



IUCN South-Eastern European e-Bulletin



Photo: IUCN/B.Erg, Djerdap National Park, Serbia

Dear Readers,

It is with great pleasure that we share the Autumn 2013 issue of the IUCN SEE e-Bulletin. It brings an overview of conservation activities in the region and features the recently launched IUCN's Strategic Plan for South-Eastern Europe. Partnership lies at the heart of IUCN's work and this strategy comes as a result of a broad consultation on key issues and priorities in nature conservation in the region. Effective protected areas, species conservation, and sustainable ecosystem management remain our core objectives, achieved by site-based activities, policy influencing, capacity building, and strengthening the Union. In its effort to contribute to a more sustainable future for the region, IUCN SEE will continue advocating for nature-based solutions to development challenges and encourage dialogue and cross-border cooperation. Read more about it in the Focus section. Wishing you a pleasant reading!

Boris Erg,
Director of IUCN Programme Office for South-Eastern Europe

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Shaping a Sustainable Future for South-Eastern Europe

IUCN Programme Office for South-Eastern Europe (IUCN SEE) was established in spring 2004 in Belgrade, in the premises of the Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia, an IUCN member. From the outset, the office has been operating under the guiding principles of a Strategic Plan titled “Conservation without frontiers – towards a new image for the Balkans”. In the course of 2013, a new IUCN Strategy Plan for South-Eastern Europe (SEE) was elaborated in a broad consultation with IUCN Members and partners, reflecting the IUCN Programme 2013–2016 and contributing to the Draft European Programme and the Implementation Plan of the IUCN Programme 2013–2016 in Europe.

IUCN SEE will continue to work in the following countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, FYR Macedonia, Kosovo*, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia, with high potential for cooperation in neighbouring countries: Hungary, Moldova, Slovenia, Ukraine and Turkey.

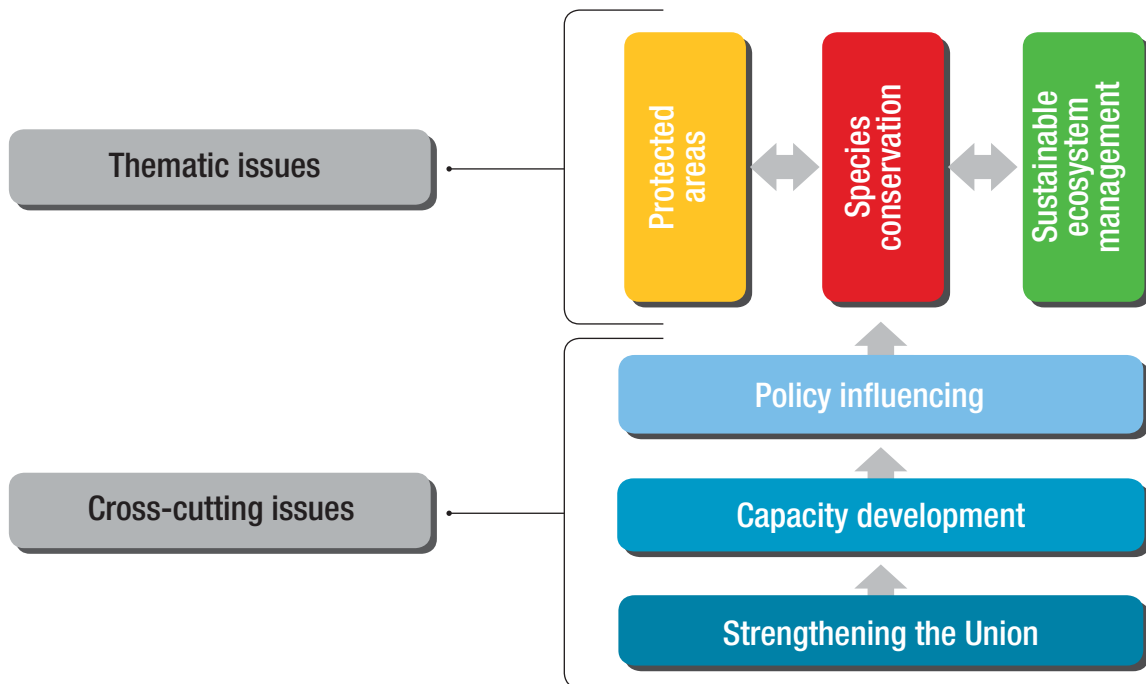


In order to achieve its goals, IUCN will work across all of its components, which include the IUCN Secretariat, IUCN Members and Commissions. It will cooperate with a broad network of partners and stakeholders, spanning governments, institutes, protected areas, research centres, NGOs, local authorities and communities. With over 20 Member organizations in the region and some 120 experts in its six expert Commissions, the IUCN constituency in the region forms a broad decision-making and knowledge base and is a key to the successful implementation of the strategy and programme. The IUCN Secretariat will have a central role in coordinating the process; however, it cannot deliver the strategy alone, nor could its Members or Commissions without their mutual cooperation. Effective strategies require continuous monitoring and evaluation and in case of the IUCN SEE strategy it should be a joint effort of all three IUCN components. The strategy should be thoroughly revised before 2020, while the programme objectives should be evaluated every two years.

The overall objective of IUCN in South-Eastern Europe is to work towards the long-term protection of biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/99 and the IJC opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence

IUCN SEE Strategic directions by 2020



Protected areas

IUCN sets standards on protected areas globally, delivering knowledge products such as the Protected Planet, IUCN Protected Area Management Category system and the emerging Green List of Protected Areas. Protected areas will remain at the core of IUCN's work in SEE with emphasis on transboundary conservation.

Programme priorities

- Increase the coverage and management effectiveness of protected areas
- Ensure compliance of national standards on protected areas with IUCN PA best practice guidelines and knowledge products
- Provide technical assistance to authorities on designing sustainable national protected area systems
- Advise State Parties on two World Heritage Upstream Processes

Species conservation

IUCN's focus on species conservation is continuous, resulting in key global processes such as the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and Key Biodiversity Areas. In SEE IUCN will continue to advocate a science-based approach to species conservation, from on ground action to policy making.

