



***PAN-EUROPEAN BIOLOGICAL AND LANDSCAPE
DIVERSITY STRATEGY***

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**BUREAU OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE PAN-EUROPEAN
BIOLOGICAL AND LANDSCAPE DIVERSITY STRATEGY**

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RESULTS OF THE PEBLDS SURVEY

Document prepared by the Joint Secretariat for the PEBLDS

Introduction

The PEBLDS Council decided at their 10th meeting at Plitvice Lakes National Park in Croatia to review options for the future of the Pan European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS) at their next meeting in 2007. As a first step, the PEBLDS Chair decided to ask the Joint Secretariat to prepare a survey that would inquire into the views of the Council on the possible future role or roles for the PEBLDS. The results of the survey would be discussed at the PEBLDS Bureau meeting in September 2006 and recommendations to the Council would be agreed on how to streamline the PEBLDS and make it more effective given the geo-political, economic and other changes taking place in the pan European region.

Methodology of the Survey

The survey was prepared based on the discussions of the Croatia meeting and further discussions at the CBD COP-8 in Curitiba between the Chair, the Joint Secretariat and PEBLDS Council members. The survey was distributed to the PEBLDS Council on 10 May 2006 and a follow up reminder was sent on 7 June 2006. The deadline set for the responses to the survey was established at 26 June 2006. The PEBLDS Joint Secretariat received responses from 18 countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Moldova, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and Uzbekistan), one biodiversity-related convention secretariat (RAMSAR Secretariat) and three NGOs (ECNC, CEEWEB and CEIRE). We have analysed the responses and have highlighted the top three (3) answers for each of the questions (those surveyed could check more than one box for each question) in the survey.

Analysis of the Results of the Survey

1. PEBLDS Priorities

Currently the PEBLDS fulfils two functions: following up on the implementation of the Kyiv Resolution on Biodiversity and positioning pan Europe for the debate and follow up to the decisions of the Meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD. How do you think PEBLDS could adequately fulfil these two roles?

- Monitoring exercise (the EEA assessment for the Environment for Europe Ministerial Conferences, 2010 Countdown Initiative)
- Policy debate through annual or biennial conferences
- Technical assistance to Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) to overcome obstacles in implementation of the Kyiv Resolution and/or the CBD
- Other, please explain:*

Outcome:

67% of those who responded to the survey felt that the PEBLDS could fulfil its role through policy debate at annual or biennial conferences.

50% of those who responded to the survey felt that the PEBLDS could fulfil its role through monitoring exercises (Environment for Europe and the Countdown Initiative)

50% of those who responded to the survey felt that the PEBLDS could fulfil its role through technical assistance to EECCA countries.

There are a number of “other” responses that have been provided to you in the Annex 1 of this document.

2. Working structure for PEBLDS

The current working structure of the PEBLDS consists of two Bureau meetings and one Council meeting each year. Every two years, the PEBLDS hosts an inter-governmental Biodiversity in Europe Conference. Do you think that the PEBLDS could be both financially and substantively more effective by adopting a different structure? Check all that apply in your opinion.

- Biodiversity in Europe conference (every year) with continuation of a Bureau to prepare the Conferences
- Biodiversity in Europe conference (every two years) with continuation of a Bureau to prepare the Conferences
- Workshops sub-regional and/or cross border
- Roundtable discussions
- Electronic conferences
- Projects
- No change in structure but a better balance between the bureau and the council (size of bureau/council)
- Other, please explain:*

Outcome:

67% of those who responded to the survey felt that the PEBLDS could be both financially and substantially more effective through sub-regional or cross-border workshops

63% of those who responded to the survey felt that the PEBLDS could be both financially and substantially more effective through biennial biodiversity conferences

42% of those who responded to the survey felt that the PEBLDS could be both financially and substantially more effective through projects

29% of those who responded to the survey felt that the PEBLDS could be both financially and substantially more effective through roundtable discussions

21% of those who responded to the survey felt that the PEBLDS could be both financially and substantially more effective through electronic conferences

21% of those who responded to the survey felt that the PEBLDS could be both financially and substantially more effective through no change in structure but a better balance between the bureau and the council

8 % of those who responded to the survey felt that the PEBLDS could be both financially and substantially more effective through annual biodiversity conferences

There are a number of “other” responses that have been provided to you in the Annex 1 of this document.

3. Financial arrangements for the PEBLDS structure

The PEBLDS structure is currently supported by a core budget from the Council of Europe and a fund of ad hoc voluntary contributions from member governments managed by UNEP.

What type of system would appeal to your government/organization for financial support?

