

SAVE eNews 2/2008

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

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Dagene and SAVE Annual Meeting 2008 at Kozard, Hungary

SAVE Foundation & the European SAVE Network held their annual meeting jointly with Dagene „Association for the Conservation of Animal Breeds in the Danubian Region“ in Hungary. Kozard, a small village in the North-East of Budapest, is a prime example for successful sustainable rural development and an excellent conference location for both transnational organisations.



Organisator Pal Hajas presents the Apple Valley of Kozard

15 years SAVE Foundation

The meetings of the different SAVE committees took place in the restaurant Vadvirag (wild flower). This year, a SAVE meeting took place for the 15th time, a proud anniversary for the still young organisation. The organisation is very pleased that its founding organisations are still active in the European Network, besides many other new SAVE partner organisations. In this context, it has to be mentioned that much input will be needed particularly in the Eastern and South-Eastern European region to establish partner organisations and networks to secure the in-situ conservation of old breeds and varieties.

During the open meeting of the SAVE Project Commission, progress in ongoing projects – including Arca-Net and ELBARN – and the development of other activities were presented and discussed.

With 10 foundation board members from 8 countries, the decisions for the next project year were made during the meeting of the Board of Directors. Riccardo Fortina, R.A.R.E., was reappointed for the next period of office. The European Agrobiodiversity Day (EAD) will from now on take place on the 29th September each year (St. Michaels Day). Supplementary guidelines for the admission of institutions in the ARCA-Net (www.arca-net.info) were intensively discussed and resolved upon. Besides many other decisions and fruitful discussions, it was suggested to release a special SAVE eNews issue where all partners present themselves with their current activities.

Marketing of traditional livestock and cultivated plant varieties in tourism



"Gyimesi Racka", an old Hungarian sheep breed..

An evening with traditional Hungarian folklore and local products such as Mangalitsa bacon and roast, several breads, fruits and cakes and local drinks perfectly topped the conference off. Following this culinary and cultural event, a common excursion took place, offering the possibility to experience diverse conservation examples – ranging from the living animal to its products, from rural farm to tourism concept. Many thanks go to all local organisers, especially to Pal Hajas from the Agroservice group "EurAgro" for the perfect organisation.

Alongside the annual meeting of the SAVE Network and Dagene, a joint conference on „Local products and rural tourism“ took place. Many countries presented examples of successful marketing and experiences. From a pan-european perspective to concrete examples of sustainable use and marketing, the possibilities of adding value to old breeds and varieties were highlighted. Individual presentations may be taken from:

<http://www.save-foundation.net/Conferences/Kozard.htm>



*...and different cheese types from this breed
as example for successful adding of value*

Crop Wild Relatives

„Crop Wild Relatives“ (CWR) are wild plant varieties related with food and fodder plants. In the wider sense, CWR includes all plants of socio-economic importance such as forest- and ornamental plants, aroma and medicinal plants. The genetic diversity of CWR is essential for plant breeding and of high economic value. CWR are further essential components of natural and semi-natural habitats world-wide (compare also <http://www.pgrforum.org/index.htm>)



The Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture obligate the signatory states to support the protection of genetic diversity in natural habitats. Thus, signatory states have to elaborate national implementation strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of CWRE. Several European states have already compiled national lists of CWR (Finland, United Kingdom etc.). 60-90% of the native plants of a country can be rated as CWR, according to the results of these studies.

In Switzerland, a national implementation strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of CWR is at present being elaborated, lead-managed by the Swiss Commission for the Conservation of Cultivated Plants (CPC-SKEK). Areas of action are being defined, providing the frame for the elaboration and rating of criteria on conservation value and conservation urgency of CWR in Switzerland. The ad hoc working group that has the task to elaborate the concept is already realising a close horizontal and vertical interdisciplinary cooperation between nature protection organisations and conservation organs for cultivated plants. Thus, synergies are used and duplication of conservation work is avoided. A priority question is to define the plant species Switzerland is responsible for. Approx. 60-80% of Swiss flora can be rated as CWR. Therefore, criteria for a priority list are being developed and weighted. A positive list is adjusted with the already existing lists "Crops of Switzerland" for aroma and medicinal plants. The red list of endangered Swiss plant species (<http://www.zdsf.ch/index.php?page=roteliste>) and existing inventories of will then show the need for action. Alpine plants, in particular aroma and medicinal plants could play an outstanding role for the conservation of Swiss CWR. The conceptual work will be finalized until the end of the year 2008.

