



## Editorial

This year, our Biodiversity Conference has demonstrated one thing beyond all doubt: we must make wiser and full use of our resources or risk permanent damage our biodiversity and rural economy. This is a challenge not only for land managers, but for all parts of our European society.

It is vital that we move towards a circular economy that makes optimal use of its resources – the traditional method of inputs leading to production leading to the garbage belt is can no longer be supported. Our members, who have a long-term vision for their businesses, are aware that reducing inputs will mean less costs and more sustainability; twin goals for any successful land manager.

However, the challenge is not only on our side, but Europe's food chain must take its responsibility. Over 100 million tons of food are wasted every year; a staggering and futile loss of the efforts of land managers and the whole of the food chain. It is a complete negation of our hard work and sweat. Farmers themselves, transporters, supermarkets, restaurants and consumers – everyone along the food chain - should not only think about the environment, but also of the efforts, time and money involved in getting safe and abundant food to market.

The New Year's resolution for 2015 for the whole food chain must be a promise to reduce waste and re-use our scarce resources.

Thierry de l'ESCAILLE  
Secretary General



## Resisting “the perfect storm” – the 2014 European Biodiversity Conference



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J. POTOČNIK

## Resisting “the perfect storm” - the 2014 European Biodiversity Conference

*“Climate change with us and land managers have a role to play”; this was the message of the ELO’s 2014 Biodiversity Conference, where participants examined the resilience of the European countryside to climate change, as well as exploring the economic necessities of paying for adapting their land management. There was no doubt among the participants as to the realities of climate change, as the opening address by ELO Secretary-General Thierry de l’ESCAILLE made clear that “At a 2.5 degree increase in temperature, yields in the United Kingdom and most of Spain will be down by 60%, and between 10 and 40% in France, Belgium and Holland”.*

**T**his event took place on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December at the Press Club Europe, around the corner from Place Schumann and the heart of Europe, where land managers, policy makers, industry, NGO’s and media came together to listen to experts and participate in an urgent conversation.

The urgency of adaptation and resilience to climate change was underscored and understood by all participants as rising temperatures take their toll around the world. As keynote speaker Janez POTOČNIK, former Commissioner for Environment, made clear: *“we are already seeing changes in our global water resources. Different rainfall patterns and the increased melting of snow and ice are affecting both the quality and the quantity of the water available for our ecosystems. We only need to look to the floods in the UK at the start of the summer, the high heat in the US and Russia, the rapid retreat of glaciers and the shrinking of the Arctic ice cap to realise that something is going terribly wrong with our climate system.”*

The problems posed by climate change were worsened by a lack of innovation and technological possibilities, according to several of the day’s speakers. Paul LEONARD, head of innovation and technology policy at BASF, was openly worried that *“the EU has an aging science population”,* with not enough young people coming out of universities who want

to work on the big agricultural questions of tomorrow. While the conference demonstrated several opportunities for current practices that could be adapted straight-away, the development of new crop varieties could take 20 years or more – demonstrating the urgency of making the necessary policy changes that can improve Europe’s innovative potential.

The circular economy was one of the pillars of a resilient and efficient Europe, according to Mr POTOČNIK, who urged all sectors of the Union to “decouple our human growth from environmental impact” in order to keep climate change under control. Setting the scene for the first panel on nature-based solutions, he pointed to the benefits of the Natura 2000 network, which at 18% of the EU’s land mass stores enough carbon to cover the whole world’s emissions in 2013, for climate change and adaptation. With the new LIFE package containing specific climate-change measures, the former Commissioner left few doubts as to the necessity to such projects.

The necessity of these projects was further underscored by DG Research’s Christos FRAGAKIS, whose presentation on resilient cities made clear that “grey infrastructure is not enough”, and that natural solutions needed to be added to such infrastructure. With “city flooding costing 1.126 lives and 52 billion in damages” in 2013, solutions such as wetland restoration and expansion, as well as dune and beach nourishment, form part of Mr FRAGAKIS answer to rising sea levels and flooding. However, he acknowledged that the EC needed to

provide an EU-wide database of practical solutions in order to help their spread.

Otto VON ARNOLD, manager of the Jordbega Estate, next took the participants from the level of European theory to real-time, practical adaptations in the field. Demonstrating the Swedish Tullstorp project, he demonstrated that local changes could have a large impact on the health of the Baltic Sea, which is under threat from nitrates and phosphorus flowing into its waters. He recommended a mixed bottom-up and top-down approach to avoid “loss of translation between the European, national and local level”, as well as an approach that focused on community acceptance through the carrot, rather than the stick of punitive measures.

