

ANNUAL REPORT 2012

The Lower Morava Biosphere Reserve



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• • • INTRODUCTION • • •

Dear friends,

When looking back at 2012, I cannot help remembering events which took place ten years ago. 2002–2003 were the years which saw the culmination of efforts to designate a new biosphere reserve. The considered options included an extension of the existing Palava BR which was to be overlapped by an extended Palava Protected Landscape Area or designation of an entirely new Lower Morava BR, whose major part would lie outside the existing Protected Landscape Area. The heated debates accompanying the designation focused on a basic question: Can the Biosphere Reserve institute in the Czech Republic represent more than a “quality trademark” of a given area? Many argued that universal values (natural in particular) must be protected by the law, adding that all other BRs in the Czech Republic are managed by the corresponding Protected Landscape Area or National Park state authorities. Why should South Moravia act differently? There was but one way how to put all the arguments, both in favour and against, to test – apply the newly proposed concept in practice.

Today, the Lower Morava Biosphere Reserve as well as the eponymous Public Benefit Corporation (Lower Morava BR, P.B.C.) is a name which is highly regarded particularly abroad. There is probably not a more credible proof of our success than the fact that in January 2012 Mrs. Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, appointed Petr Čupa, Deputy Director of Lower Morava BR, a member of the UNESCO International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves in Paris for the period 2012–2015. This twelve-member advisory body of the Man and the Biosphere Programme advises the Director-General of UNESCO and the MAB International Coordinating Council on matters concerning the nomination of new sites, changes and periodic reviews of existing biosphere reserves, as well as the development, operation and monitoring of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

In 2012, the Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic, one of the founding members of our P.B.C. left due to internal system changes. In the governing bodies of the organization it was fully replaced by Mendel University in Brno, which assumed the rights and responsibilities to promote the noble goals embedded in the Man and the Biosphere Programme, as well as to provide expert supervision of the core activities of our P.B.C. Provision of exemplary solutions in the field of environmental protection or restoration, as well as in areas where the character and natural characteristics of cultural landscape may be enhanced remain our common goal. Understandably, the Ministry of the Environment remains an important and irreplaceable partner in these efforts. The informal nature of our partnership may be illustrated by the fact that Ing. Stanislav Koukal, a joint representative of nature conservation authorities, has retained a post of permanent guest in the Board of Directors as the key body of our organization, with the right to actively participate in all meeting and implementation processes undertaken by our P.B.C.

This arrangement has enabled us to focus more closely on South Moravian agricultural landscape in cooperation with landscape architects, local municipality representatives and experts from the Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection of the Czech Republic. Together we realize that agricultural landscape requires protection of its values as well. That is why we put a lot of effort in implementing as many soil-protection projects as possible, we endeavour to put groves, individual trees, wetlands and meadows back to the landscape. We do not want the local inhabitants to take pride purely in restored village squares and pavements. We want them to realize that the development of their municipalities is easier if the surrounding landscape is picturesque and safe, providing bread and living to the people inhabiting it as well as giving home to many unique plant and animal communities and lifting spirits of those who come to visit.

We are aware of the fact that our success and good reputation are conditioned by our efforts to view people in the cultural landscape as respected partners who require sufficient information, examples of good practice and the feeling that their doings are meaningful.

Yet, we would not be able to implement our efforts if it were not for the support of the members of our governing bodies as well as of our many external consultants and supporters at home and abroad. Thanks to them

and thanks to sponsors of our activities we can pronounce 2012 as successful. I hope that the upcoming tenth year of the Lower Morava BR existence will see it prosper and will be marked by new successful activities and projects. We will do our best to continue to deserve the trust of all our supporters.

Jan Vybíral
Managing Director, April 2013

MAN AND THE BIOSPHERE (MAB) PROGRAMME AND BIOSPHERE RESERVES

The primary objective of the international UNESCO Man and the Biosphere (MaB) Programme, which was established in the 1970s, is to improve the relationship between man and the environment through sensible and sustainable use of natural resources and through the application of scientific knowledge and traditional practices. In the global context, it represents a flexible, dynamic and sustainable form of nature conservation. In the course of implementing these goals and safeguarding interdisciplinary field work, MAB rely on the World Network of Biosphere Reserves as well as thematic groups and partnerships to generate and share knowledge and information, research, monitoring, education and participative decision-making.

The World Network of Biosphere Reserves covers specially selected areas called biosphere reserves (BR). The term “biosphere reserve” should be understood in the sense of “a store kept for future use” rather than “reserve” stressing the purely conservational aspect of its operation, as it is incorrectly translated into many languages, including Czech. Notwithstanding their significant role in nature conservation, BRs should primarily serve as teaching laboratories for sustainable development.

Unfortunately, the perception of BR functions is still affected by the incorrect understanding of this institution not only in the Czech Republic. BRs are not focused purely on nature conservation but rather on providing services to people and the environment via a kind of a “sustainable development agency”. In most countries, nature conservation as the sole priority is in the hands of other institutions managed by state nature conservation authorities. The focus of BRs should therefore remain wider and more balanced.

Every BR must conform to a specific set of criteria and has to be able to deliver a given set of functions. Its size must be sufficient to allow the fulfilment of tasks assigned, it must be sufficiently varied with respect to its natural and cultural diversity and must provide home and livelihood to enough people who will in turn participate in its protection and development.

All world BRs are bound to fulfil three equally important functions:

1. Conservation of natural and cultural diversity
2. Economic development which is socially, culturally and environmentally sustainable
3. Support of research, monitoring and environmental education

The territory of each BR should be divided into three functional zones. The *core zone* is an area designed solely to protect biological diversity. The *buffer zone* is an area surrounding the core zones to protect them from negative impacts. It is utilized for activities related to nature conservation and ecological procedures, including environmental research and education, recreation or eco tourism. The remaining area of BR consists of the *transition zone* or the zone of cooperation. It is the most important zone where the MAB philosophy may be applied in full and where standard economic activities and other uses of the environment take place, while promoting sustainable management.

It is imperative that every BR actively promotes participatory management, which requires equal collaboration and participation of all stakeholders, including local governments and inhabitants, state administration, representatives of local businesses and conservation groups as well as natural and social scientists. Lower Morava BR is the only BR in the Czech Republic to directly and equally involve various stakeholders in the management and decision-making process regarding its activities through participatory management. This is done on the platform of a Public Benefit Corporation.

Biosphere reserves are nominated by national governments and designated by the MAB International Coordinating Council. The area of every BR also encompasses sites protected under the respective national systems or other internationally recognized areas (World Heritage Sites, Ramsar Wetlands, Natura 2000 sites, etc.).

