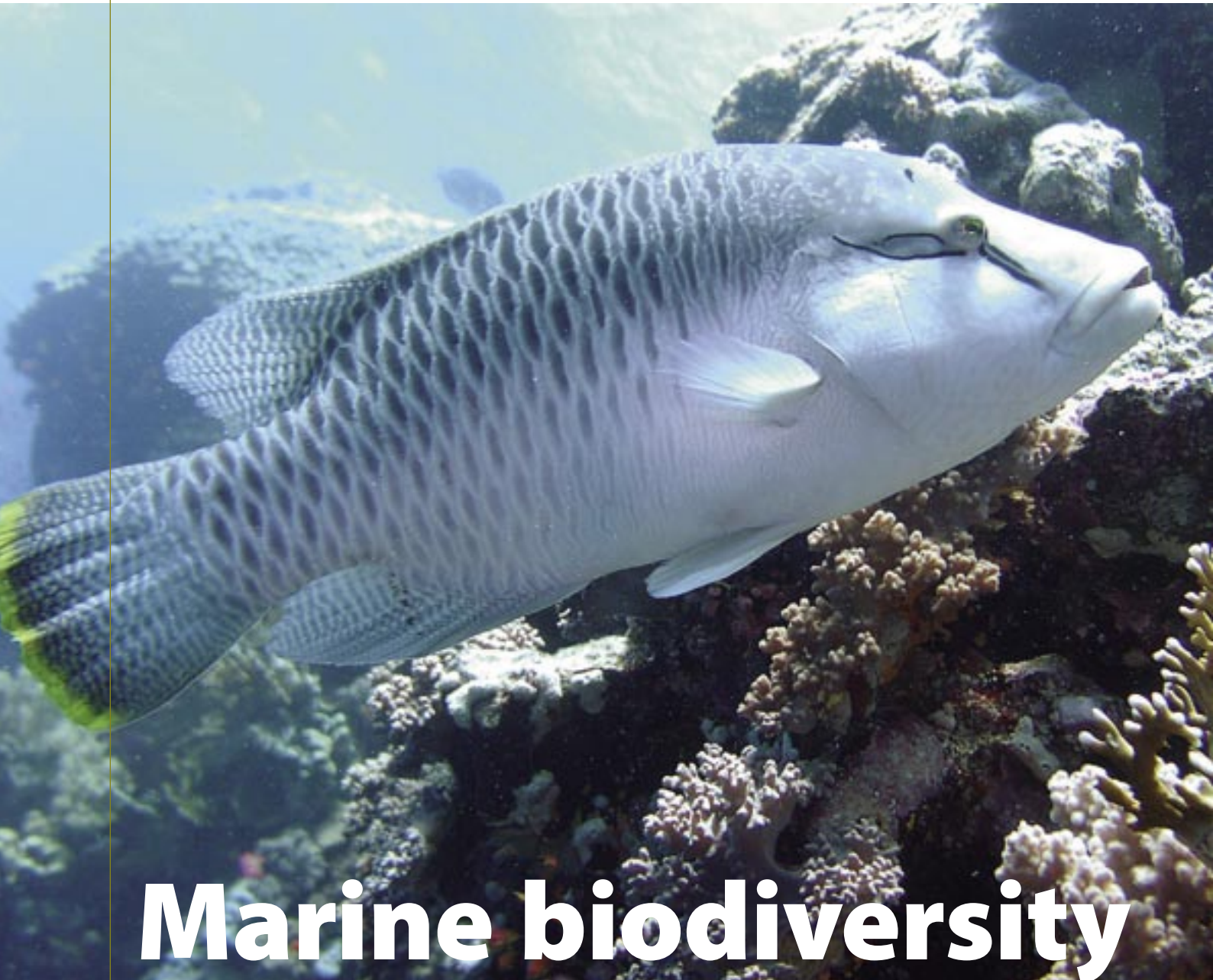


## European newsletter



# Marine biodiversity

Marine protected areas  
– governing our seas  
for the future

*See page 3*

EU marine and mari-  
time issues explored

*See page 6*

Putting the fish back  
into our seas

*See page 9*

Effects of marine bio-  
diversity on ecosystem  
functioning

*See page 13*





# Editorial

## Content

<b>Editorial</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Marine protected areas</b> Governing our seas for the future	<b>3</b>
<b>EU marine and maritime issues explored</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>The Helsinki Commission</b> A model for regional cooperation	<b>7</b>
<b>ACCOBAMS</b> A conservation instrument founded on cooperation	<b>8</b>
<b>Putting the fish back into our seas</b> How marine reserves help bring back sea life	<b>9</b>
<b>The Mediterranean monk seal and fisheries</b> Conserving biodiversity and mitigating a conflict in the Greek Seas	<b>10</b>
<b>Conservation of Critically Endangered western Pacific gray whales</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Climate change, ocean biodiversity and fisheries</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Effects of marine biodiversity on ecosystem functioning</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>New initiatives for the monk seal</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>IUCN Europe</b> News from IUCN Europe	<b>14</b>
<b>Calendar of events</b>	<b>16</b>

**Editor in Chief:**

Tamás Marghescu

**Managing Editors:**

Dirk Hendricks

Karen Hoyer

**Scientific Editor:**

Andrew Terry

**Language Editor:**

Tiina Rajamets

**Translation:**

Amalia Thaler

Victor Teplyakov

**Design, typesetting and layout:**

ohrthoyer business communications

**Produced by:**

Imprimerie Gramme, Belgium

IUCN Regional Office for Europe Newsletter

Volume 13 • 2007

ISSN: 1728-8908 - English

**Cover photo:**

IUCN Photo Library © Christian Laufenberg

The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IUCN

In this issue of the IUCN European Newsletter we focus on marine biodiversity. Compared to our experiences with managing terrestrial biodiversity, marine biodiversity protection and management is in its infant stages. The area covered by MPAs is only about 0.6% of the world's oceans, and none are located in the high seas. At the current rate, the IUCN World Parks Congress (Durban, 2003) recommendations to protect 30% of our oceans will not be met before the end of this century. In the meantime, we have reached a point where the unregulated exploitation of our marine resources has become critically unsustainable.

The ecological stability of the oceans is increasingly threatened by over-fishing, coastal development and global warming. FAO estimates that 75% of world fish stocks are over-fished and a recent scientific study<sup>[1]</sup> concludes that unless we take immediate action, we risk witnessing the collapse of our entire fishery by 2050.

A European expert workshop from 18-20 April in Berlin, co-organised by the German EU Presidency and IUCN, resulted in key messages to address the threats to marine biodiversity in Europe, and globally. The expert messages on Natura 2000, the EU Marine Policies and high seas biodiversity are inserted in this issue. In the framework of Countdown 2010, the experts charted a course of action for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity – also in the high seas. It is now up to the German, Portuguese and Slovenian governments, in the spirit of the “Triple EU Presidency”, and to the European Commission, to make use of the recommendations and set the agenda for their implementation.

Any future EU Maritime Policy should take a truly integrated view on the use of the sea and its resources, including those outside EU territorial waters. However, the protection and sustainable management of our marine environment is affected by and has links to many other policies, including development cooperation policies. It is, therefore, imperative that a future EU Maritime Policy takes a comprehensive view of the overall impact of EU activities stemming from the use of marine resources.

Many EU Member States have designated Natura 2000 sites that contain significant marine components. For example, 45% of the Latvian coastal zone is part of the Natura 2000 area. However, until now only Germany has designated offshore areas for the Natura 2000 network.