Local solutions can also come from outside Europe, as Durukan DUDU of the Anatolian Savory institute proved. With a holistic land management strategy, he stated, it was possible to reverse soil depletion as well as reducing livestock farming costs by 2/3rds. All this was needed to escape the “choice between ecology and economy” which he considered to be an outdated way of thinking. The challenge, according to Mr DUDU, was rather “to be open-minded and to be brave”.

However, all resilience and mitigation strategies must be paid for, and this is why the second panel looked at the economics of agricultural adaptation. With the CAP as one of the primary financial levers for Europe, Edit KONYA of DG AGRI demonstrated the many ways in which this poli-

cy would help prepare Europe for climate change, saying that “the public sector has a crucial role to play; providing decisions, accurate information, tools for farmers and mainstreaming climate change in different EU policies”.

Financial opportunities, according to AEBIOM’s Jean Marc JOSSART, were certainly available in the bio-energy sector, which he said “can help the agricultural sector reduce global emissions” through greener energy consumptions. With Europe’s forests growing at 300 million cubic meters per year, resources for biomass were growing and could, according to Mr JOSSART, help replace Russian gas and help Europe’s citizens. Such energy generation, the main available renewable in Europe, could contribute to further reduce CO2 emissions.

Efficient tools for farmers were being developed by the private sector, stated Richard MARKWELL, President of CEMA, who provided an optimistic view of the contributions of his industry, which is “among the highest in R&D and innovation in Europe”. The development of smart and interconnected machinery would help precisely apply fertilizers, leading to 5% more growth, and 10% less use, leading to saving of over 100 euro per hectare, according to Mr MARKWELL.

Traditionally, the Biodiversity Conference is also the place where the BellEuropa Award is presented, and 2014 was no different. The winner, the Belgian “Domaine de Graux”, was awarded for its high environmental values, biodiversity and insistence on innovation and tradition on their family estate.

None of the above will be possible, agreed the participants, without the active and positive participation of land managers. As conference chair Tim BREITMEYER, farmer and CLA Vice-President concluded, stating that the necessary changes “need to be implemented sustainably and profitably” and with the appropriate education and support. With the perfect storm of climate change on our doorstep, there is no time to waste to do all we can.

**Robert de GRAEFF, ELO**





Elisabeth SIMON receives the award for DOMAINE DE GRAUX from Janez POTOČNIK, former Commissioner for the Environment and Francesco NATTA, the sponsor of Belleuropa Award

## Belgian Estate receives the Belleuropa Award during this years' European Biodiversity Conference in Brussels

*Every year the ELO presents the Belleuropa Award on the occasion of the European Biodiversity Conference which took place this year on the 8th of December at the Press Club Brussels. The Belleuropa Award honors a Wildlife Estate (WE) Label territory which has made an important step forward to maintain, protect or improve farmland biodiversity, using agri-environmental measures.*

**B**elleuropa was founded in Italy in the late 1990's thanks to the initiative of Giuseppe NATTA, a leading environmental figure. It was spearheaded by Gruppo Ecodeco, a leading Italian firm in the environmental sector. Since then the ELO, as the EU secretariat for the WE Label, together with its supporting organisations, have been dedicated to finding and showcasing initiatives by private land managers, companies or institutions for the protection and conservation of wildlife and sustainable land use.

This year the award was bestowed upon Mrs Elisabeth SIMON, the owner of "Domaine de Graux", a newly WE labelled Belgian estate, for her achievements in sustainable estate management. The winner was selected in a close collaboration with the "Fondation Wallonne pour la Conservation des Habitats" as the newly appointed delegate in charge of the WE Label in Belgium Wallonia. "Domaine de Graux" was founded in 1492. The territory of 120 ha near Tournai, Belgium has been converted to organic pro-

duction and houses today an extraordinary biodiversity. Fields of very small sizes combined with diverse species grasslands, high-pin pre-orchards, a constantly expanding acreage of hedgerows, ponds, miles of flower strips, and spectacular cover crops throughout the year. The farm does not use any fertilizer or pesticides but also no-till – it is a real answer to the challenges of the future of agriculture! Supported by scientific advice and recommended as part of a global MFA Action Plan, the farm experiments in-field with new techniques and tools and represents a model for the future of farming.

