

European Sustainable Use Group (ESUG)

General Meeting of Members

Wednesday, 24 April 2019

09.00 – 13.00

Aquatika, Branka Čavlovića Čavleka 1a, 47000 Karlovac, Croatia.

Minutes

1. **The meeting was opened** by the Chair, Robert Kenward. He welcomed to the meeting Adrian Lombard, Adrian Pinder, David Scallan, Janusz Sielicki, Julian Mühle, Julie Ewald, Krešimir Krapinec, Mari Ivask, Marina Rosales, Maya Basdeo, Nick Casey, Piet Wit, Robert Kenward, Siti Suriawati Isa, Tetiana Gardashuk, Viktor Šegrt and Zenon Tederko, plus 4 observers including Angela Andrade as the chair of IUCN's Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM), Vilma Alina Šoba and two members of the IUCN group on Sustainable Use and Management of Ecosystems (SUME), namely Celia Vassilopoulou and Loay Frookh.

2. **Apologies** had been received from Basil Manos, Despina Symons, Eduardo Arraut, František Urban, Fritz Reimoser, Giota Digkoglou, Giuseppe Micali, Ion Navodaru, Jason Papathanasiou, Kai Wollscheid, Keiya Nakajima, Madeleine Nyman, Mátyas Prommer, Nicholas Aebischer, Omer Borovali, Pranas Mierauskas, Riccardo Simoncini, Rob Jongman, Robin Sharp, Rory Putman, Sandie Sowler, Sándor Csányi, Scott Brainerd, Sonya Zlatanova, Stratos Arampatzis, Tatyana Bragina, Tim Geer and Torsten Morner.

3. **The meeting was quorate and the Agenda was adopted by consensus.** There were 17 members attending, comfortably exceeding a quorum of 11 (10% of the 104 current ESUG members). Proxy voting is not permitted by ESUG statutes.

4. **Minutes of the [previous General Meeting](#)** held in Brussels on 17 May 2017 were adopted by consensus without alteration, with all actions completed (and to be reported during the meeting) as a result hard work that included four meetings of Committee during the last two years.

5. **Regarding ESUG relationships with government and IUCN activities.** Chair reported that ESUG's relationships with IUCN had changed. When the group for Sustainable Use and Livelihoods (SULi) was created, ESUG had been pleased to be a support group for development of European Charters (under IUCN Resolution 4.28), and for project work on the Saker Falcon with Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey (IAF). However, due to greater SULi enthusiasm for other work, ESUG's policy role had faded. As IUCN-CEM had become supportive of the internet portal projects started through ESUG's role in EU-funded projects, ESUG had come to devote most of its support work for SUME, funded initially by CMS and IAF but with generous support for meetings from IUCN-CEM. With support also from the Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation in Europe (FACE) and British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC) as Patrons, ESUG had now built the Naturalliance.org network for IUCN-CEM-SUME.

Adrian Lombard, co-chair of SUME, gave a [paper on SUME development](#). He noted that after SUME's first meeting, with ESUG in Vienna in 2015, membership had grown to 67 in

37 countries by its second meeting at IUCN's 2016 World Conservation Conference in Honolulu, to 380 members by a meeting in Lima in 2017 and was now about 550 in more than 90 countries. People were clearly attracted by its approach of global-with-local (glocal) networking, which was being helped by IAF through falconry groups also in 90 countries. This led from Sakernet and Perdixnet to AmFalCon and glocal Naturalliance. A proposal by Adrian Lombard, that ESUG members should be encouraged to join SUME, was seconded by David Scallan and agreed unanimously. **Action 2019.1**

Chair noted that ESUG had always worked in sustainable use of both species and ecosystems, especially to encourage use of species to conserve ecosystems, so ESUG work suits both SULi and SUME. Indeed, 60 of the 104 ESUG members in SULi, and with SULi chair, Dr Dilys Roe, now in Europe it should be possible to strengthen links again. Julie Ewald, Robin Sharp and ESUG chair had met Dilys in London to discuss this.