But more efforts are needed to increase awareness of our marine biodiversity. IUCN Europe invites participants of the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Barcelona in 2008 to sail to the Congress from all parts of Europe and even the world. Imagine several hundred sails with biodiversity messages gathering in the harbour of Barcelona! It is a chance for us to join efforts and it is an exceptional opportunity to emphasise to spectators all over the world two highly pressing issues: climate change and the need to conserve our marine biodiversity. Do not forget to plan your holidays next year accordingly and organise yourselves in teams so that you are part of the unforgettable journey.

Tamás

<sup>1</sup> Worm *et al.* 2006. Recent biodiversity loss undermines ocean ecosystem services at all scales. *Science* **314**: 787–790.



IUCN Photo Library © Christian Laufenberg

**The Green Paper** on a future EU Maritime Policy is in public consultation until July 2007 and can be viewed and commented on at [http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy\\_en.html#consultation](http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy_en.html#consultation)





© Karen Hoyer

# Marine Protected Areas - governing our seas for the future

By *Julia Marton-Lefèvre*, Director General of The World Conservation Union (IUCN)

Oceans cover about 70% of the planet's surface and hold an abundance of biodiversity with marine and coastal environments being home to 97% of all species on earth. Oceans, marine ecosystems and their biodiversity are vital for life on earth. They play a key role in global nutrient recycling and climate regulation and provide humans with a wide range of resources and services.

Globally, life in our seas produces one third of the oxygen we breathe and human consumption of fish makes up 16% of our animal protein supply and is particularly important as a protein source for populations in developing countries. In 2002, the global fish catch reached about 90 million tonnes and aquaculture contributed with another 40 million tonnes. Three quarters of this production were used for human consumption, the rest for animal feed and thus, to a large extent, ultimately for human consumption.

## Policies and management

Despite the importance of the ocean and its resources and services for our lives, the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources has long been subject to a sectoral approach, with little integration of cross-cutting concerns into the different policies and activities that

affect the marine environment. The transport sector and the environmental sector have, for example, mainly focussed on pollution reduction and control while the fisheries sector has focussed on sustaining the current fisheries industry and making it more effective, supporting a development where the sector reaches further and deeper into our oceans as technology progresses.

Policies have only to a limited extent emphasised nature conservation *per se*. In Europe, the notable exceptions are the EU Habitats and Birds Directives, which require EU Member States to designate marine Natura 2000 sites. Globally, less than 1% of the ocean is currently under effective protection and none of the protected areas are located in the high seas, which make up 64% of the ocean.

The fishing sector and its methods play a particularly important role in how the ocean resources are managed. It is estimated that 25% of the global annual catch is thrown back, dead or dying, into the sea. Often the discarded fish are too small or the fishing vessel is not allowed to land the species, either because it is protected or because the vessel does not have a quota for it. Moreover, bycatch is one of the principal mortality factors for many marine mammals such as turtles, whales and dolphins, causing the death of millions of animals annually.

Only within the last decades have issues such as reducing fishing pressure and designating Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) truly emerged in international discussions on managing the high seas. A network of high seas and coastal MPAs could provide refuge for the increasingly threatened turtles, whales and dolphins, and safeguard some of our most amazing marine biodiversity, while supporting the recruitment of fish stocks. In addition, a revision of fishing methods and gear could reduce bycatch and unnecessary waste of marine resources.

It is evident that a more integrated management approach is urgently needed; both in the Exclusive Economic Zones and in the high seas. It is also clear that a binding global agreement for the management of the high seas is necessary in order to regulate human activities in marine areas, which are beyond national jurisdiction.

## From the land to the sea – EU Marine Protected Areas

In the EU, the establishment of the marine Natura 2000 network has been significantly delayed with Germany being the only Member State that has completed its designation of marine Natura 2000 sites. One



IUCN Photo Library © Christian Laufenberg



© NOAA Dep of Commerce

challenge has been the lack of knowledge and understanding of marine biodiversity in the European seas. This knowledge gap is closing, although Member State will still need to earmark resources, for example to establish clear baseline conditions and indicators that will enable monitoring and appropriate management of marine sites. Experience also exists from other parts of the world, which the European countries could learn from. For example, in 2000, IUCN released a revised version of its guidelines for setting up Marine and Coastal Protected areas,<sup>1</sup> which includes instructions on institutional set-up, design principles for specific habitats and 25 individual case studies.

The benefits to fisheries and local communities from restricting activities in selected marine areas have been clearly demonstrated, e.g. through an increase in fish recruitment. EU Member States who have not yet adequately identified and finalised the designation of marine Natura 2000 areas - also in the Exclusive Economic Zones - do not only have a moral and legal obligation to do so, they will also increase economic benefits from marine resources and ensure the viability of their fisheries industry in the long term.

Land-based and coastal activities can have profound effects on the marine environment, e.g. through run-off of polluting substances, mineral exploitation, and through the management of rivers and catchments that are important as nursing areas for many fish species. EU Member States are required to develop and implement an Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) strategy. This is an excellent undertaking, which would ensure a more holistic approach to the management of marine resources and could play a significant role in the restitution of the European coastal areas and fish stocks.

<sup>1</sup> See [www.iucn.org/themes/marine/pdf/mpaguid2.pdf](http://www.iucn.org/themes/marine/pdf/mpaguid2.pdf)

### Ensuring a global marine protected area network

Marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction is under increasing threat with no comprehensive legal or administrative structure yet in place to address the issues. Threats include pollution and waste dumping, mineral and energy extraction, and over-fishing, and are often made worse by the use of new technologies that allows for exploration and exploitation to take place in previously inaccessible areas. Moreover, climate change is adding new, and aggravating current, stresses and increasing the susceptibility of marine biodiversity to broad-scale regime shifts and/or collapse in the coming years.

One of the greatest causes for destruction of marine ecosystems in the high seas is bottom trawl fishing. About 80% of the high seas catch of bottom species is taken by bottom trawl fishing vessels. However, this type of fishery supplies only a fraction of a percent of the global catch and is economically insignificant. IUCN has called for the UN General Assembly to declare a moratorium on high seas bottom trawl fishing. This is the best short-term solution as it can provide interim protection of rare and vulnerable deep-sea ecosystems until long-term solutions can be agreed and effectively implemented.

IUCN notes the initiative of several EU Member States to attach an Implementing Agreement (IA) to the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). This IA would, amongst other things, regulate the use of bottom trawl fishing and ensure the designation and appropriate implementation of a global network of high seas marine protected areas. However, as yet, not all UNCLOS Parties support an internationally binding agreement.

The European Union and individual Member States could take the lead by taking separate actions towards reducing the loss of marine biodiversity by 2010 and establishing high seas marine protected area networks by 2012. Not only to achieve the targets the EU committed





© NOAA Dep of Commerce



IUCN Photo Library © Christian Laufenberg

to during the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, but also to show by example the positive effects this will have on marine biodiversity, its ecosystem resilience, and the economic activities that depend on a sustained flow of marine resources.

Clear deadlines for the establishment of a UN regulatory regime for deep sea fisheries, and in particular applying a moratorium on bottom trawl fisheries in the high seas, are imperative. Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMO) will have an important role to play in identifying sensitive marine areas within their management areas, and in ensuring the implementation of the agreed regulatory regime. Therefore, capacity-building of RFMO staff and, in some areas, setting up or reforming RFMOs are important cornerstones in the future management of our oceans.