Innovative in legal matters, it also encourages young farmers in search of land to settle and create micro-farms including: heritage goat species, indoor and outdoor chickens, heritage cow varieties, old fruit stands, forgotten vegetables, hives... to create a balanced food basket. Fishing activities, hunting with an ethical approach, wood for heating the entire site, all complement the farm's desire to have a minimal impact on the resources of the planet.

The Estate also provides a place for upscale receptions for all those who wish to feel connected with nature.

Our warmest congratulations to the winner! Sustainable production along with biodiversity preservation is one of the recent challenges of European agriculture, but because of these outstanding efforts of people on the ground the Europeans are an example for the world. This award serves to highlight the commitment of some managers to combine productivity together with a real respect for nature. There are a lot of important examples like the "Domaine de Graux" estate across Europe and we are proud to promote best practices both through the Belleuropa Award and the WE Label.

**Delphine DUPEUX, ELO**  
**Julianna NAGY, ELO**



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## Bavarian Farmers' Association wins 2014 European Bee Award



The Bavarian Farmers' Association is the winner of the 1st European Bee Award established by the European Landowners' Organization (ELO) and the European Agricultural Machinery Association (CEMA) to acknowledge bee-friendly farm practices in the EU. The Association's "Flowering frames" initiative emerged as the winner from 24 submitted projects. The Award Ceremony took place the 8th of December at the European Parliament in Brussels, with the support of Vice President Mrs Mairead McGUINNESS MEP and the presence of Mr Albert DESS MEP.



W.HEIDL, L.MIKO, R.MARKWELL

made it difficult to choose a winner. Yet the high number and quality of projects submitted is a great tribute to the dedicated efforts that are being made across Europe to halt bee decline and enhance biodiversity."

Gilles DRYANCOUR, Honorary President of CEMA, highlighted the role of the Award in helping "to share best practices and leverage innovative approaches and technologies that can help farmers to minimize the impact of farming operations on honeybees and other pollinators."

The Award Ceremony brought together more than 100 representatives from the European Institutions, civil society groups, and the agri-food sector who had the chance to bring home a sample of traditionally harvested honey.

For more information please contact  
Ana CANOMANUEL, ELO Communication  
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Handing over the Diploma of recognition and a cheque of 5.000€ to Mr Walter HEIDL President of the Bavarian Farmers' Association, Professor Charles GODFRAY (University of Oxford and President of the Jury) congratulated the project team on their achievements.

Ladislav MIKO, acting Director-General of DG SANCO and member of the jury opened the ceremony. Albert DESS MEP welcomed the establishment of the European Bee Award by ELO and CEMA as "an important step in joining forces of public and private actors in the commitment to protect bees and pollinators in the farmed environment in Europe".

Thierry de l'ESCAILLE, Secretary General of ELO, said: "The fierce competition for the Prize



G.DRYANCOUR

## Get to know the winner of the European Bee Award 2014!

"Flowering frames" is a project run and implemented by the Bavarian Farmers' Association (BBV) in support with the Bavarian Association of beekeepers, the agricultural cooperative BayWa and the seed company BSV-Saaten. Farmers sow flower strips around maize fields, as well as around several other crops. By doing so, farmers help bees, insects and other wild animals to find food and habitats. At the same time, farmers participating in the project have the opportunity to inform the public about their work and explain why they grow maize.

The costs for the seeds used for the flower strips as well as yield losses are covered by the farmers themselves. The partners BayWa and BSV-Saaten offer adapted seeds for a lower price and finance information material. BBV has advocated for an adaptation of the legal scheme in order to reduce the bureaucratic burden of creating flower strips. The project also aims at distinguishing new practical initiatives linked to the flower strips.

The project has a high degree of popularity. For instance, in 2011, 170 km flower strips were been created. In 2014 flower strips covered 500 km. The high level of acceptance of the project by farmers, beekeepers, hunters and the local population has led to changes in the rural development programmes of the Bavarian region.

For further information about the winning project please visit the site:  
<http://www.bayerischerbauernverband.de/bluehende-rahmen>

## Field Habitat Network, honourable runner-up of the European Bee Award 2014

After the evaluation process, the Members of the Jury of the European Bee Award agreed to give a special mention to the Field habitat network for their project "Energy from Wild Plants". The network consists of 24 nationwide partners and is coordinated by the German Hunting Association (Deutsche Jagdverband e. V.), the German Wildlife Foundation (Deutsche Wildtier Stiftung) and the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC). A special diploma of recognition was honoured to them for their innovative idea in the field of pollinator protection.

