



ECOVAST REPORT December 2012

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to our third Newsletter of 2012, and the first to be edited by me.

Please send copy for the first 2013 Newsletter to me, at p.turner@semantise.com by 14 February 2013.

May I urge everyone to influence the government departments in their Member States to support the proposed Common Strategic Framework and Community Led Local Development.
(see the item on ASSET)

Phil Turner

Valerie Carter, President, thanks Pam Moore



At our Assembly in Witzenhausen, Pam Moore retired as Secretary General for ECOVAST International.

Pam has been a member of ECOVAST since 1999 and a member of the International Committee since 2000. Pam was elected to the post of Secretary General at the General Assembly in Hungary in 2004 and stood down at the General Assembly in Germany in 2012. She was responsible for holding 1 or 2 International Committees and an Annual General Assembly each year, securing events in a number of different countries including Austria, Croatia, Germany, Luxembourg, Slovakia and the United Kingdom. She also represented ECOVAST or met ECOVAST members in other countries including Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Finland, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Romania and Russia.

Pam was responsible for editing and publishing the ECOVAST Newsletter three times a year - a considerable task much appreciated by the many members of ECOVAST who cannot attend international meetings, allowing them to keep in touch with what has been happening during the ECOVAST year. She will be sorely missed by the International Committee.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

WORK WITH PREPARE

As President of ECOVAST, I am also a Member of the PREPARE Organising Group and attended most of their meetings during 2012 – including Workshops staged in Turkey and Bosnia & Herzegovina, and attending the Swedish Rural Parliament. Short reports on these 3 events are set out below.

PREPARE WORKSHOP KIZILCAHAMAN, TURKEY: 14-18 June 2012

I attended a 2 day workshop in Turkey, held at Kizilcahaman, 70 kilometres north of Ankara in Asian Turkey, in a hotel set in a thermal area in the mountains between the Anatolian Plain and the Black Sea. The purpose was to meet NGO's in Turkey who are involved in rural development.

The event revealed great enthusiasm by the Turkish groups. The first day was an international event where PREPARE explained their work - purpose of PREPARE network and the work of Rural Parliaments. My contribution from ECOVAST was to emphasise the importance of heritage and the potential for rural tourism. Then the members of Turkish NGO's who are involved in rural development in Turkey (32 different NGO's attended from 13 different regions) set out what they did and what experience they had learned from their many diverse projects.

The second day was a meeting for the Turkish NGO's with several speakers – Including the Turkish Development Foundation; 2 representatives from Government Departments (the Ministries of Development and of Agriculture – neither were politicians); speakers

representing Universities, Cultural and Ecological Sectors (green issues) and other associations including a producer association.

The Turkish representatives expressed a wish to join the Prepare network and the members of Prepare welcomed this and offered to help them achieve this. PREPARE was very impressed with what we saw and heard and welcomed so much enthusiasm and commitment to rural development in Turkey. The event had been useful in allowing everyone to hear each other's views which will assist in building trust between the rural NGO's in Turkey.

Rural development is not just about food production and agriculture. Food is not just a global issue – it is also about local produce. However the next step is to build up a strong national rural network that they can all belong to – with agreement on rural priorities and building a common understanding of what local policies are needed. This will take time. Very little was said about 'civil society' or about what local people in the varied rural communities really want. NGO's will need to develop strong and direct links with people in rural communities. It would also be of value to achieve a meaningful dialogue with the Turkish government.

PREPARE WORKSHOP BANJA LUKA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: 18- 19 July 2012

A second workshop was held in Bosnia - arranged by the Civic Association named 'Agency for Co-operation, Education and Development' or ACED from the Srbska Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and based in Banja Luka. It is a non-party, non-government, non-profit making organisation funded by membership and its own activities. It advocates humanitarianism, educational, cultural, health and environmental objectives serving development and progress of society but only operates in this part of Bosnia not the whole country. There were 54 attendees at the two day event – including the Ministry of Agriculture of the Srbska Republic; the University of Banja Luka. There was a good spread of delegates from municipalities spread across the different ethnic parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Some of the delegates above represented Local Action Groups (LAGS) from the EU Leader programme in non-EU countries. There were separate workshops on Policy; Networks and Leader.

The whole event had been lively with a great deal of interest in pursuing rural interests in Bosnia and Herzegovina even though there were many challenges to face. There was an overriding need for Ministers in BiH at all levels to work together and for the NGO sector to work with Government to help speed up developing structures and decision making. The Bosnian NGO sectors recognised that they faced a challenge if they wanted to stage a formal 'PREPARE Gathering'.

They agreed that they would co-operate with each other; map their present situation in Bosnia; look at different options; recognise that they need to develop a positive

partnership with the public sector. PREPARE could not lead the NGO's in Bosnia – they must take the lead themselves on moving forward but PREPARE can offer lots of knowledge from their different experiences and help with the process when asked by Bosnia. PREPARE agreed that they will be willing to assist BiH as their work progresses. NB: If eventually Bosnia wishes to become a member of PREPARE then they will have to form one single rural network – not one for the Federation and one for Srbska.