Programme priorities

- Provide expert support to the development of national Red Lists
- Support the application of international standards in species conservation
- Strengthen expert networks and partnership for species conservation
- Improve game management by applying sustainable hunting principles and law enforcement

Sustainable ecosystem management

Ecosystem management is becoming increasingly important for nature conservation efforts. By 2016 IUCN will launch the Red List of Ecosystems that will assess the risk of ecosystems' collapse. In SEE IUCN will support the application of concepts of ecological networks and green infrastructure.

Programme priorities

- Address the drivers of ecosystem change and degradation
- Improve knowledge on ecosystem management and support habitat restoration and rehabilitation
- Ensure better integration of biodiversity conservation principles into sectoral planning processes
- Estimate the value of ecosystem services and showcase the benefits of biodiversity conservation

Policy influencing

IUCN has a strong convening power and potential to bring together key actors at all levels ensuring effective links between knowledge, policy and action.

Programme priorities

- Support the development of regional and national policies in line with EU and global nature conservation policies and strategies
- Integrate the CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2012–2020 and the EU 2020 Strategy for Biodiversity into national and regional policy documents

Capacity development

IUCN will continue to work on the capacity development in SEE by giving particular attention to IUCN knowledge products and standards, such as the Protected Area Best Practice Guideline Series, Red List Categories and Criteria, Enhancing our Heritage, etc.

Programme priorities

- Deliver capacity building programmes on key IUCN nature conservation standards
- Provide knowledge on system-level participatory planning, such as designing nature conservation or protected area systems at the national level
- Support capacity building on other relevant biodiversity-related issues

Strengthening the Union

Mobilizing capacities and unique features of different parts of the Union, its Members, Commissions and the Secretariat, IUCN - both globally and in SEE - strengthens the delivery and impact of its strategy and programmes.

Programme priorities

- Increase membership and support the establishment of National and/or Regional Committees as deemed appropriate
- Facilitate access to first-hand information on nature conservation news, events and networks
- Encourage communication and cooperation with IUCN Members, Commissions and staff members outside SEE



1. Introducing Arbor Magna



IUCN's network in South-Eastern Europe was strengthened in 2013 by its first member from Bosnia and Herzegovina, NGO Natural Heritage Protection Society – Arbor Magna, whose membership application was approved during the 81st Meeting of the IUCN Council.

“For us, IUCN is a chance”, says Jugoslav Brujic, president of Arbor Magna. “A chance to connect with many people, who have comparable but deeper experience in nature protection activities. A chance to connect with many activities, which have been done in similar conditions. A chance to include our dolorous country in some unclouded stories.”

Arbor Magna is an association of experts on nature, who deeply believe in the unbreakable union between man and nature. The society gathers around 86 members who feel responsible of natural legacy for future generations. The membership nucleus was formed by a group of forestry experts who published the “Catalogue of the biggest trees in Republic of Srpska” in 2003. Ever since, Arbor Magna kept building a network of collaborators. Their activities included the creation of various collections (i.e. herbaria) and databases (of natural monuments, urban entities etc.), forestation actions, cooperation with government bodies on nature protection issues (studies, opinions) and working with the media on rising public awareness.

During 2013, Arbor Magna has finalized the report on the second phase of its GisPass project, and continued with the preparation of new documents, images and data to be included in the online database. Members of Arbor Magna are participating in expert workshops related to the spatial plans elaboration for the two National parks in Republic of Srpska, Sutjeska and Kozara. Arbor Magna is initiating discussions, such as a debate that was held in municipality Drinic, on plans for the Mt. Klekovaca development. Simultaneously, they are trying to assure the support for the Forestry Museum and Alpinetum building.

For more information please visit <http://arbormagna.webfactional.com/> or contact Arbor Magna at arbormagna@yahoo.com.

2. Thayatal hosted a WCPA workshop on transboundary conservation



An International workshop on defining transboundary conservation principles, organised by IUCN WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group with generous support of a local host, Thayatal National Park, was held on 16-18 October 2013 in the Austrian National Park. The workshop was organised within the framework of a project ‘Revision of the IUCN WCPA Best Practice Guideline on Transboundary Conservation’, funded by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) through the German Federal Agency for Nature

Conservation (BfN), the MAVA Foundation, and IUCN WCPA. Best Practice Protected Area Guideline Series is one of the most known and valued publication series produced by IUCN WCPA.

The workshop was an opportunity to discuss and define current transboundary conservation principles, having in mind rapid development of transboundary conservation practice at global level and a variety of objectives underpinning these processes. The workshop gathered prominent experts in transboundary conservation and served as a platform for debating most critical issues on the given topic, fulfilling its main objective - to determine the most essential subjects to be

elaborated in the future guideline and to agree on the process of the publication's development. The workshop participants learned about Thayatal National Park-Podyjí National Park transboundary protected area (TBPA) and visited the Czech part of the TBPA. The new guideline will be launched at the World Parks Congress in Sydney, in November 2014.

For more information please contact Maja Vasiljević, Chair, WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group, maja.vasiljevic1@gmail.com or visit <http://www.tbpa.net/page.php?ndx=26>.

3. Two consultations on IPBES in the Region!



Biodiversity institutions in the region are getting organised to contribute to the Intergovernmental science-policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem services (IPBES). It is a promising new international mechanism established to provide scientific evidence for policy-making. The Platform is currently developing its work programme and two important meetings were convened in the region to engage relevant institutions to support this development. NeFo, the Biodiversity network in Germany, hosted a meeting in Leipzig (16-18 July 2013) at the Pan-European level, which brought together 80 participants from 29 countries (4 from South Eastern Europe). The Hungarian Academy of Sciences, organised a meeting in Budapest and Tihany (31 July - 2 August 2013) attended by 23 participants from 11 countries. These meetings gathered representatives of many different stakeholders, including experts from state administrative bodies, environmental non-governmental organisations, as well as scientific organisations and created momentum for more dialogue. Whereas IPBES's structures are based on the UN

Regions, these meetings demonstrated the interest to train experts and coordinate their inputs at different scales. Their conclusions concur on several points including the need to broaden the range of involved stakeholders especially relative to business and land or sea-use. They also sketched the specific expectations and added values of Europe vis-a-vis IPBES. The conclusions of these meetings will be considered at the next session of IPBES decision-making body which will be held in Antalya, Turkey in early December.

