

## **ECOVAST REPORT**

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Editor: Pam Moore

### **EUROPEAN COUNCIL FOR THE VILLAGE AND SMALL TOWN**

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#### **EDITORIAL**

A very Happy New Year and welcome to the first ECOVAST Newsletter of 2012. Economically, we are all expecting a challenging year, but I hope it will, in other respects be a positive and stimulating time. I hope that all our members will find this issue of interest. The next one will be published in May and I would be grateful for articles, and notification of events for this by **FRIDAY 27 APRIL 2012.**

**Pam Moore**

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

First of all I would like to wish you a Happy New Year for 2012. I hope I shall meet as many of you as possible this year.

I know times have not been easy for the last two years or so and this has been reflected in the attendance at ECOVAST international events. I sincerely hope that this will improve and we will all be able to meet more frequently.

My most recent activities as President have been visits to Graz and Frohnleiten after our AGM in Vienna in October and visits to Croatia and Ireland in November and December respectively.

I went with Angus Fowler, Irmelin Küttner and Rudiger Maul to Graz to be introduced to colleagues who had been active in ECOVAST in its early formation. We were given a very good tour of the city of Graz – somewhere I had not been for many years and very worthy of its status as a World Heritage Site. We then went by train to the small historic town of Frohnleiten where ECOVAST was at one time expected to hold its official headquarters – but it did not quite happen that way. The town was well worth the visit and added to the list of small towns that gave rise to my interest in the ASSET project of ECOVAST.

In November I went to meet the Croatian Section and speak at their conference in Ivanic Grad – a small town to the south of Zagreb. It was exciting to meet so many young people interested in rural development and I wish that many other National Sections could attract more young people to ECOVAST. The following day I was taken to visit a smallish historic town in Croatia – Varazdin. I had passed it many times in travels with my family but had never had the time to visit. It now goes down as one of my favourite towns. I met someone at the conference in Ivanic who came from Slovenia and expressed an interest in joining ECOVAST, and I travelled by train to Maribor in Slovenia to meet her and we spent the day walking around this historic town – another new place for me! I hope that Slovenia will soon be represented on our list of members. It has been a long time since we had a member from there.

My final visit representing ECOVAST in 2011 was to Dublin in Ireland to attend the Irish Rural Studies Symposium. The event was not very well attended as it was at the same time as the Government's latest announcement of 'austerity measures' and none of the government employees were allowed to attend! It was a much specialised event mainly on dairy farming studies in Ireland. Still it was good for me to visit Dublin – it had changed a bit since my last visit in 1956! I also took the opportunity to look at another small historic town – Drogheda – to add to my list.

Our next International Committee meeting is planned for Germany – in April and I look forward to meeting some of you there,

**Valerie Carter, President**

## **REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL**

Our principal activity since the last Newsletter has been the ECOVAST Annual Assembly, held in Vienna in October. A short report appears later in the Newsletter. There were no elections due this year, so the International Committee is unchanged.

I attended a very useful meeting of the DG Agri Rural Development Advisory Group in December – Phil Turner, who represented PREPARE, has provided a report – see below.

As our President indicated above, the IC plans to meet this Spring in Germany. Our Biennial Assembly will be in the Autumn, over the weekend 5-7 October, at Witzenhausen, Hessen Germany. More details in the next Newsletter.

**Pam Moore**

## **OBITUARY - Jean Chanel (23.12.1933 – 13.10.2011)**

Lecturer in French, University of Marburg; Campaigner for preservation of vernacular architecture and village churches.

ECOVAST Founder Member Jean Chanel has died after a long illness in his home area in France, in a Care Home in the fine village of Jujurieux in the Jura foothills of the Alps in the area of Bouget/Dauphiné, east of Bourg-en-Bresse. He would have been 78 this December. Chanel came from the area, he was born in Lyon, his grandparents lived in the small town of Perouges. His father was a distinguished educationalist in Lyon, whose published works were translated into many languages. At school and university (Sorbonne, Paris), Chanel was noted for his talents and received many prizes. He was already much interested in the history, culture and architecture of his region and was a talented artist, leaving several fine watercolours and drawings of buildings in the region. He prepared a text on the town of Perouges which unfortunately was never published.

After study in Paris at the Sorbonne Chanel went to Marburg in 1957 becoming Lecturer in French at the Philips-University there, remaining in that position until his retirement in 1998. He continued his ongoing interest in vernacular architecture, traditional building materials and in particular the geography of art/architecture ("la géographie de l'art" or "Kunstgeographie"). He was in particular fascinated by timber-framed buildings and in central, north and eastern Hessen by the many timber-framed churches there (in France there are some in Normandy and the Champagne). He saw the sad state of many of these buildings, abandoned, neglected and threatened by demolition from a wave of new building, and became a fierce and much-feared defender of them.