SWEDISH RURAL PARLIAMENT, RONNEBY, SWEDEN:
6-10 September 2012

The PREPARE Organising Group attended two of the 3 days of the Swedish Rural Parliament held at Ronneby in Blekinge county in southern Sweden in September and held their Organising Group meeting on the final day. I attended the whole 3 day event – my first visit to a Rural Parliament. Sue Shaw, Chair of ACRE (Action for Communities in Rural England), also attended the event in Sweden.

ACRE reports: The Swedish Rural Parliament was the focus for a development of European significance. The merger of two pan-European rural networks, the European Rural Alliance (ERA) and European Rural Community Association (ERCA) will pave the way for a major network to enable the voice of rural people from across Europe to reach policy makers in Brussels. It will also enable the thousands of rural communities across Europe to forge links and share their experiences of making rural development work. The European networks also pledged to initiate the first European Rural Parliament, to take place within the next 2 years. This will provide a direct link to politicians and policy makers at European and also national levels.

DG AGRI EVENT BRUSSELS: 22-23 November 2012

I also represented PREPARE at the 2 day event of DG Agri Policy Committee and Workshops. PREPARE is a member of the Workshop 3 on 'rural development'. WG finalized their recommendations to the Rural Development Advisory Committee on day two, when Phil Turner represented ECOVAST.

A report from Phil may be found on the ECOVAST UK Blog:

<http://ecovast.webs.com/apps/blog/show/20609903-brussels-november-2012-rural-development>

And from Valerie:

http://www.preparenetwork.org/files/uploads/Report_WG3_Rural_development_Final.pdf



Valerie with Istvan Bali, President of APURE

WORK ON RURAL TOURISM

As President of ECOVAST I have also been asked to speak twice on rural tourism. As previously reported I have carried out in-depth research on heritage assets in South East rural towns. The first time was in Osijek, Croatia (also previously reported) when I was also on both national and regional television news. The second time was in Romania – report set out below.

EUROPEAN CONGRESS ON RURAL TOURISM;
PIATRA NEAMT, ROMANIA: 7-9 October 2012

I attended this Congress in Romania organized by EUROGITES (also a member of ECOVAST) which was called “Innovative Tourism – New Life for Rural Areas”; and I ran one of the workshops on culture and rural tourism. The workshop was held in the Monastery School of the Piatra Monastery which trains both monks and priests. We were welcomed by the Leader of the School and by the local Mayor. Both the Leader of the School and myself were interviewed and appeared on Romanian television.

There were many presentations at this workshop including one from our Russian Section (Olga Sevan) on Russian Monastery Towns; one from our Romanian Section (Magdalena Banu) on the work they are doing on the leaflet of Byzantine architecture in Romania and Bulgaria; and the third one from myself on the work I had done on Heritage Assets in 165 small rural towns in South East England to demonstrate a methodology for recording heritage which can then be used to attract tourists to rural areas who are interested in history, architecture and heritage.

The morning event went on for a long time as there was so much interest and we were finally treated to a group of children from a local school in their national costumes who demonstrated local songs and dances. In the afternoon we were taken on a tour of several of the historic but still active monasteries nearby. The conference was very well attended with more than 200 delegates and was received with great enthusiasm by the local Romanian people.

WORK WITH CIVILSCAPE

As President of ECOVAST I am also a member of the Board of CIVILSCAPE which usually holds its meetings through Skype but arranged an end of year session in Germany attached to a conference on renewable energy.

ENERGYSCAPES WORKSHOP & CONFERENCE IN BONN< GERMANY: 26-31 October 2012

I attended a workshop and conference in Bonn on renewable energy. The CIVILSCAPE Board Workshop was held in Konigswinter and each board member gave a short presentation of the work on energy in their country.

I covered Energy in the UK – specifically England. There was a day tour of the local area looking at energy sites – particularly the vast brown coal open site near Cologne. The main conference was held in Bonn and was well attended and lots of different energy types were discussed. The event was attended by several of the National sections of ECOVAST – Arthur Spiegler from Austria; Olaf Linke from Germany and Viktoria Momeva-Altiparmakovska and Vesna Kocankovska from Macedonia.

EUROPEAN SEMINAR AT METZ, FRANCE: 15-16 November 2012

As members of ECOVAST, Phil Turner and I had been talking to the Committee of the Regions – their Urban/Rural Network (called RURBAN) on the importance of small rural towns. ECOVAST was accordingly invited to the first seminar of their findings on European on ‘Sustainable Urban Rural Partnerships’ held in Metz, France on November 16, 2012. It was to be the first of a series of 3 conferences.

Sustainable urban-rural partnerships can be an important tool for territorial development by ensuring better connectivity between rural and urban local economies and communities. They can help to further economic development, reduce urban sprawl and land take, make service provisions more efficient over larger territories and reverse negative demographic trends in rural areas. The European Commission wishes to launch a direct dialogue with Europe’s countries, regions and cities in order to discuss the role of rural-urban development in the cohesion policy for 2014-2020. This event was to bring together around 200 participants, including high level European policy makers and representatives of urban and rural networks, associations and European institutions.

