seat in the campaign planning group, together with several zoos and the Large Carnivore Initiative

for Europe (LCIE). ECNC also represents the IUCN Countdown 2010 Secretariat in the planning group.

The EAZA European Carnivore Campaign aims to contribute to the conservation of European carnivore species and their connectivity requirements by raising public awareness and by raising funds for selected conservation projects, as well as awareness conferences, discussion workshops, etc.

Most large European carnivores are threatened land species. In addition to the usual threats, such as reduction of habitat and poaching, carnivores are threatened by the 'human-carnivore conflict'. How can people and carnivores live together without



Grey wolf.
(Photo: Jan van der Straaten)

threatening each other's existence? There is a need for discussion and raising of public awareness about this conflict. As increasing carnivore populations come ever closer to urban areas and the spread of urban areas reduces the distance between typical carnivore habitats and the human habitat, it is only to be expected that the conflict will increase in the future.

Furthermore, there is a need for better connectivity of the remaining carnivore habitats in Europe. The traditional habitats of the large European carnivores are highly fragmented due to the increasing urban infrastructure, and any conservation efforts for these species that do not take their need for coherent land into consideration will be in vain.

The European Carnivore Campaign will have a clear link to the Countdown 2010 Initiative. Countdown 2010 will be included in the campaign, and EAZA members and campaign participants will be encouraged to join Countdown 2010 on an institutional basis.

The campaign will be officially launched on 17 September 2008, during the EAZA Annual Conference in Antwerp, Belgium, and will run until September 2009.

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

Refresher course for 'Communicating nature conservation in the Balkan Region' 8-10 April 2008, Tilburg, the Netherlands

The ECNC project 'Communicating nature conservation in the Balkan Region: Capacity building and pilot projects in Croatia and FYRO Macedonia' is now in its final phase, which aims to set up an in-country capacity for training infrastructure. The goal of this phase is to use and deliver the communication skills obtained in the first phase of the project and during the pilot projects in both countries through a series of training workshops. The in-country trainers will be supported in setting up and running a series of two-day in-country training sessions for

staff of local, regional and national organizations and NGOs not involved in the original training sessions.

In order to achieve the project objective, ECNC organized a refresher course for four participants per country, who were selected for this task during the kick-off meetings of the current project phase in Croatia and Macedonia. The refresher course was designed by Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters, together with Aysegul Cil and Mark Snethlage, and focused on the use of



Group work during the course in Tilburg.
(Photo: Aysegul Cil)

communication skills through facilitation, specifically workshops and multistakeholder groups in countries.

The participants found the refresher course extremely useful for upcoming basic training courses, which are due to be held in May 2008 with 30 participants per country. They were also enthusiastic about giving this training for future training programmes on communication and using facilitation skills in their daily work and in stakeholder group meetings.

Another 10 municipalities and organizations in Brabant support Countdown 2010

During the last weekend of April, over 25,000 people visited the three-day 'Animal Event', in Safaripark Beekse Bergen, the Netherlands. This event offers educational entertainment for pet, animal and nature lovers. The central theme this year was 'Children, nature and the future'. Sustainability, biodiversity and the natural environment of humans and animals were given a prominent role. ECNC, in close cooperation with the Province of Noord-Brabant, put this topic into action in several ways. In the special biodiversity stand, for instance, visitors could sign the Countdown 2010 Citizens' Declaration (see also www.redbiodiversiteitinbrabant.nl).

On the first day, an opening seminar was organized on the theme of Animal Event 2008. The Regional Minister for Ecology of the Province of Noord-Brabant, Mr Onno Hoes,

This project is funded by the Norwegian Government. ECNC's Director Rob Wolters and ECNC's Programme Manager, Nature and Society, Aysegul Cil recently visited Norway to learn more about Norwegian biodiversity policies and activities and to present the interim results of the project to the Norwegian Government. More about their visit in the next *Update*.