The project "Energy from Wild Plants" involves the production of biomass with a mix of wild perennial plants with long flowering periods covering large areas, which provide food supply for wild bees and other insects.

In contrast to food production, biogas production provides an opportunity to grow a great variety of plant species and types in pure and mixed stands, and to align energy production with the goals of landscape, nature and species protection.



For more information about the project visit the Field Habitat Network website: <http://lebensraum-brache.de/>



### The call for the "Land and Soil Management Award" 2014/2015 there's still time to get your application in!

**Created by:** The European Landowners' Organization (ELO) under the auspices of the European Commission (DG Environment and the Joint Research Centre) in association with the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU) of Vienna, Syngenta International and the Centre for Soil and Environmental Sciences of the Ljubljana University

**Aim:** To encourage new concepts of land and soil protection and their implementation in land management as well as to enhance awareness about the importance of land and soil functions.

**Eligibility:** This prize is intended to recognize quality instruments and management practices which contribute to the protection of land and the soil, by improving the quality of the environment.

**Prize:** With an amount of 5000 € and a diploma of recognition.

**Deadline:** the application has been extended until the 31st of December 2014

**How:** Fill in the application form; send the application by post and by email to the contact details below.

**Contact:**

European Landowners' Organization Rue de Trèves 67; BE – 1040 Brussels  
Contact person: Julianna Nagy  
julianna.nagy@elo.org  
Tel: +32 (0)2 235 20 00; Fax: +32 (0)2 234 30 09

**Information and documents:** <http://www.europeanlandowners.org/awards>



## ELO General Assembly in Riga

From the 25th to 27th November 2014, the ELO held its General Assembly in Riga, organized with the precious support of Arnis MUIZNIEKS, President of the Latvian Forestry Owners, and Aiga GRASMANE. It is a tradition that the ELO meets in the Member State which will assume the presidency of the European Council over the next 6 months. This will be the case of Latvia starting from the 1st January 2015.

The event was spread across three days. The first day was dedicated to forestry matters, including a field trip to peat production and a presentation by the Forestry Research Institute SILAVA. This was followed a very interesting visit of the Plywood Factory Lignums where we held a discussion with its successful management team. The forest industry in Latvia employs over 40 000 people (out of 2 million inhabitants), and is expecting a turnover of 2.2 billion Euro this year.

The next day and a half day was devoted to ELO internal discussions and a debate with representatives of the Latvian authorities. This provided an excellent opportunity to share our thoughts and discuss key issues, with a special focus during the last day of the GA on the Baltic States.

The morning of the 26th November kicked off with the ELO General Assembly, where ELO President Christoph BÜREN welcomed participants and Arnis MUIZNIEKS provided analyses of the current

Latvian political and economic situation. He recalled that, unlike any other nation, Latvia's independence is recent (1918) and was interrupted by the Soviet regime, until 1991. This is critical to understanding the context of property rights in Latvia. He stressed: "We are hopeful that, despite the political situation in neighbouring, we will be able to sustain our independence for generations to come".

This analysis was continued by Armands KRAUZE, Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Member of the Latvian Parliament and Member of the European Economic and Social Committee. He told delegates that landowners in Latvia are promoting sustainable agriculture and increased awareness on all issues related to the countryside, saying: "You represent incubators of ideas for sustainable agriculture". Mr KRAUZE explained that the Latvian Presidency will work on issues including: the forestry strategy, with no additional regulatory burden to be expected; organic farming, and the reduced use of pesticides. Special attention will be given to Climate Change, especially in agriculture and forestry, as it will have an important impact on those sectors. He stressed that the recently-elected Minister of Agriculture represents Green Party and farmers' interests; therefore his team, along with ELO, is well placed to promote a prosperous and sustainable environment for the future of our farming communities. Guntis PUKITIS, State Secretary, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, echoed those priorities adding that as forestry covers 46% and agriculture 37% of the land area, Latvia is unique in its capacity to absorb CO2.

During the afternoon session Thierry de L'ESCAILLE provided a detailed overview of the ELO's ongoing activities. Ross MURRAY, Chair of EPG and Vice-President of the Country Land and Business Association (CLA), UK, together with Christopher PRICE, Director of Policy and Advice, CLA, presented the outcomes of the EPG discussion on the CAP mid-term review. The day long discussions were continued during the gala dinner.