The event in Metz proved to be very interesting. I took a Paper on the importance of small rural towns and left it with the other publications and all 20 copies were taken. There were several presentations on the work of both urban and rural partnerships – the main rural one being from Gerard Peltre of RED. The conference promoted the idea of functional areas rather than administrative areas and they agreed that this would include major urban centres, peri-urban (or peri-rural areas) that surround them, small rural towns, rural areas with villages and peripheral rural areas. It acknowledged that all of these contributed to the economy of the functional areas and not everything relied on the major urban area. I stressed particularly that small rural towns themselves served a hinterland of villages and countryside – providing both jobs and services.http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/conferences/urban/2012/programme_en.cfm

The second conference will be staged in Warsaw in the Spring of 2013 and the final event will be in the autumn.

Valerie Carter, President

ECOVAST BIENNIAL ASSEMBLY 2012

ECOVAST's International Annual Meeting was held in the German town of Witzzenhausen (region Werra-Meisner) of 5 to 7 October 2012.

The result of the Elections of the Officers and Committee were:

President Mrs Valerie CARTER (UK)

Vice Presidents:

Mrs Tihana STEPINAC FABIJANIC (Croatia)

Dr Arthur SPIEGLER (Austria)

Mr Angus FOWLER (Germany)

Mr Philip Turner (UK)

Treasurer Mrs Andrea WEIGERT (Germany)

Secretary General. Post vacant. Valerie Carter is now the contact to be shown on the ECOVAST website.

The Assembly was complemented by accompanying events, with several workshops and an excursion to the countryside in order to inform Witzzenhausen space - positive and negative processes and best practices based on the ECOVAST concept of Heritage Trails.

Seminar on small historic towns (See also the contribution by Enrico Capo, below)

Arthur Spiegler organised a workshop on historic small towns on October 4th with the help of the German section. This aimed to gain an overview of the status quo of our ideas and the facts about small towns and to speak about the option to have an international small town conference in Germany in 2013. This should hopefully be achieved with the help of the European Commission that seems to begin taking small towns seriously as decisive part of the European heritage and identity.

There was free discussion amongst members of ECOVAST about how to most effectively present the problems of small towns in the EU at the upcoming conference in Metz, Sustainable Urban-Rural Partnership (Valerie Carter). The goal is to encourage the EU to formulate a tighter policy on small towns, especially small historic cities - the small towns as a development resource, especially as the European Commission proposes integrating activities and funding for urban and rural areas - DG Regio and DG Agri acting together through Community Led Local Development.

Meeting of the International Committee

The committee agreed the agenda for the Annual Meeting, accepted the minutes of last meeting in Vienna (October 2011), and the meeting of the International Committee of the Achberg, Germany (April 2012).

6th October

Seeing cultural and economic characteristics of the region Werra-Meisner (Ralf Bokermann)

German central mountainous area of 1024 km² and 104,000 inhabitants

Presentation of the project "The region creates the future" - Association for Regional Development

A trip through the region Werra-Meisner

First case study was GARTENBACH - the village where a regional chain store, TEGUT, in cooperation with local authorities and organizations of persons with disabilities, established a small country store as part of a regional development program "Revival of a Village Store - store + cafe + lounge, collecting prescriptions for drugs and distribution at home, sales of regional products (fruits and vegetables) and some local products (soaps). The program includes the employment of people with disabilities.

**Gartenbach store visit**

Second case study BAD SOODEN - a small historic town with timber framed buildings.



Third case study KLEINWACH a village with a minimum number of jobs (restaurant, accommodation for cyclists and canoeists)

The fourth visit was to a factory for the manufacture of mobile chicken coops - innovative ideas.

Then a tasting experience at RINGGAU - a dairy producing 14 kinds of cheese, marketed locally, regionally, internationally, purchasing environmentally certified milk from nearby farms to produce 80 kg of cheese.



Ringgau Cheese tasting



BURG LUDVIGSTEIN Castle - German Youth Center- was seen at the end of the afternoon. Recently opened in the grounds is Germany's largest house of straw bales, 1,000 m². Timber framing, lime plaster and other biomaterials were used in the construction, All was made possible by grants and 41,000 volunteer hours. Later there was a tasting of German wines.



Parallel working groups for Architecture and Landscape 7th October

- There is action to bringing together local people and other organizations to prevent demolition of parts of the historic wall around Witzhausen itself!
- The Austrian section together with the Faculty of Agriculture is planning a project "Green Ring" - Arthur Spiegler will send the text to ECOVAST Sections so that they can express interest in participating.

In Leipzig on 22 November Angus Fowler, for ECOVAST and Europa Nostra, is moderating a session on "Wooden Churches"

contributed by **Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić**

Further thoughts by Enrico Capo: Small Historic Towns workshop

One of the characteristics to consider for classifying a small town like history, is the vision that people have towards their city itself, i.e. if they consider it to be (or not) a historic city.

One example is provided by the town of Vaison in the South of France. VAISON had no particular feature to be classified historic town, until the priest (archeology enthusiast) organized the first excavations. Slowly we discovered the ruins of the Roman era, well preserved, and it created an archaeological area outdoors. The discovery electrified the population, and the name of the city was changed to Vaison la Romaine. The people discovered that they belong to an historic city.