In 2012, the World Network of Biosphere Reserves encompassed a total of 610 BRs in 117 countries, six of them on the territory of the Czech Republic (Krkonoše, Křivoklátsko, Šumava, Třeboň Basin, Bílé Karpáty and the Lower Morava BR).

LOWER MORAVA BIOSPHERE RESERVE

The Lower Morava Biosphere Reserve was designated in July 2003 as an extension of the former Palava Biosphere Reserve (designated in 1986), encompassing the Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape (LVCL) and the floodplain forests at the confluence of the Morava and Dyje rivers.

In 2004, the Lower Morava Biosphere Reserve, Public Benefit Corporation, was established to procure fulfilment of BR functions on the basis of participatory management. The founding members of the corporation included Forests of the Czech Republic, State Enterprise, MND, a.s., Breclav District Chamber of Commerce, Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic and the Czech Union of Nature Conservationists.

In the context of the Czech Republic, this establishment represents a unique concept of BR management in which representatives of municipalities, businesses and non-governmental organizations participate directly as well. Moreover, the Lower Morava BR is the only Czech BR to give its employees full-time contracts. The areas of remaining Czech BRs are identical with those of the respective large-scale specially protected areas and owing to this the fulfilment of BR tasks represents only a marginal part of the respective state nature conservation officials' worksheet.

Lower Morava Biosphere Reserve, P.B.C., provides the following public benefit services:

1. organizational, institutional, factual and personnel provision of activities administered by the Lower Morava Biosphere Reserve (hereinafter BR) as part of the UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves,
2. participation in activities relevant to the Lower Morava BR, including the coordination of these activities with state administration bodies, municipal authorities, stakeholders, educational and scientific institutions, businesses, general public and other bodies,
3. participation in mediating and procuring advisory, financial and coordinating services which relate to the Lower Morava BR and its development, in accordance with the UNESCO regulations on the World Network of Biosphere Reserves,
4. safeguarding the commissioning, development and regular update of

an open information database on the Lower Morava BR and on the scientific, economic and development activities relating to the area or existence of the Lower Morava BR,

5. participation in publishing both periodic and non-periodic materials and proceedings, including informative and methodological publications printed, electronic, audio-visual and multimedia, as well as their presentation, distribution and sale,
6. participation in educating the general public, further education and training of young people, and cooperation with youth centres in a spirit of promoting the principles of sustainable lifestyle, in particular those of nature and landscape conservation and the rational management of natural resources,
7. providing information services for the general public,
8. participation in organizing international scientific conferences, forums, training courses and exhibitions relating to the Lower Morava BR,
9. establishment and management of model facilities,
10. fostering international cooperation in matters relating to the Lower Morava BR and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves,
11. promoting and enforcing activities aimed at economic and demographic development of the Lower Morava BR and the entire region,
12. providing mediatory services in cases of disputes and conflicts arising from the existence and activities of the Lower Morava BR.

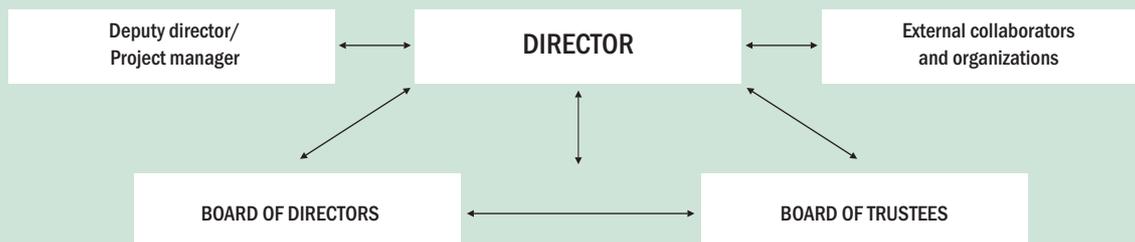
The corporation provides public benefit services under equal conditions with the objective to support all stakeholders and activities aimed at the development of the BR in accordance with conditions and regulations stipulated by the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme.

All activities conducted in 2012 were in accordance with the 2005–2013 Action Plan and in concord with the conditions of the Man and the Biosphere Programme.



ORGANIZATION CHART OF THE CORPORATION

Registered office: Národních Hrdinů 23, 690 02 Breclav
 Office: Zámecké nám. 69, 691 44 Lednice
 Registration number: 269 38 171
 Legal form: Public Benefit Corporation



Lower Morava Biosphere Reserve, Public Benefit Corporation, was established in August 2004 by the following founding members:

Forests of the Czech Republic, State Enterprise

Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic

MND, a.s.

Czech Union of Nature Conservationists

Breclav District Chamber of Commerce

In 2012, the Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic gave up its post as a founding member along with all its posts in the corporation's governing bodies for its own system and organizational reasons. Further successful cooperation takes place primarily via the Palava Protected Landscape Area (PLA) Administration and the Brno Regional Branch of the

Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection of the Czech Republic.

2012 marked other changes in the organizational structure of our P.B.C. as well, as the Scientific Board was dissolved. In order to retain its consultative and advisory functions, Mendel University in Brno was incorporated in the P.B.C. structures upon agreement of all stakeholders. It is in charge of expert cooperation and scientific reviewing of the corporation's activities.

The P.B.C. governing bodies include the Board of Directors, Board of Trustees and the Managing Director. This structure allows the widest possible participation of all stakeholders in the Biosphere Reserve operation.

The Managing Director acts as the statutory agent of the corporation.

Governing bodies of the Lower Morava BR, P.B.C., in 2012:

Board of Directors:

The Board of Directors is a nine-member governing body of the Biosphere Reserve. It includes the founding members along with three representatives of municipalities found on the territory of the Biosphere Reserve, a representative of the Chamber of Agriculture and a representative of Mendel University in Brno, which also acts as the main scientific advisory body of the Biosphere Reserve.

Libor Kabát	Chairman	Municipalities of the LVCL Region
Miroslav Svoboda	Vice-Chairman	Forests of the Czech Republic, S.E.
Petr Maděra	2 nd Vice-Chairman	Mendel University (as of 1.9. 2012)
František Fabičovic		Breclav District Chamber of Commerce
Čtírad Petrla		Podluzi Region
Libor Ambrozek		Czech Union of Nature Conservationists
Ladislav Sečkář		Breclav District Chamber of Agriculture
Pavel Kotásek		MND, a.s.
Vladislav Moravčík		Mikulovsko Region
Stanislav Koukal		representative of the Ministry of the Environment in the P.B.C. and its 2 nd Vice-Chairman until September 30, 2012, acting as a permanent guest of the Board of Directors as of this date.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is a six-member supervisory body of the corporation. It includes representatives of the founding members, a joint representative of municipalities of the three regions whose territory the BR covers and a representative of Mendel University.