Chanel was for a time in the 1970s involved in the work of the German Working Group for Vernacular Architecture (Arbeitskreis für Hausforschung). In Marburg he was particularly active in the campaign to save buildings from destruction, and from the fight to save the famous "Wirtshaus an der Lahn" (inn on the Lahn) became a founder member of the initiative group to save the appearance of Marburg (Interessengemeinschaft Marburger Stadtbild). Above all, out of his work to save and document threatened churches, Jean Chanel was initiator, founder member and first (and only) Chairman of the Förderkreis Alte Kirchen e.V. (Marburg) founded in October 1973.

Jean Chanel was much concerned for the countryside and its heritage and culture and it was only natural that he - together with Francis Noel-Baker, Irmgard Bott and Angus Fowler, the latter two like Chanel active Committee members of the Förderkreis Alte Kirchen (Marburg) - was involved in the preparation and foundation of ECOVAST. That was at the end of March 1984 in the small village of Bellnhausen/Gladenbach near Marburg in Hessen, where Chanel and the Förderkreis Alte Kirchen had saved the small timber-framed church. Chanel became a member of the International Committee of ECOVAST. He was especially important as a native French speaker in making and developing contacts with the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, especially with Gérard Baloup, leading up to the preparation and carrying out together with Angus Fowler of the first major ECOVAST conference in the Palais de l'Europe in Strasbourg November 1986. Within ECOVAST Chanel helped for many years at Committee meetings interpreting English/German/French, thus fostering a better communication between

members and aiding those who were not English speakers. Chanel took part in the foundation of the German Section of ECOVAST in 1988 and drove by car with Angus Fowler as passenger to the foundation of the Polish Section in Torun at the beginning of October 1989, driving in late September and October 1989 through East Germany at the time when the momentous changes there began to take place.

Jean Chanel was an early supporter of the "Slow Food" movement which began in Piedmont/Savoy in northern Italy, and propagated it at ECOVAST meetings, resulting in a memorable clash at the ECOVAST AGM in Remiremont/Belgium in the Autumn of 1993 with the then President of ECOVAST, Jean Pierre Dichter, who had not understood or grasped the importance of the "Slow Food" movement.

For his service saving the cultural heritage in Hessen, Jean Chanel received the honorary diploma (Ehrenbrief) of the Federal State of Hessen.

Jean Chanel was in poor health from the late 1990s onwards, suffering a series of strokes and moved to France in 2003 to be closer to his family there. He bought a fine late 19<sup>th</sup> century townhouse of an industrialist in the textile town of Tenay in a ravine leading to Chambéry but was hardly able to use it, before suffering a further stroke after which he went into the Care Home in Jujurieux where he died. It has been possible – already some months before his death - to save Chanel's photographic archive, many of his books, but unfortunately only a few of his papers.

Jean Chanel was not always an easy person to deal with. However he will be remembered as a great defender of the cultural heritage and thus his memory will be honoured.

**Angus Fowler**

## **NEWS FROM THE SECTIONS**

**AUSTRIA** - ECOVAST Austria held its Annual General Assembly on 19 December 2011. We were disappointed to have to acknowledge that landscape matters seem to become of less and less importance to officials. The Austrian national agency for the Grundtvig Programme would not support our participation in the Civilscape project because of lack of sufficient financial means. Since the Autumn of 2011, ECOVAST Austria has been an Associated partner and represented at Civilscape by Alexandru Calcatinge.

Our participation in the "Green Belt Project" of the University for Agriculture (Prof. Gerlind Weber) is still on "hold". News on that is expected in early Spring. In a way, the whole national section is on hold, as unless we can carry out our part in the "Green Belt Project" there will be no income nor tasks to fulfil. The only task last year was the very successful participation in the International Symposium on „Historic Water Supply Systems“, October 2011, related to which the ECOVAST International General Assembly was held. We still are waiting for an outcome of the award meeting related to the Symposium. So the Austrian Section for now has the status of a "sleeping beauty" waiting for a reviving kiss...

**Arthur Spiegler & Brigitte Macaria**

**CROATIA** – The third International Conference of the Croatian Section of ECOVAST on the Small Towns Project theme was held in Ivanic Grad on 11 November 2011 in co-operation with the local heritage organisation Prijateljji bastine – Amici Hereditatis. The title of the Conference: Models for Management of Historical Towns Revitalization and Development Processes, was paralleled with the subtitle of Ivanic Grad Example: Possibilities for Revitalisation and Conservation of the Old Town heritage, while other parts of the programme included the following themes: Starting Points of Urban Renewal; Examples of Historic Areas Renewal; Potentials for Development of Historic Areas; and Conclusions which made reference to the previous Conference in Moscenice in 2009. The Conference brought together 35 experts from Croatia and abroad, who presented 23 papers on the related small towns examples, including the President of ECOVAST, Mrs. Valerie Carter who also gave a paper presenting her experiences from the South East England Development Agency. The summaries of the papers were published in a booklet on Croatian and English languages, while complete papers as well as Conclusions of the Conference were published on CD and also on the web pages of both organisations ([www.ecovast.hr](http://www.ecovast.hr) , [www.prijateljji-bastine.hr](http://www.prijateljji-bastine.hr) ).

