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Quarterly e-mail service of the European SAVE Foundation
(Safeguard for Agricultural Varieties in Europe)

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Workshop “Endangered Livestock Breeds in Greece“

Together with SAVE Foundation and WWF Greece, Monitoring Institute organised a workshop in Athens within the frame of monitoring activities in Greece on the occurrence and conservation of endangered autochthonous livestock breeds.



The organisers succeeded in bringing together 25 participants from nature conservation organisations, dedicated activists and representatives from science, research and government. Particularly the commitment of private circles was very encouraging. A large and to date not known amount of new material came up during the workshop which now has to be processed.

Extract from results and objectives of action:

- In future, more attention will be paid to the exceptional diversity of breeds and varieties. First results of standardising tours for goats and donkeys were presented. It was decided to continue with this important activity. Individual hints on different donkey populations have to be traced further on.
- Monitoring and search tours are urgently needed for known but disappeared breeds such as Kea cattle and various breeds of horses. The situation of poultry requires further clarification. In addition, there are feral populations of horses and cattle that should be observed and recorded, particularly by nature protection organisations.
- Ulokeratiki goats are considered to be particularly endangered. The breed is known for its peculiar form of the horns and markings. To date, only few purebred animals could be found in two herds. Breeding of small Prespa cattle should be reorganised urgently, and a stock of Sykia cattle that is able to survive should be built up in its original form.

The workshop was a first step to countrywide networking with all dedicated and active people involved that has to date not taken place in the private sector. A lively exchange of experience took place during the workshop and numerous contacts could be made. Further flow of information will be guaranteed by an online-platform provided by SAVE-Monitoring Institute that is at the same time a first step towards more effective networking. Nature protection and agrobiodiversity should co-operate more efficiently. WWF Greece wishes to press ahead with networking and will support SAVE-Monitoring Institute in its future activities. Link: <http://www.agrobiodiversity.net/greece>

Alpinet Gheep – A network for sheep and goat breeds from the Alpine region

The INTERREG III B programme for the Alpine region, is a common initiative from 2000-2006 that shall strengthen the economic and social bonds in the Alpine region through trans-national and interregional development. Sheep and goats have always had a decisive influence on the cultural landscape of the Alps, on its vegetation and on erosion as they have grazed sites from highest altitudes down to the valleys for many centuries. In the Alpine region, there are a large number of adapted breeds: 59 sheep breeds and 33 goat breeds are found today. Numerous breeds could fortunately be integrated into conservation programmes; a not defined number of breeds have, however, already died out or are acutely endangered. The 1994 and 2004 monitoring studies on Genetic Resources in the Alpine region could reveal important need for action and various initiatives have developed since.



Interreg III B

Sheep and goat keeping in the Alpine region has been decreasing continuously since approx. 50 years. The importance of animal production is an indicator for the viability and long-term safeguard of the region and, amongst others, an important pillar regarding tourist development. Urban sprawl, weakening of agriculture, the low influence of regional products on the market and the lack of consumer's interest in sheep and goat products has further contributed to the decrease. This is where the Alpine-Gheep program wishes to start by raising awareness for negative factors of influence and developing adequate programmes.

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The network at present includes of 16 partners from Italy, Slovenia, Austria and Germany whose aim is the support of the regional long-term development of sheep and goats. The Province of Trento in Italy co-ordinates the project. From 2005-2006, the main activities are the collection of data about the distribution of breeds and focus of breeding programmes, the identification and description of grazing areas, the evaluation of economic and ecological factors influencing pasture management, the creation of an international monitoring system for the breeds and a presentation of traditional sheep and goat products.

As a first common exhibition, a show with numerous sheep breeds from the entire Alpine region has taken place on September 24th/25th in the open-air museum Glentleiten, Germany. The exhibition was organised by the "Bayerische Landesanstalt für Landwirtschaft" in Grub, the "Bayerische Herdbuchgesellschaft für Schafzucht" and the "Gesellschaft zur Erhaltung alter und gefährdeter Haustierrassen e.V. (GEH)" – Society for the conservation of old and endangered livestock breeds e.V. *Report: Feldmann.*

10th anniversary of the Monitoring Institute

At 16th September 2005, the Monitoring Institute for Rare Breeds and Seeds in Europe was founded at Sargans Castle. The institute, resident in St.Gallen, Switzerland, deals at European level with the conservation of livestock breeds and cultivated plants threatened by extinction. It investigates and records the former diversity across national borders (mapping), continuously observes the development of endangered populations (watching) and alarms responsible bodies when there is need for action (alarming). The institute is a centre for national organisations and bodies. Its data are publicly available. They mainly serve SAVE Foundation and the SAVE network for concrete conservation work.

Much was built up during those 10 years, and a lot has happened. The anniversary was celebrated with a drink for the patronage committee and the main sponsors, accompanied by reports of the projects and a comprehensive tasting of their culinary "side-effects"...

Link: <http://www.monitoring.eu.com>



20 Years Fructus

For 20 years, the association "Fructus" has been active for the conservation and support of the fruit variety in Switzerland. During this time, it has propagated approx. 2000 old varieties. On the occasion of the anniversary, a national fruit exhibition will take place from 21st to 23rd October 2005 in Frauenfeld, the first to be organised for 8 years. Besides the comprehensive variety exhibition, there will be activities such as show cidery and exhibitions on science and art around the topic "fruit". Furthermore, chocolate pears, apple cider, fruit-glacé and other fruity treats will be available.