Libor Opluštil	Chairman	Czech Union of Nature Conservationists
Zbyněk Parma		MND, a.s.
Miroslav Volařík		Breclav District Chamber of Commerce
Vladimír Krchov		Forests of the Czech Republic. S.E.
Alena Salašová		Mendel University (as of 1. 9. 2012)
Luboš Krátký		Podluzi, Mikulovsko and the Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape regions
Dušan Uťinek		representative of the Ministry of the Environment in P.B.C. until 30. 9. 2012

In 2012 the Board of Directors met six times and the Board of Trustees held one meeting.

In 2012 the Public Benefit Corporation employed two employees full-time.



• • • IMPORTANT ACTIVITIES IN 2012 • • •

1. Programmes implemented in collaboration with Forests of the Czech Republic, S.E.

State enterprise Forests of the Czech Republic (FCR) is the biggest manager of forest land in the country. Its forest management strategy stresses the importance of sustainable management which safeguards the fulfillment of production and other functions of the managed forests. The company aims to establish and manage stable, high-quality, mixed forests in terms of their species, spatial and age compositions. It also acts as the most important administrator of protected areas and a key partner of nature conservation bodies in the Czech Republic. Forests of the Czech Republic, State Enterprise, as one of the founding members of Lower Morava BR, have been traditionally supporting our activities both inside and outside the BR. Specific projects will be described in detail further on. The collaboration has the form of support provided to the following programmes:

a) Conservation of the natural and cultural diversity of cultural landscapes

All biosphere reserves are obliged to promote the involvement of stakeholders in matters related to BRs. Lower Morava BR, P.B.C., for example, cooperates with local governments to promote conservation of the species and cultural diversity and landscape management. In 2012 we managed to further foster cooperation with the municipalities by promoting projects which support biodiversity in the agricultural landscape of South Moravia. These projects include a project of a territorial system of ecological stability (TSES), planting trees in bio-centres and interaction elements or restoration of historic greenery in the Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape. New projects were drawn up for the municipalities of Vlasatice, Drnholec, Lednice, Hlohovec and Luzice, along with continuing implementation of a TSES project in Pohorelice.

b) Cultural landscape management

Cultural landscapes have been subject to human impact for millennia. The area of Lower Morava BR encompasses a rich mix of natural, cultural and social values, with various institutions of species, habitat and cultural diversity protection overlapping in their actions. This often leads to clashes of interest between nature and cultural monument conservationists and people who are trying to find home and make their living in the landscape. One of the key roles of Lower Morava BR, P.B.C., is to create a platform enabling the stakeholders to look for ways of using the landscape in a sensible and sustainable way while preserving all its values. One of the ways of achieving this goal is a joint creation of strategic plans and support of relevant projects. The main activities conducted in this field in 2012 included work under the Lednice Chateau Multi-function Centre, acting as Site Manager of the Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape, World Heritage Site and initiating a follow-up of the Restoration of Landscape Structures of the Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape project.

c) Environmental education and training

Environmental education and training in the Lower Morava BR, P.B.C., is provided in the form of individual lectures, field excursions or long-term projects. The largest target group is represented by university students, members of professional unions and representatives of state administration and local government bodies. Training of both Czech and international students of Mendel University in Brno takes place within our BR and our P.B.C. participates directly in these events. Upon request, employees of the P.B.C. organize field trips for students of other Czech and foreign universities, as well as for professional groups. 2012 saw the conclusion of the most comprehensive training programme in which the P.B.C. participated to date: "Management of Natural Resources in the Tropics and Subtropics – Innovation of Study Programmes of Mendel University in Brno".

d) Information and cooperation with the general public

2012 was a year in which our P.B.C. focused on its internal stabilization following changes triggered by the amended Act on Public Benefit Corporations. The resignation of the Ministry of the Environment from all the P.B.C. structures and giving up of its founding member post due to internal organizational and system reasons, represented the major change. Mendel University newly entered our organizational structures and negotiations with local government representatives regarding their closer participation in biosphere reserve management in the position of a founding member were started. Throughout the year negotiations with the remaining founding members as well as municipality representatives continued, leading to participation in the projects mentioned above. Our P.B.C. also initiated a project of reconstruction and stabilization of a slope endangering a housing area in the Bulhary municipality. The P.B.C. processed an application for Operational Programme Environment funding on behalf of the municipality.

Thanks to the financial support provided by Forests of the Czech Republic, State Enterprise, Lower Morava BR managed to fulfill all its three fundamental functions stipulated in the respective MAB Programme and UNESCO binding documents in 2012 as well.

2. Support of public benefit activities by MND, a.s.

Joint stock company MND is a major Czech company dealing with surveying and extracting crude oil and natural gas. Companies of the MND holding are aware of their position, the nature of their business and the consequent social and environmental responsibility. Their activities are therefore driven by an awareness of the environment, principles of sustaining environmental balance and fostering partnerships. MND is one of the founding members of Lower Morava Biosphere Reserve and one of the major private donors in the South Moravian region supporting projects related to nature conservation and its sustainable development. The funding for public benefit activities, which we received in 2012, was used for the following purposes:

- provision for activities of Lower Morava Biosphere Reserve, as part of the UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves,

- participation in activities related to BR, including coordination of the said activities with state administration and local government bodies, interest groups, educational and scientific institutions, business, general public and other entities,
- mediation and procurement of advisory and coordinating services related to BR and its development, in accordance with the UNESCO regulations on the World Network of Biosphere Reserves,
- updating the information database on BR and the scientific, business and development activities related to the area or existence of BR,
- participation in educating the general public, procurement of further education and training of young people, and cooperation with youth organizations in a spirit of promoting the principles of sustainable lifestyle, nature protection and rational management of natural resources,
- organizing conferences, forums and training courses,
- promoting international cooperation in matters related to BR and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves,
- promoting and implementing activities aimed at the economic and demographic development of the BR and its region.

Thanks to the financial support of MND, a.s., we were capable of procuring public benefit services in unchanged conditions to support entities and activities whose primary aim is the development of the area of our BR in accordance with the conditions and regulations of the Man and the Biosphere Programme as well as safeguarding the daily running of the BR. This allowed us to contribute to the development of our region and to remain active members of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves at the international level.