The evening event took place in the family owned and managed Birini Castle. Special words of greeting were expressed by all ELO members to its hosts: Arnis and Solvita MUIZNIEKS, who not only shared the passionate story of that place and their long term vision, but also gave true meaning to the words "hospitality and warm welcome", through a wonderful evening of Latvian music and cuisine. Ended by first snow of the season, this GA will certainly stay as a memorable gathering.

**Next General Assembly will take place the 16th and 17th June in Luxembourg.**

**Caroline MAHR, ELO  
Emmanuelle MIKOSZ, ELO**



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## Recognizing the diversity of EU agriculture as a benefit

*Elections to the European Parliament in 2014 sent many Euro-sceptics to Brussels. In fact, nationalist parties topped the polls in Denmark, France and the United Kingdom. But in Central and Eastern Europe very few voters mandated Euro-sceptics. But does this mean that the European institutions are well-loved in the new Member States? The 7th Regional Forum for the Future of Agriculture (FFA) that took place in Bucharest on 9th October 2014 says differently.*

Romania is a country with a remarkable agricultural potential. When it made the transition to a market economy in 1989, many foreigners were attracted to Romania to invest in large private farm properties following the break-up of the State and Cooperative farms. Then in 2007, Romania joined the European Union.

Romania has benefitted significantly from EU support both pre- and post-accession. However, seven years after joining the EU, Romania's agricultural potential remains largely unrealised. 74% of the farms in Romania are below 2 ha in size. Farm holdings over 2 ha occupy 30% of the population, compared with less than 3% of the population in France. Maize yields are around 4 tonnes per hectare compared with over 10 tonnes per ha in France. Infrastructure for

irrigation and transport remains poor, and farm land remains highly fragmented.

Many of these are national problems. Concerning the land fragmentation problem, the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Daniel CONSTANTIN, called attention to incentive schemes to get smallholders to leave or associate in units of over 30 ha. However, individual farmers are reluctant to associate. There is a confusion between new private cooperatives and ex-communist collectives. Nevertheless, there is little support for smallholder cooperatives in Romania and they do not benefit from the tax advantages of cooperatives in Western Europe.

While these are national problems, farmers are also critical of the European Union.

### Country differences must be recognized

*"The European Commission must take into account the specificities of each country or there will be a slowing down in farming activity", warned the President of the Farmers' Association of Romania (LAPAR), Laurentiu BACIU. He called for more transparency in the development of regulations, so that farmers understand them and are able to follow. "Education and prevention, information and warnings are better than penalising farmers", insisted the LAPAR President.*

A former Minister of Agriculture echoed this sentiment. He was surprised how the EU changed its mind on rapeseed quotas for biomass. He found the ban on neonicotinoids *"an arbitrary decision without prior analysis"*.





Romania is one of the few countries in Europe with favourable conditions for soybean production. In 2000, Romania approved the release of Roundup Ready soybeans. The planted area of RR soybeans grew quickly to reach 190,000 ha in 2006. When Romania joined the EU in January 2007, it had to harmonize its biotech legislation with EU legislation so the cultivation of transgenic soybeans was prohibited. The planted area of soybean fell sharply to 70,000 ha today.

Farmers are still highly critical of the EU for this decision. They point out that Romania has the potential to grow 500,000 ha of soybeans and produce an exportable surplus of up to 1 million tonnes per year of beans, meal and cakes, not to mention the potential to produce biodiesel. But this potential cannot be exploited. Instead, Romania has to rely on imports of 315,000 tonnes of soybeans per year, most of it transgenic.

Outgoing EU Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, Dacian CIOLOS – himself a Romanian – tried to reassure farmers saying that if transgenic crops were assessed as harmless by the EU, individual Member States may be able to plant them if they so wish.

Maize growers were also highly critical of the EU, this time for the two-year ban from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2013 on the use of neonicotinoids to control the corn weevil (*Ta-*

*mymecus dilaticollis*). Growers told the FFA Conference that in the south and south-east of the country (Black Sea area), corn weevil populations can exceed 100 insects per square metre. This is a regional specificity that does not exist in Western Europe. Use of neonicotinoids is the only effective control. Concerns about their harmful effects on bees are not present in Romania. The Minister of Agriculture said that there have not been any negative reports over the last six years. Again, this is a situation where growers in Romania feel that the EU is being insensitive to the situation of individual countries.