The Croatian Section of ECOVAST became an Associate partner of CIVILSCAPE, the European network of civil society for the application of the European Landscape Convention, at the Annual meeting of this international organisation which was held in Florence on 11 November 2011. Membership of this organisation gives the Section the opportunity of direct participation in its programmes and activities.

The Section is also directly involved with the proceedings of the DCSF (Danube Civil Society Forum) related to the Danube Strategy (EU SDR), which organized its second Executive Committee meeting on 16 December 2011 in Austria, Neusiedl am See, where Tihana Stepinac Fabijanac participated as a member and WG1 Co-ordinator, as well as the representative of ECOVAST and its Croatian Section. The aim of this meeting was to discuss organisational matters of the network established formally at the GA on 1 July 2011 in Eisenstadt, Austria, but also to formulate programme ideas for future work. However, the financial and organisational situation in the network has numerous difficulties which create problems for the proposed Working Groups' activities.

The Annual Meeting of the Croatian Section of ECOVAST was organised in Zagreb on 19 December 2011 where the President, Biserka Bilusic Dumbovic and the Secretary, Niksa Bozic presented the activities of our organisation in the past year. The Annual Report (in Croatian language) is on the Section's web page.

The Section has an interesting and active programme for the continuation of work in 2012, and will further co-operate with other organisations (at home and internationally) with common interests.

**Tihana Stepinac Fabijanac**

**GERMANY** – There has been a first meeting of the new committee of the German Section at the beginning of January (Irmelin, Andrea, Ivar Henckel and Angus Fowler with a guest, Michael Strecker) and we have decided on a programme for 2012. Several of us will be attending events at the Green Week towards the end of January in Berlin. We have plans to hold the AGM in Southern Germany near Lake Constance, possibly together with the Austrian Section and Swiss friends and then will concentrate on this year's Denkmal Fair in Leipzig in November with wood as its main theme.

**Angus Fowler**

**ROMANIA** - The members of Romanian ECOVAST have concentrated their efforts to secure the financing by EU funds for the restoration of monuments in rural areas. In this respect, together with the results reported in previous years, in the hilly areas of Buzău County in the village of Chiojd, a contract is being signed for the restoration of a house with traditional features built at the end of the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century which will become a study centre for the vernacular architecture of Upper Valley of Teleajen. Here we propose to hold exhibitions and meetings, popular conferences and workshops organised together with Architects' Union of Romania, to discuss regional issues of cultural identity and territorial planning, the enhancement of local tourism products and traditions. The contract for the works will be signed in the first quarter of 2012.

Also in Buzău County, approval has been obtained to finance the restoration of the Rătești Monastery (the mid-century XIX), which will preserve a valuable architectural ensemble (church, bell tower, museum, guest house, administration, etc.). The funding will begin in late 2012.

In the plains, in the county of Brăila, the ECOVAST members have been busy restoring the former Monastery Măxineni built in the first half of the seventeenth century. The church restoration is completed now and we obtained funding for the restoration of other parts of the former medieval monastery complex (administrative building, enclosure walls etc) as well as to organise a park in a large area with ponds and accommodation, which will be an important base for the religious and cultural tourism in the lowlands of the country.

Also in the plains area, in Călărași County, a financing agreement was signed to begin restoration of the former Monastery situated in the village Negoești Șoldanu built in the middle of the seventeenth century (church, enclosure walls, administrative building etc) and for the implementation of complex spaces for exhibitions and meetings.

As you can see through all the steps made by Romanian ECOVAST members, in all situations described, we consider in addition to the monument's recovery and restoration it is important to create a basis for sustainable development of these localities by developing the rural and religious tourism. Our studies made in the last years, showed us something specific for our country - the recovery and the revitalization of the important monastic nuclei which generate significant touristic activity, especially ecumenical tourism. In all these restoration sites organised restoration training schools were developed for craftsmen in traditional building crafts, supervised by our ECOVAST members.

Our members are continuing the elaboration of the studies on the historical and urban development of the villages in Prahova County, completing the inventory of buildings with traditional architecture and proposing financing programmes in order to capitalise on these (Provița de Jos, Provița de Sus, Iordăcheanu, Lapoș, Jugureni, Scurtești, Ștefești, Fulga, Poienarii Apostoli, Puchenii Mari). In these villages valuable buildings, with wood and stucco decorations, largely ignored by local ethnographers, have been discovered and recorded.

