



ECOVAST REPORT 53
March 2013

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EDITORIAL

Newsletter 53, the first one of 2013, has news of all ECOVAST national sections except Macedonia, Poland and Slovakia.

Because of translation costs, it was not possible to offer a French language version of Newsletter 52 for our members in Luxembourg, Portugal, Italy and Romania who prefer French to English. We hope that our friends in Romania who have arranged previous translations into French can help us find a solution we can afford.

If not, I would be pleased to hear of an alternative English/French translator.

Please send copy for the next Newsletter to me, at p.turner@semantise.com by 21 June 2013.

Phil Turner

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

First of all I would like to wish you a Happy New Year for 2013. I hope I shall meet as many of you as possible this year. I know that the financial situation in our countries has been very hard and it has not been easy for the last few years and this

has been reflected in the attendance of ECOVAST international events. I sincerely hope that this will improve soon and we will all be able to meet more frequently.

Since my re-election as President in October 2012 in Witzenhausen, Germany I have been on visits to Romania, Germany, France and Latvia. I ran a workshop in Piatra Neamt, Romania on rural tourism – representing ECOVAST and our research on heritage, at a pan-European Conference organised by Eurogites. I even appeared on Romanian television with the priest from the monastery where it was held. I represent ECOVAST on CIVILSCAPE and I spoke at their major conference on energy. I was also very pleased to two members of our Romanian section who were also speaking and two members from Germany and Austrian sections. My last meeting of the year was at Metz, France at a RURBAN conference. Phil Turner and I have been having talks with DG Regio on the ECOVAST ASSET project and research and as a result we are now a member of the RURBAN steering committee and I will attend their final 2 events in Warsaw and Bologna in 2013. I will be representing both ECOVAST and PREPARE as we are both interested in the development of a single urban/rural policy. I am highlighting the need to include specialist areas on small rural towns and peri-urban (or peri-rural !) areas.

I also represent ECOVAST on the PREPARE International Organising Group. We were all very pleased to hear that the Mott Foundation has agreed to a further two year period of funding. Our first meeting was in Riga, Latvia where we were warmly welcomed by the Latvian Rural Forum. Although it was very cold and snowy we had a pleasant meeting. PREPARE will be involved in the forthcoming Rural Parliaments in both Latvia and Estonia on 2103. We are also hoping to hear that the first Scottish Rural Parliament will be given the final go-ahead for 2013 but the planned English Rural Parliament seems to be unlikely.

Our next ECOVAST International Committee in May 2013 meeting is being organised by our German Section and our Hungarian Section has confirmed that is planning our Annual General Assembly in Hungary for October. Many thanks are given to Rudiger Maul, Angus Fowler and Ralf Bokermann and Gabor Rajnai for their work in organising these events. I would also like to thank Phil Turner for taking over the work of preparing the ECOVAST Newsletters.

Valerie Carter, President

European Agricultural Policy

Rüdiger Maul, Germany, has seen a report (in NABU Rundschreiben 2/13 Arbeitsgemeinschaft für biologisch-dynamische Wirtschaftsweise Rheinland-Pfalz/Saarland) that the majority in the Agricultural Committee of the European Parliament with the conservative and liberal members, and all German representatives of these political groups, have voted to recommend to the Parliament to decide that the area for environmental cultivation etc. ("Greening") should be reduced to 3-5% instead of being increased to 10%.

Rüdiger says: They have listened to the wishes of the industrial agricultural lobby. Instead of a variety of crops, there is the prospect of cropping reduced to only two sorts, one of which can make up to 80% , no conditions attached for direct payments.

Money intended for the second pillar of agricultural, i.e. for rural development, may be redirected to direct payments. This means that all attempts at reform are being watered down and reduced!

Taxpayers should be rightly be able to expect healthy foodstuffs, clean water and a landscape rich in flora and fauna.

The European Parliament will be deciding on the reforms and changes to them by the Agricultural Committee in March 2013.

Rüdiger recommended on 19 January 2011, that ECOVAST is asked to do its utmost to make sure that reforms of the agricultural policy of the EU as mentioned above should not be watered down to suit the wishes of the massive industrial agricultural lobby politically represented by conservative and liberal groups in the European parliament when the parliament makes it decisions in March 2013.