### Taking action

The Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), to be held in 2008, will provide an important opportunity

#### Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing

Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing is increasingly seen as a major obstacle to the achievement of sustainable world fisheries. Recent studies estimate the annual global value of IUU catches at US\$ 4-9 billion. IUU thrives where weak governance arrangements prevail and losses are borne particularly by developing countries. This effectively undermines efforts by developing countries to manage natural resources sustainably as a contribution to their growth and welfare. In order to increase the exposure of IUU operators, the international community needs to improve the quality and sharing of information on IUU fishing activity, intensify the surveillance of the high seas and assist developing countries with monitoring their EEZs.

to discuss the adoption of international MPA criteria and guidelines for the identification of candidate sites and defining representative MPA networks in high seas. IUCN looks forward to contributing to the discussions here and to building on the experiences and information we have collected through decades of work on MPAs.

The Countdown 2010 Expert Workshop on Marine Ecosystems, held by the German EU Presidency in cooperation with IUCN in April 2007, advanced the debate on marine conservation and protected areas in Europe. The resulting expert recommendations constitute an important step towards identifying and agreeing on solutions for the management of our seas and their resources. EU Member States are in control of the majority of the world's fishery fleets and their support of a global network of MPAs and marine resource management would carry great weight in international negotiations.

More than a century has passed since individual countries started land-based nature conservation. We know that the way we manage or influence a given ecosystem greatly determines its level of resilience and that connectivity of various systems is essential for species to migrate and adapt to new conditions. Experiences with managing resources sustainably show that this approach not only leads to more resilient and diverse ecosystems that reduce the risks of natural disasters, it also often leads to a diversification in income sources and provides greater benefits, also to secondary users, for example from tourism and recreation or from the development and marketing of local products.

It is high time for us to focus on the marine environment. We urgently need to agree on management approaches that can ensure the sustainable use of our global marine resources in an integrated manner – and we need to move forward with determination to implement the actions we have already agreed to take.



## EU marine and maritime issues explored

Interview with *Peter Gammeltoft*, Head of Unit on the Protection of Water and Marine Environment, by *Tamas Marghescu* (IUCN ROFE)

*TM: In 2005, the European Commission proposed a Marine Strategy Directive, which would see regions implementing measures to achieve “good environmental status of the EU’s marine waters by 2021”. How will “good environmental status” be defined and which elements should be considered?*

**PG:** Both the EU Council of Ministers and the European Parliament supported, in their first reading of the draft EU Marine Strategy Directive, the inclusion of a definition of “Good Environmental Status” (GES) in the Directive as well as the addition of an annex on so-called descriptors of GES. The challenge is of course to get the definition right and combine a high level of ambition with realistic objectives.

The identification of descriptors of GES is not an easy task. In its initial proposal, the Commission had therefore suggested that descriptors be developed after the entry into force of the Directive. This was in recognition of the fact that this is to a large extent virgin territory. Ideally, descriptors of GES have to be conceived as sufficiently general and flexible to take into account new knowledge and developments and allow for adaptive management. Descriptors will at the same time need to be sufficiently rigorous to capture key features of the marine environment, thus enabling us to apply the ecosystem-based approach to management and protection.

Descriptors should, in my view, focus to the largest extent possible on the status of the marine environment rather than on particular pressures affecting it. The EU Council of Ministers and the European Parliament have opted for substantively different approaches on this issue. Indeed, the Parliament proposes an extensive list of descriptors – twice as long as the Council’s list. A number of descriptors introduced by the Parliament are focused on economic and other human pressures on the marine environment. The Council’s descriptors are more often focused on the state of the marine environment.



IUCN Photo Library © Christian Laufenberg

It is clear that descriptors of GES will be revisited in the context of the second reading on the Directive later in 2007. Irrespective of the final list of descriptors, further work will be required after the entry into force of the Directive in order to turn them into operational implementation tools. This work will need to take place both at EU level – through “comitology” in EU jargon; that is through committee work at expert level – and at the regional level; through regional seas conventions. The further work at EU level will be essential to ensure full coherence across the EU, as well as the same level of ambition, and in turn guarantee a level playing field for all. The further work at regional level will be indispensable to ensure that all regional specificities, threats and risks are fully taken into account.

*TM: The European Commission put forward in 2006 a Green Paper on a Future EU Maritime Policy, with a view to developing a thriving maritime economy in harmony with the marine environment. Environmental NGOs fear that economic interests and jobs will receive greater emphasis than the environment in future EU policies related to our oceans, but can the economic benefits be separated from the environmental condition of our oceans?*

**PG:** The Marine Strategy and the future Maritime Policy are fully complementary. Both the Marine Strategy Communication and the Maritime Policy Green Paper state that the Marine Strategy will deliver the environmental pillar of the future EU Maritime Policy.

Marine ecosystems are the resource base for marine economic and social activities. Their effective protection through the Marine Strategy is a precondition for developing the thriving maritime economy that the Maritime Policy seeks to achieve. If we are to develop a sustainable approach to ocean policy, the answer to your question is therefore a clear no: Economic benefits cannot be separated from the environmental conditions of our oceans.



## The Helsinki Commission - a model for regional cooperation

Interview with *Anne Christine Brusendorff*, Executive Secretary of the Helsinki Commission, by *Tim Christophersen* (IUCN ROFE)



*TC: HELCOM has achieved significant reductions in the discharge of polluting substances into the Baltic Sea. How did you reach this?*

**ACB:** Since the 1980s, the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM) has been working to improve the Baltic marine environment, largely through some 200 HELCOM Recommendations. More than 40 of these aim to limit pollution from point sources such as industrial plants and municipal wastewater treatment plants, or from diffuse sources such as traffic and farmland. By implementing the Recommendations, coastal countries have significantly reduced discharges of pollutants and nutrients, particularly from point sources. Furthermore, numerous projects related to wastewater treatment, pollution control, waste management, maritime safety, biodiversity conservation, and the banning of toxic substances have been carried out.

Since 1992, 81 of the 162 major pollution “hot spots” in the Baltic Sea region were successfully eliminated through HELCOM activities. Baltic Sea Protected Areas, which serve to protect and restore sensitive ecosystems as well as threatened fauna and flora, and joint monitoring of the state of the marine environment, were also established under HELCOM Recommendations.

*TC: What are the most important actions that should be taken in order to secure sustainable fish stocks, and thus the fishing industry, in the Baltic Sea?*

**ACB:** In order to maintain viable fish populations, all commercially exploited fish stocks must be within safe biological limits, and a re-introduction programme for Baltic sturgeon should be in place. The existing and potential spatial and/or temporal closures of fisheries are potential tools to protect important areas for fish and birds. A good ecological status of the sea and favourable conservation status of fish stocks can only be achieved through a holistic approach. In this context, it is also important to engage in stakeholder dialogue in order to avoid potential, and mitigate existing, conflicts between fisheries and the protection

of biodiversity. This has to be done in fora such as the Baltic Regional (Fisheries) Advisory Council.

HELCOM has no mandate to manage fisheries in the Baltic Sea but has the responsibility to ensure that fishery is conducted in a sustainable way. This can be achieved through appropriate long-term management of Baltic Sea fisheries, as provided for by the EU Common Fisheries Policy and the agreements between the EU and the Russian Federation.

