Dear Readers,

Welcome to the 20th issue of the IUCN South-Eastern European e-Bulletin. We are presenting many new activities and projects implemented in the region. Hopefully you will find the reading interesting and informative. As always, you sent us a lot of news articles and updates on passed and future events, and we are thanking you for your continuous interest in the IUCN SEE e-bulletin.

The guidelines for submitting articles for the IUCN SEE e-bulletin can be found at the last page of this issue, while all issues of this publication are available under www.iucn.org/southeasterneurope.

IUCN SEE staff news

Our colleague, Andrea Strauss moves back to Germany and ends her assignment at the IUCN SEE/ Green Belt Coordination Office. She has been constantly contributing to the initiative and, on behalf of the team, we are thanking her for all the support and great team work!

We wish Andrea all the success and hope to cooperate again in the region!

With best regards,
IUCN Programme Office for South-Eastern Europe
Membership Corner: Introduction

IUCN SEE office has the pleasure to introduce IUCN members from South Eastern Europe. By answering specific questions representatives of the member organizations will have possibility to introduce themselves, their activities and express personal experience being a part of the unique IUCN family.

Green Network of Vojvodina, Serbia

Focusing on sustainable agriculture and rural development

Represented by Mrs Olivera Radovanovic
e: twins@eunet.rs

When did your organization join IUCN and what is your organization's mission? Green Network of Vojvodina (GNV) officially joined IUCN in March 2008, as an NGO that promotes and supports environmental protection and sustainable development. Thus its mission is establishment of the sustainable development principle in Vojvodina, involvement of the public in environment protection issues and decision making, providing support to local communities to achieve rural development and sustainability.

Which projects or joint activities between GNV, IUCN and other members would you stress out? GNV would like to stress out two IUCN activities which we have joined: Countdown 2010 and the Green Belt. In addition in our work we have the same protected landscape approach.

What is, to your opinion, the benefit of being the IUCN member? Does it help to improve your position at the regional/national/international level? During the past year special attention was given to the protection of biodiversity. GNV has been cooperating with IUCN-SEE office in Belgrade since 2006. Precisely because of joint attitudes and programs, GNV became a member of IUCN in March 2008. This membership has obliged GNV to direct the attention towards the conservation of biodiversity in Vojvodina even more. Within the campaign, together with IUCN-SEE, GNV made a great step forward when in April 2008, the Assembly of AP Vojvodina accepted, and Mr Kostreš, a president of the Assembly at that time, signed the Countdown 2010 Declaration. This step has proved that it is possible to realize the partnership of several levels, when the aim is well-being of the community and the surrounding nature. Thanks to the membership in IUCN and QLF/Atlantic Center for the Environment GNV member became the part of the Protected Landscapes Task Force, IUCN WCPA. For the first time GNV participated in the International Workshop of the IUCN-WCPA Protected Landscapes Task Force hosted by North York Moors National Park, United Kingdom with the presentation on Rural Landscapes of the Banat Region, Vojvodina, Serbia (April 2008).

How does IUCN contribute to the sustainable development and biodiversity conservation in the region? The most visible impact of IUCN contribution to the sustainable development and biodiversity conservation in the region has been their work on Countdown2010 issues in Vojvodina, spreading ideas on Green Belt and protected landscape approach. In addition two activities are specially known – project on the Sava River and in Gornje Podunavlje.

What should IUCN change or do better in terms of communication with members in the region? GNV and other IUCN members in the region should have the priority when IUCN SEE office is planning joint projects. In addition, as IUCN members we need to be more informed on IUCN policy in the region especially when IUCN SEE office representatives are cooperating with the decision makers in the country (Serbia/Vojvodina) where we work and live.

What are the 3 most valuable events you personally have experienced with IUCN?