The "rural villages" in major cities

Almost all major European cities to hide inside their small towns areas that have similar characteristics to those of a rural village. These are small well serviced areas where there are frequent social interactions, face to face, where people have the sense of belonging to a specific location. An example is the RIONE BORGO in Rome, close to St. Peter. For ten years I studied - with students and Teachers Assistants Social Professionals of LUMSA University, which has its headquarters in the Rione Borgo - the characteristics of Rione and its people, their sense of commonality, local distinctiveness and the relations with the outside world.

The heart of Rione Borgo consists of small alleys, too narrow for a bus to pass. At the time of our research, craftsmen and traders occupied almost all the shops in the neighborhood. Houses were rather poor, without elevators and with impassable stairs. The population was largely formed of retirees because the younger generations had emigrated elsewhere during their marriage.

The relationships between the inhabitants were face to face. If we would buy bread, we would meet many artisans and merchants in the area. Young people had built a wooden table with benches, where we played cards after a game of football on the Square Vaschette. In the part of Rione nearest St. Pierre were found a bar, a tavern and small restaurants.

The Holy Year of 2000 has upset the balance of social Rione and several houses have been converted into dormitories for tourists in elite luxury, and there has been an invasion of lawyers, doctors, etc.. who took the place of the old inhabitants.

This invasion partly modified the relationship between the old inhabitants, who consider the new tenants with the new term "Lanzichenecci", referring to the invading forces of centuries past. The wooden table (symbol of a spirit of positive neighborhood) no longer exists because the University LUMSA needed to extend the area of its premises. Old people found difficulty with face to face relationships and the neighborhood markedly changed.

Enrico Capo, Rome

Converted to English using Google Translate

NEWS FROM THE SECTIONS

Austria

Content:

- 1) The GreenBelt-Project/BOKU/ECOVAST AT
- 2) The Green Belt as a matter of landscapes and World Heritage
- 3) Taking part on the "Stadtkern Symposium", Voitsberg, Styria
- 4) Taking part at the conference "Strategies for the Future of the Alpine Region" Salzburg
- 5) Taking part at the G.A. 2012, Witzenhausen and preparing the small town symposium.
- 6) Taking part at the CivilScape meeting in Bonn.

Editor's note: A continuous green space of linked habitats:

"The **German Green Belt (Grünes Band Deutschland)** is a project of [Bund Naturschutz](#), one of Germany's largest environmental groups. The project was begun in 1989. On the former [inner German border](#), there is a strip of land approximately 1400 km long (with an area of more than 100 km²) that remained nearly untouched since the construction of the Berlin Wall. It stretches from [Travemünde](#) on the [Baltic](#) to the [Czech border](#), near [Hof](#) in [Bavaria](#). A number of endangered species can be found there."

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_Green_Belt

1. The ongoing GreenBelt-Project

The task for the Austrian national section in the European project "GreenBelt" is to identify and characterise the landscapes around the project regions one to six. (Ex-borders: EX-DDR R/BRD, Germany/Czech Republic, AT/SK, AT/HU, AT/SL, SL/IT). The work will use the ECOVAST method "A Guide to Good Practice". A main reason why we have been called to join in this project is the possibility of involving interested local and regional lay people. Close co-operation is intended with Boku (Institute of Spatial Planning and Rural Development (IRUB) University of Agricultural Sciences, Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna)

Meanwhile we have done two PR-workshops and fixed the third in December this year. The remaining three will be completed in spring 2013.

2. A promising spin-off from this task is the idea to raise a European project of identifying all landscapes along the "Green Belt", or in other words, that are connected by the GreenBelt throughout Europe. This could be a joint project between ECOVAST and CivilScape, but a "Lead Partner" for a project of this dimension has to be found. Any helpful ideas in this direction are very welcome!

A second, related one is the idea of trying to achieve world heritage status for the "Green Belt". Both ideas have been put forward to the board members of CivilScape when taking part at the conference "EnergyScape" end of October in Bonn. We have found

also other (German) organisations that strive for the same target. We agreed that this target should be followed in bite-sized chunks. The first could be to organise a feasibility study to analyse and evaluate the great difficulties to be expected.

3. ECOVAST Austria took part in other interesting meetings including the conference on "Town Centres" on behalf of small towns (Voitsberg, Styria, October 19th) focusing on examples of good practice (an excellent example is to be seen in Leoben, Styria, with the modern shopping centre in old walls in the core of the town centre).

In Salzburg we took part at a conference on "Future Strategies for the Alpine Region" (one of the new European mega-regions). In particular we found it especially challenging to ensure self-determination for the Alpine regions and their people and avoid domination by the strong interests of the metropolitan regions surrounding the Alps.

4. At the time of the General Assembly of ECOVAST International in Witzenhausen, October 2012, Arthur Spiegler organised the workshop on historic small towns (reported above).

5. The Austrian section also was present at the international conference "EnergyScape", organised by CivilScape, October 28 – 30 in Bonn (Germany).