*TC: The Baltic Sea, except for the Russian part, is governed by EU legislation. What is the added value of HELCOM, and how do you see your role vis-à-vis the European institutions?*

**ACB:** It is true that HELCOM has had to re-evaluate many of its policies, duties and working methods in wake of EU enlargement and the development of the European Marine Strategy. HELCOM will continue to play an important role in the cooperation with Russia, which is vital to ensure a healthy marine environment in the Baltic Sea region, and we also have a clear role in developing a regionally specific approach to the needs of the Baltic Sea, in close cooperation with the European Union.

HELCOM is currently working on an ambitious Baltic Sea Action Plan, which has been widely heralded as a pilot project for the European seas under the proposed EU Marine Strategy Directive. Biodiversity is central to HELCOM’s vision of a healthy sea and serves as a reference for the performance of the Action Plan. The European Commission described the Baltic Sea Action Plan as “the cornerstone for further action” in the Baltic Sea region, and also underlined that it will be instrumental in the successful implementation of the new EU Marine Strategy in the region. In this context, the new plan makes HELCOM a forerunner, and a model to be followed by other regional marine conventions around Europe.



# ACCOBAMS: a conservation instrument founded on cooperation

By Marie-Christine Grillo Van Klaveren, Executive Secretary of the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic Area



The United Nations Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS) is the result of consultations between the Secretariats of three Conventions: the Barcelona Convention on the *Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean*, the Bonn Convention on the *Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals*, and the Bern Convention on the *Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats*. Subsequently, the Bucharest Convention on the *Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution* also joined the Agreement.

## An instrument to protect cetaceans

ACCOBAMS was drafted under the auspices of the Bonn Convention, which encourages the drafting of legally binding independent tools tailored to regional specificities. It was signed in 1996 and entered into force in 2001. There are currently 20 State Parties to the Agreement, which aims to achieve and maintain a favourable conservation status for cetaceans through a conservation plan providing for:

- Legal measures
- Management of interaction between human activities and cetaceans
- Habitat protection
- Research
- Capacity building
- Information, training and education
- Responses to emergency situations

Given the rather large geographical area covered by ACCOBAMS, there are considerable differences between States. It is therefore important to adopt conservation measures that are adapted to the conditions in each country. Such measures must always take into consideration socio-economic activities, such as fishing or tourism, and aim for conservation *within* development.

Activities organised by ACCOBAMS include capacity building and training for scientific and public management staff. In a field where levels of scientific expertise vary greatly, this training has proved to be an indispensable tool.

A workshop on collisions between cetaceans and boats has facilitated technical exchange on this subject, which is one of the main threats

to cetaceans, especially in the Pelagos Sanctuary where there is heavy marine traffic. The measures outlined during the workshop are to be submitted to the Contracting Parties at the 3rd Meeting, which will be held in Dubrovnik in October, 2007.

## A spirit of cooperation

In March 2006, there was an ACCOBAMS-IUCN workshop to create a Red List for cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area. In 2004, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of ACCOBAMS State Parties recognised the need to strengthen ties between the two bodies. World-renowned scientists thus came together to assess the levels of threats to whales and dolphins.

Indeed, cooperation with other international bodies is a priority in the strategy of the Agreement. ACCOBAMS also engages with the European Community, especially regarding a Project for assessing and mitigating the adverse impacts of the by-catch of cetaceans by fishing vessels (the BYCBAMS project, carried out in association with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean) and the cetacean population survey for the ACCOBAMS Area. The European Community has demonstrated a genuine interest when it comes to these initiatives, which will add a whole new dimension to conservation measures for the cetaceans.

At a sub-regional level, close cooperation with the Pelagos Sanctuary has been established. The Sanctuary serves as a gigantic laboratory right in the heart of the ACCOBAMS area; for example for the establishment of a certification system for whale-watching operators.

Cooperation also stretches beyond the ACCOBAMS area, notably through the transfer of management and scientific expertise, as is the case for the Eastern Pacific ecological Marine conservation Corridor (CMAR) and for the Memorandum of Understanding on the conservation of cetaceans and their habitats in the Pacific Islands Region.

The spirit of exchange and communication, not only among countries located in one part of the world, but also among diverse, geographically spread regions and international institutions is therefore the cornerstone of the Agreement. It could simply not exist were it not for this tremendous cooperation.





© Heather Dine NOAA

# Putting the fish back into our seas

## - how marine reserves help bring back sea life

By Saskia Richartz, EU Marine Policy Director, Greenpeace European Unit

Marine reserves – areas of the sea where fishing and other extractive or destructive activities are prohibited – have demonstrated clear benefits for the conservation of marine species and the habitats they depend on. Where they have been designated, marine reserves have also been shown to result in long-standing and often rapid increases in the abundance, diversity and productivity of fish, not least in areas beyond the reserve boundary. Previously exploited fish stocks and damaged habitats can recover, fish can grow bigger and older, and reproduce more successfully. As juvenile and mature fish migrate out of the reserves, and increased quantities of fish spawn and larvae are carried beyond the reserve, fishermen in the surrounding areas benefit from the so-called spill-over effect of the reserve.

This has been the case around the marine reserve of the island of El Hierro, part of the Canary Isles in Spain. A collective of coastal fishermen have seen an increase in catches where fish stocks had collapsed. *“Before the establishment of the reserve, the area was practically without fish. Then we were fishing with nets and fish traps. 15 years ago, we set up this marine reserve and [...] about five years ago, juveniles began to reappear of all species of fish and today we go and fish around the fully protected zone of the reserve. There are good catches now and it is clear that this whole area has improved”* recalls Alberto Douglas, a local fisherman that helped set up the reserve. The positive results have inspired El Hierro’s fishermen to increase the size of the reserve around the island’s coast.

Although Greek coastal fishermen express similar sentiments as the fishermen of El Hierro, Greece, like many other EU Member States, currently lacks good practice examples that could provide comparable results. Dimitris Zannes, President of the Federation of Professional Fishermen of the South Aegean explained at a press conference with Greenpeace last year: *“We [the fishermen] are on the brink of collapse. Our catches are declining all the time. We catch smaller and smaller fish. There is no future. We know now that we will only continue to exist if we create a healthy ecosystem. We believe that closing some areas to fishing is what is going to save us. In addition, it will be essential to adopt national management measures for fisheries. [...] The sea is not all about fishing. If the sea perishes, so will we.”*<sup>2</sup> Mr Zannes represents around 2000 coastal fishermen in the South Aegean.

In a way, marine reserves are as old as fishing itself. The oceans seemed a limitless resource only because catches were replenished from areas that we could not reach. Now that technological limitations no longer exist, managers must purposefully create sanctuaries, which

can help replenish our oceans and seas.

For many marine creatures, size truly matters: a general rule of thumb is that when a female fish grows twice as large, she spawns eight times as many eggs. And if allowed to grow four times as big, her egg production increases sixty-four times. Moreover, the eggs of older females are of higher quality and have better chances of survival. Over 160 leading marine scientists of the American Association for the Advancement of Science – amongst others – have called on decision-makers to act on this evidence with immediate effect by setting aside a fully protected network of marine reserves.

The 2003 World Parks Congress recommended that *“networks should be extensive and include strictly protected areas that amount to at least 20–30% of each habitat”*, while the United Nations Millennium Project calls for 10% of the oceans to be covered by marine reserves in the short to medium term, with a long-term goal of 30%.

For further information, see the following film  
<http://tv.yil.greenpeaceweb.org/default.asp?loadfilm=91&loadcat=10#topmovie>

<sup>1</sup> Translated from Spanish.