In the Advisory Committees of Representatives for Urban Development Studies, Mr. Arch. Călin Hoinărescu, on behalf of ECOVAST Romania, proposed a methodology for the elaboration of the studies that can illustrate more synthetically the heritage of the investigated localities, which has been approved.

**Călin Hoinărescu and Magdalena Banu**

**RUSSIA** - Members of Russian ECOVAST together with the scientists of the Russian Institute for Culture Research contributed to the monograph "Sociocultural Analysis and Development of Russian Territories: Problems and Solutions". This book has now been published (Main editor Dr. Olga Sevan). Dr. Olga Sevan has finished the monograph "Open Air Museum "Malye Korely". History, Methodology, Modern Situation". It will be published very shortly.

A. Ivanov, urbanist, took part on the International conference in Armenia "Development Perspectives and Preservation of the Intellectual Heritage of Architecture and Urban Construction" with the paper "Why is Old Erevan not being preserved and how could it be?" <http://www.ecovast.ru/article.htm>

Dr. Vladimir Krogus took part in the Assembly of ECOVAST in Austria, October, 2011 [http://www.ecovast.ru/conf\\_40.htm](http://www.ecovast.ru/conf_40.htm). Dr. Olga Sevan took part in the International conference in India with the paper "Traditional and modern impacts of wood on dwelling house paintings and arts of everyday life" (October, 2011). Dr. Olga Sevan took part in the 17<sup>th</sup> ICOMOS General Assembly and Scientific Symposium: Sub-theme 'Sustainable' Development or a return to the Art of Building. Paper: "Culture of Wood: Old and New" (Paris, November, 2011)

The Assembly of Russian ECOVAST was held together with the Russian Institute for Cultural Research in framework of Round Table "Culture of Wood: The Past and Nowadays". Reports about this meeting on our website : [http://www.ecovast.ru/RT\\_photo.htm](http://www.ecovast.ru/RT_photo.htm) and <http://www.ecovast.ru/images/2011/table2/RT.pdf>

**Olga Sevan**

**UNITED KINGDOM** – After a very busy year in 2010, when we hosted the ECOVAST Biennial Assembly and its associated events, the UK Section has been less active, but we hope to change this in 2012, and plan a Spring meeting for our members. This likely to be on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> May, probably in Oxfordshire. More details will be sent to UK members when available. In the interim, a number of individual members have taken opportunism to "fly the ECOVAST flag" at UK events. For example, Valerie Carter and Phil Turner regularly attend towns related events which enable them to publicise our ASSET Project, and Pam Moore serves on the UK Committee of Europa Nostra, which helps us to reach a further audience.

**Pam Moore**

### **ECOVAST GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2011**

The Annual Assembly for 2011 took place in Vienna on 23 October, and was attended by members from seven countries. As well as routine business, the meeting devoted some time to debate about the future directions which ECOVAST might take, given shortage of funds, and problems of communication with some Sections.

Although in principle the accounts of 2010 were accepted, the Auditors requested that the former Treasurer provide additional information before the accounts could be finally signed off. As this was not a Biennial Assembly, no elections took place to the International Committee, but there is one change to report in the Auditors, with Angus Fowler taking over from Irmelin Küttner, who is now Chairman of the German Section. Rudiger Maul remains as the other Auditor.

This year ECOVAST did not have an independent conference, but members were able to attend the Water Supply Symposium held in the days prior to the Assembly. Representatives from the UK and Russia took advantage of this. However, an excursion was organised by Dr Arthur Spiegler on Saturday 22 October. Phil Turner's commentary on this appears below.

**Pam Moore**

## **Vienna Symposium and Excursions**

At the time of the General Assembly in October 2011, ECOVAST members enjoyed a tour of the seven terraces of Vienna (created through the erosion of the historic river Danube). Earlier there had been the opportunity to attend the study tour and Symposium on Historic Water Supplies, organised by Gilbert Wiplinger, of the Frontinus Society and Austrian Archaeological Institute in conjunction with ECOVAST Austria.

Sextus Julius Frontinus (ca. 40–103 AD), Roman aristocrat, was author of technical treatises, especially one dealing with the aqueducts of Rome. The two day symposium ranged over the experience of international academics and volunteers on historic and present day water supply systems.

Wiplinger's own work is on Roman water supply systems and the aqueduct system of Ephesus, in Turkey, so it was fitting that the symposium began with an evening launch in the magnificent ambience of the Ephesus Museum in Vienna's Hofburg.

On the following day there was a coach tour Vienna's water supply system within the city and tracing the southern of the two Mountain Spring Lines (with open channels, pumping stations and aqueducts) to the source of the drinking water in the Lower Austrian Styrian Alps. A highlight of the day was climbing the interior spiral ramp of the soaring 67 metre water tower built in 1899 at Wienerberg in the south of the city.

