

# **Building Capacity for Biodiversity Conservation in Eastern Europe and Central Asia**

**1<sup>st</sup> quarterly report**  
**January 2006**  
(Project reference number: PECE-06)

**Partnership for Environmental Cooperation in Europe**



**Earthwatch Institute (Europe)**



**Field Studies Council**



### **Summary of the project:**

Earthwatch Institute (Europe) and the Field Studies Council (FSC) are collaborating to deliver this project with funding from the UK Government's Partnership for Environmental Cooperation in Europe (PECE). The overall purpose of the project is to support biodiversity field research, train biodiversity practitioners and build capacity around Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) region. The project will directly support vital biodiversity field research and active participation in biodiversity conservation through structured training and the practical application of skills. During 2006 and 2007 four teams of 7 participants (28 in total) will join an Earthwatch project in Belarus to undergo training in biodiversity research and environmental education techniques. The training element will be led by an environmental education instructor from FSC and an Earthwatch scientist.

### **Progress to date:**

- **Outline of training course decided**

The course itinerary and training sessions have been established and Jonathan Oldham (FSC) is currently working out the finer points of the training activities.

- **Trainers identified**

Jonathan Oldham (FSC) will organise and lead the environmental education element of the training course. Dean Morgan (Natural Resource Mapping Ltd) will provide training in biodiversity survey techniques to compliment the training in wetland research carried out by Natallia Zeliankevich (National Academy of Sciences, Minsk, Belarus) who leads the Earthwatch Belarus Wetlands Project.

- **Training course briefing produced**

Earthwatch and FSC have produced a briefing document to prepare each of the course participants for the course. It outlines the aims of the course (biodiversity research and environmental education training), the location of the course, who will run the course, the course itinerary and the logistics of getting to the course and whilst on the course for the participants.

- **Training course dates and location confirmed**

The first two teams (of four teams) will take place from 10-27 June 2006 and 1-18 July 2006. The participants will meet in Minsk (initial briefing and debriefing at the conclusion of the course will take place here) and the majority of the training and field work will take place in Narochanski National Park to the north west of Minsk.

- **Partners contacted**

Field Studies Council has contacted all the partners and introduced them to the course aims, activities and the nominating process for selecting participants. The nominating partners are below:

Central Asia Regional Environment Centre: CAREC will recruit 10 participants over two years.

Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus: RECC recruit 10 participants from key organisations throughout the Caucasus.

Biodiversity Conservation Centre (Russia): BCC will recruit 4 participants from key organisations throughout Russia.

Eco Centre K (Ukraine): Eco Centre K will recruit 4 participants from key organisations throughout Ukraine.

- **Nominations for Participants for 2006 teams**

Nominations are being coordinated by FSC who will notify Earthwatch of the participant names and occupations for Team 1 by mid-February and for Team 2 by early March. CAREC have nominated two candidates to date:

1. Zhenya Postnova, works for an NGO "BIOM" in Kyrgyzstan and plays a role in developing the CAREC Environmental Education Programme, and participates in Education for Sustainable Development projects in cooperation with FSC.

2. Elmira Oleinikova-Tsoi, from Uzbekistan is the National Coordinator of the project "Environmental Education, Development of Public Information and Participation" and of the project "Creation of Nuratau-Kyzylkum Biosphere Reserve as a Model of Biodiversity Conservation in Uzbekistan".

- **Logistics and travel planning underway**

Earthwatch will organise all travel arrangements for the participants, and are currently researching/organising the travel to and from the project for the participants.

- **Post course considerations**

Inviting project proposals from the partners post course

Twenty eight preliminary proposals for biodiversity field research and/or environmental education projects will be submitted to Earthwatch and FSC by the participants or the partners as a result of their training and at least 4 of the above projects will be selected for development and receive funding to be submitted as PECE follow-up projects. Earthwatch and FSC have produced a proposal form and we are considering securing extra funding to enable the partners to implement these 4 projects.

Participant networking website

FSC have an established website where the participants can join a website forum after attending the project to continue to network with each other.

- **Meetings**

The Earthwatch Belarus research project Principal Investigator, Natallia Zeliankevich came to Oxford to meet the FSC trainer, Jonathan Oldham and the Earthwatch coordinators in October 2005. FSC and Earthwatch have since met to further the progress in January 2006 and a follow up meeting is planned for February 2006.

**Conclusions:**

FSC and Earthwatch are working well together and progress is meeting the targets set. The training course has been very well received by the partners in the EECCA region and the level of participants nominated is high.