<sup>2</sup> Translated from Greek.

### Facts and figures for thought

Shrimp trawl fisheries discard 80% of their catches, mostly throwing all caught fish back into the sea.

Driftnets can measure more than 4 kilometres in length, catching dolphins, sharks and marine turtles as well as fish. The bycatch is discarded dead or dying back into the ocean.

Over 250,000 endangered loggerhead turtles and critically endangered leatherback turtles drown annually on longlines set for tuna, swordfish, and other fish.

More than 300,000 small whales, dolphins, and porpoises die from entanglement in fishing nets each year.

Largely due to bycatch, 89% of hammerhead sharks and 80% of thresher and white sharks have disappeared from the Northeast Atlantic Ocean in the last 20 years.



© MOm P Dendrinis



© MOm P Dendrinis



© MOm P Dendrinis

# The Mediterranean monk seal and fisheries: Conserving biodiversity and mitigating a conflict in the Greek Seas

By *Dr Spyros Kotomatas*, Scientific Coordinator, the Hellenic Society for the Study and Protection of the monk seal

The Mediterranean monk seal, *Monachus monachus*, is one of the rarest seal species and one of the six most endangered mammals on our planet. Since 1991, the Mediterranean monk seal has been monitored by a National Rescue and Information Network, operated by the Hellenic Society for the Study and Protection of the monk seal (MOm). The data collected indicate that the largest global population of monk seals, estimated at some 200–250 individuals, lives and breeds along the Greek coastline (Reijnders *et al.*, 1997).

## Monk seal and fisheries interactions

Amongst the factors endangering the monk seal population are the degradation of available fish stocks, and the pollution of the marine environment. Three of the most significant threats are directly related to fisheries, especially to small-scale coastal fisheries (MOm, 2007):

- deliberate killing accounts for more than 50% of the recorded deaths of adult seals;
- 35% of young seals found dead, drowned due to accidental entanglement/entrapment in fishing gear;
- overfishing, leading to the reduction of available food.

Reversely, there is a considerable impact of the Mediterranean monk seal on fisheries. In their effort to find food, seals damage fishing gear and “steal away” fish catches. Thus, fishermen lose income due to their interaction with marine mammals, with which they share the same limited resources.

Fisheries play an important role in the economic and social life of the Greek people, shaping the distinct character of coastal and island Greece. Today, some 40,000 people are employed in the Greek fishing sector, mainly in the coastal and island areas of the Aegean and Ionian Seas. Over 97% of the active fishing boats in the country engage in small-scale coastal fishing.

## Efforts to mitigate conflicts

In the continuous effort to promote the conservation of the Mediterranean monk seal and the sustainability of the fishery sector in Greece, MOm started an initiative that aims to mitigate the seal-fisheries conflict in the country. More specifically, the monk seal and fisheries project (MOFI) aims to:

- reduce the fishermen’s loss of income through socio-economic incentives;
- reduce the fisheries-related mortality of monk seals throughout the country, through rescue, treatment and awareness-raising actions.

A key output and objective is the formulation of an action plan with feasible and immediately applicable measures to mitigate the seal-fishery conflict. The plan will be elaborated in close consultation with key stakeholders (fishermen, aquaculture owners, state and local authorities, and environmental organisations) and will be presented to the relevant national authorities, so as to be integrated into the national fisheries and nature conservation policies.

The project will build on the results of previous efforts to collaborate with local fishermen, as in the case of the National Marine Park of Alonissos, Northern Sporades. Here, conservation work over the last two decades has contributed to a change in the attitude of local fishermen towards marine species. This is particularly evident by the fact that during the last 15 years, no deliberate killing of monk seals has been recorded within the marine park.

The MOFI project is a collaborative effort, involving institutions such as MOm, the National Fisheries Research Institute of Kavala, WWF Greece, the Erasmus University of Rotterdam and the University of Aberdeen, and with the active participation of local fishermen from throughout the country. It is supported by the LIFE programme of the European Community, the Prefecture of Magnesia, Piraeus Bank and the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW).

For additional information see [www.mofi.gr](http://www.mofi.gr)

## References

MOm. 2007. *Evaluation of the status of Mediterranean monk seals (Monachus monachus) in Greece*. Report to the Hellenic Ministry of Environment, Physical Planning & Public Works. Athens, Greece.

Reijnders, P.J.H., Verriopoulos, G. and Brasseur, S.M.J.M. (Eds) 1997. *Status of Pinnipeds Relevant to the European Union*. Wageningen, The Netherlands: Institute for Forestry and Nature Research (IBN-DLO).



© Dave Weller



© Dave Weller

# Conservation of Critically Endangered western Pacific gray whales

By Sarah Gotheil and Julian Roberts, IUCN Global Marine Programme

The western Pacific population of gray whales (*Eschrichtius robustus*) is one of only two surviving populations of this species in the world. Both populations were brought near to extinction by commercial whaling. The eastern Pacific population, which migrates annually between Mexico and Alaska, has recovered substantially from severe depletion and now numbers about 20,000 individuals. By comparison, the western Pacific population, or western gray whale, which migrates between eastern Russia and China, is estimated at about 130 individuals, with only 25–35 reproductive females. As a result, the western gray whale has been listed as *Critically Endangered* on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (the highest category of threat) and is therefore a conservation priority.

The few surviving animals face a number of potential hazards throughout their range, including collisions with ships, underwater noise, entanglement in fishing gear and modifications of their physical habitat. However, particular concerns have been raised about the impact of offshore oil and gas activities along the coast of Sakhalin Island, Eastern Russia.

## Building bridges between industry, governments and conservationists

The waters off Sakhalin island are of particular significance to the conservation of the western gray whale, as the only known feeding grounds for this population lie in these waters. The area is also rich in oil and gas deposits, which have been explored and exploited since the mid 1990s. In particular, the *Sakhalin II* oil and gas development project is in close proximity to the only two identified feeding areas of the whales. Its operations are undertaken by Sakhalin Energy Investment Company Ltd. (Sakhalin Energy), and represents the largest integrated oil and gas project in the world.

Since 2004, IUCN has worked with Sakhalin Energy in order to provide advice and recommendations on how the company can minimize risks associated with its operations to the whales and their habitat. As one part of this broad initiative, in 2006 IUCN created a panel of independent scientists – the Western Gray Whale Advisory Panel – which provides scientific advice and recommendations on the company's operational plans and mitigation measures.

Several successes have been achieved so far, including the re-routing of the underwater pipelines by Sakhalin Energy to avoid the whales' feeding areas; the sharing of data between the independent scientists and the scientists associated with the industry; and the assurance that a robust scientific monitoring programme has been integrated by Sakhalin Energy into their operational cycle.

IUCN's engagement with Sakhalin Energy is an extremely positive development for the conservation of this critically endangered population of gray whales. However, it is recognised that any comprehensive conservation management initiative must consider the full range of threats to the population. For this reason, IUCN aims eventually to broaden the scope of its efforts to include all major stakeholders in the migration area of the whales and bring its extensive network of scientists to focus the best available scientific information on the range of critical threats facing this population.

As major uncertainties about the population's status and the whales' biology remain, a collaborative effort between oil companies active on the Sakhalin shelf, range states and other partners is required to safeguard this critically endangered population. These efforts will enhance the population's chances of recovery and survival.