• International Workshop of the IUCN-WCPA Protected Landscapes Task Force hosted by North York Moors National Park, United Kingdom, April 2008
• IUCN pan-European Meeting, Barcelona, Spain, October 2006
NEWS & EVENTS

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EARTH HOUR 2009 IN SEE

PUBLICATIONS & COMMUNICATION

1. IUCN e-newsletter
2. Guide to the Coastal Wetlands of Albania

TRAININGS & SEMINARS – ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Partnerships for sustainable tourism development with PAs
2. Workshop on assessing the values and benefits of protected areas
3. ELBARN - European Livestock Breeds Ark & Rescue Net
4. English Language for Environmentalists training
5. Czech Greenways Biking summer camp for youth
1. Baltic Green Belt kick-off meeting

**Germany:** The baltic green belt partners gathered for the kick-off meeting of the Baltic Green Belt project, part-financed by the EU within the INTERREG IV B – Baltic Sea Region Programme. The project is coordinated by the Coastal Geography branch of the University of Kiel. The main aim is the establishment of the Baltic Green Belt as a functional ecological network and the sharing of knowledge, experiences and best practices on transboundary cooperation for nature conservation and sustainable coastal development. The project area follows the coastal strip from Lübeck in Germany to St. Petersburg and the Russian-Finnish border. During the forum, the German Ministry of Environment and the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), IUCN and project partners from Germany, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Russia agreed to work together for a living and sustainable Baltic Sea cost.

The project addresses environmental shortcomings in the Baltic Sea area, such as eutrophication, decreasing biodiversity of natural marine and coastal landscapes, and conflicts in the management and use of coastal areas (seawards, landwards and across state borders).

The vision of the European Green Belt Initiative is to create the backbone of an ecological network, running from the Barents to the Black Sea that is a global symbol for transboundary co-operation in nature conservation and sustainable development. Hence the Baltic Green Belt project aims to contribute to the implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, the HELCOM Recommendation 15/1 “Protection of Coastal Strips” and the EU Recommendation “Implementation of integrated coastal zone management in Europe”.

For more information, please contact Michael Schultz at m.schultz@geographie.uni-kiel.de or Stefanie Maack at s.maack@geographie.uni-kiel.de or visit www.balticgreenbelt.net.

2. EuroNatur against Bird Hunting on the Balkans

EuroNatur reveals in an extensive analysis about the present situation of bird hunting on the Balkans. The publication of the report is part of the campaign "Crime scene Adriatic - Bird Hunting on the Balkans", which focuses on informing the public about this big issue. The result of this report account for the urgent need of action. Not only rare waders and waterfowl such as the common snipe, cranes and spoonbills count among the species shot, but also species typical for our cultural landscape such as the field lark, the hoopoe and the quail.

“Bird Hunting along the Adriatic Flyway - An Assessment of Bird Hunting in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Slovenia and Serbia” can be downloaded end of March as PDF (528 kb) under the link www.euronatur.org/bird-hunting.

For more information, contact M.Schneider-Jacoby, EURONATUR Martin.Schneider-Jacoby@euronatur.org or visit www.euronatur.org/bird-hunting (English) www.euronatur.org/Vogeljagd-aktuell.930.0.html (German) www.euronatur.org/Adriatic-Flyway-Conference-2009.899.0.html.
3. Wintering of Pygmy Cormorants in Belgrade

**Serbia:** Pygmy Cormorant *Phalacrocorax pygmeus* is the smallest European species of cormorants. During the last 15 years there was a continuous increase in number of Pygmy Cormorants at the Sava River in Belgrade; wintering grounds hosted almost 7000 birds. This is 10% of the European population of this species and a great responsibility for the city and for the whole state. The SPEC list of species includes Pygmy Cormorant in the first group – globally threatened species with the inappropriate conservation status in Europe.

This year the bridge construction started exactly at the place of the willow stand where one part of population spent nights. League for Ornithological Action of Serbia is responsible for monitoring of wintering of Pygmy Cormorants and other species of water birds during the building activities. As expected, the observed number of Pygmy Cormorants decreased due to disturbance, so in 2008 it was only three quarters of the number recorded the previous autumn. Meeting at the Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia, gathered representatives of the Institute, Belgrade Land Development Public Agency, City secretariat for environment, Belgrade City Parks and the League for Ornithological Action of Serbia and it resulted in an official Decision on the preceding conservation of “Pygmy Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax pygmeus*) habitat at the Sava river in Belgrade”. This document determines the regime of protection of all roosts of Pygmy Cormorants used in winter time during the last 15 years (1996-2008) by prohibiting any displacement or killing of birds, as well as disturbance and destruction of vegetation at the willow stands near the Belgrade Fair, at the lower promontory of Ada Ciganlija and at Mala Ciganlija.

For more information, please contact Dragan Simic at birdingserbia@gmail.com or visit www.ptica.org.