For further information please contact: <http://www.cpc-skek.ch>.

Conference:

Implementing the Alpine Convention and the Protocol on Mountain Agriculture – Long-term monitoring and promotion of Agrobiodiversity



Jean Gault, Sard-M, FAO

The Conference, which was held in Bolzano on 20th-21st May 2008, was organised by the Alpine Convention together with the Monitoring Institute and the Autonomous Province of Bolzano-Bozen.

The starting point of the conference was the Alpine Convention Protocol on Mountain Agriculture. The conference also drew upon the crucial study carried out by the Monitoring Institute, the “Alpine Delphi: Continuous

Monitoring of Agricultural Biodiversity in the Alpine Region”. Many interesting themes regarding biodiversity in the Alpine area were highlighted and discussed: the significance of agrobiodiversity in the Alto Adige region, strategies and promotion; long-term monitoring in the Alpine area; the “Alpine Delphi” study; the Alpine Convention Protocol on Mountain Agriculture and the System for the Observation of and Information on the Alps (ABIS/SOIA). The second part of the day focused on long-term support and monitoring of agrobiodiversity as well as the identification of issues and future approaches. The second day of the conference concentrated on specific activities in the field of agrobiodiversity in the Alpine Area.

The topics discussed during the conference identified the main and most controversial issues regarding agrobiodiversity. The issues emerging from the discussions between different associations, research bodies and stakeholders are:

- pressing need for international cooperation and coordination,
- data standardisation and harmonization,
- long-term monitoring,
- need for genetic research,
- networking between experts,
- involvement of the wider public in conservation activities,
- the role of tourism,
- shared responsibility between producer and consumer
- and last but certainly not least, the call for subsidies for certain mechanisms to support traditional plant varieties and animal breeds.

Other issues raised at the conference are also considered worth highlighting:

- cross-border harmonisation of herdbooks and other methods of breed management
- to build trust among stakeholders in the various countries,
- the importance of profitability in agrobiodiversity in order to motivate farmers
- and the generation of added value to raise both for the farmer's and the consumer's interest and motivation.

As a follow up from this conference SAVE-Monitoring is looking at possibilities for networking stakeholders through the creation of an "Alpine-Net" as part of the SAVE website <http://www.agrobiodiversity.net/alps/>. A concept for the collection and storage of traditional knowledge – the knowledge that belongs together with the traditional Alpine livestock breeds and cultivated plant varieties - is being developed.

SAVE-Monitoring are very grateful for the opportunity provided by the Alpine Convention and the Autonomous Province of Bolzano-Bozen to hold this joint conference and look forward to working together on this theme in the future.

More information (in German): http://www.alpenkonvention.org/page7_de.htm

Summary (in English): http://www.alpenkonvention.org/NR/rdonlyres/782B5564-7D43-47BA-8094-43BD069679FF/0/Agrobiodiv_BZ_summary.pdf

Review of 5 Pedigree Programmes with Analysis Software

One of the most important aspects in conservation programmes for endangered breeds is to restrain the rate of inbreeding. We will introduce you in five software programmes which may help you in a useful way to manage your population. The presented programmes are focusing on different target groups and have different goals of interest. Because of the complexity of the software we will give you some details for orientation. If you need software help to manage your herdbook or to monitor the changes in genetic variability and population structure you should test the software with regard to your own needs.

Animal Database ZVSN

is mainly a breeding program for the practical use in the field of conservation programmes, but with a lot of opportunities for recording characteristics and inbreeding analyses like identifying the genetical presence or inbreeding coefficients.