- Voluntary indicative scale of contributions for core secretariat and meetings
- Continuation of system of ad hoc contributions
- Support to national/regional/sub-regional projects (such as through the Biodiversity Service)
- Normal UN scale according to a fixed budget for core tasks
- Other, please explain:*

Outcome:

63% of those who responded to the survey felt that a voluntary indicative scale of contributions for core secretariat and meetings would appeal to their governments

54% of those who responded to the survey felt that support to national/regional/sub-regional projects (such as through the Biodiversity Service) would appeal to their governments

25% of those who responded to the survey felt that applying the normal UN scale of contributions according to a fixed budget for core tasks would appeal to their governments

21% of those who responded to the survey felt that the continuation of the system of ad-hoc contributions would appeal to their governments

There are a number of “other” responses that have been provided to you in the Annex 1 of this document.

4. PEBLDS Products

What are some of the outputs you would like to see produced and disseminated by the PEBLDS process? Please check all that apply in your opinion.

- Assessment reports
- Policy analysis reports
- Implementation reports
- Preparatory reports for the themes of the COP
- Reports on ongoing projects in support of Kyiv and CBD 2010 target
- Best practices (demonstration) and case studies
- Exchange of views on trends and needs for the European region
- Dissemination of relevant publications/issue oriented publications
- Communication and awareness materials on biodiversity (PEBLDS and CBD)
- Other, please explain:*

Outcome:

75% of those who responded to the survey would like to see best practices and case studies produced and disseminated by the PEBLDS process

63% of those who responded to the survey would like to see reports on ongoing projects in support of Kyiv and CBD 2010 produced and disseminated by the PEBLDS process

63% of those who responded to the survey would like to see an exchange of views on trends and needs for the European region produced and disseminated by the PEBLDS process

58% of those who responded to the survey would like to see implementation reports produced and disseminated by the PEBLDS process

46% of those who responded to the survey would like to see assessment reports produced and disseminated by the PEBLDS process

42% of those who responded to the survey would like to see relevant publications/issue oriented publications produced and disseminated by the PEBLDS process

42% of those who responded to the survey would like to see communication and awareness materials on biodiversity produced and disseminated by the PEBLDS process

38% of those who responded to the survey would like to see policy analysis reports produced and disseminated by the PEBLDS process

33% of those who responded to the survey would like to see preparatory reports for the themes of the COP produced and disseminated by the PEBLDS process

5. Does the PEBLDS contribute to your work for conserving and sustainably using biodiversity in your country?
- ❑ Yes, it helps elaborate political argumentaion for project proposal. (Belgium)
 - ❑ The participation of the Bulgarian experts in the activities related to PEBLDS raised their qualification, helped in the process of development of the national environmental legislation and the development of the national ecological network in accordance with the European ecological network - NATURA 2000. (Bulgaria)
 - ❑ This is a great opportunity to follow and noting the influence of having Biodiversity in Europe Conference in my country. PEBLDS became again an important issue for competent authorities and for relevant sectors as well. Some positive and concrete movements might be seen after the Conference, in specific, regarding the conclusions. (Croatia)
 - ❑ I consider the PEBLDS as an important forum for the CBD's implementation in the real regional = pan-european framework. Moreover, because being a soft law the PEBLDS is not considered by politicians and decision makers as a priority issue. In addition, before and after joining the EU politicians and decision makers have shifted their attention from pan-European to EU issues. (Czech Republic-Plesnik)
 - ❑ Issued documents and recommendations serving as a basis and references for actions at national level, especially in environmental strategy and policy sphere. (Czech Republic-Roudna)
 - ❑ It has been to some extent higher when Estonia was not a member country to EU. But still now the PEBLDS gives to participating countries wider scope to understand the variety and complexity of biodiversity problems and solutions on Pan-european level. (Estonia)
 - ❑ The main levels which influence the conservation/sustainable use of biodiversity are the following:- Subnational and national level- European Union. - CBD and other MEAs (global)PEBLDS moreover provides an pan-european perspective (understanding of common problems and challenges, room for cooperation, etc.). PEEN is probably the most relevant initiative for a concrete pan-european approach and has the greatest impact on german "biodiv-activities". (Germany)
 - ❑ It is an additional "incentive" to carry out biodiversity actions and it can be well used as reference, when there are conflicting interests of differencnt decision making bodies. The key targets with deadlines of hte Kyiv Resolution on Biodiversity for achieving the 2010 objective serve as useful guidance for moving toward halting the loss of biodiversity. (Hungary)
 - ❑ The PEBLDS is a sort of stimulus to improve our effort to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity in Europe. The PEBLDS contributes to the process of capacity building towards non-EU European countries. (Italy)
 - ❑ In general all the goals set for conserving biodiversity in Latvia are based on protecting and management of species and habitats listed in the EU Birds and Habitats directives. In the same time it is very important to elaborate the ecological corridors approach in the spatial planning of regions and local municipalities' territories. The Nation Ecological Network, which was developed in 2001 by financial help of IUCN is a tool for further spatial planning to ensure sustainable use of natural resources, in particular biodiversity. (Latvia)
 - ❑ YES, the Biodiversity Office of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Moldova have had received a small grant which had a big positive impact and support for the development the