4. Special Nature Reserve Kraljevac designated

**Serbia:** Part of the Deliblatska Pescara (Deliblato Sands), meaning sites Obzovik, Spasovina and Kraljevac, were designated as the Special Nature Reserve Kraljevac and the protected area of outstanding significance in February 2009. Its management is entrusted to the Sports-Fishermen Association Deliblatsko Jezero, Deliblato.

Aim is the protection of natural values of different ecosystems: Obzovik (valley formed by fluvial erosion), Spasovina (pasture area on the loess terrace) and a part of the watercourse Kraljevac.

The prescribed protection measures will ensure the conservation of relic plant communities of marsh ferns and grey sallow, as well as the natural rarities inhabiting these sites, e.g., ground squirrel (*Spermophilus citellus*) and lesser mole rat (*Spalax leucodon*), which are almost completely extinguished in other areas. Also, to protect the floating islands in the watercourse Kraljevac and the waterholes which are the habitats of fish fauna and migratory waterfowl species, as well as the nesting sites of rare and threatened bird species of wetland habitats: great crested grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*), ferruginous duck (*Aythya nyroca*), western marsh-harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*), whiskered tern (*Chlidonias hybridus*), etc.

For more information, please contact Maja Radosavljevic, Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia at maja@zzps.rs.
5. Nature Park Goricko spring activities

**Slovenia:** The Public Institution Nature Park Goricko is actively involved in the biodiversity conservation and protection of species through its spring actions. Supported by members of BirdLife Slovenia, DOPPS, 11 nest boxes for screech owl (*Athene noctua*) were placed in the Nature Park Goricko. Nesting possibilities for screech owl are constantly reducing, in direct connection to the lower number of suitable trees; thus, the NP is offering them the alternative - boxes placed on abandoned houses and on old willow trees. Raising the awareness on this issue amongst the local population, NP is constantly asking them for information on places where the screech owl was heard.

The amphibians’ migration route to the water is interrupted by the road, thus on three locations NP Goricko installed protective nets on the road edge. The net prevents amphibians from crossing the life-threatening saving their lives. Every morning NP staff collects, counts and determines caught amphibians and carries them across the road. The most critical sections of the road were marked by the first traffic signs *Attention! Amphibian on the road.*

For more information please contact Nature park Goričko, Slovenia at park.goricko@siol.net or visit www.park-goricko.org.

6. Djavolja Varos nominated for UNESCO WH site

**Serbia:** Natural Monument Djavolja Varos, the protected area of outstanding universal value, was nominated for the UNESCO List of the World Natural Heritage Sites. Managed by the Enterprise for Natural Health-Spas and Tourism Planinka, it is formed by the group of elongated, pyramidal columns, topped by stone caps. Rocks of Djavolja Varos are the remnants of volcanoclastites of dacite-quartzite character. In contrast to similar localities in Europe, Djavolja Varos was formed by erosion of deposits of dense debris flows – lahars, typical for powerful volcanogenic eruptions, numerous some twenty million years ago. The method of formation of the deposits and the character of volcanogenic processes conditioned the subsequent erosion and the development of the formations existing in Djavolja Varos to the date.

The nomination of Djavolja Varos was prepared by the expert team of the Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia, under the leadership of Dr. Dusan Mijovic, Head of Department of Geodiversity, and Dr. Vladiča Cvetkovic, Professor of the Faculty of Mining and Geology.

For more information, please contact Maja Radosavljevic, Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia at maja@zzps.rs.
7. Data shell – *Lithophaga lithophaga* smuggling

**Croatia:** In the last 3 months in the Croatian region of Istria, the Nature Protection Inspection recorded three cases of confiscation of the data shell (*Lithophaga lithophaga*) by the Customs and Police. It is a strictly protected shellfish that is illegally harvested and served in restaurants as a delicacy.

A total of 204.95 kilograms or 12,917 specimens of those shells were seized. According to the nature protection legislation, the compensation for each specimen is 6.7 €, so these illegal actions caused the damage to the nature in the amount of 86,500 €. The court procedures against 3 Croatian citizens who committed these smugglings are ongoing. The data shells and the equipment and vehicles with which the offences were committed were seized. Data shell is a strictly protected species in the Republic of Croatia. It is strictly forbidden to remove the shells from the see, damage their habitat, or trade in them. The import and export are also prohibited, especially since data shells are also a CITES Appendix II species. These shells are also protected by the sea fishing legislation, so the control is also being carried out by the fishing inspection, police and maritime police.

