

Meeting of CEM Thematic Group on Sustainable Use and Management of Ecosystems

In Cholpon Ata, Kyrgyzstan on 7 September 2017 at 19:00.

Present (*steering):

Keiya Nakajima, Adrian Lombard*, Janusz Sielicki, Dan Cecchini, Kamran Khan Yousafzai, Piet Wit, Mátyás Prommer, Fernando Feas, Adrian Reuter, Hilary White, Robert Kenward**

1. Status of SUME.

SUME membership had reached 62 from 37 countries before WCC6, mostly through invitation. However, close to half the membership of CEM listed themselves for SUME on re-joining after WCC6, so there are now close to 400 members from some 90 countries. The expectation underlying so much interest creates heavy responsibility to keep members engaged as well to deliver our outreach projects. To help engage members, three actions are being taken:

- a web-site, considered a possibility at meeting 2 in Honolulu, is live (<http://sume.sycl.net>);
- a D-Group is intended to enable discussions at regional level in several languages;
- regional meetings are being held in Central Asia, South America and Europe

SUME is extremely grateful to the International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey (IAF) for hosting the first of these regional meetings here in Central Asia.

2. Organisational relationships within IUCN.

SUME has been developing good relations with other parts of CEM, including a leaders meeting in London with Judy Fisher, for the theme Ecosystems and Invasive Species, with which it is hoped to develop portal networking at future regional meetings. CEM chair Angela Andrade will be at the next SUME regional meeting, in Lima during 26-7 October, and it was a pleasure to have previous chair Piet Wit present. As well as strong cooperation from IAF with developing the multilingual project portals, networking and administration were assisted by European Sustainable Use Group (ESUG), formerly part of the Sustainable Use Specialist Group (SUSG) in Species Survival Commission (SSC). This had been replaced by Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Group chaired by Rosie Cooney, with ESUG providing support facilities to both groups. Such support was useful for administration as, although IUCN group can raise funds, they may not sign contracts, and contracts are very convenient for small funded tasks such as translation.

3. Partnerships beyond IUCN.

It was agreed that coordination with like-minded groups working on sustainable use within and beyond IUCN was important, because growing pressures against use of wild species, especially animals, can be a threat to conservation of ecosystems. Other CEM groups, including those for invasive species and fisheries, have comparable groups in SSC. The anchoring of CEM activities in CBD's Ecosystem Approach tends to keep CEM groups pragmatic. External partnerships were considered very important, as exemplified by that with IAF for Sakernet and Perdixnet projects. Together with an unfilled need for coordination of SU-based member organisations between quadrennial WCCs, cooperation was also needed for SUME project development to national levels. Thus, wide dissemination of information on the many benefits of conservation through sustainable use, with translation for as many cultures as possible, might eventually help reduce the traction able to be gained in electorates by populist campaigns against sustainable use activities. Partnerships for this with and beyond other IUCN members were to be welcomed.

4. Project development and cooperation within IUCN.

All members of SUME should be involved. It was agreed that 400 members would be hard to manage, and it was noted that none of the self-listed members was present. One suggestion was to hold a survey for volunteering in particular roles, to focus administrative engagement with those members. However, it was also noted that developing projects at local level globally would require several members in each country, which favoured having a number in each from which to choose the most active for translation and for running national web-sites as nodes in the networks. Development of SUME projects could benefit from co-work with other CEM groups and especially regional CEM chairs, which could be encouraged into SUME if not already members. If incentives were needed to encourage volunteering, prizes for best efforts could include access to the next WCC.

5. Project development and cooperation with partners at international level.

Cooperation with other organisations could be cemented with Memoranda of Understanding if this would benefit those engaged. SUME could make itself a more attractive partner by having its own logo, noting that CEM and SUME logos must only be used in association with the IUCN logo. The development of projects with IAF had been especially effective because of IAF's network of some 90 clubs which could help create nodes in countries for topics of interest to falconers, such as conserving raptors (www.Sakernet.org) and conserving game in agricultural ecosystems (www.Perdixnet.org). Partnerships were very important for funding multilingual networks at international level, and ESUG experience in Europe was helping SUME to develop with IAF a system for expert translation of concepts for conservation through sustainable use concepts in countries beyond Europe. For example, Sakernet had added Arabic, Farsi and Pashto, and Danish to the 23 languages already covered in Europe, with agreements informally in Cholpon Ata also for Mandarin, Mongolian and Urdu. A process of contracts with small sums, or travel expenses with tasks to be completed before a meeting, was an effective model.

6. National level considerations.

The model for project sites at national level still required work. It was developing in Perdixnet, through national falconry clubs providing support for biologists capable of organising the web-content either as funding (Germany), or more social rewards of e.g. invitation to enjoyable events (France). Other capabilities useful in groups could be experts in drawing attention to the projects through broadcasts, press or social media. Such groups might also need to involve other organisations, such as farmers. In Poland, cooperation with farmers had been a problem because rules to implement the EU's Common Agricultural Policy gave little scope to use the subtle de-intensification measures needed for partridges. As part of activities to build national groups, training to use the software (although not needed by internet-savvy users) could be an opportunity for getting groups together at social events. Such training might be held for those from Asia attending the coming Falconry Festival in Abu Dhabi.

7. Future meetings

Plans were well advanced for the Lima meeting in October. Kind support from IAF was enabling their representatives in the Americas to attend, and there were pages in English and Spanish on the <http://sume.sycl.net>. It was agreed to inform the Belgrade IUCN office in good time about the Croatia meeting.

8. The meeting closed at 20:30