GEF medium-size project: "Ecological network Development in Mid-Prut River Catchment". The Moldovan experts are involved in PEBLDS document elaboration and have the financial support for participation at organised meetings. (Moldova)

- Partly and rather indirectly ..importance is framework for broad Pan-european exchange. (Netherlands)
- Yes, it does, through giving the possibility of the discussion on the issues of the greatest importance for biodiversity in Europe, exchanging of information and indicating European priorities. In the future PEBLDS should strengthen cooperation with the EU bodies on CBD issues and pay more attention to the preparatory process before the COPs in order to work out a strong common European position, taking into account specifying our region. (Poland)
- Yes - exchange of experience - base of presenting results - as information database. (Slovakia)
- As PEBLDS functions today, it has little use for the progress of Sweden's work with biodiversity issues. It might even have a negative effect when limited resources have to be used to make reports etc to yet another international fora. (Sweden)
- Yes, but it should be strengthened by more political and financial support and fulfilled commitments from all the members. (Switzerland)
- Although we have more direct contributions to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, we nonetheless regard PEBLDS as a very useful vehicle for Pan-european contribution to the overall targets. (United Kingdom)
- PEBLDS gives us the opportunities to follow the most recent trends in policy related to biodiversity conservation at the pan-European level, as well as learn some modern experience in this field. However, mainly it happens during our participation at the PEBLDS organised conferences. Biodiversity in Europe, while between conferences the information flow from the Secretariat or other parties are quite limited. (Uzbekistan)
- We use PEBLDS as a tool or instrument for giving justification to our activities. We have also benefited from PEBLDS by implementing concrete projects from financial support (Biodiversity Service). (CEEWEB)
- The Centre Européen d'Intérêt Rural et Environnemental, and NGO grouping to the Council of Europe does not use the PEBLDS work directly. Nevertheless it is regularly reported on the achievements during the Grouping's meetings so that member NGOs will in turn disseminate the information to their national members. These can react in putting pressure on their own national authorities. The information also serves in raising the awareness of individual NGOs and their audience. It is possible that they can initiate or contribute to activities to halt biodiversity loss. The CEIRE involvement also contributes in keeping momentum on biodiversity at the Council of Europe level. (CEIRE)
- Yes, PEBLDS is the only Pan-european framework, bringing together all European countries. If PEBLDS would not exist, another framework like this should be invented to allow the development and implementation of Pan-european and interregional perspectives. (ECNC)

Additional Comments in the Survey (“Other” category)

1. PEBLDS Priorities

- ❑ Annual conferences/debate to focus on CBD COP decision implementation. They would focus on a few main issues that would be related to main COP issues.
- ❑ Only fora for CBD preparations in Pan-European region - EU is now just one party, with own preparation process for CBD, but if we want to ensure fulfilment of obligations according to CBD, it has to be done at the Pan-european level; PEBLDS is appropriate to push biodiversity segment on Ministerial Conferences; exchange of knowledge, experience on implementation, and how to get finance for projects.
- ❑ Establishing the forum for exchange of the lessons learnt, best practices and experience in biodiversity conservation and management incl. Sustainable use of its components within the pan-european region; bridging the CBD's implementation of the European Union and at the global level. To maintain the biodiversity, nature conservation and landscape management issues within the Dobris (European ministerial conference "Environment for Europe") process in the UNECE region.
- ❑ All the above listed tasks are relevant for the PEBLDS. Perhaps, the most important among them would be policy debates as there is not many other fora for such things. The technical assistance or other forms of cooperation could also be customized wider than listed above, if appropriate.
- ❑ We think that the “Biodiversity in Europe Conference” should have one clear objective. In our view the focus should be on implementation of CBD decisions and the Kyiv resolution. Thus the Conference should be better organized after CBD-COPs. The conference could then give more emphasis on pan-european cooperation, better coordination of activities, building alliances, etc.
- ❑ Facilitate initiatives or access to funding for projects to implement the National Strategy on Biodiversity Conservation.
- ❑ Communicating the Kyiv Biodiversity Resolution (2010 targets) to broad range of stakeholders plus promotion of their realisation. Stimulate policy debate through variety of activities, initiated and carried out by national governments, international organisations, European partners etc., this includes Countdown 2010. Monitor Kyiv targets.
- ❑ A platform for information exchange, sharing good/bad practices and lessons learned.
- ❑ PEBLDS should focus on how pan Europe can implement the Convention on Biodiversity and the Kyiv Resolution on Biodiversity
- ❑ Facilitate initiatives or access to funding for projects to implement the CBD in the pan-european region (like the biodiversity service does)
- ❑ Preference would be for greater emphasis on monitoring, but it was noted at the Croatia conference that many of the EECCA members favored retention Of same pre-COP functions. It therefore suggests a combination of the two in a less formalised structure than previously.
- ❑ In our opinion PEBLDS must become a real tool for organization of cooperation in the field of biodiversity protection at the Pan-european are. The special attention should be paid to attempts to separate Pan-europe into several parts following one or another political or economical reason.