To remove the shell from the natural habitat, it is necessary to break up the rock in which it drills its home. This is causing a serious destruction of littoral over a large marine areas and a loss of habitat for many other marine organisms. Therefore, the prevention of these harmful illegal activities is a priority in inspection planning.

For more information please contact Ms Katica Bezuh, Ministry of Culture, Nature Protection Inspection, katica.bezuh@min-kulture.hr

8. Cooperation in the Sava River basin

Running for already two years, the *Protection of Biodiversity of the Sava River Basin Floodplains* project is implemented by IUCN in close cooperation with its partners: Wageningen International, Orbicon, Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia, State Institute for Nature Protection in Croatia, CEPRES, and Agricultural Institute from BiH. Unique by its complexity, the project covers the entire Sava River floodplain stretching over four countries and its main goal is to create trans-boundary partnerships to protect the area’s outstanding biological and landscape diversity. It brings together international organizations and local partners and provides a platform for the knowledge exchange, above all the experience from the EU-member country that the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature Conservation brings on the EU environmental legislation and Natura 2000.

This year partners will focus on the study of the data gathered and GIS analysis elaboration, the awareness raising campaign will be implemented and landscape and biodiversity values analysed. Cooperation with the International Sava River Basin Commission might result in inclusion of project outcomes to the Sava River Basin management plan.

For more information, please contact Lubomira Vavrova at lubomira.vavrova@iucn.org or visit [www.savariver.com](http://www.savariver.com).
9. Winter counting of great bustards (*Otis tarda*)

**Serbia:** The traditional action of winter counting of great bustards in February was organised by the Hunting Association Perjanica, the trustee of the Special Nature Reserve Great Bustard’s Pastures, and the Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia, supported by the Provincial Secretariat for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development of Vojvodina. The participants in this action were also the guests from the National Park Keres-Maros, Hungary, the representatives of the Ministry of Environment Protection and Spatial Planning, Hunting Association of Vojvodina, local government, hunting societies from Sajan and Banatsko Arandjelovo, as well as other stakeholders. On an extremely windy day, seven separate birdwatching teams crossed the Northern Banat lowland terrains, steppes, saline soils, and fields. Altogether 22 individuals of great bustards were recorded: in one flock 17 females and young birds, and 5 males in another flock. All birds were on the fields in Mokrin area and the existence of one more flock which has not been observed is possible. This action has reunited all those who would like to help in the study and conservation of the only population of great bustards in Serbia and its special site. The most important activity that is expected in this sense is the passing of the Decree on the Designation of the Reserve in the widened boundaries, which will stop the ploughing of grassland sites and create the base for unobstructed strutting, nesting, and other life activities of these magnificent birds.

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

10. Study trip – Upper Horizons in RS

**Bosnia and Herzegovina:** Within the REC/SDC Project Neretva Delta Forum (NDF) for sustainable use of natural resources, a study trip was organized to the Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The aim was for the members of the Neretva Delta Forum from Metkovic, Croatia, and Mostar, BiH, to learn about the Upper Horizons Project.

The trip included a visit to the Directorate for management of the hydro-electrical power plants on the Trebisnjica River - HEP Trebinje I and HEP Trebinje II, the laboratory for water quality control, the water transfer tunnel, and the management of Trebinje Town Fair. The study trip has been deemed as a success, as the participants gained direct insight into the work of the system of hydro-power plants on the Trebisnjica river, consolidated their views on the matter by linking theoretical knowledge with practical insights, which eventually allowed a better understanding of all project-related facts.

For more information, please contact Maja Zaric, Swiss Cooperation Office Bosnia and Herzegovina at maja.zaric@sdcc.net

11. Partnerships for sustainable tourism development in PAs

Enlarging the network of protected areas applying EUROPARC’S European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas to the east of Europe is the main aim for establishing two pilot partnerships between German and Eastern European PAs. Beginning of the year the two partnerships between Harz National Park (D) and Muranská Planina National Park (SK) as well as between Frankenwald Nature Park (D) and Apuseni Nature Park (RO) have been officially started. Representatives of each German park will carry out study visits between March and May to learn more about their partner protected area in the East and
12. Transboundary Monitoring System (TMS) for Prespa Park

**Greece:** Thematic workshop for the development of a monitoring system for the transboundary Prespa basin took place in Korcha, Albania in February 2009. Five thematic working groups with the participation of experts, public authorities and scientific institutions from Albania, Greece and the FYR Macedonia worked together on the development of environmental monitoring indicators, in 5 thematic areas: Water, Forests & other Terrestrial Habitats, Fish & Fisheries, Birds & other Biodiversity, and Land use. A second round of workshops took place in March, where experts met on two other thematic areas: Aquatic Vegetation and Socio-economics. This process will be followed by the elaboration of methodologies and field protocols.