Hannes Lorenzen, of PREPARE, reports : CAP budget was reduced on an average by 13% compared to the Commission proposal which already reduced it by 10%. So there is a reduction on the total CAP budget by 23%.

Rural development money is potentially more severely cut, because MS have the possibility to shift money between the two pillars in both directions.

Member States falling below 90% of average direct payments may shift an extra 10% from pillar two to pillar one, which will be mainly the new member states and the South.

Some member states were served with specific allocation gifts for rural development because they had a high percentage in the second pillar (Austria, Italy, Luxembourg, Slovenia, Sweden and Finland) so as to agree to the deal. Detailed figures are still to be analysed.

The Parliament has rejected the deal as a wrong signal for Europe. But there is no specific proposal for an alternative. There is pressure to reduce the CAP budget further without differentiation between first and second pillar and pressure to invest more into competitiveness, employment, innovation etc. These have been the headings of the budget which had been most severely cut.

On 25 February the European Council of Ministers made a final assessment of the Mid-Term Financial framework which reduces the Commission proposal by € 85,3bn compared to the Commission proposal, representing € 34,2bn less in real-term than the 2007-2013 MFF and 66,6bn less in real term than a freezing at 2013 level. This political agreement will be subject to the consent of the European Parliament.

The CAP allocations envisaged include: "Sustainable resources" (€ 373,179 bn) of which : € 277,851 bn for direct Payments and € 84,936 for Pillar II.

- Convergence will be implemented in 6 years (2015-2020) with at least €196/ha by 2020.
- The capping in direct payments will be introduced by Member states on voluntary basis.
- 30% greening to be defined in the regulation.
- Transfer from Pillar I to Pillar II is possible up to 15% of Member State's Pillar I allowance for 2014-2019.
- Transfer from Pillar II to Pillar I is possible up to 15% of Member State's Pillar II allowance for 2015-2020. Member states with direct payments per hectare below 90% may decide to make available as direct payments an additional 10%.
- Reserve for crisis in Agricultural sector is integrated...without adequate increase of the ceiling and is reduced to € 2,8bn instead of € 3,5 bn proposed by the Commission.

Phil Turner will represent ECOVAST at the DG AGRI Rural Development Advisory Committee in Brussels on 23 April 2013.

NEWS FROM THE SECTIONS

Austria

From Monday, 18th to 20th of February 2013, the "2nd Scientific & Midterm GreenNet Conference" took place. It was related to the "GreenBelt Project" of which ECOVAST Austria is involved as an external expert group of the "IRUB", a department of the Viennese University of Natural Resources and Applied LifeSciences ("Boku").

ECOVAST Austria now has carried out three of six workshops covering the six project regions. We had a poster presentation of the workshop in the project region five, "Kucnica" (this name means a small river flowing in narrow, meandering curves). This project region is situated near the meeting of the three countries, Austria, Hungary and Slovenia, at the border line to Slovenia in Eastern Styria. The basic tool for the workshops is our "Guide to Good Practice, ECOVAST Landscape Identification", thus again proving its good practicability.

Before this conference there was an other meeting on "Vital Landscapes", from February 14th to 15th, ECOVAST Austria attending, and also organised by the same university. So some participants bridged the weekend to attend both conferences. This also was the case with Inge and Dirk Gotzmann of CivilScape whom we took care of showing parts of the Vienna City and the surrounding Vienna Woods.

As a consequence of both conferences and our practical experience of the workshops we agreed that the "whole of the GreenBelt should be surveyed by identifying its landscapes and regions and the small historic towns. This should be done in the view that the GreenBelt is even more than the commitment of nature protection. It meanwhile became also an entity of Europe's heritage and identity. Further more efforts are undertaken to nominate the GreenBelt as a cultural world heritage site (mentioned already in the last News).

So, to successfully follow this intentions we urgently need to use ECOVAST International's good contacts in Strasbourg and Brussels (e.g. commissioner Dr.Hahn and others). All this could be followed either under the title "Landscapes and Small Towns along the GreenBelt" or "Sustainable Rural Development of the GreenBelt Regions with special focus on Landscape and Small Towns". We propose to discuss this matter as soon as possible within ECOVAST international.

(A draft of basic ideas to serve for a project on Landscapes and Small Towns along the GreenBelt is in preparation and under discussion).

