

Editorial

On 6 November 2008 ECNC's Board met at ECNC's headquarters in Tilburg, the Netherlands. During the Board meeting, Sir Brian Unwin was re-elected as ECNC's President. The Board also approved the applications of three new ECNC Network partners. As 2008 is the 15th anniversary of the establishment of ECNC, the Board and staff took the opportunity to celebrate this milestone together. Further details on the Board meeting and the new Network partners can be found in this issue.

ECNC recently published a report on the impacts of biofuel production on biodiversity in Europe (see page 12). The European Union has already set ambitious biofuel production targets for its Member States before the full implications of achieving those targets have been fully researched and analysed. There is therefore a pressing need to 'take stock' of the current situation, to provide a quantified assessment of the likely impacts of biofuels and to have a reasoned discussion about the way forward. This report aims to provide a balanced introduction to one of the most pressing environmental issues of our time.

On behalf of the Editorial Team
Glynis van Uden

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Support to International Organizations and Policy Initiatives

Renewing pan-European biodiversity cooperation

On 3 November 2008, in the UNEP buildings in Geneva, a Bureau meeting of the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS) took place, chaired by the new PEBLDS president, Mr Robert Lamb, Switzerland. The revitalization of the pan-European biodiversity cooperation was on the agenda, including the next 'Biodiversity for Europe' conference. From ECNC, Executive Director Rob Wolters attended the meeting.

The PEBLDS Bureau agreed to try to refocus the pan-European cooperation on a number of topical issues, which would also be of direct relevance for the European implementation of decisions in the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Ideas were exchanged about the agenda for the next 'Biodiversity for Europe' conference, including the concept of a 'market place' of European biodiversity projects and project concepts.

ECNC stressed the importance of a PEBLDS as a platform for pan-European discussion and exchange of experiences on important themes, including on ecosystem services and payments, and the impact of climate change and of biofuel production on Europe's biodiversity. Rob Wolters made a plea for more passion in European biodiversity conservation, moving away from too technical or complex approaches which do not sufficiently reach vital stakeholders or citizens.

For more information, contact Rob Wolters, Executive Director ECNC; wolters@ecnc.org



Biodiversity and business actions in Noord-Brabant

The promotion of biodiversity within the activities of enterprises is one of the main items on ECNC's 2008 programme for the Province of Noord-Brabant. The provincial MOLO Task force Biodiversity and Countdown 2010 leads the process of 'Business and biodiversity' in Noord-Brabant. As secretariat of the MOLO Task force, ECNC provides expertise, promotional activities and contacts with enterprises and municipalities involved in the process.

The willingness of enterprises to take biodiversity into account in their operations is growing. Companies are increasingly considering biodiversity an integral part of their social and sustainable responsibility. The surplus

value for these companies is strengthening of their corporate image, ensuring the provision of their production materials now and in future and creating an attractive living and working environment in and around the enterprises.

A growing number of enterprises are joining the Countdown 2010 and signing the declaration. On joining the Countdown 2010 they draft a programme of contributions for biodiversity. To date, 16 leading companies in Noord-Brabant have signed the Countdown 2010 declaration; ECNC is stimulating other companies to sign the declaration.

On 17 December 2008 a special seminar, organized by ECNC, will be held in Tilburg, the Netherlands, on the theme of 'Business and biodiversity in Noord-Brabant'. Mr Onno Hoes, Noord-Brabant's Regional Minister for Ecology, has invited leading companies from several branches in the province to participate in this seminar. Mr Jan Melis, entrepreneur and ambassador for biodiversity in enterprises, and Dr Frank Petter, Chairman of the MOLO Task force, will lead the seminar. Contributions on good examples of biodiversity actions will be given by Brabant Water, Efteling theme park and PricewaterhouseCoopers. ECNC and the

Province of Noord-Brabant hope that as a result of this seminar the number of companies and organizations that join Countdown 2010 in 2008 will climb to at least 25.