The TMS under development will then undergo a pilot application phase which will be followed by the final adjustment of the system. The project will hopefully culminate in the endorsement of TMS by the competent national authorities in the 3 countries by 2011. This would be a very significant step towards effective conservation of the area in the context of the trilateral Prespa Park initiative.

For more information please contact Society for the Protection of Prespa, Miltos Gletsos at m.gletsos@wwf.gr or Marianna Vlassi at m.vlassi@wwf.gr.

13. Glina – River Pearl from Continental Region of Croatia

**Croatia:** Green Action / Friends of the Earth Croatia organized a multistakeholder workshop “Glina - River Pearl from Continental Region of Croatia” in Town Glina, Croatia, 27 February 2009, with participants from Croatia and B&H. Discussions were mostly concerned on vision of life with the river and concrete solutions of the problems (lack of waste waters purification, illegal waste dump sites, open quarries, lack of data about biodiversity, lack of protected areas). Steps for solving the problems were taken immediately after the workshop. Memorandum of cooperation between municipalities and towns in the river basin is soon to be signed, working group for the river is about to be formed and memos to the inspections about burning issues are already sent. This was the most positive and inspiring workshop with real willingness from all participants to go forward and start working now on issues at hand.

Workshop is part of the EU CARDS 2004 Project Promoting conservation of border river ecosystems and sustainable use of resources in border area of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Next workshop scheduled for April 2009 will be about the River Una Basin.

For further information, please contact Irma Popovic, Water Protection Program, Green Action / FoE Croatia at irma@zelena-akcija.hr.
Man in his numerous industrial activities, exploits fossil fuels as quickly as the other geological resources – ores and minerals – that were created through various and complex geological processes during a long geological period of time. Together with geological treasures, modern civilization is very efficient in exploiting all the other natural treasures that had been created during centuries of time such as forests – the lungs of planet – with enormous biological treasure of animal and botanical species. The educational movie „Inheritage for the Future“ will remind us that we will disable a normal social and economical development for future generations, because of our unreasonable exploitation of all natural treasures.

For further information please contact Aleksandrar Vlajic, Ecolibri-Bionet at a.vlajic@ecolibribionet.co.rs.

Analysis and mapping of target nature habitats is planned, as well as implementation of different measures in order to reach and maintain the favourable status of the habitats and use of pasture as a managerial tool for maintaining treeless zone.

TRINET Project is in line with the Directorate’s Management plan and long-term objectives, such as safeguarding the high mountainous treeless zone. NP has already gained some experience in the use of regulated and targeted pasture as a mechanism for management of alpine and sub-alpine habitats. Last year, within a project of the Wild Flora and Fauna Fund for restoration of the transhumance, a herd of local breed of sheep crossed 200 km along the main crest of the Balkan Range and safely entered the park’s grassland as a successful example of seasonal migration of sheep flocks in the high – mountain.

For more information please contact Diana Terzieva, Central Balkan NP Directorate at did@centralbalkan.bg.

Slovenia: Bohinj International Wild Flower Festival is the sustainable tourism project seen as a key tool in raising awareness on protected areas and both habitat and species management in Slovenia. It is held in Bohinj, at the heart of Triglav National Park and this year it will be held in the period 23 May - 6 June 2009. The festival features a series of guided botanical tours showing the vast array of plants and flower in different settings, craft markets, exhibitions and a scientific conference.
Its main purpose is to demonstrate that natural and cultural heritage of Bohinj and Slovenia as a whole, is one of the most important foundations for sustainable economic development. A special feature of the 2009 Festival will be a series of butterfly walks and talks by Tony Mainwood of Butterfly Conservation (Scotland).