6. The General Assembly of ECOVAST Austria was to be held on the third of December, where all these issues were on the agenda.

The outlook to the future of our section, due to the GreenBelt project, is much more optimistic than last year.

Arthur Spiegler and Brigitte Macaria

Croatia

After the last Annual Assembly of the Croatian Section of ECOVAST held in Zagreb on December 2011, a number of activities were undertaken this year, most of them related to the ongoing Small Croatian Towns project. After the last International Conference on the theme – in Ivanic Grad on November 2011, the Book of Works was prepared and put on CDs and on ECOVAST Croatia web-pages (http://www.ecovast.hr/conf_ivanic).

In April 2012 representatives of the Croatian Section of ECOVAST (vice-president Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic) as well as of the Croatian Rural Development Network (HMRR secretary Marina Koprivnjak) participated in Slovakia at the meeting of the international group in the Grundtvig financed European (Lifelong Learning) LLL Project 'Capacities over 50s as Rural Development Tool'. Participants presented activities of national LAGs in the project, which came from Finland, Germany, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Slovenia and Croatia. Several interesting projects in the agricultural sphere were shown during the tour in the central part of Slovakia, around Nitra and Banska Bistrica.

In May 2012 the Croatian Section of ECOVAST was present (in the position of a Supporter) at the 3rd International Rural Tourism Congress in Croatia, held this time in Osijek, the biggest town in the flatlands to the East of the country, with an excursion to Baranja region. President of ECOVAST International Valerie Carter was invited by the organizers, the Croatian Farmer and Village Club, to give a presentation on tourism in small towns of the South East England, while vice-president Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic spoke about the EU Danube Strategy, with a special attention given to the actual situation in Croatia as one of 14 countries of the Danube Region.

The Croatian Section is still actively involved in the DCSF (Danube Civil Society Forum) of the EUSDR (European Union Strategy for the Danube Region) through Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic as Coordinator of the Work Group – WG1 for communication, culture, tourism and energy. However, not much was accomplished so far in 2012 since the organization did not succeed in securing EU funds needed to follow its Programme of work as planned at the Founding Assembly a year ago in Eisenstadt, Austria (e.g. travelling workshops along the Danube towns to popularize the EUSDR, etc.).

Representatives from Croatian Section of ECOVAST, Valerija Kelemen Pepeonik and Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic (also as DCSF representative), were present with a presentation at the International conference at the beginning of July 2012 in Ulm in Germany, organized by ZAWIW Department at the Ulm University on 'Active Ageing and Intergenerational Dialogue – a Challenge for the Danube Countries in a United Europe'.

It was funded through the Grundtvig Programme – to which also an LLL project on local tourism was proposed by the same Department in Ulm University with several Danube countries participating (including Croatia through ECOVAST Section). Although the Project was approved and successfully started in September, the Croatian proposal was not included since it was put on the 'waiting list' by Grundtvig national Agency in Zagreb due to the lack of finances available for participation in this project. There are at present further attempts going on to stay involved in this project through other means on the small scale.

Another new project in which ECOVAST Croatian Section is participating can be announced here related research on Spatial Identity of Planned Towns – with example of Licki Osik (Lika region, Croatia); it has already been presented on International Conference in Tirana (Albania) and in Rijeka (Croatia) by members Niksa Bozic and Jasenka Kranjcevic.

Several other events were organized by the Section's members during the summer 2012, including the promotion in Zagreb at the 'round table' of the newly published book of papers from Moscenice Conference 2009; also in Zagreb ECOVAST members were actively involved in the presentation of the book on Rural Croatia

by Aleksandar Lukic, member of our Committee, while in the Open Air Museum of Kumrovec members participated at the opening of the Macedonian exhibition about Podpelister Architecture organized by ECOVAST Macedonia member Victoria Momeva Altiparmakovska.

In September 2012 president of the Croatian Section of ECOVAST Biserka Dumbovic Bilusic and secretary Niksa Bozic presented a paper for the Dubrovnik International Conference on Historic Towns, organized by the Town of Dubrovnik, Association Heritage Europe and the Croatian Association of Historical Towns as well as such Turkish Association, under the cover of the Council of Europe, while ECOVAST Croatian Section was present as Supporter (<http://www.dubrovnik.hr/HUPG/conference2012/supporters.php>).

Further projects include in October 2012, besides two members participating at the Biennial Conference of ECOVAST International in Witzenhausen in Germany, the organization of the Biennial Assembly of the Croatian Section of ECOVAST to be held in the small town of Nin in Dalmatia (Zadar County) with a 'round table' on the 'Creative Use of Potentials of Small Towns' – with Nin as one of the 'best practice' examples of sustainable use of heritage in tourism. Also the theme of Croatian islands will be discussed there (programme available at <http://www.ecovast.hr/Nin>).

In October 2012 there was another presentation in Moscenice of the book of papers from the 2009 Moscenice Conference, organized again together by the local cultural association and the Croatian ECOVAST Section, with regional organizations and institutions of the Rijeka County coming to discuss problems and possibilities of cooperation on the theme of revitalization of small historic towns in the area.

