

SAVE eNews 4/2003



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

SAVE Head Office: Paradiesstr. 13, D-78462 Konstanz/Germany Tel. +49-7531 / 455 940
Web: <http://www.save-foundation.net> E-mail: office@save-foundation.net

First “Regional Fair of Balkan Agrobiodiversity and Rural Heritage”

On September 26, 2003, the first “Regional Fair of Balkan Agrobiodiversity and Rural Heritage” opened at Dimitrovgrad, Serbia. The aim of the event was to promote indigenous breeds and knowledge, to encourage local and regional farmers to use it, to facilitate transborder co-operation and the involvement of different partners in joint activities in agrobiodiversity and cultural heritage conservation. The fair was so successful that the organizers are willing to organize a second Regional Fair next year. For the first time, 13 indigenous Balkan breeds were exhibited in one place: Bosnian Horse, Balkan donkey, Mangalitsa pig (black and white variety), five breeds of Tzakel sheep, black headed Pleven sheep, Balkan goat in three colours and three breeds of shepherd

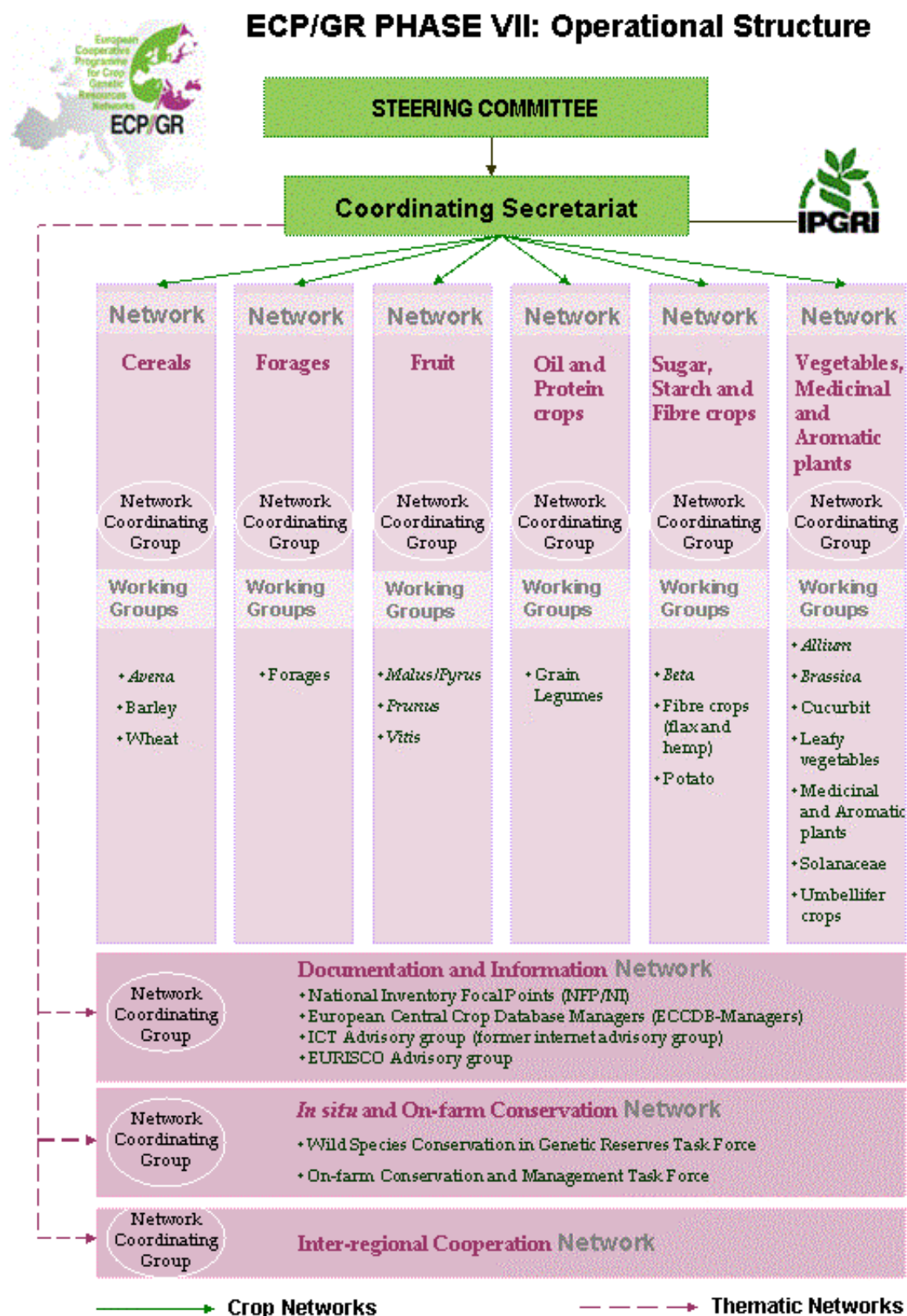


dogs. The fair also attracted craft makers, folk musicians and dancing groups. The event which was opened by Srdjan Stojanovic, head of the Genetic Resources in the Ministry of Agriculture and Water resources, was visited by numerous representatives from neighbouring countries presenting their own activities in Bulgaria, FYR Macedonia and Albania. More information is available from the Center for Sustainable Rural Development „Natura Balkanika“, e-mail: balkanika@ptt.yu

ECP/GR launches Phase VII and sets new priorities

From October 22-25, 2003, the Steering Committee of the “European Cooperative Programme for Crop Genetic Resources Networks (ECP/GR)” met in Menemem, Izmir, Turkey. As NGO-representative Bela Bartha, director of the Swiss foundation Pro Specie Rara, took part. During the review of Phase VI it became obvious that not very much progress has been made with regard to the relationship between NGOs, ECP/GR and genebanks. Despite the fact that the co-operation with NGOs is mentioned as a crucial point in every action plan of each working group, not one working group could present an example of successful co-operation. From the NGOs’ point of view, the focus is on participation within the frame of in-situ and on-farm conservation.