# Climate change, ocean biodiversity and fisheries

Climate-induced changes to species range and disruptions to food webs are widely documented in terrestrial ecosystems (e.g. Parmesan and Yohe, 2003). Changes in species range have been recorded for marine biodiversity, including plankton (see review by Hays *et al.*, 2005), Antarctic krill (Atkinson *et al.*, 2004), marine fish (Perry *et al.*, 2005) and leatherback turtles (*Dermochelys coriacea*) (McMahon and Hays, 2006). However, establishing causal relationships between species distributions and physical features, such as water temperature, is much more difficult than on land due to the physical difficulties of collecting data and the lack of long-term monitoring. One of the few long-term studies comes from the Continuous Plankton Recorder (CPR) survey which was started in 1946 and has documented numerous range shifts. Plankton<sup>1</sup> are an important indicator of the impacts of climate change on marine ecosystems because they are short-lived with a strong relationship between their population dynamics and environmental change, can respond rapidly by increasing or contracting their ranges and are not commercially exploited (Hays *et al.*, 2005). Furthermore, they provide over half of the global primary production (Richardson and Schoeman, 2004).

The CPR dataset has revealed similar disruptions to food webs as those found in terrestrial systems. The omnivorous copepod (*Calanus finmarchicus*), for example, is an important food species for many fish and in the 1960s constituted about 70% of all zooplankton in the North Atlantic Ocean and adjacent seas. Data indicates that in the early 1980s there was a significant decline in *Calanus* spp. size and abundance and that this prompted declines in larval cod recruitment (Beaugrand *et al.*, 2003). Together with heavy over-fishing, the changes in environmental conditions that reduced *Calanus* spp. were claimed to have caused the widespread declines in the cod fisheries. Richardson and Schoeman (2004) used the CPR dataset (114,322 records for +400 species) to show a positive relationship between warming sea surface temperatures, a northward shift in phytoplankton and then a trophic cascade up the food chain to large predators. This change in the food web of the North Atlantic has now been termed a “regime shift” (Hays *et al.*, 2005).

The studies mentioned above have been able to use relatively large sample sizes, but for large and rare species this is not possible. The need to understand the impacts of climate change remain prescient. The leatherback turtle is the largest living turtle, but is also critically endangered. McMahon and Hays (2006) fitted radio transmitters to nine turtles to compare the habitat choice of this large planktivorous ectotherm with plankton densities and water temperature. They showed that water temperature – and not food availability – was the best descriptor of the turtle’s migration range, and that they were limited to waters warmer than 15°C (isotherm). As water temperatures increase, the turtles are expanding their range by approximately 200km per decade. This carries with it important information for conservation planners and also fisheries managers.

## References

- Atkinson, A., Siegel, V., Pakhomov, E. and Rothery, P. 2004. Long-term decline in krill stock and increase in salps within the Southern Ocean. *Nature* **432**: 100–103.
- Beaugrand, G., Brander, K.M., Lindley, J.A., Souissi, S. and Reid, P.C. 2003. Plankton effect on cod recruitment in the North Sea. *Nature* **426**: 661–664.
- Hays, G.C., Richardson, A.J. and Robinson, C. 2005. Climate change and marine plankton. *Trends in Ecology and Evolution* **20**(6): 337–344.
- McMahon, C.R. and Hays, G.C. 2006. Thermal niche, large-scale movements and implications of climate change for a critically endangered marine vertebrate. *Global Change Biology* **12**: 1330–1338.
- Parmesan, C. and Yohe, G. 2003. A globally coherent fingerprint of climate change impacts across natural systems. *Nature* **421**: 37–42.
- Perry, A.L., Low, P.J., Ellis J.R. and Reynolds, J.D. 2005. Climate change and distribution shifts in marine fishes. *Science* **308**(5730): 1912–1915.
- Richardson, A.J. and Schoeman, D.S. 2004. Climate impact on plankton ecosystems in the Northeast Atlantic. *Science* **305**: 1609–1612.

<sup>1</sup> Plankton are defined as passively drifting small plants and animals in aquatic ecosystems. These range in size from bacteria to large jellyfish (Hays *et al.*, 2005).



IUCN Photo Library © Imène Meliane

## Effects of marine biodiversity on ecosystem functioning

It is often stated that biodiversity underpins the ability of ecosystems to provide humans with the services they require to survive. Although this is undoubtedly true, understanding the role of biodiversity in ecosystem functioning, and the relative roles of different functional groups, has proved to be extremely complex (Hooper *et al.*, 2005). Most of this knowledge has come from research on terrestrial ecosystems and less is known about marine ecosystems where studying the role of biodiversity poses additional challenges.

The world's oceans provide critical ecosystem services for humans. An ever increasing proportion of the world's population lives near coasts and is reliant on marine resources for survival. For many years, we have witnessed an increased loss of populations and species and the degradation of marine and coastal ecosystems. Worm *et al.* (2006) carried out a meta-analysis of published studies to identify whether the level of marine diversity had an effect on ecosystem services such as productivity, resource use, nutrient cycling ecosystem stability, and therefore whether marine degradation was harming the ability of ecosystems to provide services.

The study found that increased diversity at either a genetic or species level led to enhanced ecosystem services and stability (ability to withstand recurring perturbations). In some cases, primary and secondary productivity were increased by 78% to 80% in diverse ecosystems when compared to monocultures. Comparing trends for an average of 48 commercially important species in 12 coastal ecosystems, they showed that ecosystems with a high regional species richness showed lower rates of collapse and extinction over time.

Reviewing the situation in 64 large marine ecosystems, the authors extracted data on all global catches of fish and invertebrates between 1950 and 2003. They compared this with independent measures of species richness. Globally, the rate of fishery collapses has increased, with 29 species currently considered to have collapsed (following the definition of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea, ICES; below 10% of their recorded maximum). These collapses occurred at a higher rate in species-poor ecosystems. Furthermore, the average catches of non-collapsed fisheries were higher for ecosystems with high biodiversity and recovery of collapsed fisheries was more likely.

Marine reserves and fishery closures are two options to promote ecosystem and species recovery. Reviewing 44 fully protected marine reserves and four fishery closures, Worm *et al.* (2006) found that, although there was high variation, species diversity, productivity, resistance to and recovery from natural disturbances, and tourism revenue (measured on 138 Caribbean protected areas) all increased when associated with marine protected areas. This indicates that at least on a local and regional level it is still possible to recover biodiversity and that this can be accompanied by recoveries in productivity.

Worm, B., Barbier, E.B., Beaumont, N., Duffy, J.E., Folke, C., Halpern, B.S., Jackson, J.B.C., Lotze, H.K., Micheli, F., Palumbi, S.R., Sala, E., Selkoe, K.A., Stachowicz, J.J. and Watson, R. 2006. Recent biodiversity loss undermines ocean ecosystem services at all scales. *Science* **314**: 787–790.

Hooper, D.U., Chapin III, F.S., Ewel, J.J., Hector, A., Inchausti, P., Lavorel, S., Lawton, J.H., Lodge, D.M., Loreau, M., Naeem, S., Schmid, B., Setälä, H., Symstad, A.J., Vandermeer, J. and Wardle, D.A.. 2005. Effects of biodiversity on ecosystem processes: a consensus of current knowledge. *Ecological Monographs* **75**(1): 3–35.