The Croatia Section has been involved recently in an interesting project – an event to be organized in England next year related to the succession of Croatia in EU, for which occasion a common celebration should be organized with a traditional Croatian dry stone structure being built as a memorial. This archaic building technique has been known all along the Mediterranean and up the British islands all the way to Scandinavia.

The project is at its beginning being negotiated through the International (British – Croatian) Welcome Croatia Committee and members of English and Scottish Dry Stone Walling Association, with several members of ECOVAST involved, including Michael Dower from the English side.

Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić

Germany

The German Section of ECOVAST will be seeking to exchange mutual membership with the Bund Heimat und Umwelt Deutschlands/German Forum for Cultural Landscapes, the Association of Organizations for Church Care in Sachsen-Anhalt and the Denkmalhof Gernewitz/Monumentendienst Thüringen.

ECOVAST members had attended Green Week in Berlin. Themes had included agriculture and demographic changes, biodiversity, eco building and the importance of regions and their role in sustainable development.

Articles and talks by members:

Justus Bohl (on the ecological building of his own house), Ralf Bokermann (on wind energy), Angus Fowler (on sustainable conservation), Irmelin Küttner (on the Lenzer Wische).

The leaflet of the German Section will be further developed.

Several meetings have been held of the Working Group Rural Areas/Brandenburg Villages (under Prof. Kurt Krumbach) at the Rosa-Luxembourg-Foundation in Berlin, most recently on the development of solar energy in villages in Brandenburg and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern;

Conferences of the German Forum of Cultural Landscapes have been held in Berlin (a major aim is the ratification of the European Landscape Convention by the Federal Republic of Germany).

Since the Potsdam conference of the International Organization ECOVAST on small towns November 2010 A. Fowler has maintained close links for ECOVAST with Prof. Hagen Eyink, responsible for landscapes and small towns at the Federal Ministry.

Other Activities:

Development of working groups on ecological building, small towns, landscapes/brown coal, possible conference at the small towns Pegau and Groitzsch in brown coal area in Saxony.

Denkmal 2012 Leipzig 22-24 November 2012

From the Europa Nostra website: ANNIVERSARY FAIR -

Europe witnessed its first trade fair dedicated to everything related to historic conservation back in October 1994.

In 2012, the "Denkmal" trade fair will celebrate its 10th anniversary in Leipzig.

The fair's concept, its unique range of exhibitions, full schedule of first-class seminars and conferences and highly qualified, experienced audience of industry insiders have established Denkmal as Europe's leading trade fair

for conservation, restoration and old building renovation, making it:

- *the industry's top trade fair with special products for historic conservation and restoration*
- *a trade fair to experience, up-close and personal*
- *a platform for advanced training*
- *a contact forum for specialised handicrafts and conservators, historic conservators, architects, building owners and contractors from the private, public and church sectors as well as for interested individuals and lovers of art and culture.*

Denkmal's partner country concept has become a regular feature since 2004 and is set to continue for the upcoming anniversary fair. Our past partners consisted of Italy, France, Hungary and Poland, and The Russian Federation is now set to be Denkmal's fifth partner country in 2012.

Visit Europa Nostra's common stand with ECOVAST in Hall 2 with the Stand Nr. IF 14.

See also:

<http://ecovast.webs.com/apps/blog/entries/show/1997345-0-denkmal-2012-leipzig-22-24-november-2012>

International Organization:

The German Section has made several suggestions to the international organization:

Reports and Papers should be sent in advance to save time at meetings and allow more time for thematic discussions of strategy and development. Clear aims and tasks in the form of projects should be developed further and if possible financial support be sought from the European Union and foundations, especially for the attendance of ECOVAST members in central and eastern Europe.

Franz Nahrada and Irmelin Küttner have discussed the possibility of setting up a Library and Archive for History and Future of Villages at a redundant monastery in Austria. A symposium on the subject "Stillness and Fullness: Monasteries of the Future" will take place in Seelenstein/Austria in June 2012.

Especially thanks for their work for the German Section go to Marlis Lier as Treasurer and to Prof. Heinar Henckel, Bernd Maisel and Peter Thran who have retired from the Committee.

Angus Fowler

Hungary

The Section takes an active part in the work of the "Monitoring Board of New Hungary Rural Development Programme". This Monitoring Board has three Subcommittees dealing with realisation of rural development, CAP reform in the Union and forestry

problems; the Section has representatives on all. They are also work with the Hungarian Rural Development Network, and have taken part in events relating to the Danube Strategy.

Other activities included work with the LOGOS Foundation for young rural people, in LEADER activity, and in the launch of a Territorial Developers' Forum in the Carpathian Region. Another initiative has been the setting up of a "voluntary Senior Mentors' network", aimed at harnessing the expertise of retired people who have been involved in rural development.

Gabor Rajnai

To hold the ECOVAST General Assembly in 2013 in Hungary is not only a possibility but we consider it a great honour. Last week we had a Board meeting and at the end of this month we will hold the GA of the Hungarian section too. The Board accept and I am sure that the GA also will not be against the idea.