The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) was established in 2012 as an independent intergovernmental body open to all member countries of the United Nations. The members are committed to building IPBES as the leading intergovernmental body for assessing the state of the planet's biodiversity, its ecosystems and the essential services they provide to society. IUCN has been involved in the IPBES negotiations since the very beginning and strongly supports ongoing work leading to the Platform's full functionality.

For more information please visit www.iucn.org/ipbes and <http://ipbes.net/>. On questions related to the Pan-European Multistakeholder approach contact Dr. Katja Heubach at katja.heubach@ufz.de. IPBES representatives in Eastern Europe are Dr. András Báldi andrasbaldi@gmail.com and Dr. György Pataki gyorgy.pataki@uni-corvinus.hu On IUCN's involvement with the Platform please contact Pierre Commenville at pierre.commenville@iucn.org.

4. Dinaric Arc Parks Discovery tour

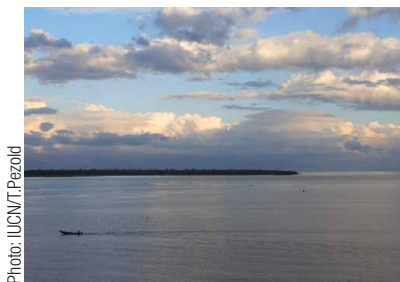


As part of the WWF MedPO Dinaric Arc Parks programme, EUROPARC Consulting organised a study visit for 20 partners from the Dinaric Arc region, in May 2013. The group visited three regional nature parks in Provence: Luberon, Camargue and Verdon. These parks had been awarded EUROPARC's European Charter for Sustainable tourism and could serve as great examples of practical applications and benefits of implementing Charter principles. The event proved to be an excellent combination of knowledge transfer, expertise exchange and team building.

The Dinaric Arc region offers astounding natural beauty, intriguing culture and a rich biodiversity. However, the concept of sustainable tourism is not well understood in all parts of the region. Many partners in the Dinaric Arc Park project wish to change this situation by becoming champions for sustainable tourism in protected areas and are already working towards becoming Charter parks themselves. This trans-boundary exchange presented inspiring ideas for new impetus at home, leaving the participants feeling well-connected to their colleagues and the host regions. One said the "study tour was first-hand experience which has allowed us to compare where we are now and what we need to do to achieve our goals".

For more information contact Wilf Fenten, EUROPARC Consulting at wilf.fenten@europarc-consulting.org, visit the website <http://www.europarc-consulting.org/news-update-recent-work/dinaric-arc-parks-visit-france> and Facebook page www.facebook.com/europarc.consulting.

5. Sustainable tomorrow for Skadar Lake



IUCN SEE has initiated the implementation of a 3 year long project Supporting the Long-Term Sustainable Management of Transboundary Lake Skadar, in partnership with the Institute for Nature Conservation in Albania – INCA and Green Home of Montenegro. Improving practices and capacity for management of protected areas, the project intends to foster the effective management of biodiversity of Skadar Lake, natural border between Albania and Montenegro. Being largest on the Balkan Peninsula, Skadar Lake witnessed a number of political agreements toward its improved management and international

conservation efforts. With its partners, IUCN will build on the gathered experience and establish a cross-border exchange platform for protected area authorities and other stakeholders to work jointly and ensure the sustainable future of the shared lake.

Funded by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, the project will aim at illegal activities diminishing by strengthening law enforcement, encouraging the participation of civil society organizations in monitoring and protected area management, increasing transparency and awareness rising among key stakeholders and resource managers on the importance of biodiversity conservation.

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, the MacArthur Foundation and the World Bank. A fundamental goal is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation.

For more information please contact Tomasz Pezold, IUCN SEE at tomasz.pezold@iucn.org.

6. First ever Amazon of Europe Day kicked off with “Big Jumps”



In alliance with EuroNatur and many partner NGOs, WWF celebrated the first Amazon of Europe Day on 14 July 2013 with various events on the natural riverbanks of the Mura, Drava and Danube. The three rivers span Austria, Slovenia, Hungary, Croatia and Serbia and will become Europe's largest cross-border protected area under the UNESCO flag.

In Serbia, the Day of UNESCO Transboundary Biosphere Reserve was marked in the city of Sombor where dozens of river enthusiasts jumped into the Danube to celebrate their share of the “Amazon of Europe”. The celebration was followed by creative workshops for children organized by local NGOs and the City Sport Center. Children painted their visions of the biosphere reserve in colourful drawings that were presented at a joint exhibition in August. The date was chosen in memorial of birthday of Martin Schneider-Jacoby, prematurely deceased executive director of EuroNatur, who is the originator of the idea of penta-lateral transboundary biosphere reserve.

For more information please contact Aleksandra Stamenkovic, WWF DCP at astamenkovic@wwfdcp.org.

7. Fight the poaching in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro



Nature park Hutovo blato in Bosnia and Herzegovina and special nature reserve Tivat Salina in Montenegro are designated wetlands of international importance - Ramsar sites. Unsufficient care for the habitats and presence of poaching in recent years have significantly altered the number and presence of bird species in these areas. Importance of the sites and problems their

managers are facing have been recognized by the Delegation of European Union which is financing 300.000 EUR worth project „ORNIBA-Bird Species Protection in Balkans: Joint Intervention by Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro“. The project is implemented within the IPA Cross-border programme Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro. Its aim is to raise awareness on the need of habitat protection for the birds which fly across the Adriatic Flyway or nest in these areas.

Project is implemented by NGOs Oxfam Italia (BiH) and Center for Protection and Research of birds of Montenegro (MNE) in partnership with “Naše ptice” and “Novi Val” in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Tivat Municipality, and it will run from January 2013 until December 2014.

For more information please contact Sanja Radulović, Oxfam Italia at sanja.radulovic@oxfamitalia.org or Marija Stanišić, Center for Protection and Research of birds of Montenegro at marija.stanistic@czip.me.