Slovenia will hold the Presidency of the Alpine Convention March 2009 – March 2011 and the Bohinj International Wild Flower Festival will play a key role in helping Slovenia celebrate and promote this Presidency. The Alpine Convention is an international agreement that works for the protection and sustainable development of the Alpine region. The main objective of the Bohinj International Wild Flower Festival “To build a sustainable future for people and nature” fits closely with that of the Alpine Convention.

For more information, please contact Ian Mitchell at ianmit@globalnet.co.uk or visit www.bohinj.si.

17. Training programme for the environmental education

Albania: Environmental education for the young generation, particularly for the elementary school, is an emerging need and should become a priority in the government program. For this concern an UNICEF project named CLEEN (Child-Led Environmental Education Initiative) starts in Albania as a new approach in addressing environmental problems. The current school curriculum does not properly cover the environmental education, and there is a clear need to align the content and processes in school with the emerging needs and aspirations of students and parents.

The main component of the project is the environmental education training for primary school teachers, school Principals and Regional Education Directorate (RED) authorities. The Institute of Nature Conservation was selected to manage this program, based on the staff of the Institute of Training and Curricula (Ministry of Education and Sciences). The training program started in 2008 and will be developed until June 2010, including 1994 teachers and 330 Principals and RED authorities, from 5 country regions. In the first year were trained 330 Regional Education Directorates (RED) representative and school Principles, and 648 elementary school teacher from 5 regions. During the second year (2009) further to the training, a cluster methodology will be implemented for promoting more active teachers and schools.

For more information please contact Zamir Dedej, Institute for Nature Conservation in Albania at zamirdedej@yahoo.com or visit www.unicef.org/albania.

18. Protected Areas system assessment in Albania

Albania: WWF’s RAPPAM Methodology is one of several ongoing efforts to develop specific assessment tools that are consistent with the WCPA Framework. With the support of WWF Protected Areas for a living planet project, the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration, in cooperation with Institute for Nature Conservation in Albania, implemented the RAPPAM methodology for assessing the protected areas system in Albania.

The workshop organized in Shëngjin, Lezhë gathered 28 participants representing 18 protected areas, NGOs and academic institutions. Participants were divided into three groups; each group discussed about the situation in their PA and filled out the questionnaire. At the end of the day results of the questionnaire shown in graphs triggered a long discussion between participants arguing on their answers. The RAPPAM workshop provided several recommendations on next steps for improving protected areas management. Recommendations, as well as all the result of the RAPPAM assessment will be further elaborated in cooperation with the MEFWA in order to prioritize them, develop an action plan, identify agencies or departments that will be responsible for changes implementation.

For more information please contact Abdulla Diku, National Project Coordinator WWF at adiku@hotmail.com or Genti Kromidha, National Scientific Coordinator WWF at gkromidha@yahoo.it
19. New habitat of *Umbra krameri*

**Republic of Srpska:** Special Nature Reserve Gromizelj is proved to be the home of *Umbra krameri*, common name European Mudminnow, today very rare fish species, classified as Vulnerable. It is included in the Berne Convention (Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats) in the Appendix I - Annex I. In order to protect this species, the Republic Institute for the Protection of cultural, historical and natural heritage of the Republic of Srpska has commenced the revision and upgrade of the protection level of Gromizelj.

*Umbra krameri* can be found in permanent freshwater marshes, rich in vegetation. It is found in Danube drainage and lower reaches of drainage Dniestr, and in the neighboring countries in the Mura River in Croatia and in the Special Nature reserve Zasavica in Serbia.

For further information please contact Jelena Kadic, Republic Institute for the Protection of cultural, historical and natural heritage of the Republic of Srpska at jelenakadic@heritagers.org.

20. Energy project in Protected Areas

**Albania:** With the support of DSA/TICOS Grant AlbaForest started the implementation of the Energy Project. Its objective is introduction of alternative energy sources (solar panels) in the tourist industry and on the cleaning actions focusing on three most popular tourist areas in Albania – Dajti, Divjaka, and Llogara National Parks. It is planned to have solar energy panels and water heaters substituting electricity and other non-renewable fuel sources. Guidance and training material are provided to National Parks’ management on how to reduce their CO2 emissions. Out of the project funds, some 50 solar energy panels for these selected PAs will be provided.

For further information please contact Mehmet Metaj, AlbaForest at albaforest@yahoo.com.

21. Protection of the Vrbas area

**Bosnia & Herzegovina:** Eko logic from Banja Luka, in cooperation with NGO Eko Pliva from Jajce, started implementation of the project Coalition pleading of law protection of Vrbas protected area, within the program "Civil society and citizens - CDG", implemented by CCI from Tuzla. This whole program is financed by the Government of the Netherlands.