Arthur Spiegler and Brigitte Macaria

A tax on Mineral Extraction funds landscape enhancement

The Lower Austrian Landscape Fund (NÖ LAFO) www.lafo.at

The Province of Lower Austria promotes projects and measures for the maintenance, cultivation and design of the landscape in Lower Austrian communities.

The Lower Austrian Landscape Fund is financed by a tax on the exploitation of materials in the ground such as gravel, sand, stones, loam, clay, etc.

The purpose is the implementation of projects towards the preservation and reconstitution of an ecologically intact cultural landscape with a rich endowment of indigenous plants and animals, manifold landscape elements and environmentally sound land use.

Projects that conserve or reestablish the regional or local character of the countryside are eligible. Preservation and reconstitution of an ecologically intact landscape, such as a sustainably directed husbandry of its fields and meadowland and of its woods, is an example, as are touristic and other forms of use.

On the average, up to 300 projects per year are applied for at the Lower Austrian Landscape Fund. Out of these applications around 100 to 150 result in specific projects capable of promotion, which are executed as single or multiple-year enterprises and receive a subsidy.

As viewed over all of the projects, the promotion share comes to an average of 40 % of the total costs of the projects.

A fundamental objective is the close cooperation with other promoting locations, so as to achieve the best possible exhaustion of other provincial, federal and EU funding. Upon taking the sums released from other programs and promotion pools into account, it is to be noted that 1 Euro from the Lower Austrian Landscape Fund triggers an average of 5 Euros from other sources.

Arthur Spiegler comments:

The origin of this fund was the glorious idea of an officer - who I know well and has now retired - in the late 1990s to hold back a low percentage rate of every m³ of sand, gravel, stone and clay, taken out of the landscape and to be "refunded" in financing projects to enhance landscape protection and quality. This fund nowadays is well known and asked for from the people and authorities of the Lower Austrian regions.

But it is obviously one of the unexplainable "secrets" of our life, that "best practice examples" like this, so often remain singular! This counts as well for Austria as international (I reported about this fund when being invited to Ploiesti, Romania 2010, but earned no response at all).

Waste from grapes as a resource.

The remnants from wine harvest (grape seeds, skin and stems) are a waste and can threaten soil and groundwater. Biovin is a way to make a source out of the harvest waste - a highly effective biological-organic fertiliser without any chemical additives from the waste of wine harvest.

Biovin is a humus activator, it strengthens the natural process of humification. The production uses the energy within the seeds of the grapes (organic oil) together with that of the skin and stems when going through a warm fermentation process. Biovin is the final product of this process. It can be used on fields, in gardens (flowers and vegetables), or on golf courses. You can have it dry (granulate) or liquid, even drink it.

Biovin is produced by a private enterprise in the province of Lower Austria. You can contact the owner, Mr Peter Schneider, for any questions or help if you want to implement this product in your country.

pjs.intertrest-sanco@aon.at

Arthur Spiegler comments:

The transformation of a former environmental problem into a win-win situation goes back to the early seventies. In this time the Austrian Academy of Science launched and funded a project of how to use the energy sleeping in the seeds and peels of grape. In consequence a special process of fermentation was developed. This process created heat and mould at the same time. Waste material of the harvest and wine pressing that before had been thrown away by the wine farmers - as was common behaviour - caused a severe environmental problem in the vineyards. Now it is a resource of heat and fertilisation and even as a medicine (liquid or powder).

Although you can buy Biovin either at a firm directly or in some shops, in the broad public it remains unknown thus sharing the same fate as shown in the first comment.

Arthur Spiegler

Croatia

President of ECOVAST Croatia, Nikša Božić, announces a new project 'Heritage - Driver of Development' in partnership with Dubrovnik County and an organization from Monte Negro (he and Biserka Dumbović Bilušić are involved, especially relating the landscape issue).

Valerija Kelemen Pepeonik and Aco Lukić participate in the council for the preparation of IPARD Measures 202 for Croatia (local strategies of rural development).

There are also plans with the partnering organization DCSF (Danube Civil Society Forum) to organize an event 'River Show' in Vukovar in March 2013 in order to spread information on EU Danube Strategy.

ECOVAST Croatia is also giving its support to the ongoing campaign of the partnering organization 'Prijatelji bastine - Amici Hereditatis' - initiative to establish a local museum in the small town of Ivanic Grad.