### Competitiveness must go hand in hand with environmental protection

In spite of criticisms of EU decisions concerning RR soybeans and neonicotinoids, there is a new awareness of the environment among farmers in Romania and they are embracing the greening of the CAP. In the past, environmental legislation compelled farmers to do things, said Commissioner CIOLOS. Today the CAP provides incentives through cross-compliance supplemented by voluntary measures in Pillar 2. Commissioner CIOLOS recognized that integrating practices to protect the environment into 'production logic' will take time as they need to be tested, but he saw the EU as a pioneer in a global movement to make production more sustainable. Innovations to support this will come from the operational groups set up under Horizon 2020 to work on solutions among stakeholders.

### Conclusion

Agriculture in the European Union is very diverse, so is it possible to have one common policy for agriculture that covers all 28 Member States? Outgoing Agricultural Commissioner Dacian CIOLOS thinks so especially for 'common goals and common instruments', with space to implement the policy according to each national situation. But for the farmers, ministers, business leaders and others who came together at the 7<sup>th</sup> Regional Forum for the Future of Agriculture, there is some way to go before this is a reality on the ground. Brussels still feels like a long way from Bucharest.

**David KING, Advisor to ELO and former Head of International Relations of SAF**

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## HERCULES: a bridge between research and practice Stakeholder engagement is one of the project's cornerstones

*The most important objective of HERCULES is to link research with practice while making everyone more aware of the importance of cultural landscapes; not only in terms of social well-being, but also of economic and ecological rural prosperity. The project's vision is to identify local needs for landscape management and to provide a forum for general exchange on findings developed by its researchers.*

Sustainable Futures for Europe's Heritage in Cultural Landscapes (HERCULES): Tools for understanding, managing, and protecting landscape functions and values

*"The core idea of the project is to link different perspectives and knowledge on the past and present of landscapes across Europe, in order to concretise pathways for their sustainable development. This most importantly includes the views of people living in very distinct areas across the continent." – Claudia BIELING, HERCULES researcher*

Funded through the Seventh Framework Program (FP7) of the EU, the project brings together 13 partners from European Universities and research institutes, small and medium-sized enterprises and non-governmental organisations to develop a holistic approach that incorporates diverse stakeholder perspectives to appropriately address landscape changes. While the adoption of the European Landscape Convention (ELC) has attracted much attention from the sciences, policy makers and the general public, cultural landscapes are in need of further action to ensure their continued existence.

To reach this goal, and to ensure that all perspectives are considered, HERCULES decided to bring together different stakeholders, including policy makers, farmers, practitioners, scientists, NGOs and industry, through local stakeholder workshops: 3 workshops in 6 European countries where HERCULES researchers are working; Spain, Greece, Estonia, France, the Netherlands and The United Kingdom. Three of these workshops were held in October in Spain, Greece and Estonia.

### SPAIN with a focus on linkages between landscapes and human well-being

In Spain the workshop was held in Colmenar Viejo, a small town near the study's assigned landscape, the foothills of the Sierra de Guadarrama mountain range, which

is situated in the Northwest of the Autonomous Community of Madrid, Spain. Although it is a rural area when it comes to the characteristics of the landscape, its economic and demographic characteristics more closely resemble urban dynamics due to its historic role as head of the northern region of Madrid and its proximity to the Spanish capital. The region is dominated by hills and shallow valleys (mostly in the North-western sector), with scarcer areas of pronounced valleys and ravines, rocky outcrops of granite, and the prominent San Pedro Hill; all carved by watercourses.

The aim of this first local workshop was to create a contact with the local stakeholders in order to introduce HERCULES listen to their views and better understand their relationship with their local landscape.

The second aim was to establish a bidirectional cooperation between Colmenar Viejo and HERCULES in order to work together towards finding new solutions to the problems that European landscapes face.

Berta MARTIN LOPEZ, Professor at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, identified in her concluding remarks that it was the variety of presented stakeholders and their willingness to actively cooperate with the project that made the workshop such a positive experience.

As a result of the workshop, the Municipality of Colmenar Viejo endorsed the project and re-assured its support for its continual involvement. They were so happy with the project that the topic of next year's local Environment Days (a series of events in the municipality held over several months) will be Landscape and will start with the next HERCULES workshop.