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



Halt the loss of biodiversity

Nature and Society

'Communicating nature conservation' in South-East Europe (Croatia and FYR Macedonia) presented at the Lyon Conference on Jobs for Nature

12-14 November 2008, Lyon, France

This project, funded by the Norwegian Government, was completed in September 2008. Its main objective was to strengthen the capacity of nature conservation professionals to 'communicate for nature conservation'. This took the form of a training programme in the basics of communication, skills development and the provision of handbooks and written guidance. In particular, participants in the project received training in facilitation skills and, finally, a selected group from both countries was trained as trainers of others in order to pass on these skills. The project has been extremely successful in reaching its aim to extend the knowledge and capacity in the country, with the new trainers delivering programmes for their colleagues and other key stakeholders who need the skills; indeed, the outreach has extended well beyond the project in terms of the originally defined target audience.

ECNC was therefore invited to present the results of the project at a conference, organized by the French organization 'L'Atelier technique des espaces naturels', on 12-14 November 2008. The theme of the conference was 'Jobs for Nature' and communication is recognized as one of the key skills that should be in the 'toolbox' of the modern nature conservation professional. Their particular interest was to hear about the concepts underlying the principles of communication for nature conservation and how these were implemented through the project in Croatia and Macedonia. The presentation was delivered in the form of a workshop ('Communicating professionally to convey expertise'), by ECNC staff members Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters and Aysegul Cil. Together with two other presentations on related subjects, the topics generated a lively discussion and question and answer session with participants and presenters exchanging

their views and experience around the subject. The presentation generated particular interest around ECNC's experiences in South-East Europe and a desire was expressed to learn more from other countries, their fields of expertise and to further explore work together with other institutions in Europe. A paper based upon the presentation will be written for the conference proceedings (the paper will also be available on the ECNC website when completed).

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



Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters and Aysegul Cil (second and third from left, respectively) leading the workshop on 'Communicating professionally to convey expertise'.

Business and Biodiversity

Scenar 2 study commences

In October 2008 ECNC, together with project partners the Agricultural Economics Research Institute (LEI) and Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF), started work on a follow-up study for the Scenar 2020 project.

The first Scenar 2020 study, finalized in December 2006, provided an important background for reflections on future agricultural policies and a systematic review of the main variables that rural and agricultural policies have to take into account (such as rural demographic patterns, agricultural technology, agricultural markets, as well as the natural and social constraints on land use that are likely to exist by 2020). The study identified the future trends and driving forces that will form the framework for the European agricultural and rural economy on the 2020 horizon.

The objective of the follow-up study is to refine and add to the Scenar 2020 study's identification of major future trends and driving factors and the per-

spectives and challenges resulting from them for European agriculture and rural regions. The focus of the study will be an analysis of key driving forces and the provision of a well-developed reference scenario under the assumption of continued Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform as defined in Scenar 2020, but extended to include important issues of the European Commission's CAP Health Check Communication and taking into account the discussions in the Doha Development Round. The study will keep the two alternative scenarios (Regionalization and Liberalization) of the Scenar 2020 study. The further development and refinement of the Scenar 2020 study will provide an additional analytical input into the debate on the future of the CAP.

The project is funded by EU DG Agriculture and will be completed in June 2009.

For more information: Vineta Goba, Programme Manager – Business and Biodiversity; goba@ecnc.org

Phase 2 of project 'Business case for biodiversity' in Switzerland approved

In November 2008 the Swiss Government, Federal Office for the Environment, approved follow-up to the project 'Business case for biodiversity' in Switzerland. Phase 1 of the project was carried out in 2008, and showed the high potential for increased commitment from Swiss-based companies to biodiversity conservation.

The project objective is to promote further the business case for biodiversity in Europe by mainstreaming biodiversity concerns in the business operations of selected companies and disseminating biodiversity conservation knowledge to selected Swiss companies. Throughout 2008 ECNC, in close cooperation with the Countdown 2010

Secretariat, initiated successful cooperation with a number of Swiss companies, including Nestlé and Swiss Re, and will take this cooperation to the next level during 2009.