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

The refresher course participants and trainers.
(Photo: Mark Snethlage)



gave a presentation and spoke of the importance of integrating biodiversity into all aspects of policy and promoting it actively to citizens. The Chair of the Dutch National Committee of the International Year of Planet Earth, Mr Johan Meulenkamp, spoke about children and our earth, and the progress that is being made in saving biodiversity. Mr Frank Petter, Chair of the Noord-Brabant Taskforce for Biodiversity and Countdown 2010, led the signing ceremony of the Countdown 2010 Declaration. Seven Brabant municipalities and three organizations, including the Zuidelijke Land- en Tuinbouw Organisatie (ZLTO), the biggest cooperation for farmers in the south of the Netherlands, and the RECRON, the association representing almost all recreation industry in the Netherlands, including leisure and bungalow parks and camping sites, signed the Declaration. To

date, 62 municipalities and organizations in Noord-Brabant have signed the Declaration, and at least another 36 are interested in signing it in the near future.

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

Representatives of the municipalities and organizations that signed the Countdown 2010 Declaration.

(Photo: D. Bloemendaal, Imadia)



Business and Biodiversity

Final workshop of project 'Promoting pro-biodiversity business in Bulgaria and Croatia'

14 March 2008, Zagreb, Croatia

This 18-month project closed with a workshop on 14 March 2008 in Zagreb, Croatia, at the premises of Green Action.

The project assisted small and medium enterprises and local financing institutions in Croatia and Bulgaria in identifying a range of pro-biodiversity oriented companies and creating appropriate financing opportunities for them so that they can benefit from positive financial goals of working on biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

The workshop summarized results and experiences during the project. The target groups were local and international bankers, policymakers, and selected NGOs and entrepreneurs.

The morning session was opened by Mr Zoran Sikic, State Secretary of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia. Other speakers during the morning session were Mr Andras Demeter (EU DG Environment), Mrs Vineta Goba (ECNC Programme Manager – Business and Biodiversity), Ms Jagoda Munic (Green Action, Croatia), Mr Emil Yotov (Eco-Innovation, Bulgaria), Mrs Miroslava Dikova (EU BTAU project, Bulgaria), Mr Ognjen Skunca (UNDP COAST project, Croatia), and Ms Shulamit Alony (Countdown 2010/IUCN Regional Office for Europe).

In the afternoon session, in a discussion facilitated by Mr Paul Goriup (Fieldfare International Ecological Development), policy officials and bankers, and the UNDP reviewed the outline Finance Facility elaborated by the project and formulated recommendations for its implementation. It became apparent that, as with most innovative developments, government must take a pump-priming lead in the development of such a facility. The provision of an enabling environment for a Pro-biodiversity business (PBB) sector by government is essential since biodiversity investments require preferential conditions. In this regard, the Message from Lisbon and the EU Business and Biodiversity Initiative are important steps, especially if complemented with practical steps such as PBB guarantee schemes (along the lines of export guarantees).

This project was 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

Feels Like Home event a successful pilot for the LIFESCAPE philosophy

18–21 April 2008, Boxtel, the Netherlands

The Feels Like Home event held in April in de Kleine Aarde in Boxtel, the Netherlands, attracted more than 1,800 people to its activities. THE LIFESCAPE – YOUR LANDSCAPE project supported this event, as its objectives are very much in line with the LIFESCAPE objectives: raising the awareness of citizens about the landscape, exploring business opportunities and involving people and the local community with their landscape. ECNC participated in the event through its role as a LIFESCAPE project coordinator.

The programme of the event offered opportunities for professionals to participate in and contribute to workshops on biodiversity, sustainable development, sustainable building, spatial planning, biodiversity and businesses, energy and green roofs.

Theatre performances, exhibitions, activities for children, lectures, information stands and regional products succeeded in engaging the general public on issues with regard to National Landscape Het Groene Woud, living a sustainable life and living in Europe.

The Feels Like Home event proved that citizens are becoming increasingly interested in sustainability issues and that target groups



that are sometimes difficult to reach can be reached through creative programming.