### GREECE with a focus on traditional agricultural activities

For the Greek landscape, HERCULES chose the petrified forests and agroforestry landscapes of Lesvos. Lesvos is an island of the Aegean (1,456 km<sup>2</sup>) with a population of 90,000. The most important agricultural landscapes consist of olive plantations in the east of the island and grazing land (for sheep) in the west. The study landscape of Gera and Plomari is located in the middle of the olive plantation landscape. This landscape is homogenous and characteristic of Lesvos as part of its local identity. Most trees lie on small, hilly or mountainous sloping fields.

The workshop had such aims as: to introduce HERCULES to local stakeholders and to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to discuss and debate the present and future of the olive trees and their landscape. The aim was that stakeholders did not just to listen to experts, but also had the opportunity to speak and be heard and initiate the discussion on the introduction of an integrated management system for the



olives that will: (I) make olive cultivation more profitable and reduce abandonment of olive plantations, (II) protect biodiversity, (III) preserve and maintain the landscape. The workshop gathered several different groups of stakeholders ranging from olive farmers to local administration officials. Three different groups emerged that expressed their interest to work together and try to develop and apply such a system. Two of them are olive millers – bottlers and merchants of olive oil that wanted to build traceability and increase quality via a management of the olives that will be adapted to the local landscape. The third group is the local Gera NGO that is interested in the same goals, but also in developing a series of accompanying activities related to tourism.

**ESTONIA  
with a focus on linkages between  
landscape and cultural heritage preservation**

The Estonian study landscape (Vooremaa with adjacent Kodavere parish) lies on the

Western edge of Estonia, next to Lake Peipsi, the border lake between Estonia and Russia, and is culturally and naturally diverse. The territory's landscape is almost completely rural, mosaicked with only a few villages. Habitation is sparse and centred around these dispersed villages.

The region is interesting because of the presence of Lake Peipsi's lowlands, the clayish-sandy agricultural soils of the south-eastern Estonian plain, and relic land forms (elongated drumlins) left by the regressing ice cap. The location of the Lakes of Peipsi and Pskov has meant that the area has been touched by the cultural influences of many passers-by who sailed along the lake system.

The Estonian workshop's aims were very similar to the Spanish and Greek event. In addition to presenting the project to the local people, the workshop aimed to assess what they value in their landscape and what they think could prove a risk for the elements they value. One of the most important issues that emerged from the discussion was the preservation of the linguistic heritage in Kodavere.

These first workshops demonstrate the importance and necessity of stakeholder consultation in relation to landscape issues. There is a clear need of going beyond the description and assessment of current systems; stakeholders are looking forward to not just receiving solutions and new alternatives on how to face future challenges, but they are willing to be consulted and to take an active part in decision making.

**Julianna NAGY, ELO**

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## Three new Wildlife Estates for Finland

The Finnish national delegation for Wildlife Estates (WE) organised an event in Porvoo on 28th October to promote new members in Finland. As a result, three new Finish estates, Kullo, Kiiala and Wanantaka, became members of the Wildlife Estate network and received their label. Around 30 participants attended the event which also attracted the attention of the local media.

**K**onstantin KOSTOPOULOS, COO of Wildlife Estates gave an enlightening speech on "why one should join the WE network and what does it bring to an estate?" Konstantin's speech gave those attending a clear idea about the vision behind the Wildlife Estates and its' meaning for estates and their biodiversity.

The Coordinator of Finnish national WE delegation, Dr Ahti PUTAALA, presented the general concept of Wildlife Estates and gave those attending information how to apply for a label. Many participants were interested to hear about Wildlife Estates and some expressed an in applying immediately after the event.

Jakob FRANKENHAEUSER, an owner of one of the labeled estates, shared his thoughts about the WE and the procedure of applying. In his speech Jakob encouraged those with estates to manage and to continually seek new ways and means to support biodiversity. He explained how going through the process of application alone increased his awareness and knowledge concerning biodiversity and

generated new ideas on how he could improve its management.