* The content of this text is sole responsibility of Oxfam Italia and Center for Protection and Research of birds of Montenegro and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.

8. Spatial planning along the European Green Belt within the GreenNet Conference



Photo: S. Mihrić

In the framework of the project “GreenNet – Promoting the ecological network in the European Green Belt”, financed by Central Europe Programme, the Public Institute Goričko Nature Park has organized on 11 September 2013 in Grad, Slovenia, international conference entitled Cross border spatial planning examples in nature protected and non protected areas along the European Green Belt.

The scope of the conference was to promote the sustainable spatial planning and development of the regions in and along the European Green Belt. Experts from Central Europe and the Baltic have discussed about examples for cross border cooperation in Germany, spatial planning and coastal territories in Latvia, best practise in spatial planning in Slovenia, implementation of Mura Drava regional Park in Croatia, regional (cross border) strategies within the GreenNet Pilot Regions, the “Green Infrastructure”, etc. The GreenNet project’s aim is to support and strengthen policies, strategies and approaches to safeguard an interlinked ecological network with a special focus on legally non- or low protected ecologically valuable areas along the Central European Green Belt.

For more information about project GreenNet and European Green Belt please contact Gregor Domanjko, Nature Park Goričko at gregor.domanjko@goricko.info or visit www.greennet-project.eu/.

9. Conservation planning in South-Eastern Europe



Photo: IUCN/T. Pezold

The overall objective of the IUCN’s recently initiated project is to strengthen the implementation of conservation standards in South-Eastern Europe by supporting institutional development and creating a regional platform for nature conservation planning. To achieve this, IUCN will work closely with national nature conservation authorities in the region.

At the regional level, the project will aim at establishing a network of state authorities and conservation agencies. This network will play a pivotal role in defining priority issues, sharing knowledge and experience among relevant stakeholders within the region and beyond. At a national level, it will help define and implement conservation priorities and communicate them across various sectors. Apart from networking and planning, the process includes a baseline assessment of the state of nature conservation in the region, tailored capacity building programme, trainings, exchange visits and study tours. In this project IUCN will draw on the expertise of its expert Commissions and a broad range of its knowledge products. Eventually, by fostering strong and effective conservation community in South-Eastern Europe the project will contribute to the CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy. The project, titled “Toward strengthened conservation planning in SEE”, is funded by the MAVA Foundation and designed to last three years.

For more information please contact Boris Erg, IUCN SEE at boris.erg@iucn.org.

10. PrespaNet meets at the highest point in Prespa



Photo: SPP Archive

From the “roof of Prespa” PrespaNet – the network of environmental NGOs for Prespa – sent a message that transboundary environmental co-operation in Prespa must stretch from the bottom of the lakes to the alpine summits of each country.

The three NGO members of PrespaNet (MES, PPNEA and SPP) organized a 2-day walking trip over Mt. Pelister at 2,601m into the Prespa basin. Rather than holding another meeting against an office backdrop, the members of the network were surrounded by the alpine landscapes and rare, fragile biodiversity that they seek to protect. The climb started on 6 July 2013, when 20 participants from MES, PPNEA and the SPP left the village of Nizhe Pole and began the 4 hours long ascent to the mountain hut by the glacial lake of Golemo Ezero. The next day walkers descended into the Prespa basin on a beautiful track which partly follows the World War I military road, through alpine meadows, granite stone rivers and old-growth forest, down into Brajcino, a traditional village of 150 inhabitants.

PrespaNet was officially launched on 29 March 2013 when a transboundary Agreement of Cooperation was signed between the three environmental NGOs from each of the countries sharing the Prespa lakes. The aim of the network is to safeguard the unique natural and cultural heritage of the Prespa region, whilst promoting sustainable socio-economic development.

For more information please contact Marianna Vlasi, Society for the Protection of Prespa (SPP) at spp@line.gr.

11. Summer in the Krka National Park



Photo: NP Krka Archive

The Public Institute of Krka National Park held a series of cultural events during the summer months, including *Burnum Ides* and *Evenings along the Krka*, aimed at putting a focus on the upstream localities of the Krka River.

The *Burnum Ides* have been held since 2011 at the valuable archaeological site Burnum, the only Roman military amphitheatre in Croatia. The object of holding the *Ides* was to give greater emphasis to the Burnum site and to educate visitors and the local population on the Ancient Romans way of living, particularly the legionnaires', who inhabited this area. The date of the *Ides* originally corresponded to the dates when the Romans organised their festivities. The event programme had two parts: the fair part in front of the amphitheatre, with traditional antique tables and presentations of the customs and crafts in place during the Roman Empire, and the theatrical part, held in the amphitheatre itself. The project *Evenings along the Krka* included a number of evenings of chansons, classical and popular music, and *Klapa* singing groups in the exceptional ambience of Roški slap. Performances were given by well known Croatian musicians, to the delight of numerous visitors, local residents and their guests. *Klapa* multipart singing is an original form of Dalmatian singing, and their sounds are recognisable worldwide. In 2012, UNESCO included *Klapa* singing on the List of Intangible World Heritage in Europe.

For more information please contact Katia Župan, Krka National Park at katia.zupan@npk.hr.

12. Celebrating wildflowers



Photo: P. Botteri

Thousands of visitors have enjoyed Wildflower Festivals last summer in the Balkans. Tourists and visitors got engaged for the wild plants and culture! Events were as various as walking and biking tours of the wildflower meadows in the Rhodopes and Alps, visit of a Romanian dance group to the island of Hvar and wildflower inspired fashion show created by Ljubljana Art College. The flowers of the meadows and the role they play in our culture are part of the common heritage. Their depiction in art, literature, performance, design and symbolism is as diverse and ever changing as the human populations who shape and have shaped their landscape and Important Plant Areas we know today. The Wildflower Europe project takes place in Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Slovenia and the UK, and celebrates this cultural and natural diversity.

For more information please visit http://www.plantlife.org.uk/wild_plants/important_plant_areas/ or contact Seona Anderson, Plantlife at seona.anderson@plantlife.org.uk.