Final aim of this campaigne is approval of the law on proclaiming protection zone the Vrbas river canyon. The study of natural and civilizational values of Vrbas protected area was prepared, contains the facts and evidence on the real necessity for legal protection of stream area of the Vrbas river.

In future, we expect some concrete activities of institutions in charge as well as establishing the new protected areas, which will refer to their joining to global support to nature protection and providing conditions for implementation of European directives, conventions for nature protection and sustainability of protected areas, together with improvement of quality of life for all citizens of B&H.

For further information please contact Dragan Chomich, Academic association Eko logic at academic-eco-logic@blinc.net.
On 28 March 2009 at 8.30pm local time, 2848 cities and towns across 83 countries switched off their lights for Earth Hour in a moment of global solidarity. Earth Hour is a global WWF climate change initiative. Individuals, businesses, governments and communities were invited to turn out their lights for one hour to show their support for action on climate change. The event began in Sydney in 2007, when 2 million people switched off their lights. In 2008, more than 50 million people around the globe participated. The Great Pyramids of Giza, the world’s greatest symbol of the power of collective action, head up a list of 829 landmarks around the world which switched off their lights for Earth Hour, including: Acropolis in Athens, Colosseum in Rome, Eiffel Tower in Paris, Bird’s Nest Stadium in Beijing, Christ the Redeemer in Rio de Janeiro, Empire State Building in New York… WWF was organizing and taking part in activities in SEE region: Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Montenegro.

In Serbia 30 cities, towns and municipalities reported official participation from the authorities, including capital Belgrade and larger cities such Novi Sad and Nis. Belgrade city authorities organized an official lights off event while Coca-Cola supported free entry to the observatory for star gazers. Prominent landmarks in Belgrade turned off its lights: Park and well known Kalemegdan Fortress and monument “Pobednik”-symbol of Belgrade, Parliament building, Government of Serbia, City Hall, three bridges, buildings of several ministries, few museums and theaters….An unplugged concert was performed by group Druid in the Novi Sad at Square of Liberty. Seven bands played in famous club Akademija in Belgrade to support Earth Hour 2009.

In Bosnia & Herzegovina cities Sarajevo and Banja Luka participated.

Capital of Croatia-Zagreb participated in Earth Hour, the Park of the National Theatre and the National Theatre itself were switched off.

There was an activity in one of the schools in Podgorica in Montenegro where NGO Green Home worked with classes preparing for the National Geographic Junior competition to teach them about how to save energy.

In Bulgaria, the aim was to have six municipalities participate; 42 participated with enthusiastic support by a government minister. In capital Sofia, 45 landmarks were shrouded in darkness, including all government buildings, the Parliament, President’s Office, National Palace of Culture, the National Theatre, National Bank, Nevski Cathedral, Sofia synagogue and mosque or as organizers described it “basically everything in the centre of the city”.

The world’s largest civilian administrative building, Romania’s House of Parliament in Bucharest, turned off its lights while its grounds played host to an unplugged “fiery concert” filmed from the other prominent Bucharest landmarks to switch off included the National Theatre, Opera House, Athenaeum, National Art Museum and National Military Centre, joined by tens of cafés, restaurants and hotels.

Some 20 Romanian cities and towns reported official participation from the authorities, three of them turning off all street and public buildings lights for one hour. Two million Romanians – or ten percent of the national population - took part in Earth Hour according to the National Energy Directorate.

From the small island nations of the South Pacific to the densely populated cities of the Americas, millions of people from all walks of life and corners of the world participated in Earth Hour, casting their vote in the world’s first global election between Earth and global warming. WWF is urging the world to VOTE EARTH and reach the target of 1 billion votes, which will be presented to world leaders at the Global Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen 2009. This meeting will determine official government policies to take action against global warming, which will replace the Kyoto Protocol. It is the chance for the people of the world to make their voice heard.

For further information please contact Duska Dimovic, WWF at ddimovic@wwfdcp.org.
1. IUCN e-newsletter

Conservation Made Clear is a monthly update from the world’s largest community of environmental experts. Each issue will have a theme such as and the first one focuses on water. To subscribe, please visit IUCN website.