The following diagram shows the future network structure of ECP/GR:



For Phase VII (2004-2008) of the network the following priorities have been set:

1. Characterization and evaluation (including use of modern technologies)
2. Task sharing (especially with the European Genebank Integration System AEGIS)
3. In situ and on-farm conservation
4. Documentation and Information

=> For more information see: <http://www.ecpgr.cgiar.org/SteeringCommittee/SC9.htm>

Book “Agricultural Genetic Resources in the Alps”

A hundred livestock breeds in the Alpine countries are acutely endangered. This was the most important finding of a study on „Agricultural Genetic Resources“ in the Alps in 1992/93. Especially alarming was the fact that, in 40% of cases, there appeared to have been no attempts to conserve the endangered breeds.

This study was now updated for 2000/2001, including a detailed study on the situation of cultivated plants. Since the first study, not only the sizes of the remnant populations have changed, but so have the legal and political conditions in these Alpine countries, ranging from France to Slovenia. After the summaries of the updated study have been available as download from the website <http://www.monitoring-inst.de/projects.htm> of the Monitoring Institute for some time, the printed version has now been published, too. The publication of the Bristol Foundation (178 pages with 98 coloured illustrations) contains the synthesis in 5 languages, and the enclosed CD-ROM contains the full text of the study in English and German. The text is designed as reference book, important contact addresses appear several times. The integrated search function facilitates the search for certain expressions or simply to surf in the text. Websites and e-mail addresses are activated so that either browser or e-mail program may establish the desired link automatically.

For orders in any bookshop please use ISBN 3-258-06669-8 or contact Hauptverlag, (<http://www.haupt.ch>), Falkenplatz 14, CH-3001 Bern (Price: EUR 24.-/CHF 36.- (including forwarding costs).
A Christmas present?