Tihana Štepinac Fabijanić is participating in preparing the Welcome Croatia celebration (on entering EU) with ECOVAST International and British ECOVAST (M. Dower), which includes an Istrian dry stone building (kažun) to be constructed in the Peak District National Park (June, July), an event financed mainly by the Croatian Ministry of Culture (see below).

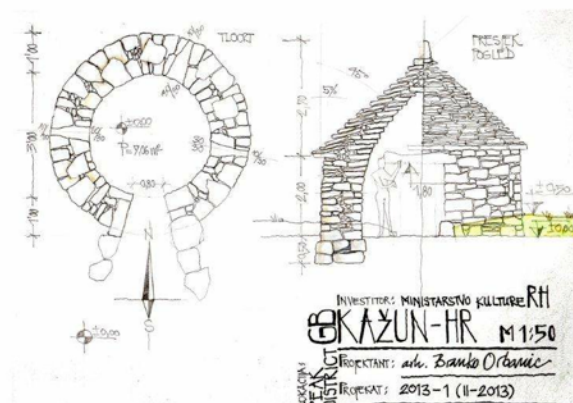
Tihana Štepinac Fabijanić

Croatian kažun in the Peak Park, England UK

On behalf of ECOVAST, Michael Dower has donated the expense of his three project visits to the Peak Park, where once he was National Park Officer. He reports:

The Welcome Croatia Festival Committee proposes to build a Croatian-style dry stone shelter or kažun in England as part of a series of events and features to mark the accession of Croatia to the European Union in July 2013.

Subject to planning permission, the kažun will be a gift from the Croatian government to the United Kingdom. The Peak Park is well-suited to host this kažun because of its tradition of dry stone wall building in limestone similar to that of Croatian Istria, and because of its strong links with rural activity in Europe including Croatia.



The building will be put to good use, in order to achieve the aims of both Welcome Croatia and the Park Authority. Visitors to the Trails will value a shelter, particularly in bad weather, and the building will also serve an educational and interpretive purpose.

It will be circular in plan, with thick walls, a beaten floor of earth and stone chippings, a corbelled conical roof with a finial stone, two slots in the side walls to provide some interior light, a wide doorway with 1.8 metre (just under 6 feet) vertical clearance, and a simple wooden door on post-hinges.

There will be a simple wooden bench, supported on stone pillars, round the whole of the inside circumference.

A set of interpretive panels (to be prepared by the Park Authority interpretation officer Catherine Bowner, with inputs from Welcome Croatia, and of durable and damp-proof construction) will be mounted on the inside wall, to tell the story of dry stone walling and of the varying styles of dry stone shelters found in different parts of Europe. A commemorative plaque, engraved on the same kind of stone as the kažun, will be mounted within or outside the building.



The application for planning permission will be prepared by the Park Authority's Estates staff, and processed (at 'arm's-length') by the Authority's planning staff. Approval from building regulations staff of Derbyshire Dales District Council may also be needed.

It is proposed that the building work be done by a team of 3 dry-stone masons from Istria, overseen by Branko Orbanic, architect from Istria, who has been responsible for a series of dry-stone walling workshops and reconstructed kažuni in Istria.

The kažun will be built during a two-week period in June 2013, in time for an opening ceremony on or soon after 1 July, expected date of Croatia's accession to the European Union.

- Completion by say 30 June
- Formal opening ceremony, early July – date to be agreed between Park Authority and Welcome Croatia, with expected participation of Croatian Ambassador and representatives of Croatian Ministry of Culture.

It is proposed that the Park Authority should own, manage and maintain the building, following its formal handover as a gift from the Croatian government.

Michael Dower

Germany

Denkmal, Leipzig 22 – 24 November 2012

As in previous years ECOVAST shared a stand at the Monument Fair in Leipzig 22-24 November 2012 with Europa Nostra. Olaf Linke, Ralf Bokermann, Ivar Henckel and Angus Fowler manned the stand. Ivar Henckel produced highly professional posters, featuring in particular Small Towns and Timber-framed Churches, subject of an international seminar, organized by ECOVAST. Europa Nostra was represented by its former Chairman Dr. Andrea Schuler from Switzerland.

Together with the Förderkreis Alte Kirchen (Marburg) and BAUDID/Denkmal Wacht Brandenburg-Berlin ECOVAST organized the international seminar on Wooden and Timber-framed Churches, bringing together 3 speakers from Russia (Europa Nostra prizewinner the Kizhi complex), 3 from Poland, 1 from the Czech Republic (Europa Nostra prizewinner Karel Kuca for his two volume survey of wooden churches in Europe), 1 from northeastern Germany and A. Fowler (on England, France and Hessen).