*"The water reaches Vienna without pumps through galleries (some of which were cut through sheer rock) by exploiting the natural drop resulting from the difference in altitude. The gravitational energy is even made use of along the course of the pipeline to generate electricity."*  
<http://www.wien.gv.at/english/environment/watersupply/supply/way.html>

On the Saturday before the GA, Arthur Spiegler was the leader of a minibus tour into the six landscapes surrounding Vienna. We were particularly pleased that Dr Enrico Capo of Rome could be with us.

Beginning at river level in the Donau National Park, close to the Slovakian border, we discovered a surviving boat mill (Schiffmühle) near the Castle and small town of Orth where the national park has its headquarters.

Climbing through the terraces of Vienna's townscape to the Vienna Woods, we reached a traditional rustic restaurant and, after lunch, we looked down on the Danube from the Leopoldsberg (425 m, 1,394 ft), the most north eastern extent of the Alps. St Leopold's church, from 1679, and the former restaurant is now closed to visitors and is deteriorating, despite a promise from the architect who took the lease to keep it open and in good repair.

**Phil Turner**

## **THE ASSET PROJECT – Action to Strengthen Small European Towns**

Valerie Carter is in contact with the Committee of the Regions and with Phil Turner will meet them soon to discuss a joint conference with ECOVAST in Brussels in 2012

ASSET has joined the UK Action for Market Towns (AMT) in its initiative, Small Towns for Tomorrow, a Policy forum exploring the future of small towns

<http://towns.org.uk/knowledge-hub/market-towns-policy-forum/>

There is a strong and widespread concern to revive the small towns, to protect and find new life for their remarkable heritage and to strengthen their economies. This effort falls within the broader context of policies within and beyond the European Union; and can call upon programmes of regional development, rural development, spatial planning and other sectoral activities.

I have contributed an article on Europe and Hampshire UK.

<http://www.smalltownsfortomorrow.org/>

**Phil Turner**

### **The Austrian Small Town Register**

At the ASSET Small Towns seminar in Potsdam in November 2010, we heard an inspiring paper by Gerard Fasching about the Austrian Small Town Register. This article from the Austrian Section, offers more information....

Austria, to our knowledge, is the first European country that has enlisted its small historic towns. For the moment this list or table is available only in German and can be found by googling "Kleinstädte Österreich". There you will find (in the first line) "Kleinstadt Kataster Österreich; under contents/inhaltsverzeichnis click "KatasterDerKleinstädteNachLändern: Übersicht. There you will find the overview of our nine provinces. We understand "Small Towns" as towns up to some 50.000 inhabitants. We do not suggest this limitation should be taken too strictly.

This table looks incomplete, but if you click whatever province you like, for example Kärnten/Carinthia, you will find the complete list of small towns (St) and market towns (M), the year of founding (if easily known) and the number of inhabitants; the first column shows the postal code, the third the altitude. The other columns to the right are not yet finished – and are not expected to be filled in soon, as they need thorough research that cannot be done voluntarily). They will tell what schools are in the town, which regional authority governs it, if it has a health centre and other information of public interest.

To get a first impression what this register - a work in process - looks like, we add an excerpt, the first fifteen entries of Small Towns and Market Towns of the eastern-most Austrian province "Burgenland" (see below at end of article). To the right of the table you will find some empty columns, that's why we still have to call it a work in progress.

There are, at the moment, 182 Small Towns in Austria of which 129 we would call "Historic Small Towns" due to the criteria we have developed. These criteria are:

- the (central) historic and public court, the line(s) of historic facades on multi-storied historic houses (around the court), dense network of narrow lanes and houses (around the historic court) castle (or ruin) and/or monastery, walls (or some perceivable remains), major place of worship (cathedral, mosque, synagogue), authenticity and "unique sense of place" (associated values).

Besides the "historic criteria" there are some functional criteria that Small Towns fulfil for their region, independent of their historic value, such as:

- regional authorities, school centre, health centre, shopping centre, core of public traffic (trains, buses), destination for tourism (e.g. culture and sport events), greater number of "higher professions".

In this context it might be interesting to you to compare the differences between "towns" and "villages", which you also will find in the "contents" as mentioned above. This is of special importance, as there exist a huge number of "villages" that have more inhabitants than many "towns".

The official body in Austria that for the moment is most interested in our work on "Small Historic Towns" is the "Federal Council of Towns"/"Österreichischer Städtebund" which publicised our view on Small Towns in its periodic publication "Österreichische Gemeindezeitung".

So we do hope to stimulate other countries or at least provinces and regions to enlist/identify their (historic) small towns in the way we have done, or at least in a way that are comparable with each other.