13. Stop financing for coal projects



Photo: T. Haugersveen

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), one of the world's largest development banks, held several meetings in September to discuss its new policy on lending to energy projects. WWF called on the bank to follow the example set by the European Investment Bank (EIB) and World Bank earlier this year, and stop the financing for coal projects.

During the bank's public consultation on 4 September in Belgrade, 350.org, SEE Change Net, CEKOR, Fractal, WWF and Bankwatch delivered to the EBRD a petition signed by more than 17,000 people asking the bank to stop financing fossil fuels, starting with coal. Similar events took place in Istanbul and Moscow. WWF's global petition to all major investors, including the EBRD, has been signed by more than 40,000 concerned people asking for greater investments in clean, renewable energy. WWF is running a global campaign, [Seize Your Power](#), calling on financial institutions to take this leadership. WWF will participate in all EBRD public events to raise awareness on coal and hydropower impacts and ask for more renewable and energy saving projects instead.

For more information please contact Aleksandra Stamenkovic, WWF DCP at astamenkovic@wwfdcp.org.

14. MedMPAnet Project – Pilot Project Croatia

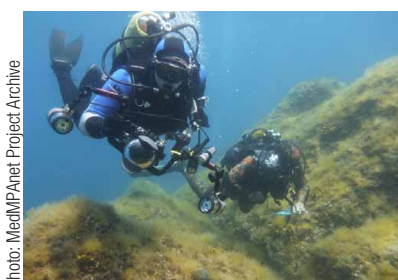


Photo: MedMPAnet Project Archive

Implementation of the UNEP-MAP RAC/SPA MedMPAnet Project started in Croatia in March 2013. Project partners are RAC/SPA, Croatian Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection, State Institute for Nature Protection and Public Institution Priroda.

The data for socio-economic fisheries study was gathered through interviews with local fishermen and for assessment of coastal fish stocks through the analysis of catch. The fieldwork was organized around two study areas – one Marine Protected Area and three proposed marine Natura 2000 sites of the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County, the pilot coastal county of the Project. Between June and August habitat mapping was done in the same

study areas. By the end of the Project species inventory and habitat map will be developed and will serve as baseline data for future management actions.

Project is developing Croatian monitoring protocols for coralligene and posidonia. Two working groups were established and the state of coralligene and posidonia research and monitoring in the Mediterranean and the Adriatic was discussed at their meetings. The following fieldwork tested the monitoring protocols and collected the baseline data for future monitoring. Implementation of the MedMPAnet Project enabled cooperation between different scientific and expert institutions in Croatia, as well as protected areas management authorities and government representatives. The project is bringing Mediterranean best practice to the Adriatic and is assisting the fulfillment of the Habitats Directive requirements, as well as the implementation of the SPA/BD Protocol of the Barcelona Convention.

For more information please contact Zeljka Rajkovic at zeljka.rajkovic@gmail.com or visit: <http://www.ju-priroda.hr/projekti.shtml> and <http://medmpanet.rac-spa.org/>.

15. NEW LIFE+ project promotes conservation of unique habitat



Photo: SPP Archive

The restoration and conservation of the Priority Habitat Type *9562 Grecian Juniper Woods (GJWs) in Prespa National Park, Greece, has been made possible through a newly approved EU LIFE+ Nature project. The Society for the Protection of Prespa (SPP) and its associated partner Greek Wetland/Biotope Centre (EKBY) will work with local stakeholders, local authorities and scientists over the next four years towards restoring GJWs and embodying responsible planning and management of resources.

The main threat to GJWs is the abandonment of traditional, low intensity human intervention, such as extensive livestock grazing and small-scale wood cutting. This four-year project will apply concrete conservation actions, such as the gradual removal of broadleaved species through logging, clearing the understory to reduce fire risks, planting juniper seedlings to assist regeneration, as well as creating infrastructure - animal shelters and water-tanks - to promote sustainable grazing practices in selected sites. Local agricultural associations involved with livestock rearing have expressed an interest for extending to newly-developed grazing areas, thus ensuring the sustainability of restoration practices beyond the project. The project foresees the conservation of GJWs within Greece, the sole area where this habitat type is found in the EU, but it also encompasses networking activities with relevant stakeholders in Albania and the FYR Macedonia in order to disseminate results and engage stakeholders within the transboundary Prespa basin in this important habitat's conservation.

For more information please contact Irene Koutseri, Project Manager, Society for the Protection of Prespa at i.koutseri@spp.gr or visit www.spp.gr.

16. Bodrog Festival: Where Nature Brings People Together

The village of Backi Monostor in "Gornje Podunavlje" Special Nature Reserve hosted the ninth Bodrog Festival on 10 August. Surrounded by water and swamp forests, Backi Monostor has its long-standing reputation as a place that brings people and nature together. In order to introduce the natural beauties of "Gornje Podunavlje" Special Nature Reserve to wider audience, WWF has joined the celebration by opening the photo exhibition „Water Labyrinth“ by Silard Kovač. The exhibition depicts wild and intact landscapes, specific plant and animal species as well as the coexistence of man and nature in this area.



Photo: WWF DCP Serbia Archive

This years' special guest was American Mimi Hughes, who presented her book "Wider than a Mile", where she recalls her amazing Danube adventure. In the summer of 2006, Mimi spent 89 days swimming down the entire length of the Danube River from the Black Forest to the Black Sea, travelling an average 33 km per day. The then 50-year old high school teacher and mother of four became the first person to swim the Danube without fins and only the second to attempt the feat at all. This 2800 km long journey made her acquainted with Danube's diverse personality

which, according to Mimi, "begins narrow and dynamic, and by the end it is wide, calm and tranquil."

For more information please contact Aleksandra Stamenkovic, WWF DCP at astamenkovic@wwfdcp.org.