The event was part of the theme "Wood and Conservation", main theme of Denkmal 2012 as well as of the Open Heritage Days in Europe. In due course the presentations will be put on the Website of the German Section of ECOVAST. The seminar, unfortunately at the beginning of Denkmal and not particularly well attended, was the scientific highlight of Denkmal 2012.



Joint ECOVAST/Europa Nostra stand at Denkmal.

On the wings of Denkmal a meeting took place on sustainable conservation organized by BAUDID/DenkmalWacht Brandenburg-Berlin involving several of the organizations concerned in Germany, in particular Monumentendienst Weser-Ems, Interessengemeinschaft Bauernhaus, Bauwacht Rheinland and the Deutsche Stiftung Denkmalschutz/German Foundation for Protection of Monuments.

Grüne Woche/Green Week, Berlin, January 2013

Several members of the German Section of ECOVAST (Weigert, G. Henkel, Fowler) attended various seminars within the Zukunftsforum Ländliche Entwicklung (Forum on the Future for Rural Development) 23 – 24 January 2013 organized by the German Ministry of Agricultural etc. within the Grüne Woche in Berlin. Of interest was the seminar on village shops/community centres organized by the Regionalbewegung/Regional Movement in Germany, other seminars were concerned with LEADER projects, seminar by the academies for rural areas in Germany, demographic effects on and cooperation between rural areas, small towns and metropolitan areas however seen mostly from the metropolitan areas, a deficit which was pointed out in discussion. Traditional associations tended to be neglected. This year the organizers made a conscious effort to involve young people with representatives of Bund Landjugend, the main organization for German Rural Youth.

Also on the wings of Grüne Woche Andrea Weigert and Angus Fowler attended a meeting of German organizations concerned with the development of a German Village Movement, held under the auspices of the Dutch Village Movement organization at the Dutch national stand at the Grüne Woche and thus also involving

representatives of ERCA. A position paper was discussed and worked on for further improvement and action.

Committee of the German Section held a meeting on Saturday 12 January 2013 reviewing the events of 2012 and planning for 2013, the May events in the Palatinate and Alsace, involvement in the events in Hungary in October etc.

40 Years Förderkreis Alte Kirchen (Marburg)/ Network "Future for Religious Heritage" in Germany, June 2013

In mid June 2013 the enlarged Networking Committee of the new international network "Future for Religious Heritage" will be holding its main early summer meeting in Marburg, visiting the Förderkreis Alte Kirchen (Marburg) and the churches which the Förderkreis has saved, partly restored and used for cultural uses together with local associations. With this event the Förderkreis Alte Kirchen will be celebrating its 40th anniversary (which actually occurs on 15th October 2013) together with its Annual General Meeting and excursions. The Förderkreis is to endow a trust (to be founded) with the church in Bürgeln, the saving of which from demolition led to the foundation of the Förderkreis on 15th October 1983 in Bürgeln .

30 Years ECOVAST 2014

Next year ECOVAST will have been founded 30 years ago at the end of March 1984 on the initiative of the Förderkreis Alte Kirchen (Marburg) together with Francis Noel-Baker, subsequently first President of ECOVAST 1984-1986, at events beginning in Marburg, culminating in the constitutive meeting in the village of Bellnhausen/Gladenbach near Marburg in Hessen/Germany.

In memoriam Diethart Kerbs (1937-2013)

Diethart Kerbs, member of the German Section for many years, died on 27 January 2013. Diethart Kerbs was Professor for Art Education (Kunstpädagogik) at the Hochschule/ later Universität der Künste (University for the Arts) in Berlin from 1980 until 2003/2006 and taught cultural history and the history of photography, well known for several books, exhibitions he organized and a three volume work on "Photography and Memory" documenting many buildings, particularly industrial buildings, in Brandenburg, Saxony-Anhalt and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, i.e. the northern part of the former East Germany, together with his wife Sophie Schleussner and many other helpers.



Diethart Kerbs at his desk

In particular he was much concerned with saving manor-houses and the buildings of former estate complexes especially in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, in particular a spectacular action in connection with an exhibition forcefully bringing the fate of an estate building in Kittendorf to the attention of the then Prime Minister of the State of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern was especially memorable.