### **EXTRACT Burgenland, Austria**

Nr	Name	PLZ	GKZ	HH	St	Jahr EW2006	Öffentliche Verwaltung	Bildung	Anmerkung	Netzwerk
1	<a href="#">Andau</a>	7163	AUT10701	120	M	2451				
2	Apetlon	7143	AUT10702	120	M	1849				
3	Bernstein	7434	AUT10902	617	M	2321				
4	Breitenbrunn	7071	AUT10301	136	M	1766				
5	Deutsch Kaltenbrunn	7572	AUT10501	262	M	1796				
6	Deutschkreutz	7301	AUT10801	192	M	1454 3131				
7	Donnerskirchen	7082	AUT10302	193	M	1702				
8	Draßmarkt	7372	AUT10802	341	M	1398				
9	Eberau	7521	AUT10403	214	M	967				
11	Frauenkirchen	7132	AUT10705	124	St	2843				
12	Gols	7122	AUT10707	130	M	3603				
13	Großhöflein	7051	AUT10303	194	M	1850				
14	Großpetersdorf	7503	AUT10905	311	M	1564 3556				
15	Güssing	7540	AUT10405	229	St	1459 3812				

**Arthur Spiegler and Brigitte Macaria**

### **Europa Nostra - 'EUROPEAN HERITAGE ALLIANCE 3.3'**

ECOVAST joined the '**EUROPEAN HERITAGE ALLIANCE 3.3**' that was launched by more than 25 European and International networks and organisations active in the wider field of cultural heritage on the occasion of the European Heritage Congress 2011 organised by Europa Nostra in Amsterdam.

The name of this newly created Alliance refers to the article 3.3. of the consolidated version of the Lisbon Treaty of the European Union which stipulates that "[The Union] shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity, and shall ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced."

### **Towards a strategy for cultural and natural heritage**

The organisations and networks represented at the constitutive meeting of the Alliance intend to advocate together the necessity to develop a future EU strategy for cultural and natural heritage, in compliance with article 3.3. of the Treaty, and will seek to develop stronger synergies between their respective activities with regard to European policy.

These organisations and networks bring together Europe's civil society organisations, historic cities and villages, museums, heritage professionals and volunteers, (private) owners of collections of artefacts, historic buildings and cultural landscapes, educators, town planners, etc. The "European Heritage Alliance 3.3" thus represents a very large constituency composed of tens of millions of Europe's citizens. Europa Nostra, the Voice of Cultural Heritage in Europe, will be acting as facilitator of the newly created alliance.

As first concrete steps of their joint action, the European Heritage Alliance "3.3" decided to endorse the "we are more" campaign launched by the Culture Action Europe in strategic partnership with the European Cultural Foundation. This campaign urges the EU Institutions to allocate adequate financial resources for culture - in particular through the future Culture Programme and Structural Funds - in the period 2014-2020. Each member of the Alliance will actively encourage their respective members and supporters to sign the "we are more" manifesto.

Members of the Alliance also agreed to prepare a joint position paper on the contribution which Europe's cultural and natural heritage brings to a series of topical agendas of the European Union, and in particular the Agenda 2020, the Digital Agenda, the Sustainability Agenda, the Creative Europe Agenda, the Research & Innovation Agenda, the Climate Change Agenda and the Territorial Cohesion Agenda of the Union.

*information from* <<http://www.europanostra.org/news/164/>> where the full range of organisations can be seen.

**Phil Turner**

### **"The Village " - a new book by an ECOVAST member**

The problems of rural areas are diverse and profound. Quality publications are therefore all the more welcome, and attract attention from a wider audience. Such a work was published in 2011 under the title: "The Village" – Country Life in Germany – Yesterday and Today.

The book gives a comprehensive insight into the living areas, developments and problems of the village. The author is Prof. Gerhard Henkel. He is a member of the group, which founded ECOVAST as a European organisation in 1984 in the village of Bellnhausen.

The detailed description is of the village as a living environment in the wider rural area. A representation of rural areas from the perspective of small towns would certainly produce a somewhat different picture. But the village represents still the basis of rural areas. As an economic and living style villages have highly helped to shape the European cultural space. However, there is no single type of village. Characteristic is a rather large variety of economic, structural and cultural forms.

The book presents first the village in the context of European civilisation in the last 200 years. In 1800 agriculture and the crafts of the village were the very basis of states and their societies.

The model of "The Village" is to present a series of constant developments as well as abrupt changes. Today, the inhabitants of villages are mostly fully integrated in the many-sided economy. However, the jobs are now on the whole located in the cities of each region. For most villages agriculture is still important, not least because of its care and preservation of the surrounding landscape. On this landscape is based tourism, which has become for many places a significant source of income. A new economic sector could rise through renewable energy.

