

Press release



Climate change impacts will badly affect biodiversity in South-East Europe

Tilburg, the Netherlands, Szentendre, Hungary, 20 March 2009

Biodiversity and ecosystem services in Southern and South-East Europe will be particularly badly affected by the impacts of climate change. This will result in further losses of species and habitats many of them rare and endangered.

This is the outcome, detailed in three reports, of a one year project by ECNC-European Centre for Nature Conservation together with REC-Regional Environment Centre for Central and Eastern Europe; focussing on five countries within the South-East European region: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.

Although the understanding of the complex processes surrounding climate change impacts is still in its early stages, it is clear from the project that trends and patterns such as increased temperatures, pressure on water resources, a rise in the frequency of severe weather conditions and flooding, increased coastal erosion and more forest fires will continue. In many cases these are already visible and are also having an impact on people, places and employment in parts of the region. The impact of these on biodiversity has been confirmed through this project by the participating stakeholders, scientists and experts in the South-East European region.

The project resulted in an increased understanding and awareness amongst policy-makers, experts, scientists and other stakeholders about the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and ecosystem services in South-East Europe.

Ways to address these predicted impacts were also discussed and elaborated on. The interregional conference which formed part of this project resulted in a plea for a targeted and concrete action plan for climate change and biodiversity for South-East Europe. The conference also provided various recommendations and suggested actions for policies and mitigation measures. This plea was also taken on board at the Ministerial Conference "Combating Climate Change in South Eastern Europe" held in Sarajevo on 14 November 2008.

The project was funded by AECID–Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (Spanish International Cooperation Agency for Development).

Note for the editor

For more information, please contact Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters or Ms Amor Torre-Marin on tel number 0031135944944, or email joneswalters@ecnc.org and torremarin@ecnc.org

Copies of the final reports of the project are available on ECNC's website: www.ecnc.org