The main objective for Phase 2 is to achieve increased commitment from companies to biodiversity conservation, which will be demonstrated to the broad range of stakeholders, as well as reflected in internal and external reporting and the companies' environmental policies.

For more information: Vineta Goba, Programme Manager – Business and Biodiversity; goba@ecnc.org

European Ecological Network

Experts meet to discuss the Pan-European Ecological Network

17 October 2008, Strasbourg, France

Experts from across Europe gathered in Strasbourg on 17 October 2008 for the 12th Meeting of the Committee of Experts for the Development of the Pan-European Ecological Network. Under the auspices of the Council of Europe, the meeting convenes to consider current progress, new developments and the future of the Pan-European Ecological Network (PEEN). A number of important items were on the agenda for discussion (full minutes and associated papers are available at: www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/Regional/EcoNetworks).

There is to be a major conference on ecological networks, linked to the delivery of CBD targets, land use and management, practical delivery and best practice in Spain, under the Spanish Presidency of the European Union, in 2010. Discussion centred

around the need to move from strategy to delivery at national, regional and local level. Following on from that theme, ECNC's Senior Programme Manager, Dr Lawrence Jones-Walters, gave an update on the findings from two projects sponsored by the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, which address the links between spatial planning and ecological networks (the SPEN project) and the practical implantation of ecological networks through stakeholder involvement (the KEN project). He also outlined the recommendations and research agenda proposed by the international workshop, held in Oisterwijk in October 2008 (see *ECNC Update*: 15 (4) p. 4), which were based around the outcomes of the projects. The presentations generated a lively and lengthy debate which concluded that one of the key issues for the delivery of ecological net-

works practice is the resolution of the question: 'who is responsible for ecological networks?', in particular in relation to the local and regional levels. This will certainly be a question that is addressed through both projects as they reach their conclusion.

A short presentation was also given on the Macedonian National Ecological Network project (see elsewhere in this *Update*). There was a great deal of

interest in this project, particularly as it is an example of national level delivery and includes consideration of large carnivores (in this case European Brown Bear) and a range of related socio-economic issues.

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

Development of National Ecological Network in Macedonia (MAC-NEN) – Kick-off meeting

25 & 26 November 2008, Skopje, FYR Macedonia

Following the launch of ECNC's MAC-NEN project earlier this year, the first project team meeting was held on 25 and 26 November in Skopje, FYR Macedonia. It was attended by project team members from ECNC and hosted by the national partner – Macedonian Ecological Society (MES) – at their offices.

The project team went through and analysed all the project objectives and activities and constructed a comprehensive implementation plan. One of the key outcomes of the meeting was the development of a detailed National Awareness Raising Campaign Plan which defines the key target groups, the messages to be addressed to them and means of delivering those messages.



MAC-NEN project team.
(Photo: Dime Melovski, MES)

Progress was made on: the MAC-NEN Background Document, which will review the biodiversity of FYR Macedonia in an international context and provide information on the development of the National Ecological Network; and the Scientific Study on the Brown Bear which is well advanced and is already showing some interesting results in relation to ecological needs of this species, the public perception of large carnivores in general in FYR Macedonia (including Wolf and Balkan Lynx) and the Brown Bear in particular. In addition, dates were set in April 2009 for a National workshop on ecological networks. Once completed, the final reports and further details of the workshop can be found on the project website (http://www.ecnc.org/Overview/Index_850.html).

During the two-day meeting, the project team visited the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, which has been a supporter of the project from its inception; they reaffirmed their continued desire for involvement, in particular offering support for the delivery of the awareness raising campaign.