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

Visit the LIFESCAPE website: www.lifescapeyourlandscape.org



English nature conservation managers enjoying a drink during their visit to Feels Like Home. (Photo: Lawrence Jones-Walters)

Communicating biodiversity and streamlining indicators in Copenhagen

The European Environment Agency (EEA), the United Nations Environment Programme and ECNC are coordinating the SEBI2010 project – Streamlining European 2010 Biodiversity Indicators. Based on the thematic framework provided by the 16 European 'Headline Indicators' for biodiversity, in turn derived from the Convention on Biological Diversity indicators, the SEBI long-list of over 140 indicators was rationalized into a core set of 26 at the beginning of 2007. Soon afterwards ECNC, through its role as consortium partner of the European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity, made a first draft of the EEA Technical Report *Halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010: proposal for a first set of indicators to monitor progress in Europe*.

In March 2008 the SEBI coordination team met at the EEA offices in Copenhagen to discuss the next major milestone in the process. The technical report has provided the platform for an indicator-based assessment of progress that will be completed in August this year. It is intended that this will contain real data and information in relation to all 26 indicators. This will be presented in visual form with brief textual information; the hope is that this will for the first time show clearly how we are progressing against the 2010 target. This is both an exciting prospect and a significant challenge in terms of collating and sourcing the information for the indicators. The publication of the report will assist in the communication of the indicators to a wider audience and will also provide a trigger for increased action at national level to deliver the 2010 target.

The communication of biodiversity provided the subject for a small international workshop organized by the EEA back-to-back with the SEBI coordination team meeting. A range of experts selected from national agencies, NGOs and the European Commission were

invited to consider best practice and innovation in this highly interesting field. Context was provided by the recent Euro barometer survey on public attitudes to biodiversity (for instance, only 35% of people have any knowledge of the word 'biodiversity' and few of them are familiar with Natura 2000); and the final report of the 'Scoping study for an EU wide communications campaign on biodiversity and nature', also commissioned by the European Commission, DG Environment. The latter provided one of the first published expressions of the Commission's target that '10 million Europeans should be actively engaged in biodiversity conservation by 2010, and 15 million by 2013'. The workshop was moderated by ECNC's Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters and, amongst many of the excellent case studies that were presented, the use of storytelling and partnership with the media (for instance, in the case of the UK, the BBC's 'Breathing Spaces' campaign) stood out as highly effective and innovative methods of communicating a difficult subject to a very wide community, and in the case of the Breathing Spaces campaign achieving real public engagement and action for nature.

For more information: Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters, Senior Programme Manager – Biodiversity and Ecological Networks; jones-walters@ecnc.org

KYOTO - a new kind of project involvement for ECNC

We live in a digital age, so it is not surprising that ECNC is enjoying an increasing level of involvement in projects that are based on information technology. The KYOTO project is one such. KYOTO – Knowledge Yielding Ontologies for Transition-Based Organization!

The goal of KYOTO is to develop a system that provides search and information access to large quantities of data and information for both experts and the general public in relation to biodiversity and other environmental subject material. However, it is not just any old search engine. By organizing words and connecting them to each other and to specific meanings, an 'ontology' is created that allows the user to ask sophisticated questions, whose content will be linked and associated with meaning. The end result is that the system will come up with specific references, definitions, information and data thereby avoiding the irrelevant and time-consuming URLs and other leads that are thrown up by the more commonly available search engines.

ECNC is involved as the 'end user' and was represented at the kick-off meeting for the project in Amsterdam at the beginning of March this year by Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters, Ana Nieto and Andrew Schrauwen. ECNC's knowledge will help to form the ontology; we will provide sources of information that will contribute to the building of the system and then we will be asked to test the system to see if it works. Whilst KYOTO is intended as a research project, funded under the European Commission FP7 programme, it is likely to break new ground and will create a valuable new time-saving, quasi-intelligent tool for use by biodiversity policymakers, researchers and practitioners alike.

For more information: Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters, Senior Programme Manager – Biodiversity and Ecological Networks; jones-walters@ecnc.org



Lively fourth ALTER-Net Advisory Committee meeting

3 April 2008, Copenhagen, Denmark

The fourth ALTER-Net Advisory Committee meeting, organized by ECNC, was hosted by the European Environment Agency on 3 April 2008 in Copenhagen. The meeting focused on the outcomes of four years of ALTER-Net work and discussions for further development of support mechanisms for the delivery of ALTER-Net results into policymaking. The meeting was chaired by ECNC's Executive Director, Mr Rob Wolters. The ALTER-Net Coordinator, Dr Terry Parr, and work package leaders Dr Eeva Furman, Dr Allan Watt and Mr Karl Baadsvik presented the state of the art of each integration goal of ALTER-Net, as well as thinking on the future of ALTER-Net beyond the current project period.