# New initiatives for the monk seal

By *Hemmo Muntingh*, Senior Policy Advisor, the International Fund for Animal Welfare

The monk seal is fully protected by national legislations throughout the Mediterranean as well as by the Conventions of Bonn, Bern and Barcelona and action plans have been developed for the Mediterranean and for the Atlantic population. Unfortunately, these action plans were never truly implemented and the overall status of the monk seal has not improved, except in a few distinct areas (Piperi, Greece and the Desertas islands, Madeira).

To re-activate monk seal conservation activities, a conference was organised in 2006 by the three Conventions, the Government of Monaco and the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW). The Regional Action Centre for Special Protected Areas (RAC/SPA) of UNEP in Tunisia undertook the practical organisation.

The conference concluded that the three Conventions and their individual Parties should step up their activities to protect the monk seal. They should fully participate in the existing conservation actions and earmark funds to support these activities.

Further recommendations included the creation of a protocol for coordinated actions in emergency situations, and the setting up of a permanent working group for the Mediterranean Sea similar to the one that exists for the Eastern Atlantic.

Most importantly, the conference called for the establishment of a Steering Committee, which should stimulate, steer and monitor the implementation of the actions of the two existing action plans. It should identify and advise on emerging initiatives and approaches and should monitor progress on specific actions. The Steering Committee should also set up a resources mobilisation group with the aim of defining funding strategies for Mediterranean monk seal conservation and assessing the feasibility of setting up a fund to support conservation actions for the species.



## Brussels

### Europe sets sails towards the 4<sup>th</sup> IUCN World Conservation Congress

Julia Marton-Lefèvre, who took up office as Director General of IUCN in January 2007, visited the Regional Office for Europe in February. During her visit to Brussels, she created further momentum for the next World Conservation Congress in Barcelona in October 2008.

In meetings with Stavros Dimas, Commissioner for the Environment, and other high-level representatives from the European Institutions, Ms Marton-Lefèvre invited the European Commission to highlight its European and global initiatives in nature conservation and sustainable development during the Congress. She also encouraged Members of the European Parliament to join the conservation community in Barcelona in order to define and launch the Barcelona Legacy, which will provide a vision and action plan for a paradigm shift in nature conservation towards and beyond 2010.

During a reception in the IUCN Regional Office for Europe, which was held under the motto "Sailing to Barcelona 2008", more than 100 guests welcomed the idea of participants sailing to Barcelona, forming a parade of sailing boats and research vessels that will deliver key political messages on the 2010 biodiversity target.

### Biodiversity in Development Cooperation – The Post Paris Process

Following the Conference Biodiversity in European Development Cooperation (BEDC), the Message from Paris, adopted by the participants, was welcomed by the EU General Affairs and External Relations Council in December 2006. In this context and in order to transform commitments into action, IUCN started to work on the Poverty Reduction and Environmental Governance Initiative (PREGI).

## New staff

ROFE is pleased to announce that **Mr Alexei Grigoriev** has joined the IUCN Programme Office for Russia and CIS as the Office's Information Officer. Mr Grigoriev previously worked for 15 years as an expert and campaigner on forest, energy, and oil and gas industry-related issues for the Russia-based NGO, International Socio-Ecological Union. He has extensive experience in working with Russian governmental bodies, the World Bank and GEF, leading Russian and international companies, NGOs and the mass media.

## A new concept for the IUCN Europe Newsletter

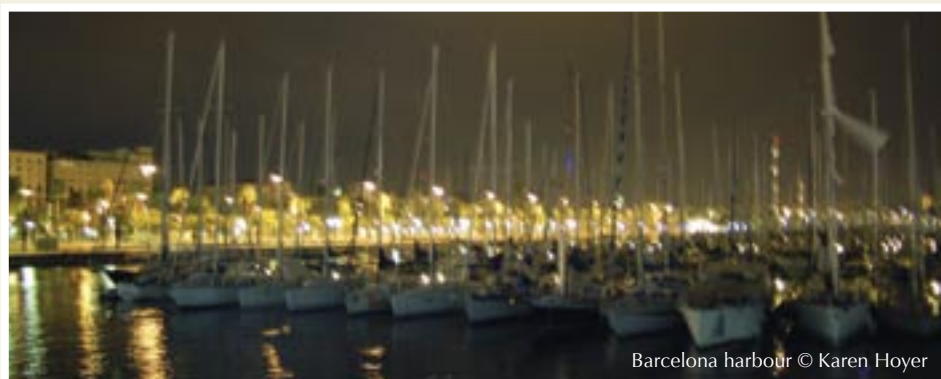
Based on discussions with IUCN members during 2006, a new concept for the Newsletter was developed. While the main objective of the Newsletter







© Karen Hoyer



Barcelona harbour © Karen Hoyer

IUCN ROfE is setting up a five-year global initiative to address some of the key issues of the Message from Paris and the EU Council conclusions, including:

- To strengthen civil society and implement capacity-building programmes for all relevant stakeholders;
- To include biodiversity and ecosystem services in policy dialogue processes and mainstream biodiversity in national and regional development strategies and plans;
- To include biodiversity and ecosystem services in development cooperation programming;
- To develop and support the use of innovative financial mechanisms;
- To develop a coherent framework and a platform of exchange and dialogue on biodiversity and environment in Overseas Countries and Territories; and
- To better communicate on the importance of biodiversity for a sustainable development.

For more information please contact Jean-Claude Jacques (jean-claude.jacques@iucn.org).

## Tbilisi

### Extending IUCN Europe's network to the shores of the Caspian

In January 2007, IUCN Regional Director Tamás Marghescu met with the Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan, Mr Hussein Bagirov. The Minister outlined the progress of Azerbaijan's internal preparations for IUCN membership and priorities for collaboration between IUCN and the future Member State Azerbaijan were discussed. These discussions focused in particular on capacity building within the governmental conservation sector, eco-tourism and the management

of the country's growing network of protected areas. Azerbaijan has created no less than seven national parks since 2002, including the Hyrcan National Park with its species-rich glacial relict forests and the Shirvan National Park in the Caspian semi-desert, which hosts populations of wintering water-birds and Goitered Gazelles.

Although great efforts are being made to conserve its biodiversity and natural resources through protected areas, major challenges from overgrazing and other unsustainable forms of natural resource use remain. The future involvement of IUCN in Azerbaijan will contribute to tackling these challenges.

## Update on Countdown 2010

### Cities and regions Countdown to 2010

The year 2007 marks a milestone: Five years after the adoption of the global 2010 biodiversity target, it will see the turning point at which more people live in cities than in rural areas. In addition, the global loss of biodiversity is mostly the result of millions of decisions, activities and behavioural patterns taking place at the local level. It is therefore critical to address the issue locally! Countdown 2010 jointly with its partners ECNC (European Centre for Nature Conservation) and ICLEI (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives) is implementing a project focussing on raising awareness of the loss of biodiversity right in our own backyards and communicating the 2010 biodiversity target to regional and local authorities. The project – kindly supported by the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality – aims above all at building up a growing network of regions, cities and communes that walk the talk by working actively on nature conservation and are willing to share best practices.

continues to be to inform IUCN members in Europe, the content and timing of the Newsletter will be more aligned with major political events. In order to increase dialogue with partners outside the environmental sector, targeted events will be those of non-environmental sectors where biodiversity is not yet an integrated factor in policy development and decision making.

IUCN Europe has already experienced positive results from closer cooperation with the development sector. We look forward to similar outcomes from an enhanced cooperation with, for example, the fisheries sector and the business sector in general.