Much space is devoted to the village as a political, social and cultural habitat. The political situation as well as the previously existing infrastructure have unfortunately suffered significant losses. The autonomy of most villages was abolished by the inclusion in larger communities. Many important village facilities, such as its own school, post office and village shop were abandoned, sometimes even the village inn. Despite these noteworthy losses many villages have preserved their lifestyle and have developed it. Closely tied to the village is the special charm of country living, that has many facets. Usually retained is the high social capital of the villages, this is mainly due to the high degree of personal acquaintance and the involvement and active participation in local communities. With an appropriate initiative, villages are even able to offer cultural events - as do small towns.

In recent decades the outer screen of most villages has been upgraded. Public measures, such as village renewal have contributed significantly to this. As a result, the village remains an attractive style of living to many people.

What makes this book more interesting than many others? An important point is its focus on the reality of the village. Almost every subject is made clear by appropriate pictures or illustrated by examples of surviving villages. It is therefore to be expected that many readers will understand the village much more better and find sympathy with it.

**Ralf Bokermann**

## **Report on the meeting in Brussels of the EC DG Agriculture Rural Development Advisory Committee**

Pam Moore represented ECOVAST and Phil Turner was there on behalf of PREPARE. We were pleased that the meeting was so positive. The Advisory Committee, though not so well attended as previously, is working well.

New Working Groups (inaugural meeting and workshops had taken place on 11 November) were welcomed by all and convergence and consensus between farmers and others is emerging.

Working Groups are:

WG1 Agricultural Competitiveness

WG2 Environment

WG3 Other Major Goals of Rural Development

In future if the WGs and the Advisory Committee meet on same or previous/ following day that could cover travel costs to both.

The Common Strategic Framework approach presented by DG Regio, covering 5 funds, is a positive step.

Also positive is the proposed European Innovation Partnership.

Some papers are available in the PREPARE newsletter of December 2011

<<http://www.preparenetwork.org/news-archive/95-new-issue-of-prepare-newsletter>>

### **Priorities and instruments for the Rural Development Policy after 2013**

Mike Mackenzie, DG Agri, gave a useful presentation on the operational priorities and measures proposed for CAP post 2013. This explained in clear and simple terms the paper published on 13 October 2011.

*"COM(2011) 627/3 2011/0282 (COD) Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) {SEC(2011) 1153} {SEC(2011) 1154}"*

New points include:

- Advice will extend to SMEs (Small and Medium Sized Businesses).
- Support for all small farms in the EU, rather than 'semi-subsistence in new member states'.
- Village renewal does not change.
- Co-operation includes environmental and social aspects, without encroaching on LEADER, and LAGs will now be able to use several funding sources
- A new European Innovation Partnership network will involve non-farmers but be of benefit to agriculture - more information early in 2012.

## **Structural funds in rural areas after 2013**

A DG Regio spokesperson looked to rural areas - beyond farming. The potential and vitality of rural demographics and climate change.

2014 -2020 vision is for a strong and integrated territorial economic development, including rural and fishery areas. Funds will be used in an integrated way - DGs acting together.

There will be 'community-led local development over the 5 funds : European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF), the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF).

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/11/663>

LEADER is one model. There was emphasis on the LEADER tradition for urban, rural, coastal and cross border areas led by the local community. It would be important to balance the representation of interests in local action groups.

There would be sub-regional and multi-sectoral development strategies, agreed by the managing authorities for the 5 funds. A 'lead fund' would be chosen by the managing authority. Groups would take over tasks from the managing authority. Working under ESF with NGOs, there would be learning from good practice, best examples. Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI) could be used. More information would be available soon. There would be use of poverty mapping to address specific needs of areas affected by social and economic disadvantage.

There is as yet no model. Each member state (MS) has different conditions / traditions for a managing authority. MS are to indicate detailed arrangements and the Commission will take a view. MS should ensure that all partners, stakeholders, civil society are included in the process.

## **Presentation of the European Innovation Partnership (EIP)**

Christiana Canenbley (DG Agri) introduced the topic . Links between science and practice.

1. The idea of the EIP is not ad hoc from DG Agri. It comes from EU 2020. It is a flagship innovation union. A partnership without new funding or policy measures. Aimed to face the challenge of drawing relevant actors together to:

- foster communication

- identify gaps in existing policy measures

- put forward new measures to close those gaps

2. Societal changes are faced:

- more old people - active and healthy

- mining of raw materials and recycling

- sustainable agriculture in the context of: food demand 70% by 2050; production increase; supply reaction; competition for bio-energy and feeds ( at the expense of the environment and deteriorating natural resources).

Looking for innovative approaches to increase productivity without damaging the environment. Asking the right research questions. Many people, including farmers have already pointed out that research and solutions do not connect with farming practice. There is a need to translate complex research findings to improve understanding. Good networking could close the gaps. There will be funding for applied research, testing, concrete actions - clause in the co-operation measure (Article 36).