He was much concerned with immediate “first-aid” repairs to secure endangered estate buildings (“Sicherungsmaßnahmen”) committing his own financial resources and also attracting the financial support of the Deutsche Stiftung Denkmalschutz (German Foundation for the Protection of Monuments).

Diethart Kerbs was much involved with the Arbeitsgemeinschaft zur Erhaltung und Nutzung von Gutsanlagen in Mecklenburg (Working Group for the Preservation and Use of Estate Complexes in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern), which the German Section of ECOVAST helped to found, and had been for many years a member of the Committee of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft.

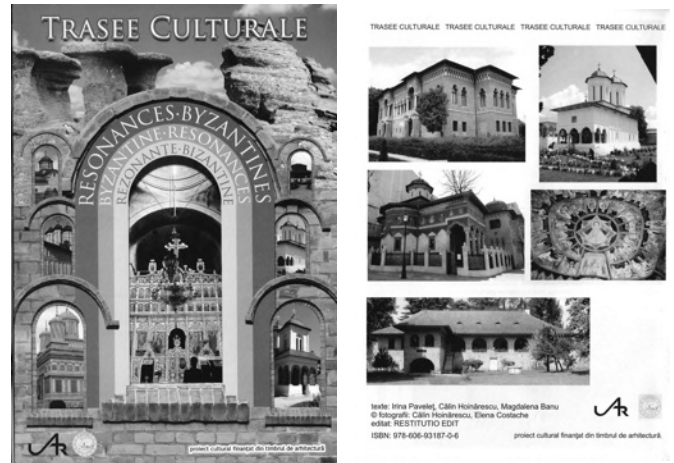
He was much interested in fellow fighters for the heritage and the cultural landscape, endowed a prize, and was working on biographies of Jean Chanel and Angus Fowler! He took the trouble to come to Marburg to attend the presentation of the Honorary Diploma of the Federal State of Hessen to Jean Chanel.

Angus Fowler

Romania

Călin Hoinărescu and Magdalena Banu, ECOVAST Romania, are among the three authors of a Booklet on touristic routes (trails) to monuments in south eastern Romania. Most of these are recently restored with the contribution of ECOVAST members in the project “Byzantine Resonances in Romania”. Romanian and English text. Many colour illustrations. 26 pages.

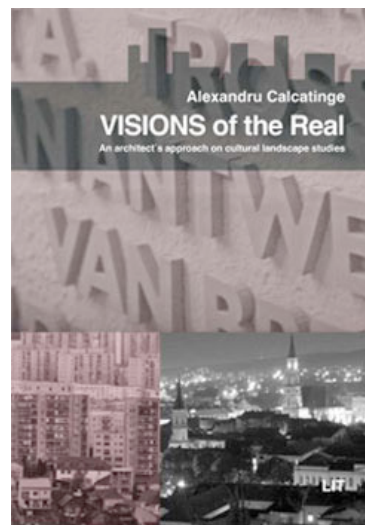
ISBN: 978-606-93187-0



Romania/Austria

“The Need for a Cultural Landscape Theory - An Architect’s Approach” is a new book by Dr Alexandru Calcatinge as a result of his PhD studies at the University of Architecture and Urbanism ‘Ion Mincu’ in Bucharest Romania. He has been a member of ECOVAST Austria since 2010.

<http://www.visionsofthereal.com>
<http://www.calcatinge.ro>



ISBN 978-3-643-90064-7

19.90 €

Russia

On 4 February 2013 Club Arhnadzora gathering at the State Museum of Architecture, Moscow. "Culture of Wood: History and Modernity". Olga Sevan analysed the development of Russian wooden architecture from the 17th century, discussing the example of conservation of wooden architecture and construction in the 20th century, the modern search for Russian architects.



Dr Sevan was awarded a diploma in the competition for the best printed edition of her book about architecture "Malye Korely" Arkhangelsk Museum of Wooden Architecture "

Congratulations, Olga.

Phil Turner

United Kingdom

In the December 2012 newsletter I reported on the Common Strategic Framework and proposed Community Led Local Development. In the UK the lead government department is the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). A recent report on Skills Funding 2012 - 2015 says of the sub regions of England : "Local Enterprise Partnerships will...be able to determine how EU Common Strategic Framework funds, including the European Social Fund, are used locally.."