For more information: Kristijan Čivić, Project Manager; civic@ecnc.org

State of European Nature and Biodiversity

ALTER-Net set to take the next step

The ALTER-Net network is ready to take the next big step in its development. During the ALTER-Net management group meeting, hosted by ECNC in Tilburg on 11 and 12 November 2008, and during the Council meeting in London in October, the ALTER-Net parties confirmed their commitment to continue the network beyond the current funding period. Pledges and in-kind contributions were agreed and key activities for the next few years were formulated. All partners were invited to sign a Memorandum of Understanding to reflect this commitment. In addition, they were invited to bid for hosting the future secretariat, which until now has been hosted by the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology in the UK.

ECNC will also actively contribute to the ALTER-Net conference on 4-6 March 2009 in Leipzig, Germany. We will produce a summary brochure on the key ALTER-Net achievements and hold a meeting of the revised science-policy interface, building on the Network Advisory Committee.

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



Agriculture to support biodiversity

Over 400 researchers, decision makers and intermediaries came together at the conference 'Biodiversity and Agriculture: Today's Challenges, Tomorrow's Research for More Sustainable Farming', held on 4 and 5 November 2008 in Montpellier, France as part of the French EU Presidency. The conference was organized by the French National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA). The delegates discussed the many connections between agriculture and biodiversity and agreed that agriculture has an essential role to play in the conservation and restoration of biodiversity in Europe.

They concluded that, in order to respond to the demographic and environmental challenges of the 21st century and to achieve sustainable development, agriculture has to be able to

increase production on cultivated land while conserving and benefiting biodiversity and adapting to a changing climate. For this reason the agriculture sector must continue to adapt in order to further integrate biodiversity into its land management practices, favour it and value it in all its forms. For this to be possible there is a need for a Europe-wide research agenda. There is therefore a significant, related challenge to frame that agenda so that it can provide answers to questions around, and contribute to our growing knowledge about, ecosystem services (of which agricultural production is of course one) and how they contribute to biodiversity.

ECNC participated in the conference to contribute its knowledge with regard to scenarios for agriculture (the Scenar 2020 project) and impacts of agricul-

ture on biodiversity (BioScore), to present the outcomes of the highly successful international workshop 'Ecological Networks: from spatial strategy to implementation' (*ECNC Update*: 15 (4) p. 4), and to sound out the interest for setting up a European learn-

ing network on functional agro-biodiversity.

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

ECNC facilitates the EURECA expert meeting on 'Spotmeters'

10 & 11 November 2008, Copenhagen, Denmark

As part of its role in the European Topic Centre on Biodiversity, ECNC actively contributes to the European Ecosystem Assessment (EURECA), a programme being carried forward by the European Environment Agency (EEA) as part of the new (second) Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA) process. ECNC facilitates the meetings and contributes its expertise to the overall process.

The expert meeting on 10 and 11 November 2008 was organized by the EEA in Copenhagen as part of the extended definition phase of EURECA. The definition phase should result in a multi-annual work plan up to 2012. The approach presently has three main elements:

- storyline-based assessments of biodiversity change and its consequences for delivery of ecosystem services against the background of European trends and policy frameworks;
- an integral accounting framework that will ultimately allow economic assessment of ecosystem service flows across different scales;
- capacity building through the production of a methods handbook, consistent with the UNEP-WCMC Millennium Assessment follow-up manual, and tailor-made for application at European and national scales.

In this set-up, EURECA will start with a comprehensive analysis of state and trends of major ecosystems (the 'Pathfinder' module) and then focus on areas and issues of particular interest, to be explored in further detail and from an ecosystem service perspective ('Spotmeter' modules). Several storylines can be explored simultaneously and where appropriate be integrated in a final conclusive section (the 'Integrator' module).

The expert meeting investigated the potential of the storyline-based assessments (the Spotmeters) on the basis of preliminary ideas. After an introduction to the EURECA approach and the international context, four selected spotmeter topics (the marine environment, mountain areas, agriculture and Natura 2000) were discussed in breakout sessions. These discussions focused on (policy) issues, key ecosystem services, process design, stakeholder involvement, and available data. A wrap-up of results and reflection on further steps was made in a final plenary discussion and the process will be taken forward and further developed in 2009.