Julie reported that, following the decision in 2017 to investigate joining IUCN, a working group that also included Robin Sharp and Frank Vorhies had completed the investigation and reported to Committee. It had been decided provisionally to join IUCN as an International Non-Government Organisation, which would cost about €500 per annum. The application form for this had been completed to the point at which a new requirement, for two legally registered offices in countries other than the main office, needed to be met. It was proposed by Piet Wit, seconded by Maya Basdeo and agreed unanimously that ESUG should complete application to IUCN as an International NGO. **Action 2019.2**

Angela Andrade (current CEM chair) and Piet Wit (CEM chair 2008-16) briefed the meeting on functioning of IUCN for World Conservation Congress 7 in Marseilles during June 2020. The three pillars of IUCN, namely its Members (86 State Members, 1,100 NGOs, plus Government Agency and Indigenous People Members), with secretariat (of about 1000 staff) and 6 Commissions (ca 20,000 members), come together at 4-year intervals for a Congress to approve and modify the quadrennial Programme put forward by Secretariat. Some 10,000 people attend. A Forum of Commission meetings and side events for five days precedes five days of General Assembly, during which Motions are deliberated. The possibility of partnering for side events, with IAF on development of multilingual networks and with UN-WHO on Traditional Chinese Medicine was suggested. Indeed, the ESUG/SUME networking was relevant to both, as common pages like the Nature Actions page could be carried across all satellite sites in countries, e.g. on Health Actions and perhaps also Culture Actions with UNESCO. If ESUG membership was approved in time, engagement on coordination for Motions with FACE and IAF would be possible, noting a need for re-linking with the interests of Indigenous People members. The need for Secretariat to be a better broker of funding for Commissions, which do much of the work on Programme, was also mentioned. Rapid planning was now needed and liaison should occur with Angela Andrade on possible Forum engagement. **Action 2019.3**

6. Potential Sustainable Use project engagements of ESUG. Chair noted that the original regional groups of IUCN's Sustainable Use Initiative and subsequent Specialist Group had been themselves sustained where they had projects, with NorAid funding in Southern Africa, the project on Markhor in Central Asia and project funding from several sources in Europe. Recently, funding for portal work from IUCN Member IAF and support from Patrons, including IUCN Member FACE had permitted development of the Naturalliance network, which engaged many members. However, there was a need for better project funding. The [basis for networking projects](#) had been examined the previous day; further scope for these would be examined in break-outs. Bids for EU-funding could now take >3 person-months to prepare, but a 2-stage process was more cost-effective.

A review of projects with a connection to agriculture undertaken by ESUG or members of ESUG was given by [Mari Ivask & Julie Ewald](#). The chief amongst these was [Perdixnet](#) – undertaken in 2017 with the support of IAF and launched at the last ESUG meeting in Brussels. Julie summarised other projects GWCT was involved with, including PARTRIDGE (a NorthSea Interreg funded demonstration project) and Farmer Clusters (UK government funded projects to enable landscape level cooperation between landowners). Mari highlighted the need to address soil degradation across Europe and the world, and the fact that the EU decided to withdraw a proposed Soil Framework Directive in 2014. Mari is involved in a project on soil biodiversity that begins in June 2019 and highlighted the need for healthy, biodiverse soils.

Zenon Tederko and Siti Suriawati Isa had presented the previous day on aspects of tourism and the possibilities for ESUG of expanding digital portals to include tourism – specifically ecotourism. [Zenon underlined](#) the difficulties of working with individual municipalities for portals, with many different online resources available to them. He emphasised that the most likely collaborators for ESUG would be large companies and that the ecotourism segment of the industry was the one that would be most compatible with ESUG interests and priorities. [Siti underlined](#) the importance of enabling local communities to receive the benefits of ecotourism and establishing contacts between local people with those partaking in ecotourism.

David Scallan provided an [overview of developments](#) related to the conservation of mammals in Europe and beyond. He also highlighted how efforts to control the spread of African Swine Fever are leading to sharing of information across borders on the distribution of large mammals, particularly wild boar. These may provide the impetus for taking a proposed “Mammalnet” further. Possible funders included both governments and commercial interests (insurance companies or those with mammal logos). The list of possible partners was long – including governments, NGOs, museums etc.