The target group are mainly Breed managers, herdbook keepers and persons responsible for population management in conservation programs. The author, Kurt Steiner, can be addressed directly for support, data handling and data analyses.

Breeders Assistant

is a pedigree and record keeping software program for breeders but it has also a lot tools regarding inbreeding, mating and genetic tools like the prediction of genetic geno- and phenotypes.

It comes with nice data integration possibilities via *.csv (Excel) and *.xml and a attractive design, especially pedigree outputs, and reporting features. But it is a commercial program, the personal version (modular costs) is about 130 €.

ENDOG

is a Computer Program for Monitoring Genetic Variability of Populations Using Pedigree information.

Target group: Researchers or responsible persons for population management or teachers, students for population genetic analysis. Primary functions carried out by ENDOG are the computation of the individual inbreeding (F) and the average relatedness (AR) coefficients. Additionally, users can compute with ENDOG useful parameters in population genetics for the number of ancestors explaining genetic variability or for the genetic importance of the herds. Moreover, the present version of ENDOG can compute F statistics from genealogical information.

Optimate

is a very fast Computer Program in a DOS prompt window for the registration and the simple working on genealogic data. It is a helpful tool for breeders to give information for mating and reducing inbreeding but the data integration is inconvenient.

PEDSYS

PEDSYS (Pedigree Database System) is a series of programs written for management and analysis of genealogical and demographic data. It is in our opinion more a research tool and the installation process is not very easy to understand. But it can be used on the most important operation systems. The last version is from 1999, so it seems to be out of development now.

Conclusion

The five presented software programs are helpful tools to manage animal populations and to avoid inbreeding. The choice for a program depends significantly of your needs and your computer knowledge.

If you have to run a small population and you have limited budget, than **Optimate** may be the right tool. If you want to do genetical analyses and you are experienced in computing and statistics, than **PEDSYS** or **ENDOG** may be your favourites. If you have the responsibility for a conservation program and you are not very experienced in dealing with data and analysis of inbreeding than **ZVSN** with support might be your option. For a broader management of animal population including veterinary data and an adequate reporting and contact management paired with basic computer knowledge you might spend little money for **Breeders Assistant**.

=> A comprehensive review with comparison of many technical details may be downloaded from: http://www.save-foundation.net/docu/en/Pedigree_Analysis_Software.pdf

Newsflash

New EU directive for acceptance of agricultural landraces

The new Commission Directive 2008/62/EC of 20 June 2008 finally provides the long awaited legal basis for certain derogations for acceptance of agricultural landraces and varieties which are naturally adapted to the local and regional conditions and threatened by genetic erosion and for marketing of seed and seed potatoes of those landraces and varieties. The English text of the directive can be downloaded from:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:162:0013:0019:EN:PDF>

Balkans Workshop on short-horn cattle

The SAVE Monitoring Institute is planning to conduct an expert's meeting including a workshop on „Necessities for the future breeding of endangered short-horn cattle breeds in the Balkans (Busha, Prespa, Rodopen and Illyric Cattle)”. It will take place 11-13 Sept. 2008 at Pogradec (Lake Ohrid), Albania. Contact: info@monitoring.eu.com

Results of ELBARN Workshop Kutna Hora published

The results of the Central Workshop of the project „European Livestock Breeds Ark and Rescue Net“, held in February 2008 in Kutna Hora, Czech Republic, are now published and may be taken from: <http://www.save-foundation.net/ELBARN>

Arca-Net and Fruit-Net temporarily not available

Because of massive hacker attacks into SAVE-database accesses in the Internet, both online services Arca-Net (www.arca-net.info) and Fruit-Net (www.fruit-net.info) were and will be temporarily removed from the net. As soon as security levels have been improved, both services will be online again.

