

# The GEF NGO NETWORK e-NEWSLETTER



**"FROM THE GROUND UP"**

**An Electronic Newsletter for the GEF NGO Network**

**Third Edition**

**July 2006**

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## **Welcome!**

Welcome to the Fourth Edition of our e-Newsletter! Our aim is to keep everyone abreast of the GEF NGO Network and its activities.

For this, our Fourth Edition, we have taken the opportunity to further inform you of the GEF NGO Network - our function, our responsibility, who we are, what we represent and where we are from. In this edition, we have focused on another region - **Europe**.

<b>MEMBER PROFILES - EUROPE : RUSSIA (to be elected)</b>	<b>MEMBER PROFILES - EUROPE : CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE (to be elected)</b>
<b>MEMBER PROFILES - EUROPE : WESTERN EUROPE <u>Central and East European Working Group for the Enhancement of Biodiversity (CEEWEB)</u></b>	<b><u>AN EXCERPT FROM CONCERNS RAISED BY ANDRAS KROLOPP</u></b>

# MEMBER PROFILES

## Europe

### **RUSSIA (to be elected)**

**The countries that fall within the Russia region are as follows : Russian Federation, Belarus, Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Krygyz Republic, Tajikstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.**

### **WESTERN EUROPE**

**The countries that fall within the Western Europe region are as follows : Denmark, Austria, Spain, United Kingdom, Switzerland, France, Belgium, Norway, The Netherlands, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Sweden, Ireland, Germany and Luxembourg.**

### **Central and East European Working Group for the Enhancement of Biodiversity (CEEWEB)**

The Central and East European Working Group for the Enhancement of Biodiversity was established in 1993, with the support of the European Union and two Hungarian NGOs; the National Society of Conservationists and Green Action. One primary aim of the organization is to help with the implementation of international tasks under the Convention on Biological Diversity. Presently CEEWEB is the only network in operation which has been set up and run by nature conservation NGOs in Central and Eastern Europe.

The mission of the Central and East European Working Group for the Enhancement of Biodiversity (CEEWEB) is the conservation of the biodiversity through the promotion of sustainable development.

Today CEEWEB represents the network of several dozens of nature conservation organizations from Central and East European countries, working together to protect the biological heritage of the region. The rich natural heritage, which is vital to the rejuvenation of these countries, is threatened by intensive agriculture, forestry and resource exploitation, as well as infrastructure developments. As CEE countries are trying to imitate the West; they repeat all the mistakes that were made by these previous models. Roads, power lines, tourist

facilities are just some elements of developments that are being constructed without any consideration for the ecological consequences. Since the ecological systems and features that need to be protected are linked and interdependent, biodiversity can not be saved by one country alone. It necessitates regional efforts, based on biogeographical characteristics.

Enormous political changes are currently taking place. The political map of Europe is changing, and so too is the focus on nature conservation. Since the existence of CEEWEB, the work of the member NGOs has shifted from nature study to political activity, which represented the natural evolution of the nature conservation movement. This indicates that the strongest driving force influencing changes in nature conservation is policy making. Therefore, just as in the case of the environmental movement, the nature conservation movement needs to address its problems at source, rather than using the "end of the pipe" approach.

Pursuing its mission the CEEWEB aims to:

- form common policies and actions for the enhancement of biodiversity in the Central and East European region;
- promote the enforcement of international conventions for nature and biodiversity conservation, with special regards to the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- promote the concept and strategies of sustainable development and contribute to their implementation;
- raise public awareness about the importance of biodiversity and its protection.

For these aims the network undertakes lobbying activities and campaigning, information and expertise exchange, capacity building and educational activities.

## **CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE (to be elected)**

**The countries that fall within the Central and Eastern Europe region are as follows : Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, Bulgaria**

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# An Excerpt from Concerns Raised by Andras Krolopp

" Following our last meeting in Washington DC, I (as former Regional Focal Point of the GEF NGO Network) would like to put forward a proposal to get us out of the impractical situation we currently find ourselves in - namely the lack of real and effective coordination by the GEF-SEC with regard to NGOs. This has been recognized as a result of the fact that at GEF-SEC there is only one person who has been given this job on a part time basis, on top of all the other tasks which are already on his portfolio. This was pointed out in the document "Assessment of the Network", as well as in GEF-SEC's response to this document presented during the last Council Meeting.

We can see as the result of this situation the imperfection of effective communication between GEF-SEC and the NGOs and among the NGOs themselves. Since this has become a rather urgent problem, it was put on the agenda at the last Council Meeting, however, the time constraint we faced did not allow us to discuss this in detail, so it was decided to put it again on the agenda for the coming General Assembly in Cape Town. The urgency to find an answer to this problem, along with the time it usually takes to arrive at a decision we might wish to opt for a quick solution now. In my opinion this solution has to be temporary, so that we would have a flexible and accommodating option. I suggest that the appointment of a coordinator at GEF-SEC should be performed out of the voluntary contribution of donor countries in the form a kind of "secondment", which thus is not part of the GEF corporate budget.

The position should be a full time position for a period of two to three years. This option would give all parties involved in the decision making the time to work out and arrive at a definitive solution. As the position would run parallel to the three-year period of the GEF programming cycle, it has the added benefit that the tasks, performance and the added value of the GEF NGO coordinator can be evaluated in the course of the decision making process, so that this assessment can be of significant value in the final solution we all wish to achieve. In this way everybody will be able to get a clear view whether this is a solution which can be made permanent, whether adjustments to the set of tasks are needed to be made, or whether a different solution should be conceived. These matters can be assessed throughout this trial period. To ensure that this "interim" coordinator is effective as quickly as possible. The appointment of someone who already has relevant experiences at working with NGOs, with the Council and with GEF-SEC should be considered instead of somebody junior."

*If you have any comments or wish to engage in discussion regarding the above, please contact Dorothy Manuel (CFP) at [dorothy@zeroregional.com](mailto:dorothy@zeroregional.com).*

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## **CONTACT THE GEF NGO NETWORK e-Newsletter**

We value your comments, suggestions and contributions. You can communicate with us at either: [info@zeroregional.com](mailto:info@zeroregional.com) or [dorothy@zeroregional.com](mailto:dorothy@zeroregional.com).

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