Chair raised the question of whether the European Charters developed by ESUG member Scott Brainerd for Bern Convention, and now [presented online](#) in all naturalliance.org languages, should be further developed, possibly with the Forestry Charter conceived in 2013. There was consensus that this should be taken forward. **Action 2019.4**

7. ESUG portal development.

This had been mentioned extensively in discussions already, with background to the launch of the global Naturalliance network [available online](#).

[Nick Casey illustrated](#) how his experience as a Full Stack software engineer and employment by Anatrack Ltd to produce an analysis system for radio-tracking had led in ESUG’s TESS project to design of a multilingual mapping tool and then the initial Naturalliance portal, further portals for ESUG and now the Naturalliance portal relaunch as a tool for networking to local level. Keeping such a system running in days of continual software security issues and browser changes presented many challenges.

Tetiana Gardashuk reported the [results of a mini-survey](#) of the experience of translators for the new naturalliance site. The vocabulary and length of sentences had been considered slightly unsatisfactory, but the software easy to use. Most translation of single words and sentences was direct into the system, with paragraphs generally translated separately and then pasted in. The time required was 10-20 hours (about two person-days).

8. **Report of the Chair.** [The report](#) was given by Robert Kenward. During his 12-year tenure, ESUG had taken part in two projects for European Commission, attended three WCCs, launched 5 multilingual portals, changed its name and helped launch a group in CEM now with 550 members. However, it had needed 8 years to become financially viable again after the end of the last EU project, which coincided with loss of status as an IUCN regional group. The long-term success was due to a multi-term core of elected Committee members, including Despina Symons, Zenon Tederko, Kai Wollscheid and Angus Middleton, who preceded TESS, and also Stratos Arampatzis, Mari Ivask, Tetiana Gardashuk, Julie Ewald and David Scallan, all of whom were thanked. ESUG also owed its financial survival to IAF, and to the four Patrons who were now so generously helping.

9. **ESUG constitution changes.**

To accommodate greater ESUG activities, legal recognition of two offices outside Belgium had become advantageous (and see Item 5 above). This requires addition to Article 3 of: “Additional offices for international operations are at Stoborough Croft, Grange Road, Wareham BH20 5AJ, UK and 470 Yamanote, Owariasahi, Asahigaoka, Aichi, 488-0084 Japan”

The motion was proposed by Adrian Lombard, seconded by Julie Ewald and approved unanimously by the 17 members present. Despina Symons had kindly agreed to allow the office of her European Bureau for Conservation and Development in Brussels to continue as ESUG’s main address. This needs prompt notary attention. **Action 2019.5**

10. **Financial reports** for [2017](#) and [2018](#) were online and were summarised briefly by chair. There was €6,091 in the Brussels account at the end of 2016, after closing and transferring funds from the UK account. During 2017, there was €10,859 expenditure (mainly on the final stages of the Sakernet project, on translation for Perdixnet and for arranging the SUME meeting in Lima), but only €8,204 income due to a late final payment by UNEP for Sakernet, so the year ended with €3,436 in the account. However, income in 2018 was €6,181, including that late payment, an advance from IUCN-CEM for the current meetings and four payments from Patrons, with only €2,648 expenditure (mainly for changing our name), so the year ended with €6,969 in the account.

ESUG finances were being handed to the new chair free of the loan needed for matching in the last EU-funded project and with about €2,000 on account after all costs of the current meetings had been met. It was hoped that income could be raised from further Patrons to provide about €4,000 p.a. for servicing the global network and future meetings.

11. **The Accounts for 2017 and 2018 were approved by consensus**, after being proposed by Zenon Tederko and seconded by Maya Basdeo.

12. **Elections of Chair and Committee Members.**

As the retiring chair was not standing for Committee, he served as Returning Officer assisted by Adrian Lombard. The new ESUG chair, elected unanimously, was Dr Julie Ewald. The five Members elected to ESUG Committee were David Scallan, Tetiana Gardashuk, Sándor Csányi, Viktor Šegrt and Zenon Tederko.

13. **There was no other business**

14. **The meeting closed** at 13.00.