## The BioDaVersity Code

Forensic zoologist Robert Penguin and agent Sophie Minnow race to expose the greatest lie ever told. But what secrets will they unveil? And will their exposure give us any clues as to who killed the polar bear???

To find out, look up <http://countdown2010.net/daversity>

## Calendar of Events May - July 2007

The meetings listed below are events organised or sponsored by IUCN, or in which IUCN is participating.

### May

**1** **Belgrade, Serbia**  
Large Carnivore Symposium on the "Coexistence of Large Carnivores and Humans: Threat or Benefit?"  
[www.cic-wildlife.org/index.php?id=254](http://www.cic-wildlife.org/index.php?id=254)

**2 - 4** **Bremen, Germany**  
European Conference on "The Future Maritime Policy of the EU: A European Vision for Oceans and Seas"  
[www.bmvbs.de/-,2655.987771/Future-Maritime-Policy-in-the-.htm](http://www.bmvbs.de/-,2655.987771/Future-Maritime-Policy-in-the-.htm)

**7 - 11** **Almería, Spain**  
IUCN World Protected Area Category Summit on the IUCN Protected Area Management Category system  
[www.iucn.org/themes/wcpa/theme/categories/summit/summit.html](http://www.iucn.org/themes/wcpa/theme/categories/summit/summit.html)

**12 - 13** **Global**  
World Migratory Bird Day  
[www.worldmigratorybirdday.org/wmbd/](http://www.worldmigratorybirdday.org/wmbd/)

**13 - 17** **Seville, Spain**  
Wildfire 2007: 4<sup>th</sup> International Wildland Forest Conference  
[www.wildfire07.es/html/in/index\\_in.html](http://www.wildfire07.es/html/in/index_in.html)

**21** **Baltic Region**  
International Day of the Baltic Harbour Porpoise  
Events are organised locally/regionally throughout the Baltic.

**22** **Global**  
International Biodiversity Day - Biodiversity and Climate Change  
[www.biodiv.org/programmes/outreach/awareness/biodiv-day-2007.shtml](http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/outreach/awareness/biodiv-day-2007.shtml)

### June

**5** **Global**  
World Environment Day: melting ice – a hot topic?  
[www.wed.npolar.no/world-environment-day-2007/view?set\\_language=en](http://www.wed.npolar.no/world-environment-day-2007/view?set_language=en)  
[www.unep.org/wed/2007/english/](http://www.unep.org/wed/2007/english/)

**3 - 17** **The Hague, The Netherlands**  
CITES COP 14  
14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora  
[www.cites.org/eng/news/meetings/cop14.shtml](http://www.cites.org/eng/news/meetings/cop14.shtml)

**6 - 8** **Heiligendamm, Germany**  
G8 Summit  
[www.g-8.de/Webs/G8/EN/Homepage/home.html](http://www.g-8.de/Webs/G8/EN/Homepage/home.html)  
G8 environment discussions  
[www.bmu.de/pressemitteilungen/presse-mitteilungen\\_ab\\_22112005/pm/38931.php](http://www.bmu.de/pressemitteilungen/presse-mitteilungen_ab_22112005/pm/38931.php)

**11 - 15** **Malaga, Spain**  
Training course on Mediterranean Protected Areas  
[www.iucn.org/places/medoffice/boletines/2007/boletin24.html#8](http://www.iucn.org/places/medoffice/boletines/2007/boletin24.html#8)

**12 - 15** **Brussels, Belgium**  
Green Week: Past lessons – Future challenges  
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/greenweek/home.html>

**25 - 30** **New York, USA**  
Eighth meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (UNICPOLOS)  
Topic: marine genetic resources.  
[www.un.org/Depts/los/consultative\\_process/consultative\\_process.htm](http://www.un.org/Depts/los/consultative_process/consultative_process.htm)

### July

**2** **Durban, South Africa**  
4th World Environmental Education Congress. Theme: Learning in a Changing World  
[www.weec2007.com/](http://www.weec2007.com/)

**2 - 13** **Paris, France**  
Twelfth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-12)  
[www.biodiv.org/convention/sbstta.shtml](http://www.biodiv.org/convention/sbstta.shtml)

### IUCN's vision

A just world that values and conserves nature.

### IUCN's mission

To influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable.

### ROfE's mission

To foster and fortify a European network of excellence in environmental research, policy and best practice, with the aim to:

1. Contribute to IUCN's global mission
2. Support the integration of biodiversity conservation into economic development
3. Support innovative initiatives for the multi functional, sustainable use of natural resources

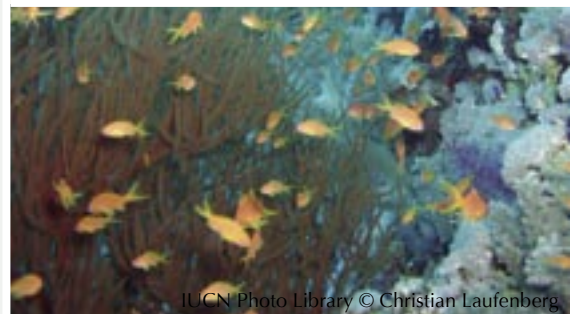
### ROfE's structure

The Regional Office for Europe (ROfE) is the World Conservation Union's (IUCN) Permanent Representation in Brussels. Through its Programme offices in Belgrade, Moscow, Tbilisi and Tilburg, and in cooperation with European members and other parts of the IUCN constituency, ROfE implements the European Programme. The Programme area covers 53 countries and stretches from Greenland to Kamchatka.

The IUCN European Programme goal for 2005 – 2008 is to contribute to halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010 through an ecologically sustainable Europe – a political commitment made by European Heads of State and Environment Ministers.

Together as IUCN in Europe, we strive to meet our goals for a sustainable Europe by utilising local expertise and the strength of the global IUCN network.

For a history of IUCN and an explanation of the global structure please visit [www.iucn.org](http://www.iucn.org)



IUCN Photo Library © Christian Laufenberg

**Head Office in Brussels,**  
Regional Office for Europe and Permanent Representation to the European Union,  
Boulevard Louis Schmidt 64,  
1040 Brussels, Belgium,  
Tel: +32 2 732 82 99,  
Fax: +32 2 732 94 99,  
E-mail: [europe@iucn.org](mailto:europe@iucn.org),  
Web: [www.iucneurope.org](http://www.iucneurope.org)

**Belgrade,**  
IUCN Programme Office for South-Eastern Europe,  
Dr. Ivana Ribara 91,  
11070 Novi Beograd,  
Serbia and Montenegro,  
Tel: +381 11 2272 411,  
Fax: +381 11 2272 531

**Moscow,**  
IUCN Programme Office for the Commonwealth of Independent States,  
Stolyarny pereulok, 3,  
building 3, Moscow 123022,  
Russia,  
Tel: +7 (095) 609-33-99,  
Fax: +7 (095) 609-34-11,  
E-mail: [info@iucn.ru](mailto:info@iucn.ru),  
Web: [www.iucn.ru](http://www.iucn.ru)

**Tbilisi,**  
IUCN Programme Office for the Southern Caucasus  
Nutsbidze Plateau 3, 1-7-10  
Tbilisi 01'83  
Georgia  
Tel +995 32 326 496

**Tilburg,**  
Reitseplein 3,  
5037 AA Tilburg,  
The Netherlands,  
Postal address;  
Postbus 90154,  
5000 LG Tilburg,  
The Netherlands,  
Tel: +31 13 594 49 44