17. World Heritage sites monitoring



Photo: Škocjan Caves Park Archive

A workshop on WH sites monitoring was organised in Škocjan Caves, Slovenia, 9-13 September, within a project supported by the UNESCO Participatory Programme. Six countries confirmed the participation in the project: Hungary (Monastery of Pannonhalma), Serbia (Gamzigrad – Romuliana), Romania (Sighisoara Old Town and Villages with fortified churches in Transilvania), Bosnia and Herzegovina (Mostar Old Town and Bridge and Mehmed Paša Sokolović Bridge), Bulgaria (Pirin National Park and Srebarna Nature Reserve) and Slovenia (Ljubljansko barje Pile dwellings

and Škocjan Caves). The training included the presentation on natural sites, given by Pierre Galland, an IUCN expert from Switzerland while the cultural sites were presented by Katri Lisitzin, ICROM's consultant from Sweden. Mihael Kline, a professor at Faculty for Social Sciences in Ljubljana, Slovenia, gave a lecture on communication and its use for local communities' engagement in the WH sites monitoring. Raphael Schmid explained the process of monitoring in natural site Jungfrau Aletsch in Switzerland to the group.

Participants learned about the actual management and monitoring of the sites, the monitoring indicators in relation to the statement of outstanding universal values, the effective management and importance of partnering with local communities. During the field visit to Škocjan Caves the group was informed about management issues related to conservation of the site, the visitors' safety and the importance of monitoring for the periodic review. Project partners will prepare a questionnaire for assessment of the values and perception of the site for local communities, visitors and experts. A publication will be available with guidelines for implementation of monitoring schemes on the properties.

For more information please contact Vanja Debevec Gerjevič, Škocjan Caves Park at vanja.debevec@psj.gov.si.

18. Joint monitoring of waterbird species in the Transboundary Prespa Park

Since the mid '80s the Society for the Protection of Prespa (SPP) has been monitoring waterbirds such as Dalmatian and Great White pelicans, six species of herons, Glossy Ibises, and Great and Pygmy Cormorants in the Greek part of the two Prespa Lakes.

Great Cormorants *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis* nest at two sites within the Greek part but the largest nesting colony in the area lies on Golemgrad Island, in Great Prespa Lake, which is part



Photo: SPP Archive

of the Galicica National Park in the FYR Macedonia. However, all the Great Cormorant colonies in the area form one larger population that frequently moves and shifts between sites. Thus, it is fruitless to count nests in one colony without knowing the population size in the rest of them. Therefore, a joint monitoring effort was launched in 2010 by the SPP and Galicica National Park. This bilateral census of colonies has shown that ca. 2,000 pairs breed at the Prespa Lakes.

In 2011 SPP, Galicica NP and Prespa National Park Albania/KfW started to jointly census populations of the Common Merganser *Mergus merganser*, a rarely studied anatid, which nests in rock crevices and holes along the coastline of Great Prespa Lake in all three countries sharing the lakes. The population of ca. 40 pairs is of extraordinary scientific interest since it is the southernmost European population of the species, a relic of glacial eras and entirely isolated from its neighbouring populations by ca. 300 km.

For more information, please contact Marianna Vlasi, Society for the Protection of Prespa (SPP) at spp@line.gr.

19. Balkans Peace Park Project

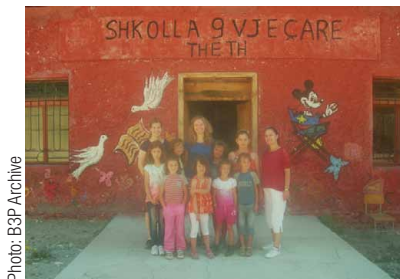


Photo: B3P Archive

In July the Balkans Peace Park Project ran their sixth summer education programme in the small mountain village of Thethi in Northern Albania. The programme coordinator worked with a team of six volunteer teachers, from England, Germany and Kosovo/a, and a team from Albania who provided the project with translators, logistical support and additional teachers.

Since its inception the project has aimed to teach English and environmental education to children aged 5-15 so that they can support their families in making a livelihood through eco-tourism.

This year, the education programme ran for two weeks and was once again based in the local village school. Environmental Education was taught by a local teacher who explored with children topics such as pollution, recycling, the water cycle and eco-tourism. In addition, English lessons were given to the village nurse who has started working in the recently established pharmacy/medical centre.

This summer, B3P volunteers were also able to assist and support an environmental education and tree planting project in Thethi which was organised for local teenagers from Shkodra by the NGO AAS, and the U.S. Peace Corp Volunteer Jay MacErlene. This year B3P noticed an improvement in the level of English spoken by young people in Thethi and it is hoped that similar progress will be achieved in the nearby community of Vermoshe, where B3P ran the summer programme for the second year.

For more information please contact Peter Spafford, Balkans Peace Park Project at peter.spafford@ntlworld.com.

20. The most beautiful meadow in Goričko Nature Park

For the third time since 2011 the public Institute Goričko Nature Park and the Slovenian Chamber of Agriculture and Forestry from Murska Sobota awarded the most beautiful meadow in Goričko Nature Park. Competition focuses on awareness rising among farmers, land owners and general public on the importance of nature conservation value of extensive used meadows. Moreover competition aims to encourage farmers to mow and safeguard hay meadows, which are vital



Photo: G. Domanjko

for rare and endangered animal and plant species in Goričko. On the other hand, it rewards those who already follow these objectives and use hay meadows in accordance with the good agricultural practices. This year 12 farmers and land owners participated in the competition. The panel evaluated and chose the most beautiful meadow according to the following criteria: number of different plant species, number of rare and protected plant species, different landscape elements on a meadow (e.g. hedges, tall trunk trees), time of the mowing last year, type of the mowing-machine, use of fertilizers, type of hay balls, participation in Slovenian agri-environmental schemes, etc.

For more information please contact Gregor Domanjko, Goričko Nature Park at gregor.domanjko@goricko.info or visit www.park-goricko.org.

21. Monitoring the Griffon Vulture in Serbia



Photo: INCS Archive

Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia conducted the annual monitoring of the Griffon Vulture (*Gyps fulvus*) nesting colonies in the period from March till July 2013, in cooperation with the managing authorities of special nature reserves Uvac and Trešnjica River gorge, feeding places for the necrophagous species in the Mileševka River gorge and external partners. The partners' goal was to determine the number of nesting couples and raised offspring of this species, to estimate the number of couples in the colonies and potential threats they face.