We have a plan that, at the same time together with GA meeting, we will organise a conference to discuss about rural heritage and show the best practice.

You will be welcome in Hungary in the autumn of 2013.

From a message sent on 24 October 2012 to Ralf Bokermann by
Gabor Rajnai

Macedonia

"Balkan border towns and regions" - international exhibition and scientific conference (6-7 August 2012, Bitola) was organized by ECOVAST Macedonia in cooperation with the Bitola Institute and Museum. The participants from Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece and Macedonia organized mutual exhibition concerning traditional architecture on the Balkans and their intercultural influences.

Two representatives from ECOVAST Macedonia participated in the regional seminar "Cultural heritage management- Inspirational management & approaches"- 14-16 September, 2012, Girokastra, Albania in the frame of the project "Western Balkan - From historical integration to contemporary active participation" organized by CWHB*

Two participants took part at the conference in Bonn, Germany organized by CIVILSCAPE with the presentation "How the old and new energy production change the landscape in Bitola region".

Our next activity will be participation at the workshop in Tirana, Albania - Coaching & mentoring for female managers in the Western Balkans, organized by CHWB.

Victoria Momeva-Altiparmakovska

* Editor: - the Swedish NGO/ foundation Cultural Heritage without Borders.

Romania

ECOVAST members are continuing the projects described in the last Newsletter.

We moved the legal office of ECOVAST Romania to the Apostolache village near the monastery with the same name, in a new space specially arranged (statutory and set by court).

Our association has won a project entitled "Byzantine resonances in Romania" to make a booklet containing touristic routes (trails) to monuments in southeastern Romania (mostly recently restored with the contribution of our members).

Magdalena Banu

Russia

Section Members have been active in a number of activities, often linked to ICOMOS' Committee, CIVVIH, such as a conference in Italy, translation of the "The Valletta Principles for the Safeguarding and Management of Historic Cities, Towns and Urban Areas" to Russian for the Committee website, and a forum in October in Russia, which would be held at the same time as the Assembly of Russian ECOVAST on the topic "Preservation of Cultural heritage".

Dr Olga Sevan took part in the tourism Congress in Romania, which was attended by the ECOVAST President.

Olga Sevan

From the website: <http://www.ecovast.ru/>

For French and German language use Google translate

- [Invitations to the meeting of the Union of Architects of Russia \(Grenade per., 7\), which holds an architect and member of ECOVAST Mark Gurari. The next meeting of December 11, 2012 18-30 Subject: Town Planning ASPECTS OF MODULAR CONSTRUCTION temple in Moscow](#)
- [Olga Sevan "The Round Table" tree culture - past and present - 3 "](#)
- [Constantine Gutkov. "Architecture Days in Vologda: activation of wooden architecture"](#)
- Round table on "Culture of Wood: Past and Present" at the Second International Forum "The preservation of cultural heritage", October 3, 2012, OCE pavilion № 57, Moscow. [forum program \(On a forum on the site "Russian Architecture" \)](#)

- [The program of the Round Table \(On a round table on the site "Russian Architecture" \)](#)
- [Festival ARCHITECTURE IN VOLOGDA 2012 - New Wood 16-22 May 2012](#)
- [Fellow of the Institute of Cultural Studies and ECOVAST architects Olga Sevan and Andrei Ivanov took part in the festival "Days of Architecture in Vologda - 2012](#)
- [Recommendations for a comprehensive approach to preserving historic architecture wooden Vologda](#)
- [Press release of the festival "Days of Architecture in Vologda](#)
- [Olga Sevan and Mark Meerovich Recollections of Vyacheslav Glazychev](#)
- [Valletta Principles of conservation and management of historic cities and urban areas](#) (translation S.Gorbatenko, with the participation and assistance O.Sevan, V.Krogius, Yu.Spiridonovoy)
- [The Valletta Principles for the Safeguarding and Management of Historic Cities, Towns and Urban Areas](#) (Translation: S.Gorbatenko, with a help of O.Sevan, V.Krogius, U.Spiridonova)
- [Paris Declaration "On the heritage as an engine of development"](#) (translation N.Vishnevskoy, O. Sevan)
- [The Paris Declaration as a heritage On Driver of Development](#) (Translation: Natalia Vishnevskaya, Dr. Olga Sevan, Russian Research Institute for Culture, Committee Member of ICOMOS - CIVVIH, ECOVAST)
- [S. Ilvitskaya. On the creative exhibition of student work, "Tradition and Innovation"](#)
- Central House of Architects (Moscow, Grenade Lane, 7). 26-30 March 2012
 - [Invitation to the exhibition](#)
 - [Photos from the exhibition](#)
- [On the issue of safety and support for "Elsa's Cottages" in Pyatigorsk](#)

A contest to develop a corporate style of the National Park "Plescheevo Lake" (from March 20 to May 20, 2012), established by the Directorate of NP "Plescheevo lake." Organizer - EcoCenter "Reserves." Proposals submitted to the contest with sketches of the elements of corporate identity, including architectural design, and a description of the concept. The prize fund of 180,000 rubles.