3. Management of Natural Resources in the Tropics and Subtropics – Innovation of study programmes of Mendel University in Brno

The project is implemented by Mendel University in Brno and our P.B.C. participated in it together with Lipka, an educational organization for environmental training, as partners. It focuses on innovation of study programmes of Mendel University in Brno, with the primary objective to

enhance the competitiveness of its graduates. The platform of two biosphere reserves, Lower Morava BR and Socotra Archipelago BR, was used for the purposes of the project. The study programme introduced students to the specific aspects of natural resources management in tropical and subtropical regions and offered comparison with cultural landscape management in the conditions of Central Europe. In the course of a practical training module the students solved assigned field projects in Socotra itself in collaboration with native inhabitants.

The final practical training module took place in the period 23. 1. 2012 – 12. 2. 2012. Conclusion of the project, which had to be relocated to northern Vietnam due to security threats in Yemen, took the form of practical field practice for 20 students and 7 lecturers. It focused on analysis and evaluation of forest plantations established in 2002–2005 and included visits to research institutes, natural parks and commercial plant plantations.

The project received financial funding from the European Social Fund and the state budget of the Czech Republic under the Education for Competitiveness Operational Programme.

4. Establishment and restoration of biocenters and Territorial System of Ecological Stability (TSES) elements in the Drnholec cadastre

The key objective of this complex landscape project is the establishment of a basic structure of the TSES system along with restoration of a number of habitats in the cultural landscape which was originally characterized by habitat diversity. The cadastre, on which the project focuses, is subject to intensive farming and its large areas have been transformed into a cultural steppe with a severely limited biodiversity.

The establishment of TSES elements will positively enhance the ecosystem character at the landscape level. The proposed and implemented measures will decrease the velocity and desiccating effect of winds, reduce the destructiveness of rainstorms, decrease the temperature sum in the vegetation period or improve the moisture regime.

A radical improvement in biodiversity can be expected in all groups of living organisms. The biological function of permanent high and low

vegetation habitats will be restored in the landscape. The landscape permeability for migration of all groups of autochthonous plants and animals will be enhanced, along with conditions of specific sites in the form of food supply and nesting opportunities. Thanks to succession processes a number of species will find ideal conditions to enhance and stabilize their populations along with possibilities to occupy newly established ecological niches. The possibilities of increasing numbers of individuals, primarily in songbird, owl and raptor populations, will be widened in the vicinity of farming facilities and municipalities.

Cultivation and harvesting measures taken in the municipal forest stands represent an important follow-up project. The municipality of Drnholec took the decision to eliminate the danger of non-indigenous tree species spread into the newly established TSES and to create refuges for the development of invertebrate and fungi species in ancient and rotting trees and stumps.

5. Establishment and restoration of biocenters and TSES elements in the Vlasatice cadastre

The key objective of this landscape project is the establishment of the TSES system along with restoration of a number of habitats in the cultural landscape which was originally characterized by habitat diversity. The area has been subject to intensive farming and particularly in the 1960s – 1970s was transformed into a cultural steppe with a severely limited biodiversity.

The proposed and implemented measures will decrease the volume of soil wash and erosion, enhance landscape hygiene by decreasing the dust burden or improve moisture characteristics.

It is expected that the newly established basic TSES structure will be supplemented by related measures in the agricultural landscape, such as the establishment of bio-corridors between field crops and linear elements, watering places for birds and wetlands. The enhanced environmental characteristics of the landscape will result in e.g. an increase in hare and partridge populations, as important bioindicators of the quality of agricultural landscape.

An important aspect of the project is the elimination of the threat of non-

native tree species spread into the newly established TSES. The project will create an exemplary complex ecosystem of a cultural farmland with significantly improved conditions for conservation and development of biodiversity.

6. Establishment and restoration of biocenters and TSES elements in the Pohorelice and Nova Ves cadastres

A follow-up of a project launched in 2011 and implemented by the municipality of Pohorelice, which our P.B.C. initiated, processed and applied for funding. The project was granted funding from the Operational Programme Environment and its implementation was launched in 2012. The interest area comprises vast stretches of arable land intersected by linear plots of land used as access roads, usually devoid of complementary linear greenery. The entire area shows a minimum ecological stability, which is why the establishment of two TSES biocenters was proposed, complementing the existing bio-corridors (a windbreak and the Jihlava River) with new interaction elements in the form of tree alleys and groves which will house natural plant communities currently missing in the interest area. The the project will complement vast stretches of farmland with interaction elements designed to play poly-functional role within the local TSES and enhance the aesthetic and hygienic functions of the landscape. This project represents probably the most extensive implementation project focusing on the establishment and complementation of South Moravian TSES to date. The proposed area to be planted with trees and shrubs combined with grassy areas amounts to approximately 56 ha and the planned implementation cost is approx. CZK 40 mil.

7. Establishment of biocentre in the Nejdek u Lednice cadastre

Our P.B.C. procured a project (along with processing a complex application for funding from the Operational Programme Environment, priority axis 6.3) for an interesting site with a well-established name

“Nejdek Biocentre”. The key objective of the project is to adapt the site to an exemplary biocentre which will provide ideal conditions for the development and protection of biodiversity in wetland, riparian and grassland habitats. Removal of invasive tree species, black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) in particular, growing along the mine wall of a former sand pit and implemented local revitalization of the wall will create an ideal habitat for nesting of the bank swallow (*Riparia riparia*), the European bee-eater (*Merops apiaster*) and the common kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*). Growths of softwood broadleaf trees on the banks of pools will provide ideal conditions for nesting of e.g. the penduline tit (*Remiz pendulinus*). The establishment of a natural site in the vicinity of the Nejdek u Lednice and Lednice municipalities will provide pleasing environment for the local residents and tourists as well as a space for children to play in. At the same time it will help create an interesting wetland and forest steppe ecosystem enabling the growth of rare plant, animal and fungi species. The site is intended for use as a training space for local and neighbouring schoolchildren. The site is notable for several reasons, being part of the Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape, World Heritage Site, as well as part of the Pannonian biogeographical region. The restored permanent and vernal pools will create ideal conditions for amphibians and reptiles, while newly established flower-rich hay meadows will create a habitat for a number of plant species and associated invertebrate groups. Establishment of this TSES biocentre will trigger a number of positive ecosystem changes in the surrounding cultural landscape. The proposed and implemented measures will restore the biological function of permanent high and low vegetation as habitats with a number of ecotone zones.