EVOVAST UK hope to join in the event to Welcome Croatia at the kažun in the Peak Park, England.

Phil Turner

ASSET: Action to Strengthen Small European Towns

Through Valerie Carter's membership of the steering committee of the Partnership for sustainable urban-rural development (RURBAN) she has been invited by Władysław Piskorz, Head of Unit, European Commission Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO) to discuss the involvement of ECOVAST and ASSET in a workshop to be held during Open Days in Brussels 7 - 10 October 2013.

We have in mind presentations and discussions that are based on the following:

The workshop aims to focus on the economic, social, cultural and environmental linkages between urban and rural areas.

In the face of globalisation, how to reinforce the resilience of local places?

Showcasing work since 2005 in the ECOVAST Project, ASSET, with examples from Austria, Croatia, Germany, United Kingdom and Macedonia.

Revealing the economic successes that have resulted from collaboration with partners.

Other speakers from RURBAN, PURPLE (Peri Urban Regions Platform Europe), and from a City Region.

Highlighting the opportunity for citizen participation in Community Led Local Development and territorial co-operation between urban and rural areas in the Common Strategic Framework.

"In the light of current discussions for the next EU 7-year budget, reforms to EU Regional Policy and other EU programmes, there is a need to address urban challenges in an integrated, more effective way. The reformed Regional Policy makes the case for this kind of integrated approach. This is why the recently renamed Directorate for Regional and Urban Policy has been given a new role by Commission President Barroso to co-ordinate the urban policy initiatives of the EU."

Inforegio 25 February 2013

Phil Turner

Towns and villages that are energy self-sufficient

Nils Lagerroth, of the Swedish Rural network, reports: "In my home village, Brålanda in Dalsland, we have focused on renewable energy. Five years ago we imported all the energy we needed to our area but we are now self-sufficient in all types of energy. We produce electricity from about 40 large wind mills, biogas to vehicle fuel from 4 farm based biogas plants and local heating to the village from a heating plant using local products."

[Biogas Brålanda](#)

Our village/rural area is now interested in finding cooperation with similar towns and areas in other countries. Would you know if there are any more rural areas like ours?"

I have told Nils of the historic town of Güssing, in Austria's Burgenland, visited by ECOVAST members in 2007, where self-sufficiency in energy has been achieved, with no energy imported, except for that in the tanks of outsiders' vehicles, numbers of which have grown due to the increasing interest in sustainability.

<http://www.dorfwiki.org/wiki.cgi?action=browse&id=Energy/Examples/Self-Reliance%2BUseOfLocalResources>

In Germany, the village of Feldheim, with 50 homes, produces 140 times the amount of energy it consumes. As well as a solar powered district heating and 43 wind turbines (not a wind farm, but built in several stages) one community owned, there is a biogas plant fueled by pig manure and local maize silage, with a wood chip burner used as a back up in winter. In a recent BBC radio 4 interview a farmer said: "money of the village stays in the village...If it is YOUR wind turbine you love it." Another said: "Your own pigs do not smell." Success depends on the "democratisation of energy production - people are PROSUMERS of electricity." A social revolution.

'Costing the Earth', BBC Radio 4 . January 30th 2013 - available for 12 months to download:

[Costing the Earth](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01q8mqh)
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01q8mqh>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2012/may/30/germany-renewable-energy-revolution>

Landscape Character

ECOVAST Landscape Identification Guide to Good Practice

A September 2012 update of the Guide in German and English will be available to download from the ECOVAST website.

Summary: The purpose of this guide is to help the citizens of Europe to understand, to celebrate and to protect the landscape in which they live; and to assist governments in their work to implement the European Landscape Convention. It is 28 pages in length, with the following contents:

- Introduction: Landscape, a common interest
- Landscape identification
- Landscape matrix
- Practical steps
- What next?
- Conclusion
- Examples

Poland

Małgorzata Opęchowska, of the government General Directorate of Environmental Protection, the Polish focal point for the European Landscape Convention, is working on a webpage which will be devoted to ELC in Poland. They have asked if the publication: ECOVAST Landscape Identification - A guide to good practice could be published in Polish translation on the webpage?

They say that this would be very helpful to promote information on landscapes and their roles in people's lives.