PEBLDS also should be an instrument of involvement of different stakeholders in these activities. Last, but not least: PEBLDS must not only follow various related international processes (i.e. CBD), but take a lead in elaboration strategic plans in the field of biodiversity at the Pan-European area.

- ❑ Providing technical and financial support to the above area seems to be most helpful and effective.
- ❑ I think all the above is relevant. What is still needed is coordination/harmonisation/oversight of regional activities aiming the implementation of the above objective. Added value would be if a common financial pool could be created and managed by PEBLDS joint secretariat for supporting such activities (a bit similar to GEF objectives)
- ❑ Discussing project and programme activities under PEBLDS, good examples, lessons learned, connecting experience.

2. Working Structure for PEBLDS

- ❑ Biodiversity in Europe Conference (every year) until 2010. There should be a balance between EU MS countries and non MS countries. The web portal could be improved, it could consist partly of an interactive portal where countries could post experiences on implementation.
- ❑ Workshops sub-regional and/or cross border, Roundtable discussions, Electronic conferences and projects are all good forms of cooperation under the general tasks, but to manage it as a PEBLDS working structure needs far too much administrative capacity for the time being.
- ❑ Biodiversity in Europe conference (every two years) after the CBD COP in order to discuss the implementation of decisions adopted at the COPs.
- ❑ One Council meeting and one Council meeting plus one Biodiversity in Europe conference every two years alternately. Two or three, if necessary, Bureau meetings in the space of two years. Workshops sub-regional and or cross border. Roundtable discussions, projects and other activities by means of internet and e-mail with the assistance of the PEBLDS Secretariat.
- ❑ The Bureau and Council meetings should be organized after the current CBD COP.
- ❑ The conference should take place before the COP of the CBD in order to approve the main documents. After the COP of CBD should be organised the experts group in order to examine and propose appropriate ways for implementing at the sub-regional level.
- ❑ PEBLDS should be used as a framework and initiator of such activities, not as organizer or implementer.
- ❑ Change to thematic conferences and workshops
- ❑ The conference should take place after th COP of CBD in order to change the focus which should be the cooperation in implementing the CBD in the pan-European region.
- ❑ The PEBLDS must be more active in the implementation of practical measures to protect biodiversity. It is, in our opinion, the only way to attract the public opinion to its activities and necessity. In respect of sub-regional workshops: it may have a sense to invite also selected representatives from other sub-regions to support integrity and information/experience exchange at Pan-European level.
- ❑ Smaller, but more focused conferences seem more efficient and output-oriented. I know about specialists not present at the Croatia conference - because they were busy preparing for the CBD COP, thus: fewer and smaller conferences are more effective, I believe.

- ❑ It would be ideal to have regional consultation(s) Biodiversity in Europe conference prior to COP meeting, but also one after COP meetings focusing on implementation, Bureau meetings might also have specific issues to discuss as well, besides the “regular” business, The “big” regional consultations should also provide the place to have discussions between various sectors’ representatives, and thus forming European strategies, statements.
- ❑ Biodiversity in Europe conferences should be only organised after each COP meeting, when the focus is on implementation. Then countries could present their plans/experiences for implementing COP decisions, link their activities with each other (sharing prepared national documents, organising expert exchanges, joint projects, etc.) and the servicing Secretariat could also work on developing the knowledge base for the future.
- ❑ A B I E conference would also be possible every 3 years if sub-regional/cross border and or thematic ones take place in the meantime. Transboundary pilot projects could be an excellent way of having countries working together to implementing the 2010 and CBD objectives while creating a political kind of incentive to actually do something for biodiversity.