In the areas of Uvac (85 estimated couples) and Trešnjica River gorge (20-24 estimated couples) the Griffon Vulture colonies show highest numbers recorded so far. The number of birds in the colony in the Mileševka River gorge has rapidly decreased in the last two years, probably due to migration of birds to the area of the Radoinjsko Lake, where their number increased in 2013. Two couples of the Griffon Vulture were for the first time recorded at the site Peći in the area of Soko Grad. A nesting colony has disappeared from this location in the sixties due to the poisoning of wolves, and therefore the appearance of two couples could indicate the formation of a new colony through the spontaneous recolonisation.

Data on 122-126 nesting couples, 94-98 raised offspring and 135-141 nesting couples of the Griffon Vulture are the highest ever recorded numbers in Serbia. Still, the protection of the Griffon Vulture and other vultures requires strict application of protection measures and activities in future, such as monitoring, supplementary feeding, suppressing negative phenomena, education, etc.

For more information please contact Maja Radosavljevic, Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia at maja.radosavljevic@zzps.rs.

22. The European Commission supports the protection of priority species and habitats in Central Greece



Photo: C. Georgiadis

The European Commission financially supports the Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature (HSPN) to implement a LIFE project (LIFE11 NAT/GR/1014 *Conservation of priority forests and forest openings in “Ethnikos Drymos Oitis” and “Oros Kallidromo” of Sterea Ellada*) for the protection of priority species and habitats in two Natura 2000 sites in Central Greece. The other partners are the National and Kapodestrian University of Athens, the Agricultural Organization “DEMETER”, the Region of Sterea Ellada and ARCTUROS.



The main objective of the project is to design and implement management of forests and forest openings for the conservation of biodiversity at species, habitat, and landscape levels on Mts. Oiti and Kallidromo. Specific targets include priority habitats occurring in forest openings –Mediterranean temporary ponds (3170*) and grasslands (6210* and 6230*) – as well as conifer forests (9560* and 9530*). Target species include Annex II Directive 92/43/EEC priority species *Veronica oetaea** (a critically endangered plant endemic to Mt. Oiti) and *Ursus arctos**, as well as five Annex I Directive 79/409/EEC bird species (*Aegolius funereus*, *Dryocopus martius*, *Dendrocopus leucotos*, *Picus canus* and *Alectoris graeca*). Implementation of the project started in

September 2012, and its duration is 63 months.

For more information please contact Christos Georgiadis, Project Manager at cgeo@eepf.gr or Nikos Petrou, Project Coordinator at president@eepf.gr, or visit www.foropenforests.org.

23. Environmental Survey done for the Junik Municipality



Photo: The Albanian lily (*Lilium albanicum*) by Albaforest Archive

The Baseline Environmental Survey has been completed by AlbaForest with the support of UN-habitat, Kosovo. It includes Biodiversity Assessment of Moronica Nature Park, located in the Junik Municipality. This study will support decision making processes in order to ensure protection of the natural resource base in the Moronica Park area and enable the sustainable development in the buffer area. The assignment includes the Site inventory and analysis study of Moronica Park, provides information on the environment of the Natural Park, management

guidelines, measures for protection of the environment and proposed educational activities. The analysis clearly identifies strengths and weaknesses of the area.

For more information please contact Mehmet Metaj, AlbaForest at albaforest@gmail.com.

1. Mountain Ecosystem News



The first issue of the thematic group newsletter ‘Mountain Ecosystem News’ is released. Published bi-annually, it is accessible on the Mountain Ecosystems homepage of IUCN website https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/mountain_ecosystem_news_july_2013.pdf

2. IUCN World Parks Congress 2014



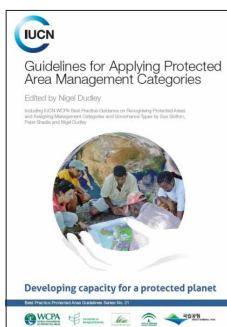
IUCN
WORLD PARKS CONGRESS
SYDNEY 2014

The website for the IUCN World Parks Congress 2014, to be held 12–19 November 2014, in Sydney, Australia is launched. It brings to life the

overall message and theme of the Congress of “Parks, People, Planet: Inspiring Solutions”, which is closely aligned with the delivery of IUCN’s Programme 2013–2016. It contains a wealth of information on the Congress programme, and details how Members can become involved in preparations.

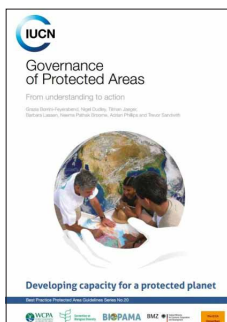
Please visit the website at www.worldparkscongress.org to find out how you can participate, and stay up to date with the latest Congress information. Your feedback and enquiries can be sent to: worldparkscongress@iucn.org.

3. Guidelines for applying protected area management categories



The IUCN Best Practice Guidelines for applying protected area management categories is a core document for the development, reporting and understanding of protected areas worldwide. In this reprint of the 2008 categories, there is a completely NEW section on Recognising Protected Areas and Assigning Management Categories and Governance Types, drawing on global best practice and extensive consultation. Download the Guidelines from https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/governance_web_1.pdf

4. Governance of Protected Areas



IUCN Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series No.20 is published in collaboration with the ICCA Consortium, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (via GIZ) and the CBD Secretariat. It is an important tool to help enhance governance diversity and quality for the world’s protected area systems. Part 1 provides an overview of the four different protected area governance types recognised by IUCN, featuring numerous examples from all over the world. Part 2 offers practical guidance for countries willing to embark on the process of assessing, evaluating and improving governance for their systems of protected areas or for individual protected area sites. Download the Guidelines from https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/governance_web_1.pdf.