Link: <http://www.fructus.ch>



The book „Rosensapfel und Goldparmäne“ 365 apple varieties – botany, history and use - was compiled in cooperation with Pro Specie Rara. This anniversary edition can be ordered for CHF 49.90 (Euro 33.-) from fructus@bluewin.ch.

European Agrobiodiversity Day

On the first European Agrobiodiversity Day on 24 September 2005, numerous activities took place. Here in short the most important ones:

Albania (AlbaGene): National Symposium - "Conservation of farm animal autochthonous breeds - the key component for development the agrobiodiversity". Information: kkume@icc-al.org

Bulgaria (Semperviva/ABIB): "A Month of Agri Biodiversity – A month of forgotten and neglected breeds and plant varieties". Events all over the country. Information: semperviva@bluelink.net

Germany (GEH): Special event in the frame of the International Exhibition of all Alpine Sheep Breeds in Glentleiten. Information: geh.witzenhausen@g-e-h.de

Greece (Aegilops): Day of "Farmer Seeds and Biodiversity" in the frame of the Panhellenic Ecofarm Festival in Katerini. Information: koutis@aegilops.gr

Ireland (ISSA): AgroBiodiversity Conference at Scariff, Co. Clare. Info: info@irishseedsavers.ie

Italy (RARE): Congress on Italian pigs in the frame of the all-Italian Fair of organic products in Guastalla. Information: info@associazionerare.it

Serbia-Montenegro (Natura Balkanika): Special event in the frame of the 3rd Balkan Fair on AgroBiodiversity in Dimitrovgrad. Information: balkanika@ptt.yu

Slovakia (AgroGenofond): International Congress: "Traditional AgroEcosystems" in Nitra. Information: dezider.toth@uniag.sk

Spain (Red de Semillas): "Declaracion de Cortes de la Frontera" during the 6th Feria de la Biodiversidad at Malaga. Information: jmanuel.gonzales.ext@juntadeandalucia.es



Newsflash

Pomology Seminar for Czech governmental employees

From 22nd to 24th September 2005, a workshop of special nature took place in Veselí n.M. (Czech Republic). The organisers addressed their papers on importance, methods and practical aspects of fruit conservation not to colleagues or other experts but to governmental employees and decision-makers at all levels of agricultural administration, landscape protection and communal administration. Thus, those were being addressed that take part in decisions concerning the legal and financial framework for conservation work. This is an idea that deserves copying. It is supposed to contribute considerably to acceptance and support of conservation activities.

New in the FAO DAD-IS Library

FAO has published the posters of 82 countries and 4 national NGOs describing their efforts to conserve animal genetic resources in its information system on livestock diversity (DAD-IS) in the category "Documents for the State of the World on Animal Genetic Resources". The documents are available under URL

<http://dad.fao.org/en/refer/library/CountryPosters/CountryPosters.htm>

EAAP launches the “Cattle Network“

The European Association for Animal Production (EAAP) launches the “Cattle-Network”, an online-portal for the food supply chain with cattle: breeding, production, processing, marketing, services, research, consumption. The virtual network will promote, through interaction and collaboration, every aspect of the cattle sector in Europe. Key elements are Continuous information flow, knowledge transfer and dynamic participation.

see URL: <http://www.cattlenetwork.net>

Important dates (extract)

5-7 October: Meeting on Pastoralism “ Protected natural habitats and extensive breeding”. Fieldtrip to Crau and Camargue, France. Contact: info@pastoralisme.org, Web: <http://www.pastoralisme.org/afp/journees.htm>

7-10 October: Internat. Conference "The Role of the Donkey (and Mule) in the Culture of the Mediterranean", Island of Hydra, Greece. Contact: ed.emery@britishlibrary.net, Web: <http://www.geocities.com/DonkeyConference>

9-13 October: 6th Global Conference of the RBI on the conservation of domestic animal genetic resources "Conservation the Future"; Magaliesburg, South Africa. Contact: Anelja@gogirlevents.co.za, Web: <http://www.ais.up.ac.za/vet/fact>

21- 23 October: "FRUCTUS 05" national jubilee exposition on fruitvarieties "20 years FRUCTUS", Swiss Association for the furtherance of old fruit varieties, at Frauenfeld, Switzerland; Contact: fructus@bluewin.ch, Web: <http://www.fructus.ch>

24-26 October: Conference: "Integrated Rural Development in the Mountain Areas of Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans", at Liptovski Mikulás - Demänovská Dolina, Slovakia. Contact: conference@euromontana.org, Web: <http://www.euromontana.org>

10-12 November: 2nd Conference "Science and Society - the frontier of the invisible" at Lastra a Signa, Florence, Italy; The Genetic Rights Council. Contact: modonesi@consigliodirittigenetici.org, Web: <http://www.consigliodirittigenetici.org>

15-16 November: Conference “Conservation strategies and management for plant genetic resources”, IPK-Gatersleben, Germany. Contact: ballhaus@ipk-gatersleben.de

2006

18-20 May: Mediterranean Livestock Production: "Uncertainties and Opportunities", Zaragoza, Spain. Web: <http://www.iamz.ciheam.org/gmed2006>, Contact: iamz@iamz.ciheam.org