3. Financial Structure

- ❑ Core budget from the Council of Europe + Voluntary indicative scale of contributions for core secretariat and meetings / Support to projects
- ❑ In tactical perspective: Voluntary indicative scale of contributions for core secretariat and meetings combined with further closer affiliation to EU25 biodiversity processes including financial means; in strategic perspective the Normal UN scale according to a fixed budget for core tasks could be applied. At both stages the system of ad hoc contributions to support to national/regional/sub-regional projects (such as through the Biodiversity Service) should be continued.
- ❑ It would be important to have UNEP/RofE contributing to the process even more actively (in line with CBD/COP8 dec. VII/7 Strategic Plan, para 6 and 9) in the future for regional meetings. Some difficulties in understanding without examples what voluntary indicative scale of contribution for core Secretariat means in concrete terms for each Member State (note: all states should contribute to the core work and costs).
- ❑ No flexibility with our Ministry of Finance! (Germany)
- ❑ It has to be added, that because of budgetary constraints and cuts, Hungary/the Ministry of Environment and Water will not be in the position to provide voluntary contributions in the coming period.
- ❑ Such a voluntary scale should be based on the UN scale; it should be taken into consideration that the contribution from countries with economy in transition is very limited.
- ❑ Focused support for those activities that are implemented by the PEBLDS Secretariat, e.g. BD in Europe Conference.
- ❑ Such a voluntary indicative scale should be based on the UN scale. Support to national/sub-regional projects on a voluntary basis when possible.
- ❑ Primarily we would support continuation of ad-hoc contributions. However, that does not really work if the contributors are limited in number, which seems to have been the case recently. Perhaps,

therefore a voluntary indicative scale could be trialed to see if it appeals to the consciences of additional contributions.

- ❑ Irrelevant for us, however, a kind of “membership” we could also imagine. I think it would be good to have governments to commit to a financial support scheme possibly from CBD COP to CBD COP in order to create the PEBLDS budget. Of this the Council would set the priorities for spending the budget, and the Bureau would do the “fine programming”.
- ❑ Service provided by the Secretariat (experience sharing, tool kits, newsletters, workshops) could be also paid for. The payment could be voluntary for the least developed countries, and higher for the economically more developed states. This kind of service supplements/ substitutes the work done by the national ministries (e.g. when preparing a national CEPA strategy), which spares time (and thus money) for the government and through the possibly better results also brings additional benefits to the countries. This means that paying for this service does not bring excessive financial burden for the countries.
- ❑ NGOs cannot make commitments on this issue but in our view it would be useful to have a core budget for securing the existence of the Programme and meetings. Perhaps voluntary support could help fund (pilot) projects? (It's normally easier to find funds for concrete activities.)

4. PEBLDS Products

- ❑ Dissemination of relevant publications/issue oriented publications and communication and awareness materials on biodiversity (PEBLDS and CBD) could be done via the web portal.
- ❑ Some of these things are possible only through/after some kind of fora, meetings, conferences! Due to the traditional lack of capacity building (in CEE and EECCA region, in specific) for PEBLDS related issues all these things are very useful, almost necessary!!
- ❑ Assessment reports only if not covered by EfE assessments; regional and sub-regional (like Central-Asian, Balkan, Baltic, etc.), CBD policy analysis reports could be of very high value; implementation if not covered by CBD reports or CBD policy analysis reports mentioned above; all other mentioned products/outputs are very much needed but however with slightly lower priority. Most of these products could be communicated via clearinghouse mechanism at Pan-european (PEBLDS) level.
- ❑ Room for coordination and cooperation
- ❑ The substance and future direction of the PEBLDS process and the way how it could work besides the European Union should be elaborated.
- ❑ Advice and support to initiatives in framework of PEBLDS; exchanges and agreements for relevant initiatives by governments and NGOs in relation to Kyiv target.
- ❑ All those outputs apply but are not relevant for all issues dealt with by the PEBLDS. Those types of output should be selected for specific thematics carefully chosen.
- ❑ More attention should be paid to the development of the PEBLDS web-site, which should serve as a communication centre for all interested parties.
- ❑ List of experts, updated databases of ongoing and completed projects, organisations, institutions dealing with PEBLDS specific program/project implementation.
- ❑ The items indicated in the same colour could possibly be reproduced together. (*Note: We could not discriminate between colours.*) It would be useful before taking any decision to check with

the CBD Secretariat as well as national governments or the EU or other regional policy initiatives/organisations and also NGOs about their publications in order to avoid duplication of work.