The members of the Committee participated actively in the discussions and there was an intensive exchange of views. The meeting resulted in various concrete recommendations and suggestions. A facilitation session, led by ECNC's Aysegul Cil, resulted in promising ideas for effective future policy-science interfaces. The results of the Advisory Committee meeting were presented to the





ALTER-Net NAC meeting.
(Photo: Aysegul Cil)

ALTER-Net Council during its annual meeting on 23 and 24 April 2008 in Brussels. The Council favours continuing a science-policy interface in the next stage of ALTER-Net and feels that an ad-hoc think-tank should be created for this. At the Council meeting, all parties expressed commitment to continue participating in ALTER-Net beyond its initial five years with funding from the Commission. The Council agreed on a draft Memorandum of Understanding for this future and explored possibilities to ensure funding.

For more information: Aysegul Cil,
Programme Manager – Nature and Society;
cil@ecnc.org and <http://www.alter-net.info>

ECNC Organizationally

Staff news

Ágnes Bruszik, Project Manager, left ECNC at the end of March 2008. Ágnes worked with ECNC for six years, first at ECNC's Regional Office in Budapest, Hungary, and from January 2006 at ECNC headquarters in Tilburg.

ECNC's Deputy Executive Director, Ben Delbaere, has been appointed Research Associate at the European Forest Institute in Finland.

Merijn Biemans completed his traineeship with ECNC in mid-May. This year Merijn will complete his M.Sc. in Forest and Nature Conservation at the University of Wageningen.

New ECNC publications

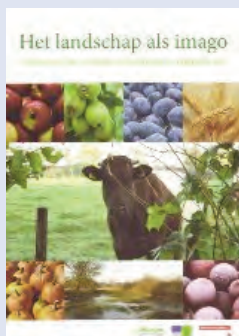
Goba, V. and Y. Waarts (2008) *European Biodiversity Finance Compendium – Final Report*. – Tilburg, ECNC–European Centre for Nature Conservation.

This biodiversity finance compendium is intended to facilitate the discussions on and practical implementation of biodiversity financing mechanisms and instruments. The information presented is useful for financial institutions, entrepreneurs, NGOs and governmental agencies.

LIFESCAPE Partnership (2008) *Het landschap als imago: Leidraad voor het vermarkten van landschap en streekproducten*. 's-Hertogenbosch, Provincie Noord-Brabant.



This is the English translation of *Branding the Landscape – a guide*, published in 2006 by the LIFESCAPE project partners. The LIFESCAPE branding guide is a step-by-step guide for marketing regional products while managing the regional landscape. The guide is available in English, Dutch and German, and can be downloaded from www.lifescapeyourlandscape.org.



Dimitrova, L., V. Goba, P. Goriup, J. Munic and Y. Waarts (2008) *Assessment of potential to encourage pro-biodiversity business in Bulgaria and Croatia*. – Tilburg, ECNC–European Centre for Nature Conservation.

This paper discusses how to create appropriate financing opportunities for companies so that they can benefit from positive financial gains while ensuring biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.



New issue of *Journal for Nature Conservation*

Volume 16, issue 1 of the *Journal for Nature Conservation* (published by Elsevier in affiliation with ECNC) was published in March 2008.

For further information, please consult: http://www.ecnc.org/JournalForNatureCons/Index_36.html



ECNC Update Volume 15, No. 2

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). Readers are welcome to reproduce this Update in whole or in part providing reference is made to the source.

Subscribers to the ECNC Update receive an email every time a new Update is issued. To subscribe, please send an email to Glynis van Uden (vanuden@ecnc.org).

ECNC Headquarters – Tilburg • PO Box 90154, 5000 LG Tilburg, the Netherlands • Tel.: +31-13-5944944 Fax: +31-13-5944945 • Email: ecnc@ecnc.org WWW: www.ecnc.org

ECNC is a member of NatureNet Europe and IUCN - the World Conservation Union