1. WWF Prince Bernhard Scholarships for Nature Conservation

The WWF Prince Bernhard Scholarships (PBS) are awarded to individuals from East and South who wish to pursue formal studies or professional training in the field of conservation. Each scholarship empowers a dedicated conservationist to build his or her capacity. In turn, these people are in a position to share the benefits of their knowledge and skills with others and so spread the benefits. The maximum amount for any one scholarship under this scheme is CHF 10,000, and preferential consideration is given to requests for less than CHF 10,000. Applications as well as more information on the scholarship are accessible under http://www.panda.org/how_you_can_help/volunteer/prince_bernhard_scholarships/. The application deadline is set to 11 January 2014.

2. Dinaric Arc Parks International conference in Budva



This year's Dinaric Arc Parks International Conference will be held 2-5 December in Budva, Montenegro. For the second time WWF will gather protected area practitioners from all national or nature parks connected through the Dinarides brand.

The conference participants will learn about other parks' activities and management –conference objective is to strengthen their future cooperation and support common projects development. Dinaric Arc Parks project connects 79 parks from the region. It has a strong capacity building component focused on EU integrations and climate change. 16 parks from the region started a process of getting European Charter for Sustainable Tourism,

while more than 20 protected areas were evaluated by their stakeholders using methodology for the assessment of values and benefits of protected areas (PA-BAT). Future of protected areas depends on humans valuing their economic contribution.

For more information please visit www.discoverdinarides.com. If you want to follow the Budva conference contact ikebe@wwfmedpo.org or ikorn@wwfmedpo.org.

3. Economic Valuation of Protected Areas in Eastern Europe



Photo: International Academy for Nature Conservation Archive

The training course "Economic Valuation of Protected Areas in Eastern Europe" will take place at the International Academy for Nature Conservation on the Isle of Vilm from 27–31 January 2014. It aims at building capacity among the participants in applying economic analysis in the context of protected areas and to demonstrate how economic tools can be used to support sustainable management of parks and reserves.

This training course shall provide tools and build capacity for the valuation of ecosystem services of protected areas in

Eastern Europe and shall demonstrate how practitioners can use this economic value in their daily management. The course focuses on:

- an understanding of what specific services are linked to ecosystems and biodiversity.
- the quantification and economics of ecosystem services.

- own case studies of the participants tailored to their personal context and quantifying and economically valuing the most important ecosystem services in their own protected area.
- the use of the valuation results for management, communication and building support.

The course is free of charge, but participants have to bear the costs for board and lodging. Limited funding is available towards covering parts of the travel and subsistence costs of participants.

Please register by 10 December at: http://www.bfn.de/10990+M52087573ab0.html?&tx_blitzcalendar_pi1%5Bcid%5D=2412.

More information on the course can be found under http://www.bfn.de/06_akademie_naturforsch+M52087573ab0.html.

4. Global Environments Summer Academy



The Global Diversity Foundation announces GESA 2014: the fourth Global Environments Summer Academy, held in collaboration with the Centre for Development and Environment of the University of Bern (Switzerland) between 26 July and 15 August 2014. More details about the course content, financial

information and registration are available below and on the GESA website. Interested candidates are invited to complete the application form and upload their CV before 15 January 2014. The cost of the Academy is €2000, inclusive of accommodation, tuition, field trips, insurance and materials, but excluding local and international travel, meals and other living costs. Some course fee waivers and partial scholarships will be available.

For more information please visit <http://www.globalenvironments.org/courses/gesa-2014/>.

1. Terra Viva Grants Directory



This global database provides information about international grant funding for agriculture, energy, environment, and natural resources in the developing world. They focus on grant makers (donors) serving the developing world. The website is mostly used by people searching for financial support of their work as individuals or as organizations. Grant makers included in the Terra Viva Grants Directory range from funders of community projects to funders of science and research. For more information please visit: www.terravivagrants.org.

2. Cross-border Programme Croatia-Montenegro, 2007-2013 - third call for proposals

Programme(s): IPA – Cross border cooperation, Croatia. Pre-Accession Countries / New Member States. Sectors: Culture - Media Local development Education - Training Environment Services Co-op & Development Enlargement Tourism.

Abstract: The Agency for Regional Development of the Republic of Croatia and the Delegation of the European Union to Montenegro in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of Montenegro and the Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds of the Republic of Croatia are seeking proposals with the aim to encourage the development of **joint actions for environment, nature and cultural heritage protection**, joint tourism and cultural space and small cross-border community development projects.

Deadline(s) for submitting applications: 13/12/2013

Eligible organizations: Research centers Local and Regional authorities Schools Training centers Federations Unions Administrations States Agencies Chambers Development NGOs Universities Associations

Geographical Zone: Montenegro

To download all related documents visit

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome&nbPubliList=15&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&searchtype=RS&aofr=134665>.

For more information about IPA visit

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/ipa/index_en.cfm.

For further information, contact the contracting authority at office@cbccro-mne.org.

Call for proposals No: EuropeAid/134665/L/ACT/ME

Guidelines for contributing to the IUCN SEE e-Bulletin

IUCN welcomes articles in which you report on the activities related to transboundary cooperation in protected areas and biodiversity conservation. Please inform the public on the status of your projects and actions, as well as events that you attended. You are welcome to announce new meetings and workshops, briefly report on new publications and announce funding opportunities. Please send a photo to accompany your article if appropriate and indicate your email and/or weblink for further reference.

The articles should be 150-250 words in length. Please note this as the interest to distribute news articles through the bulletin is extremely high and we are trying to secure space for all of you to contribute. The editors reserve the right to shorten and modify the text if necessary. Thank you for taking these guidelines into consideration!



Programme Office for South-Eastern Europe

IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, is the world's oldest and largest global environmental organization, with more than 1,200 government and NGO members and almost 11,000 volunteer experts in some 160 countries. IUCN's European region covers the European continent, Russia and Central Asia, and includes the European Union overseas entities. IUCN Programme Office for South Eastern Europe promotes improved governance of natural resources and biodiversity, and supports initiatives to conserve biodiversity and manage ecosystems for human well-being. Working closely with IUCN Members and Commissions, it shapes regional policy and supports two flagship initiatives: Dinaric Arc Initiative and European Green Belt.

www.iucn.org/southeasterneurope

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For the purpose of this publication, the name Kosovo is used to refer to the territory under the UNSCR 1244 and the name Macedonia is used to refer to The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

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