8. Restoration of landscape vegetation in the Luzice u Hodonína cadastre

The key objective of this landscape project is to establish a natural site in the vicinity of Luzice, which would provide a pleasing space for leisure time activities of local residents and children as well as an interesting forest steppe ecosystem enhancing the development of rare plant, animal and fungi species.

The area in question has been partly degraded by illegal building material dumps and under threat of becoming overgrown with non-native tree and herb species, such as the box elder, black locust, tree of heaven or the dangerous Bohemian knotweed (*Reynoutria x bohemica*). The project aims to establish a forest steppe site of a natural character with cultural “butterfly meadows” hay meadows, interwoven with soft field roads and trails and groves of forest tree and native shrub species.

Establishment of this element based on TSES biocentre principles will trigger a number of positive ecosystem changes in the surrounding cultural landscape. The proposed and implemented measures will enhance the biodiversity of all groups of living organisms. Succession processes will create ideal conditions for a number of species, helping to enhance and stabilize their populations along with opening possibilities to occupy newly established ecological niches.

9. Lednice Chateau multi-functional centre

The project “Lednice Chateau Riding Hall – multi-functional centre” focuses on restoration of stables belonging to the state-owned Lednice Chateau and their new utilization. The rehabilitated building will come to life through a newly designed activity programme, which will become effective immediately upon conclusion of restoration works planned at the end of 2013. The new multi-functional centre will provide spaces for educational and cultural activities. Cultural landscape will be the focus of these programmes, using the exemplary composed Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape, World Heritage Site.

The project received EU structural funding via the Integrated Operational Programme (IOP) “We Bring Monuments Back to Life”. The Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic acts as an intermediary body in the IOP area of intervention 5.1 “National support for utilizing the cultural heritage potential” under activity 5.1b.

Work meetings focusing on the proposed exhibition “Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape” continued throughout 2012. We participated in preparing thematic areas and sources required for commissioning the scenario of main exhibitions on the premises of the Lednice Chateau Riding Hall. A thematic plan of the exhibition on Lower Morava BR and its

activities was prepared. It aims to implement all available audio-visual technology and interactive tools to present the wide scope of activities of our P.B.C. Thematic proposal for the Man and the Biosphere Programme exhibition presenting the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, focusing on our partner biosphere reserves and presenting the programme in various parts of the world, has also been submitted.

10. Site Manager of the Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape, World Heritage Site

Lower Morava BR, P.B.C., treats the issue of cultural landscape management as a sophisticated system with numerous specific requirements, particularly in the area of the Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape. These requirements are inherent in the obligation to ensure protection, management and sustainable development upon preserving the outstanding value of the landscape inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1996. The complexity of the task and the necessity to ensure interdisciplinary coordination, communication and continuous awareness of all the stakeholders in the area require a full involvement of a coordinator, or LVCL Site Manager, as an objective moral authority. Lower Morava BR, P.B.C., was proposed for this post by the Interdisciplinary Workgroup for LVCL in 2007.

In 2012 we succeeded in obtaining funding from the grant programme of the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic “Support for UNESCO World Heritage Sites” to secure an update of the LVCL Management Plan. The project is implemented in collaboration with experts from the National Heritage Institute, as well as scientists from Mendel University in Brno, particularly those from the Faculty of Horticulture in Lednice. We also established a close collaboration with external specialists in the field of LVCL.

We provided all labour-law requirements for the LVCL Site Manager and participated in all the relevant activities in LVCL. As a legal entity we fulfilled the role of a platform intended for continuous interdisciplinary exchange of expert information and coordination. This principle was safeguarded through active participatory management in our P.B.C., thanks to the fact that all key LVCL stakeholders are represented in the Board of Directors and other governing bodies of our BR and thanks to our

direct participation in the Interdisciplinary Workgroup for LVCL, which was established by a government decree.

Sadly, a system of basic (core) funding of LVCL Site Manager operation as a commissioned, long-term public benefit service for LVCL failed to be secured in 2012 as well.

11. Landscaping of the historic greenery on Hlohovecky Fishpond south bank

This project may serve as an example of practical cultural landscape management. Its aim is to restore the habitat diversity of a park landscape on the bank of Hlohovecky Fishpond and create a pleasing environment for the local residents, tourists and children as well as an interesting ecosystem combining stands of forest trees and regularly mowed meadows characterized by a number of ecotone zones, particularly in combination with the water ecosystem of the Lednice Fishponds National Nature Reserve. A carefully planned planting and regular long-term maintenance will create a site which will provide ideal conditions for the development of rare plant, animal and fungi species.

Restoration of a well-kept nature park with ancient solitary trees, groves of young and old forest stands and flower-rich “butterfly” hay meadows will facilitate a number of positive ecosystem changes in the cultural landscape. The proposed and implemented measures will enhance biodiversity of all groups of living organisms. The biological function of permanent high and low vegetation as habitats with a number of ecotone zones will be restored. Conditions for all groups of autochthonous animal and plant species at the site will improve. Thanks to succession processes a number of species will find ideal conditions to enhance and stabilize their populations along with possibilities to occupy newly established ecological niches.

Our P.B.C. processed the project and complete application for operational programme funding by the Ministry of the Environment, priority axis 6.3. This project is a follow-up of activities conducted under the project “Restoration of landscape structures of the Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape” and was to be part of several simultaneously running projects focusing on landscaping of northern and southern banks of Lednice

Fishponds implemented in collaboration with Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection and Forests of the Czech Republic. Unfortunately, due to system and legislation reasons, it was impossible to implement the remaining projects.

12. Stabilization of the Bulhary slope

The focus of the project is stabilization of a slope in the Bulhary cadastre. The slope and its surroundings are in immediate danger of landslide on the right bank of the uncanalized Dyje River. Due to erosion impact the slope is unstable, deformed by local landslides and its deteriorating condition threatens the neighbouring houses and infrastructure. The project proposed measures protecting property and minimizing investment costs. The aim of the project is to secure the stability of the Dyje River bank and the slope above it in the critical segment situated directly in the Bulhary municipality. Due to the ongoing slope erosion and growing threat to property and health of local residents, and with minimizing investment costs in mind, rectification of the present state is imperative in the shortest time possible.

The technical specifications of the project involve relocation of the riverbed and consequent stabilization of the damaged right bank by building material.

The activities proposed in the project encompass the following:

- 1) Removal of bank vegetation which might obstruct the construction works in the segment of relocated riverbed and in the space of stabilization.
- 2) Riverbed relocation – the existing riverbed will be relocated, thus fortifying the right bank and creating a lagoon by the left bank.
- 3) Stabilization of the right bank slope – the slope will be stabilized by added building material and consequent terracing of the bank. The terraces are planned in the place where the original riverbed is filled by suitable soil.
- 4) Greening of the river bank, biological support – trees planted along the bank line of the newly formed riverbed.