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

Renewed European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity ready to start

As reported in previous *ECNC Updates* ECNC is continuing as a consortium partner in the European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity (ETC/BD) for the coming five years. The renewed consortium, consisting of nine partners, met for a preparatory meeting in Paris at the end of October 2008. The meeting introduced the consortium to the strategy and work plan of the European Environment Agency and decided on the role of each partner in executing the implementation plan in 2009.

ECNC continues to be actively involved in the process of Streamlining

European Biodiversity Indicators (SEBI2010) as well as the EURECA process toward a European ecosystem assessment. It will also contribute to some of the other assessment and reporting activities. As from 1 January 2009 ECNC will second Dr Marcus Zisenis to the core team in Paris to work as Biodiversity analyst (see page 11 of this issue).

For more information: Ben Delbaere, Head of Programme Development; delbaere@ecnc.org

ECNC Organizationally

ECNC Scientific Council meeting

16 October 2008, Tilburg, the Netherlands



(Photo: ECNC)

The Scientific Council meeting in progress. Clockwise, from the left: Ben Delbaere (Council secretary), Dr Julius Oszlányi (member), Dr Sjur Baardsen (Chair), Dr Eeva Furman (member), Mr Carlos Sunyer (member), Veronika Mikos (Project Manager ECNC), Kristijan Čivić (Project Manager ECNC).

The ECNC Scientific Council met for the second time this year on 16 October in Tilburg and formulated advice to the ECNC Board, which met in November. The Scientific Council discussed ECNC's work plan for 2009, reviewed progress and the output of this year's work and advised on a number of emerging topics for ECNC to work on in the

coming years.

Dr Jozef Keulartz of Wageningen University and Research Centre resigned from the Council in October. ECNC wishes to thank him for his contribution to the ECNC quality review over the last few years. The ECNC Board appointed Dr Anke Fischer from the Macaulay Institute in Aberdeen, UK, to succeed Dr Keulartz. ECNC has known Dr Fischer for some years now as a very active partner in the ALTER-Net network and looks forward to working with her.

For more information: Ben Delbaere, Head of Programme Development; delbaere@ecnc.org



New Scientific Council member Dr Anke Fischer.

ECNC's 15th anniversary Board meeting

6 & 7 November 2008, Tilburg, the Netherlands

ECNC's Board meeting in Tilburg on 6 and 7 November 2008 took place against the backdrop of ECNC's 15th anniversary. This was a special occasion, for various reasons.



The joint Board-Staff meeting: first, the serious business.

(Photo: ECNC)

Sir Brian Unwin was unanimously re-elected as ECNC's President and accepted another term. Mr Eddie Idle (UK) left the Board after 15 years' service. During the meeting, the Board also accepted two new members, Ms Kornelija Pintaric, Director for Nature, of the Croatian Ministry of Culture, and Mr Dyreck Steer, Director of JNCC, UK.

The annual work plan and budget for 2009 were approved and the advice of ECNC's Scientific Council was welcomed, and integrated into ECNC's planning and operations.

The Board welcomed further steps to integrate ECNC and EUCC-The Coastal Union, and adopted an action plan to this effect.

During the meeting, the Board approved the applications of three institutes to become ECNC Network partners: the National Environmental Research Institute (NERI), Denmark; Moscow City Pedagogical University, Department of Biology, Russian Federation; and Turkish Environmental and Woodlands Protection Society

(TÜRÇEK), Turkey (see the following article for details).

To celebrate ECNC's 15th anniversary, on the morning of Friday 7 November, following a joint dinner the previous evening, an interactive Board-Staff meeting took place. The programme was diverse and inspiring, consisting of a facilitated session on future priorities for ECNC, an ECNC quiz and a comical interlude based on English pantomime. Both Board and staff highly appreciated this combined meeting.