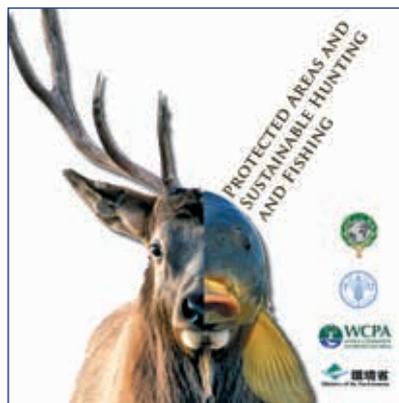
There are now six labeled estates in Finland which include, in addition to those who applied on 28<sup>th</sup> October, Porkkala in Lammi, Palosaari in Pyhäjoki and Laitiala in Hollola. The Finnish delegation expect the number of Wildlife Estates

to at least to double in coming years.

**Ahti PUTAALA,**  
Coordinator of Finish WE delegation

For more information please visit  
[www.wildlife-estates.eu](http://www.wildlife-estates.eu)

## Call for Protected Areas to Harness the Benefits of Sustainable Use



FAO and the CIC held a panel discussion session entitled 'Protected Areas and Sustainable Hunting and Fishing' on 15 November 2014 as part of Stream 4 – Supporting Human Life during the World Parks Congress of the IUCN in Sydney, Australia.

In the past local people were often excluded from protected areas, making it difficult or impossible for them to accept protected areas that forced them to leave their lands and deprived them of the possibility to harvest appropriate renewable natural resources. However, times are changing and the concerns

and needs of local populations are beginning to receive the attention they deserve. Part of these concerns is the right to sustainably harvest fish and wildlife in and around protected areas.

The session examined the role of hunting and fishing in the planning and management of protected areas, whether these activities could support local community-based development and how management can maintain the wildlife habitat and hence a valuable food source. Four panellists from around the world discussed these issues and answered questions from the floor.

With hunting and fishing in protected areas being a controversial topic in itself, the session provided some further material to fuel discussions and helped to clarify certain questions. Whilst it was clear that there was no one size fits all solution, it was concluded that sustainable hunting and fishing, including falconry, as part of protected area management, have the ability to support livelihoods and cultures, increase food security, generate income, maintain wildlife numbers within the ecological and social carrying capacity of the environment, and build crucial local support for the conservation of biodiversity and habitats.



CIC Team

More information: <http://www.cic-wildlife.org> >> Partners >> IUCN

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## Forum of Countryside Entrepreneurship (FCE) 2015



### DIARY DATES 2014

On the 21st and 22nd March, YFCS will organise the 2015 FCE. The previous editions of the FCE have proved to be highly successful in not only allowing us to learn about innovative and promising projects, but also to benefit from the advice of competent and experienced people, to generate new ideas and create new contacts. There are many current projects initiated by the Young Friends, which are benefiting from considerable success.

This year, the organisers have chosen to highlight emerging projects to enable members to benefit from the feedback and the support of fellow members and to pass on their entrepreneurial spirit. The main topic will be forest management - the new challenges faced by forest owners, and sharing their possible solutions. One of the main highlights will be the new demand opportunities for wood, including energy from wood.

FCE 2015 will take place at the property of a member in the Belgian Ardennes. This will also be an opportunity to discover a beautiful area where the owners promote biodiversity by testing a multitude of micro-projects. This is a perfect setting to talk about entrepreneurship and future challenges.

This kind of opportunity allows YFCS to establish a pool of knowledge that will support them in the adaptation of land management to a changing world, whilst respecting the values we cherish. The past has shown us that it is often the younger generation who brings the effective solutions.

Geoffrey de CANNIERE, YFCS

For more information please visit: [www.yfcs.eu](http://www.yfcs.eu)

#### 2015 – International Year of Soils, launch by FAO

#### 26 - 27 January, Berlin

Workshop organised in the framework of HERCULES  
<http://www.hercules-landscapes.eu/>

#### 29th January, Brussels

CAP Communication Awards 2014 [http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-communication-network/awards/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-communication-network/awards/index_en.htm)

#### 10th March, Paris

Wildlife Estates Scientific Committee meeting  
<http://www.wildlife-estates.eu/>

#### 21 - 22 March, Ardennes (Belgium)

Forum of Countryside Entrepreneurship (FCE); organized by YFCS  
[www.yfcs.eu](http://www.yfcs.eu)

#### 31st March, the Square, Brussels

8th Forum for the Future of Agriculture (FFA)  
[www.forumforagriculture.com](http://www.forumforagriculture.com)

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## 8<sup>th</sup> Forum for the Future of Agriculture Meeting the Food & Environmental Challenge



[www.forumforagriculture.com](http://www.forumforagriculture.com)

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**The SQUARE, Brussels Meeting Centre**  
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