2. Guide to the Coastal Wetlands of Albania

In the framework of activities of the AM.JO.WE.L.S (Adriatico Meridionale & Jonio Wetlands System) project, financed by European Commission under the Interreg IIIA, “Provincia di Bari” in cooperation with Albania experts prepared a Guide to the Coastal Wetlands of Albania. This catalogue in three languages (Albanian, English and Italian) pictures the reality of 10 important wetland sites of Albania, including Velopoja, Viluni, Kune-Merxhani, Vain-Ceka, Patok-Fushekuqe, Rrushkulli, Karavasta, Narta, Orikumi and Butrinti. All areas that have closely related their existence to wetlands and where there are also ancient settlements and castles showing the importance of these environments to human kind. This catalogue provides an important and simple tool for better knowing the Albanian reality and inviting those who would like to admire this wonderful part of the world rich in traditions and culture.

For more information please contact Zamir Dedej, Institute for Nature Conservation in Albania at zamirdedej@yahoo.com or visit www.amjowels.eu/public/Pubblicazione-umide-albanesi1.pdf

Trainings & Seminars - ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Partnerships for sustainable tourism development with PAs

15-17 June 2009 in Slovakia an information seminar will be held to further strengthen the contacts with PAs in Eastern Europe, inform about the Charter (European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas) and how the Charter methodology was successfully used in other protected areas. Representatives from protected area authorities, local tourism businesses and other stakeholders are very welcome to attend.

For more information please contact Petra Dippold at p.dippold@europarc.org.
2. Workshop on assessing the values and benefits of protected areas

Conservationists know much of the different values of protected areas for nature, but maybe less of the benefits for humans, and sometimes they even do not find the right words or approaches to communicate them to other stakeholders. Enabling Protected Areas’ managers to better identify, assess and communicate values and benefits of their protected areas is the main objective of a workshop which will be organized by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) together with Europarc Federation.

The workshop is directed towards European countries and will take place at the International Academy for Nature Conservation Isle of Vilm from 14 – 18 April, 2009.

For further information please contact Judith Jabs, BfN at judith.jabs@bfn-vilm.de.

3. ELBARN - European Livestock Breeds Ark & Rescue Net

Within the pan-European project ELBARN - European Livestock Breeds Ark & Rescue Net - EuroNatur and SAVE Foundation will host a workshop with international experts from South Eastern Europe.

It will take place in Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria, from 7 to 10 May 2009. The registration deadline is 2 April 2009.

For more information contact Markus Dressnandt, EURONATUR at markus.dressnandt@euronatur.org.

4. English Language for Environmentalists training

17 - 22 May 2009, Losehill Hall Peak District National Park, UK. Invites experts working in countryside and environmental conservation outside of the UK who wish to improve their English language skills. The course will provide opportunities to practise English in a variety of technical contexts, as well as individual tuition in language skills.

For more information please email training.losehill@peakdistrict.gov.uk.

5. Czech Greenways Biking summer camp for youth

The camp in its 5th year is very well run by the Cyklo Klub Kucera from Znojmo, and supposes two weeks of stay for children 6-14 years, in Maly Ratmírov, 10km from Jindřichuv Hradec on Prague Vienna Greenways in South Bohemia /area called little Canada, in the period 25 July - 8 August 2009.

For more information please contact Jan Brezik, Cyklo Klub Kucera Znojmo at jan.brezik@gmail.com.
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 and 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. You are responsible for any content that you post or transmit. The editors reserve the right to shorten and modify the text if necessary.

Thanks for taking these guidelines into consideration!

All contributions should be sent to Aleksandra Nesic, aleksandra.nesic@iucn.org.

ROfE’s Structure

Regional Office for Pan-Europe (ROfE) is a branch of IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature). Along with offices and commissions around the world, we link back to the President, Director General and Council of IUCN. For a history of IUCN and an explanation of the global structure please visit www.iucn.org.

ROfE is comprised of four IUCN offices located in Brussels, Belgrade, Tbilisi and Moscow. The head office in Brussels, is a meeting point where the Programme Office for the Southern Caucasus, The IUCN Programme Office for the Commonwealth of Independent States in Moscow and the IUCN Programme Office for South-Eastern Europe in Belgrade can disseminate information and strategies. Together as ROfE we strive to meet our goals for a sustainable Europe by utilizing local expertise and the strength of the global IUCN network.

ROfE in Belgrade

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