[Monograph Olga Sevan "Small Karelians" Arkhangelsk Museum of Wooden Architecture. History, design methodology, the present state. "M," Progress-Tradition, "2012 - 368 c, IL.](#)

United Kingdom

At the offices of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) on 25 September, I represented ECOVAST a stakeholder workshop in London , organised by the Commission for Rural Communities, (chaired by Dr. Stuart Burgess, CBE, who spoke at the 2010 ECOVAST Assembly in the Isle of Wight).

There was discussion on "Recognising rural interests within Local Enterprise Partnerships" in England. Sitting next to me was an old friend of ECOVAST members, Richard Wakeford, Chair at UK Sustainable Development Research Network Advisory Committee, Principal at Rural Strategy, Chair at OECD Rural Working Party. He is also in favour of CLLD. A link with OECD could be made on a possible ASSET conference in 2013.

ECOVAST UK, in July, commented to the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS)

A government response can be found at:

[Partnership agreement: delivery of structural funds, rural development funds and maritime and fisheries funds in England: Government response to the informal consultation \(PDF, 95 Kb\)](#)

Government department BIS (UK) says:

EU policies for cohesion, rural development, maritime and fisheries each play a significant role in supporting sustainable, environmental, social and economic restructuring across the EU. The main funding programmes that support this agenda are: Structural and Cohesion Funds (European Regional Development Funds, European Social Funds and Cohesion funds), European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. The purpose of this informal consultation was to elicit initial views on how these Funds can best be used to develop and maintain sustainable growth and jobs in the 2014-2020 funding period. The key messages from stakeholders were for:

- 1 *Reduced administrative burdens in delivering each of the Funds.*
- 2 *Ability to align funds, as appropriate, to enable a more holistic approach to dealing with barriers to growth.*
- 3 *Flexibility in managing funding programmes that allow for a more place based approach as well as an issue based approach.*
- 4 *Better use of match funding by aligning national programmes, local expenditure and private sector investment with EU Funds.*
- 5 *Local engagement throughout the process.*

The Government will consider how to take forward the views of stakeholders and aim to launch a formal consultation for the Partnership Agreement in spring 2013.

ECOVAST UK, with ACRE (Action for Communities in Rural England) and AMT (Action for Market Towns) will be approaching the government departments in London to press for CLLD (see ASSET below).

On 19 October, at Kendal in the Lake District, I represented ECOVAST at the AMT Annual Convention. At workshops on Community Led Planning I was able to bring the European Commission's proposals into the debate and to offer my recent experience in supporting towns and villages to produce neighbourhood plans under the 2011 Localism Act.

There was also discussion of the government initiative to support independent shops in town centres, by offering funding to "Town Teams". This came from the High Street Review Report of Mary Portas (a retail specialist and television presenter). The Department of Communities and Local Government is running a number of high street Town Team pilots in England...encouraging local partnerships and consortiums to come up with innovative ideas of their own about how to transform their local high street into a social place, bustling with people, services and jobs. We were pleased that the many existing town partnerships could become Town Teams, without "reinventing the wheel".

Europa Nostra UK

On 30 October, Angus Fowler, John Sell, Jane Wade and I attended the Annual General Meeting and Duncan Sandys Memorial Lecture by Sir Donald Insall and entitled 'Living Buildings'.

The events were held at the prestigious Spencer House, London, the city's only great eighteenth-century private palace to survive intact built in 1756-66.



John Sell, ECOVAST member and Executive Vice President of Europa Nostra International, informed the AGM of the progress of the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy and Europa Nostra's priority to influence European Policy through the European Heritage Alliance at the formation of which John and I were present, in Amsterdam in 2011.

Pam Moore has stood down as a committee member of EN UK and I have been elected to the committee. That means that I receive papers for major EN International committees, such as the recent one in Helsinki.

Phil Turner

ASSET: Action to Strengthen Small European Towns

Urban and rural areas.

Newsletter 51 had information on the proposed European Commission Common Strategic Framework (CSF) and Community Led Local Development (CLLD).

On 9 October 2012 I was pleased to attend two of the CLLD workshops of the European Union Open Day in Brussels.

Michael Dower attended and presented on behalf of the Agricultural and Rural Convention (ARC2020) and his reports may be found [on DorfWiki](#):

http://www.dorfwiki.org/wiki.cgi?SmallTowns/The_ASSET_Project/Papers#EuropeanCouncilsupportforterritorialdevelopment

Michael and I urge ECOVAST Sections and members to bring strong influence upon the Ministries of their Member States to support the idea of LEADER local action groups to cover both urban and rural areas of sub-regions in an integrated approach to local development by communities.

It is important to persuade government departments responsible for agriculture and rural development to welcome this element of the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). CLLD already seems to be of higher priority to Ministries of Regional Development, Ministries of Economy or Business.

Phil Turner

EVENTS NOTIFIED TO THE EDITOR

2013 International committee France/German Border - Rudiger Maul

Autumn 2013 General Assembly Hungary - Gabor Rajnai

June 2013 - EUROPA NOSTRA Congress, Athens, further details will appear at: www.europanostra.org