Apart from the project itself, our P.B.C. also processed application for EU funding under the Operational Programme Environment.

13. PEFC membership of Lower Morava BR, P.B.C.

Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC) is an independent, non-profit international organization registered in Geneva, which represents a framework for creating and mutual recognition of independent national certification systems. The Czech Republic is one of the 11 founding member states which formed PEFC Council in 1999.

In 2012 our P.B.C. accepted an official offer to become a member of PEFC CR, a consortium of legal persons acting as the national managing body of the Czech system of forest certification. PEFC CR unites representatives of forestry, wood processing industry and other interest groups. Individual members divide into three chambers based on their respective fields of activities.

The “other interest groups” chamber, of which our P.B.C. is a member, unites PEFC CR members representing other forest management organizations, such as educational and research institutions, trade

unions, environmental organizations, state administration and other. The current members include the Faculty of Forestry and Wood Sciences of Czech University of Life Sciences, Faculty of Forestry and Wood Technology of Mendel University, Czech Forestry Society and the Trade Union of Wood-processing Industry and Forestry Workers. The chambers are authorized to elect and dismiss members of the PEFC CR Presidium representing the respective chambers, elect delegates for PEFC CR Assembly, process proposals presented by the Presidium and make proposals to the Presidium and Assembly. Those nominated to represent their chamber in the Presidium participate in everyday running of PEFC CR within the jurisdiction of the Presidium.

By becoming a PEFC CR member, our P.B.C. endorses sustainable forest management and its contribution to enhancing biodiversity and the environment. It has also gained access to independent control of sustainable forest management, which could prove to have a positive effect particularly in the ongoing revision of Lower Morava BR zonation.

• • • PUBLICATION ACTIVITIES • • •

In 2012 we published materials which inform the public not only about the activities of our Public Benefit Corporation and the fields in which they are implemented, but also about the philosophy of the MAB Programme, its specifics as well as about the importance of the World Network of

Biosphere Reserves and its role in raising awareness of the principles of sustainable development. In 2012 our articles were published regularly e.g. in Malovaný kraj, which is one of the oldest ethnographic journals in the Czech Republic.



• • • OTHER ACTIVITIES • • •

2012 was symbolized by a number of negotiations both at home and abroad. In the course of work meetings, conferences, lectures and field trips we presented the MAB Programme, Lower Morava Biosphere Reserve, our projects and the involvement of our founding members and partners. We continued collaboration with the existing partners and established cooperation with new ones.

14. 1. 2012 Meeting with “Habruvka – Traditional Village” civic association in Brno

The form of cooperation for 2012 was agreed with representatives of the civic association. Our P.B.C. presented a proposal to apply for funding from the South Moravian Region focusing on environmental education of children from the Krtiny primary school upon utilizing the Tyrš Orchard in Habruvka.

22. 3. 2012 Meeting of the Interdisciplinary Workgroup (IW) for LVCL

Chaired by the newly elected IW chairman Ing. Tesar, Deputy Minister of the Environment, the meeting reiterated the mission, objectives and tasks of the Interdisciplinary Workgroup, as well as the involvement of responsible bodies, namely the South Moravian Region, in the long-term management and development of LVCL. The Ministry of the Environment stressed its readiness to assume full responsibility. Proposals for change of the basic IW documents – Statutes and Rules of Procedure – were presented. The Rules of Procedure were approved with the objective to eliminate cases of frequent changes in the Chairman post. The newly adopted document enhances the authority of the Vice-Chairman to maintain continuity of IW meetings in cases when a Chairman, who is always Deputy Minister of the Environment, fails to be appointed in time. The updated Statutes will be submitted to the Minister of the Environment for approval and issue.

28. 3. 2012 Meeting of the Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection, representatives of wine producers and Lower Morava BR in Mikulov

The focus of the meeting was agreement on principles of establishing vineyards in places of former orchards on the territory of the Palava Protected Landscape Area. All parties expressed their joint effort to preserve selected habitats and individual ancient trees to secure songbird nesting opportunities and conditions enhancing the development of rare insect species. It was also agreed that the said localities require management conditions which would not significantly limit the economic interests of their owners. There are options which, upon using positive motivation, would allow meeting the requirements of all stakeholders. Our P.B.C. offered to participate in the project under the project of updated Lower Morava BR zonation and certification of ecologically acceptable management methods.

3. 4. 2012 “Outdoor activities” workshop at the Breclav municipal authority

The aim of the workshop organized by our P.B.C. was to facilitate the process of determining strengths and weaknesses in addressing the issue of outdoor activities, as well as expectations regarding new approaches to the issue as a basis for establishing the planned outdoor activities centre by the winter stadium and possibly at other sites. The results obtained were included in a commissioned study which will be followed by a proposal of system solution of the said site in the vicinity of a floodplain forest. The municipality has expressed a keen interest to establish long-term collaboration with our P.B.C. and Forests of the Czech Republic and to launch a joint project of using part of the forest for outdoor activities of teenagers and other groups of local residents, as well as tourists.

10. 4. 2012 Lecture for international students of Mendel University in Brno (20 persons)

Upon request of the Vice Dean of the Faculty of Forestry and Wood Technology of Mendel University in Brno, our P.B.C. delivered a lecture on Lower Morava Biosphere Reserve and the participatory model of landscape management.

13. 4. 2012 Presentation and lecture at Mendel University in Brno (34 students)

A lecture and presentation on “Cultural landscape management in Central Europe and the (cultural) landscape of Madagascar” delivered to students of the subject “Management of natural resources of tropics and subtropics”.

19. 4. 2012 Workshop on the importance and function of floodplain forests in the basins of the Sava and Drava Rivers (Croatia) and Morava and Dyje Rivers (Czech Republic) in the conditions of a changed environment, catastrophic floods and anthropic impacts

Representatives of universities in Zagreb, Brno and Olomouc, along with our P.B.C. met on the grounds of Mendel University to discuss the proposition of a joint international project focusing on the currently highly topical subject of the importance and function of floodplain forests in the basins of the Sava and Drava Rivers (Croatia) and Morava and Dyje Rivers (Czech Republic) in the conditions of a changed environment, catastrophic floods and anthropic impacts.