Book review

ALBC, the „American Livestock Breeds Conservancy“ publishes the book „**Managing Breeds for a Secure Future**“. On 220 illustrated pages the book tackles the challenge of maintaining genetic diversity in species and breeds of livestock and poultry. It is both a theoretical exposition and a practical user's guide. Strategies that secure standardized breeds and landraces are outlined and developed. Many examples demonstrate the practical application of the theory so that breeders can apply the principles to their herds and flocks. *Managing Breeds* provides information useful to all levels of breeders. Key points are emphasized and examples help beginners. Crisp, detailed explanations of techniques and strategies provide the fine points needed by master breeders. The book addresses the complex political and human aspect of saving rare breeds. Associations are alerted to potential obstacles and pitfalls, and all readers are informed of responsibilities. Breed association leaders, breed stewards, conservation organisations, teachers, researchers and students will find this book an excellent resource, text, and handbook.

The book is available from ALBC, PO Box 477, Pittsboro, North Carolina 27312, USA, and at the website <http://www.albc-usa.org> for \$ 22.95 plus shipping and handling.

Important dates (extract)

24 August: 12th Rare Breeds Expo in the "Living Heritage Park" in the Provincial Domain Puyenbroeck in Wachtebeke, near Gent, Belgium. All Belgian rare breeds will be present. Contact: staf.vandenbergh@skynet.be , Web: <http://www.sle.be>

24-27 August: 59th EAAP Meeting with satellite workshop "Linking Conservation NGOs with the Professionals", Vilnius, Lithuania. Contact: rbi_office@agro.auth.gr

8-12 September: Conference "Ecological Restoration"; exchange of knowledge, experiences and good practices in ecological restoration in the Natura 2000 framework. Ghent, Belgium. Contact: ser2008@semico.be, Web: <http://www.ser2008.be/>

9-12 September: IV Balkan Symposium on Vegetables and Potatoes. Plovdiv, Bulgaria. Contact: krasteva.liliya@gmail.com, Web: <http://www.4bsvp.org>

11-13 September: Expert meeting and workshop "Necessities for the breeding of endangered shorthorn cattle in the Balkans (Busha-, Prespa-, Rodopi-, Illyrian and Brachyceros cattle)", Pogradec, Albania. Contact: info@monitoring.eu.com

14-18 September: 7th RBI Global Conference on the Conservation of Animal Genetic Resources. Hanoi, Vietnam. Contact: rbi_office@agro.auth.gr

18-20 Sept.: VI Iberian Congress on Animal Genetic Resources, Lisbon, Portugal. Contact: sprega.pt@gmail.com, Web: <http://www.sprega.com.pt/sprega.html>

27-28 September: 6th Regional Fair "Balkan Agrobiodiversity and Rural Heritage", Dimitrovgrad, Serbia; Exhibition of indigenous Balkan breeds. Contact: balkanika@ptt.yu

29 September: European AgroBiodiversity Day (EAD). PR event to the topic "Ark & Rescue Stations". Various activities of the SAVE Network organisations in their respective countries. Contact: info@monitoring.eu.com

5-14 October: 4th IUCN World Conservation Congress "A Diverse and Sustainable World", Barcelona, Spain. Web: <http://www.iucn.org/congress/2008/congress.htm>, Contact: congress@iucn.org

15-18 October: Film Festival "Pastoralismes et Grands Espaces" at Les Adrets (near Grenoble), France. festival7laux@tiscali.fr, Web: <http://www.alpages38.org/festival7laux>

23-27 October: 3rd Terra Madre World Meeting and Salone del Gusto (SlowFood), Turin, Italy. Contact: terramadre@slowfood.it, Web: <http://www.terramadre.info>

25-26 October: World Potato Exhibition (Esposizione delle Patate dal Mondo). Torriglia (Genova), Italy. Mail: scrivi@quarantina.it, Web: <http://www.quarantina.it/expo2008.htm>

11 November: Conference "Conservation of plant varieties – regulations for Switzerland and Europe" (simultaneous translation German-French) in Berne, Switzerland. Contact: catherine.gosteli@cpc-skek.ch