Support of products from mountain regions

The „Mountain Group“ of the Forestry Department of FAO has announced the launch of a new research project on „Promoting and Protecting Local Products as a Means for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions“, which will be carried out from September 2003 to March 2004. The main goal of this study is to identify good examples of high quality mountain products from different regions of the world which contribute to improve local economies without degrading the environment. The study aims to highlight the marketing (e.g. certification and labeling), technological, institutional (policies and laws) environmental and socio-cultural conditions/requirements that have enabled these mountain products to become successful. Aline Faucher from FORC mountain group gladly receives any information about these products.

E-mail: aline.faucher@fao.org

SAVE Meeting; Staf Van den Bergh new chairman

From November 7-9, 2003, 31 participants from 12 countries took part in the tenth anniversary of SAVE Foundation and the SAVE Network which was celebrated in the border region of Liechtenstein-Austria-Germany-Switzerland. The participants were welcomed in the mountain village Triesenberg by Julius Ospelt, head of the Liechtenstein Office for Agriculture, and by Andreas Goetz, director of the International Commission for the Protection of the Alps CIPRA. Dr. Pal Hajas, representative of FAO, the UN Organisation for Food and Agriculture, delivered greetings from Rome and emphasised the importance of the work of SAVE and its network.



The SAVE committees had a lot of work to do, the members of the Board of Directors and the Project Commission had to be elected for the next term, numerous decisions had to be made which will be reflected in the next edition of the SAVE eNews. However, there was still time for exchange of experiences and for training.

In the Rheinhof Salez (Switzerland, see photo) Hans Oppliger informed the participants about the successful conservation and marketing of Rheintal Ribel maize, the national vine variety garden was visited and Eva Koerbitz introduced the project for the conservation of genetic variety of cultivated plants in the Principality of Liechtenstein. In Dornbirn (Austria), Dr. Margit Schmid, creator of the probably most modern natural museum "iNatura", led the SAVE group during an interactive visit and, finally, Friedrich Schuler in-

formed during a visit of his farm park in Ueberlingen, Germany, which is at present the most diversified in Germany. Waltraud Kugler, chairperson of the SAVE Project Commission, and Hans-Peter Grunenfelder, executive vice chairman of the Foundation, pointed out the highlights of 10 years of SAVE activities, but also the limits of its possibilities. The actual celebration took place at the Castle of Sargans, a medieval banquet was celebrated with satirical and solemn interludes. The meeting was a full success and has brought the foundation fresh wind and new drive.

It already can be announced that the Board of Directors has extended its Management Committee to 5 members. Present members are: Prof. Dr. Andreas Georgoudis (Greece), Hans-Peter Grunenfelder (Switzerland), Dr. Drago Kompan (Slovenia), Michael Miklis (Ireland) and Staf Van den Bergh (Belgium).

The Board elected Staf Van den Bergh as chairman of SAVE Foundation for the term 2003-2005. Van den Bergh was born 1949, works in the banking sector and was a part time lecturer in finance at the University of Limburg. As a breeder of old breeds of Belgian sheep and poultry he joined some 15 years ago the Belgian organisation for the Safeguard of rare breeds V.B.Z.H., which is today "Stichting Levend Erfgoed - Fondation Patrimoine Vivante" (Living Inheritance Foundation). In 1993 he became a member of the board, responsible for public relations. He has been the representative of the Belgian partner organisation at the SAVE-meetings since 1997. In 2000 he became a member of the SAVE Board of Directors.



Important dates (extract)

Year 2004

4-5 February: Conference "Developping agrobiodiversity: action strategies and factors for a sustainable animal and plant breeding". Umweltforum Berlin, Germany. Contact: tagung@ioew.de, Web: <http://www.umweltforum-berlin.de>

8-11 July: Congress of the Rare Breeds International (RBI) in Sun City, Southafrica. Kontakt: KeithR@nda.agric.za

2-4 September: Annual Meeting of SAVE Foundation and the SAVE Network at Bled, Slovenia, in collaboration with DAGENE; Contact: office@save-foundation.net

5-9 September: Annual Meeting of EAAP at Bled, Slovenia; Contact: eaap@eaap.org