20. 4. 2012 Lecture and field excursion for international students of Mendel University (48 persons)

Under the Erasmus international study programme focusing on the socio-economic challenges in European forestry, a lecture called “BRs and their role in cultural landscape management” was delivered in the town of Lednice, followed by a field excursion to the area of Lower Morava BR.

26. 4. 2012 Workshop with Master Degree students of the Faculty of Horticulture at the Lanzhot town hall

The focus of the ten-student workshop was architectural design of the Visitor Centre in Lanzhot in relation to the nearby tourist trails. Representatives of the Lanzhot municipality and the Moravian Fishermen Union present at the workshop communicated their ideas and possibilities.

27. 4. 2012 Workshop with Master Degree students of the Faculty of Horticulture at Hranicni Manor by Hlohovec

A group of 12 students was assigned the task to propose landscaping measures in the vicinity of Hlohovec and Hranicni Manor in the wider context of the surrounding cultural landscape. Information delivered by our P.B.C. focused on the role of LVCL Site Manager in coordinating activities within the World Heritage Site, the content of LVCL Management Plan and activities prepared in the vicinity of Lednice Fishponds. The students were to work as a team and present a proposal of optimum management of the interest area in the context of developing tourism and spa tourism.

27. 4. 2012 Field excursion for international students in the LVCL (20 person)

In the context of collaboration with Mendel University we organized a thematic field excursion to the LVCL called “BR and site management of a World Heritage Site”.

2.–3. 5. 2012 Off-site meeting of the economic committee of the Forest Management Department of the Czech Academy of Agricultural Sciences (34 participants)

A two-day expert event organized jointly by our P.B.C. and the Lednice municipality. Under the official programme we delivered a lecture and power-point presentation on the Lower Morava BR, its philosophy and the key activities of our P.B.C. in the context of the Man and the Biosphere Programme. The field trip day focused on localities which illustrated the essence of interdisciplinary clashes of interest, as well as the issue of

economic evaluation of various functions of the cultural landscape and difficulties in exchanging interdisciplinary information. The trip offered a reflection on the role the state should play in protection of cultural landscape values (particularly in LVCL, World Heritage Site) and in motivating sustainable development of the Lower Morava BR region.

9. 5. 2012 Lednice presentation of student proposals related to the Lanzhot locality

The presented interesting designs drew on historical studies, a survey conducted in Lanzhot and other territorial contexts. Our P.B.C. considered some of the proposals as to their possible inclusion in the final proposed design of the said locality.

10. 5. 2012 Field trip related to the issue of the 2nd stage of LVCL landscape measures

An information and coordination meeting of representatives of the Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection (ANCLP), Forests of the Czech Republic and P.B.C. with the designer of the 1st stage of landscaping measures conducted in 2001. The aim of the meeting was to become acquainted with the extent and type of measures planned, particularly with respect to the southern bank of Apollo Fishpond (owned by the state, managed by Forests of the Czech Republic), and their impact on stands which at present constitute the protection zone of the Lednice Fishponds National Nature Reserve. The participants agreed that a complex project dealing with the issue of stand adjustment on land belonging to the Hlohovec municipality and ANCLP is necessary. The core of the intended measures will be removal or undesirable tree species, restoration of a part of former meadows and arboristic treatment of selected solitary trees in specified localities.

30. 5. 2012 Work meeting at ANCLP Brno discussing revision of Lower Morava BR zonation

A regular work meeting took place at ANCLP – Palava Protected Landscape Area administration and Brno Regional Branch of ANCLP to discuss specific criteria for individual zones and the suitability of given BR areas for integration into the respective zones.

5. 6. 2012 P.B.C. presentation at a meeting of the Podluzi Region mayors

A presentation of P.B.C. activities was made as part of the agenda. The possibility of enhancing the significance of municipalities through the participation of regions in the P.B.C. at the post of founding members (accessing founding member) and through a possible extension of Lower Morava BR to encompass the LVCL, Mikulovsko and Podluzi regions was indicated.

7. and 8. 6. 2012 Meeting of the LVCL Interdisciplinary Workgroup (IW)

Attended by Ing. Tesar, Deputy Minister of the Environment, the meeting aimed to finalize the updated Rules of Procedure, discuss the LVCL Management Plan (MP), its mission and matters related to the post of LVCL Site Manager, as well as the role of IW in the management structure and implementation of the LVCL MP. A final deadline of 20. 6. 2012 for submitting observations on LVCL MP was set. Guided expert field excursions focused on the Lednice Chateau garden and the vicinity of Lednice Fishponds.

11. 6. 2012 Presentation for the Lanzhot Municipal Council

The presentation prepared by our P.B.C. demonstrated possibilities of using municipal land for establishing a visitor point both for local residents and tourists, with a strong educational input for the young. The councillors present expressed their appreciation for an exemplary proposal and supported an immediate implementation of the project. Our P.B.C. will continue to act as a coordinator.

12. 6. 2012 Meeting of PEFC Assembly in Kostelec nad Cernymi Lesy

The agenda included accession of new PEFC CR members, among them Lower Morava BR, P.B.C. Ing Jan Vybrál, Managing Director of P.B.C., was elected a new PEFC Inspector.

13. 6. 2012 Expert seminar “River landscape affected by man”

The seminar was organized by the Faculty of Agriculture of Mendel University. Our P.B.C. delivered one of the three key lectures on “Cultural landscape management and biodiversity protection in South Moravia”.

19. 7. and 23. 7. 2012 Trilateral meeting of representatives of the South Moravian Association for Nature and Gamekeeping, P.B.C., Faculty of Forestry and Wood Technology of Mendel University and Lower Morava BR, P.B.C.

A coordination and information meeting took place at the Faculty of Forestry and Wood Technology in Brno, discussing the possible application of the Education for Competitiveness Operational Programme to foster activities and life-long learning in gamekeeping in South Moravia. All participants agreed to continue such meetings after representatives of the Association have verified the feasibility of accommodating the binding indicators (number of persons in target groups and individual activities). Additional possible outputs of the project might include information and promotional materials – scope of our P.B.C. activities. An application may not be submitted until 2013 or until a new EU planning period. The project holder will be either the Faculty of Forestry and Wood Technology or the Association, with Lower Morava BR acting as a partner.

27. 7. 2012 Work meeting at the Zidlochovice Forest Enterprise discussing the Lower Morava BR zonation

The participants clarified the basic and associated characteristics of individual zones as presented in the work material related to revision of Lower Morava BR zonation. The characteristics of forests, floodplain forests in particular, in the area of Lower Morava BR reveal that the core zones will be relatively small and their role will differ from that of PLA core zones. Owing to the fact that the key objective of the zone revision is an acceptable vision of sustainable management upon preserving biological diversity, it is obvious that the key economic and conservation activities will focus on the buffer and possibly on the transition zones. It was agreed that the area of Soutok (Confluence) Forest District will constitute the core and model part of the zonation project and that efforts will be made to procure map and text input data in collaboration with land users to serve as a document for expert discussions and reviews.