Work in November 2011 revealed that MS are all different. DG Agri would issue a communication on the EIP.

**Phil Turner**

### **From the ARC 2020 newsflash December 2011**

On November 24th ARC contributed to a press statement with The European Forum on Nature Conservation and Pastoralism, the European Environmental Bureau, BirdLife Europe and IFOAM EU Group calling for all stakeholders to be involved in CAP reform talks. In addition, the collaborative article in the European Parliament Magazine featured in November has now been translated in German, Polish, French and Romanian.

### **Statement by civil society NGOs on the selection of organizations speaking in the Common Agricultural Policy reform debate of the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November 2011, organised by the Polish presidency, in the European Parliament:**

"We deplore the lack of involvement of civil society in such an important debate. Sadly, it further increases the impression that key decision makers in the Parliament and Council see themselves primarily as serving the interest of those who have benefitted from this multi-billion euro policy, rather than the general interest.

We ask the next EU Presidencies and the European Parliament Agriculture Committee to organise the next CAP reform debates involving a fair representation of civil society, including the various sectors active in such debate, as the European Commission was doing in 2010/11."

For more information, may I recommend the useful and user friendly ARC 2020 website - [www.arc2020.eu](http://www.arc2020.eu)

**Pam Moore**

### **NEWS FROM PREPARE**

The successful PREPARE Gathering June/July 2011 in Zlatibor, Republic Serbia was an important opportunity to discover Serbia's rural life, to exchange experiences from across Europe and to contribute to integrated and sustainable development of rural areas. The National Rural Development Network of Serbia became a member of PREPARE Network in the autumn.

A 9th Rural Parliament of Estonian Villages was held on western coast of Estonia, Roosta in beginning of August. As a part of event's program, PREPARE held a seminar in order to exchange knowledge about similar initiatives of rural parliaments in different EU Member states. More: [www.kodukant.ee](http://www.kodukant.ee)

During the last two-day meeting in Brussels in October, PREPARE Organizing Group accepted many important resolutions, including the call for bilateral cooperation of PREPARE member organizations with the target countries for 2011/2012.

The January 2012 newsletter of PREPARE may be downloaded from <http://www.preparenetwork.org/>

News of past and forthcoming events includes:

Slovenia's Rural Development Network together with Slovenian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food organized First Slovenian Rural parliament (SRP), which took place on **7th December 2011** in castle Jable near Ljubljana. The event gathered around 150 participants – rural activists, local and national representatives, entrepreneurs, politicians and decision makers with purpose to collaboratively discuss and seek solutions to issues facing rural development in Slovenia.

In **November 2011** Croatian Rural Development Network, together with member associations LAG Gorski kotar, Slap and TINTL, organised two round tables on rural development including the presentation of LEADER Ordinance. Representatives from the Ministry of agriculture, fisheries and rural development presented the content and procedure of adoption of the Ordinance expected in 2012.

Young Professionals in Local Development" (YPLD)YPLD is a network of professionals aged between 18 and 40 involved in both international and local development through the nature of their education and professional activity. Due to our worldwide partners (currently we have partners in the USA, Europe and Africa) and our current regional representatives we plan from the start to give it a global reach. YPLD is planning a workshop on **February 18-19th 2012** in Romania (Siret city, Suceava county) on Local development and the role of different stakeholders in this process. Invited as lecturers at this event are representatives of FAO, EC, Groupe de Bruges, YPARD and others. Contact: dr.ing. Codrin Paveliuc-Olariu, [office@ypld.org](mailto:office@ypld.org)

Latvian Rural forum is organizing an international conference "Local Identity Product (LIP) – sustainable support systems for communities in Europe", which will bring its participants in a wintery journey from our capital city Riga through Mežotne to Aizkraukle district from **15th till 18th February 2012**.

Rural at the Edge – the 2nd Nordic conference for rural research **21 – 23 May 2012**, Joensuu, Finland. Organizer: University of Eastern Finland

This research conference will follow the subthemes:

- Cultures and people, places and identities
- Natural resources governance and landscape management
- Rural economy and entrepreneurship
- Policies and politics of the rural

More: <http://www.mua.fi/ruralattheedge/>

**Compiled by Phil Turner**

## **EVENTS NOTIFIED TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL**

**May 28 – June 2 2012** Europa Nostra Congress Lisbon, Portugal – more information on EN website [www.europanostra.org](http://www.europanostra.org)

**November 22-24 2012** Denkmal - European Trade fair for Conservation, Restoration & Old Building Renovation Leipzig, Germany – see [http://www.leipziger-messe.de/LeMMon/denkmal\\_web\\_eng.nsf](http://www.leipziger-messe.de/LeMMon/denkmal_web_eng.nsf)