For further information: Rob Wolters, Executive Director ECNC; wolters@ecnc.org



And then the fun part, under the expert direction of Board member Mr Eddie Idle. (Photo: ECNC)

ECNC welcomes three new Network partners

At its meeting on 6 November 2008 the ECNC Board approved the applications of three new Network partners, bringing the total number of Network partners to 49 in 25 European countries. (See http://www.ecnc.org/EcncNetwork/Index_27.html for a complete list.)

The National Environmental Research Institute (NERI) is part of the University of Aarhus, Denmark. NERI undertakes scientific consultancy work, monitoring of nature and the environment as well as applied and strategic research. NERI's task is to establish a scientific foundation for environmental policy decisions.

For more information on NERI, visit www.neri.dk

Contact person: Dr Bo Normander



Moscow City Pedagogical University provides teacher training and conducts scientific research in various aspects of science. In addition to conducting its own research the University participates in collaborative projects in the Russian Federation and abroad. The main areas of focus of the Department of Biology are environmental education and sus-

Staff news

Merijn Biemans completed a short-term contract with ECNC on 15 November 2008 as Project Officer. Merijn supported the activities in the programmes State of European Nature and Biodiversity, and European Ecological Network.

On 17 November 2008 Ingeborg Smit joined ECNC as an intern. Ingeborg is Dutch and is studying for a Master's degree in Sustainable Development at the University of Utrecht, the

tainable development, biodiversity and current methods of nature protection.

Contact person: Dr Denis Bogomolov



The Turkish Environmental and Woodlands Protection Society (TÜRÇEK) is a non-profit NGO, established in 1972, which works to preserve nature and the environment in Turkey. TÜRÇEK is working towards the establishment of the National Confederation of Nature Conservation, strengthening non-governmental organizations in Turkey working in the field of the environment and nature conservation, and supports the foundation of new local initiatives. It manages environmental education and visitors centres, and collaborates with various organizations.

For more information on TÜRÇEK, visit www.turcek.org.tr

Contact person: Ms Ceren Üzel Gürbüz



Netherlands. She is conducting research for her thesis on the implementation of Natura 2000 in several European countries. At ECNC Ingeborg is assisting in two programme areas: European Nature and Biodiversity, and European Ecological Network.

Dr Marcus Zisenis is being seconded by ECNC to the European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity in Paris. Marcus will take up his position as Biodiversity analyst on 1 January 2009. Marcus earned

his Ph.D. at the Technical University of Berlin (his thesis was on 'A framework of values and criteria for interdisciplinary evaluations of nature and landscapes'). His previous position was at

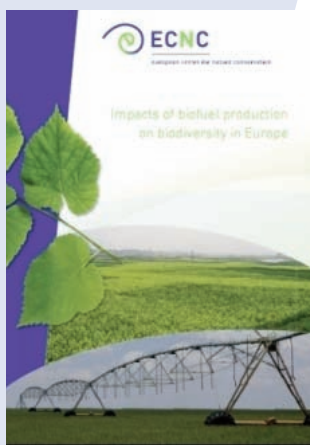
the Helmholtz-Zentrum für Umweltforschung in Leipzig, as Science Officer, developing the EU Biodiversity Research Strategy (BioStrat).

New ECNC publication

Biemans, M., Y. Waarts, A. Nieto, V. Goba, L. Jones-Walters, C. Zöckler (2008) *Impacts of biofuel production on biodiversity in Europe*. – ECNC–European Centre for Nature Conservation, Tilburg, the Netherlands.

Although biofuels may have a significant role to play in solving the problem of non carbon emitting energy and fuel creation, the situation is much more complicated than that. There are serious implications for food production and therefore prices, and also for nature and biodiversity conservation. These issues have not yet been adequately explored, and the purpose of this report is to help inform and stimulate further exploration and discussion.

The report, including the list of impacts and a set of practical recommendations for biodiversity-friendly biofuel production, can be downloaded here <http://www.ecnc.org/jump/page/867/Output.html>



New issue of *Journal for Nature Conservation*

Volume 16, issue 3 of the *Journal for Nature Conservation* (published by Elsevier in affiliation with ECNC) was published in October 2008.

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



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