2. 8. 2012 Consultation meeting with representatives of the South Moravian Regional Authority (SMRA)

Employees of the SMRA turned to us with a request for consultation

regarding MAB, BR, P.B.C. activities and its role in the Lower Morava BR territory, stressing the aspects of protection and management of the LVCL cultural landscape as a World Heritage Site. The materials and information provided were used as a basis for a paper presented by SMRA at an international conference.

9. 8. 2012 Meeting of the Breclav Development and Tourism Committee in the Breclav Chateau Grounds

The meeting of committee members, municipal counsellors, non-profit organizations and local entrepreneurs aimed to present the planned complex system of outdoor activities, education and enhancement of the town's tourist attractiveness, with a particular focus on the Breclav Chateau grounds. The project outline processed by our P.B.C. was presented and the ensuing discussion focused on the following issues: children playground, rope centre, tree top canopy trail and the possibilities of long-term, economically sustainable management of this site and entire town, whose attractiveness will be significantly enhanced. The participants agreed that an original attractive feature needs to be created both for the local residents and for tourists, yet expressed their awareness of the fact that part of the said site is situated in an active flood area. It was agreed that a high-quality concept study of outdoor activities must be commissioned and that the general public must be well informed throughout the process. The multidisciplinary project is to involve renowned professionals, be timeless and allow partial implementation and must be free of the influence of interest groups and their partial interests. Our P.B.C. acts as a partner in the project.

20.–23. 8. 2012 Visit of Mrs. Meriem Bouamrane, EUROMAB Secretary

Mrs. Meriem Bouamrane, EUROMAB Secretary, visited Lower Morava BR and during her stay became acquainted with the BR territory and the related issues of cultural landscape management, as well as with our P.B.C. activities and its method of BR management. She visited sites where our projects are implemented and met representatives of our governing bodies to discuss the contemporary development of the MAB Programme. The discussions revealed that Lower Morava BR and its

activities are sufficiently balanced and that their operation is fully in compliance with the conditions and present development trends of MAB.

3. 9. 2012 Study “Multi-level social learning for sustainable landscapes in Bergslagen, Sweden”

A team of authors led by researchers of the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in Skinnkatteberg prepared a study summarizing experience with establishing multi-level collaboration in creating approaches to sustainable landscape management. The document summarizes experience obtained in model forests, biosphere reserves and areas within the EU LEADER Programme. The authors conclude that the process of creating models of sustainable landscape management must be based on information exchange, thanks to which local experience may be transformed into generally applicable rules. This process is further simplified by the involvement of various partners who respect each other and cooperate. Owing to the fact that Lower Morava BR is one of the model areas used in the study, our P.B.C. was asked for reviewing and comments prior to its publishing.

24.–26. 9. 2012 Workshop in Lipovljany (Croatia), University of Zagreb facility

Workgroups from Mendel University in Brno and University of Zagreb met to develop the principles of an international project called “Function of floodplain forests in the basins of the Sava and Drava Rivers (Croatia) and Morava and Dyje Rivers (Czech Republic) in the conditions of a changed environment, catastrophic floods and anthropic impacts”. The meeting set the aims of the project, outlined topics for diploma and doctorate theses, along with the general aim to produce a monograph summarizing available experience and evaluating trends of selected characteristics. The project will be open to other countries from the Danube River basin, particularly Hungary, Austria and Slovakia. The intended role of Lower Morava BR is in the form of direct involvement of a non-governmental institution which also focuses on the issue of protecting the floodplain ecosystems on its territory in wider contexts, particularly in the form of BR zonation and initiation of contractual protection in Natura 2000 sites. Applications for EU operational programme funding are being considered.

10. 10. 2012 Work meeting and negotiation with the Zidlochovice Forest Enterprise in the area of the Morava and Dyje confluence

Professionals from the Zidlochovice Forest Enterprise and our P.B.C. met directly in selected forest stands to negotiate the delimitation and stabilization of the first BR zone in forests managed by Forests of the Czech Republic. The meeting addressed the issue of delimiting core zone localities which would be natural or close-to-nature, their biodiversity subject to strict protection and at the same time subject to no other activities but monitoring of minimally damaged ecosystems, non-destructive research and other low-impact activities, such as teaching. The workgroup reached an agreement on allowing only non-invasive management in the core zones.

16.–18. 10. 2012 Participation in an international conference “Biosphere Reserves for nature and for people” (Lviv – Ivano-Frankove, Ukraine, 80 participants)

The Ukrainian National MAB Committee, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport of Ukraine, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine, Lviv Regional Authority, State Department of Nature Conservation of the Lviv Region, Roztochya Nature Reserve and Roztochya Biosphere Reserve organized an international conference called “Biosphere Reserves for nature and for people – Management challenges in achieving sustainable development” on October 16.–18. 2012. The issues discussed involved sustainable life in BR, forest management in BR, nature protection in BR, implementation of management plans, monitoring of ecosystems in protected areas and participation management in BR. The aim of the conference was to create a proposal for Roztochya BR Management Plan and to discuss possibilities of natural resource use and protection in real-life situations as well as cooperation between local stakeholders as the key tool for sustainable development implementation. The conference was attended by participants from Ukraine, Austria, Slovenia and Sweden. Petr Cupa, as representative of our P.B.C., delivered a presentation called “The role of participation management in accommodation of multiple tasks of biosphere reserves – practical examples from the Lower Morava BR”.

• • • **COLLABORATION WITH UNIVERSITIES** • • •

Logistic support for research, monitoring and environmental education represents a basic function of each BR. In everyday BR management this requires creation of conditions necessary for implementation of the said activities. Few BRs worldwide are capable of fulfilling this function independently and at their own expense, and sadly, Lower Morava BR is no exception. To fulfil this function, we therefore take on primarily

a coordination role and collaborate mostly with universities, research teams and individual researchers. In 2012 Mendel University in Brno, notably its Faculty of Forestry and Wood Technology and Faculty of Horticulture, was one of our key partners, along with Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in Skinnskatteberg.

• • • **DONORS AND PARTNERS** • • •

Our activities and projects implemented in the Lower Morava Biosphere Reserve would not be possible without the funding of grant and support programmes, nor without the contributions from individual donors and

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