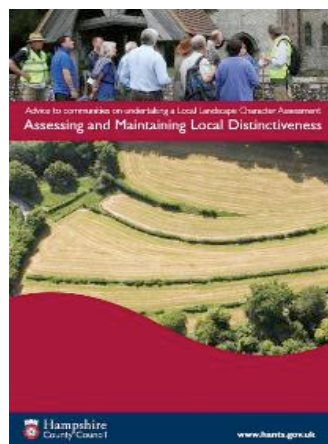
England UK

Action for Communities in Rural England (ACRE) has produced a new Topic Sheet to help communities assess their landscape and local distinctiveness.

Our local landscape is the backdrop to our daily lives. We often take it for granted and it is only when something changes we realise how much we value it. The "Assessing and Maintaining Local Distinctiveness Topic Sheet" has been developed to help put skills and techniques for explaining the importance of the local landscape into the hands of those best placed to say what they value – local people.

The Topic Sheet, produced in partnership with Hampshire County Council (HCC) and Community Action Hampshire, builds on guidance produced by HCC to help communities produce Local Landscape Character Assessments (LLCAs). Local Landscape Character Assessments provide a useful environmental framework and evidence base for local decision making, help structure environmental issues and provide information on what local people value about their landscape. Most importantly a LLCA can be used to provide an evidence base for future planning, for example, if the community is considering writing a neighbourhood plan or can feed into a local authority's planning system.

For more information, please visit the ACRE website.<http://www.acre.org.uk>



The Hampshire guide to Local Landscape Character Assessment.

EVENTS NOTIFIED TO THE EDITOR

8-10 April, 2013. Europa Nostra UK Llandudno, North Wales, A CONFERENCE AND A CELEBRATION sea air and mountain views
As part of the Europa Nostra Jubilee celebrations, Europa Nostra UK, in association with Cadw, the National Trust and Interpret Europe, is holding its main 2013 meeting in Llandudno. Sponsors, the Leventis Foundation and the Headley Trust.

24-25 April 2013, Warsaw, Poland
RURBAN 2nd European seminar on sustainable urban rural partnerships
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/conferences/rurban/2013/index_en.cfm

23 - 26 May 2013 Events in the German Palatinate and French Alsace - Draft Programme:
Thursday 23th May 2013: Arrival in Weyher/Pfalz (between Landau and Neustadt/Weinstrasse)
Evening: Preparatory meeting?

Friday 24th May 2013: Excursion:

Via Pfälzer Wald (Palatinate Forest), castle of Trifels (where Richard Lionheart was held prisoner 1193-94), into the Vosges, open air museum "La Petite Pierre", further sites ending with wine tasting

Saturday 25th May 2013 10 – 12.30 International cross-border seminar with participation of speakers and guests from Alsace in Weyher on vernacular architecture esp. glossary/Baufibel

12.30-13.30 Lunch

13.30- 16.00 Continuation of seminar

16.30 – 19.00 Meeting of International Committee Part 1

19.30 Evening meal/wine tasting

Sunday 25th May 2013 9-10.30 Meeting of International Committee Part 2

11.00 – 13.00 AGM of German Section of ECOVAST 13.15 Lunch 14.30 End, Departure

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19 - 21 August Europa Nostra UK. Scotland
Visits in the Scottish Borders: to the site of the 1513 Battle of Flodden, churches, castles and the Coldstream Museum.

Contact Dr Peter Collins
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June 2013 - EUROPA NOSTRA Congress, Athens, further details from:
www.europanostra.org

40 Years Förderkreis Alte Kirchen (Marburg)/ Network "Future for Religious Heritage" in Germany, mid June 2013

Angus Fowler

7 - 10 October 2013 Open days, Brussels
In October 2013, regions and cities will be finalising preparations for the 2014-2020 cohesion policy, rural development and fisheries programmes. The OPEN DAYS will offer EU institutions, managing authorities and final beneficiaries a chance to exchange and network on new approaches even before the new operational programmes (OPs) are implemented in 2014.

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/conferences/od2013/index.cfm

23-25, October 2013 BOLOGNA, ITALY

OECD 9th Rural Development Policy Conference "Rural-Urban partnerships: an integrated approach to economic development"
Please visit <http://www.oecd.org/gov/regional-policy/ruralconferencebologna> for more information

Autumn 2013 ECOVAST General Assembly Hungary

Gabor Rajnai

30 Years ECOVAST 2014. To be decided.