

International conference

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION IN HUMAN LANDSCAPES

ORGANISED BY

ALKA WILDLIFE, o. p. s.

ABSTRACT BOOK

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Č R Program **Prostředí pro život**



ALKA
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Iñaki Abella Gutiérrez / Asociación Biomás

[What works in conservation ... and what doesn't](#)

Notes from my personal experience in 20 years working in conservation in different countries. In the Bolivian Pantanal: An extreme case of Western arrogance. Costa Rica: two diametrically opposed ways of doing conservation, the cases of Tortuguero and Ostional, Cabo Pulmo, (Baja California Sur, México), an example for the world. Gorongosa National Park, (Mozambique): the project that started all over again to involve more of the local populations. Dzanga-Sangha, (Central African Republic): the controversy is served, or when you are wrong with the local populations. Semliki Wildlife Reserve and the Semliki Chimpanzee Project (Uganda): the power of small initiatives. Kenya: an example of working with local communities that is branded as neo-colonialism.

Václav Zámečník / Czech ornithological society

[Decrease of birds in agricultural landscapes](#)

The results of common bird species monitoring show that birds in the agricultural landscape are declining the most in our country. Since 1982 alone, their numbers have fallen by about a third. The main reasons for the loss of birds in the agricultural landscape include changes in farming methods and the overall approach to the landscape, especially the drainage of wetlands in the last century or the socialist consolidation of land. The use of pesticides and rapid mechanization has also contributed to the decline in the abundance of many bird species. The CSO has been intensively involved in the protection of farmland birds since 2003. Thanks to research and practical experience, we are already able to define major threats and how it is possible to ensure their protection.

Denisa Lobbová / Bratislavské regionálne ochranárske združenie

[Conservation of the European ground squirrel through tourism in Slovakia](#)

In Slovakia, there are several localities where the endangered European ground squirrel has become a highlight for a great number of tourists. These are, for example, the localities of Muráň - Biele Vody or the courtyard of Spiš Castle. The animals have adapted to interact with the visitors, who like to feed them and take selfies with them. Despite the various pitfalls of this regime, tourists help both with the suslik protection and influence the habitat management in these localities for the future. We think in a positive sense.

Kateřina Holubov / Kukang coffee

[Eco-friendly livelihoods in exchange for safe wildlife in Sumatra: a conservation story, that modern zoos made possible](#)

Modern zoological gardens play a key role in biodiversity preservation around the world thanks to the fact that they breed species in human care (ex situ) and at the same time realize or support field conservation projects in the species' natural areas (in situ). Thanks to the long-term support of numerous Czech and other European zoological gardens, the Kukang Rescue Program fighting the illegal trade in slow lorises on the Indonesian island of Sumatra started engaging local communities in wildlife conservation while at the same time supporting their sustainable livelihoods. Within the "Kukang Coffee" project, in cooperation with coffee farmers of the newly established "Kukang Coffee Community", representatives of the rescue program introduced a methodology for cultivation and processing of high-quality eco-friendly coffee. The farmers receive proper advice and training in the harvesting and processing of coffee beans that the program consequently buys from them at a price that is higher than on the local market. In return, individual members of the Kukang Coffee Community are required to make a legally binding promise that they and their families will protect endangered and protected animals and abide by the ban on their hunting. It has therefore been possible for farmers to make a significant profit from nature conservation, as "Kukang Coffee" not only supports local farmers but also directly helps to protect slow lorises, pangolins and other threatened wild animals in the forest around the village.

Jamie Copsey / IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group

[Principles of species conservation planning](#)

To be most effective in our species conservation work, we need to do our best to ensure that all those who could impact our work (positively or negatively) are as positively engaged in it as possible, or at least do not undermine what we are trying to do. Gaining this 'buy-in' requires an opportunity for all involved to look critically at the information surrounding the species and its conservation concern and to build agreement around what should be done to conserve it, or them. This process is easier said than done. In this presentation, Jamie Copsey (Director of Training for the IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group) will introduce you to CPSG's 'Principles of species conservation planning'. These principles summarise what CPSG has learnt over the last forty years of its development to be necessary to consider when developing a planning process that results in effective implementation on the ground.

Václav Beran / ALKA Wildlife and Muzeum města Ústí n.L.

[Breeding of Peregrine falcons in industrial areas](#)

Peregrine falcons have never been common and abundant in the Czech Republic, because historically they nested only on rocks, which are not numerous in our country. Moreover, they have been the focus of human attention at least in the last centuries - as a falconry species, pest or collector's item. In the 1960s, due to the use of agricultural chemicals, they became completely extinct and nesting did not occur again until 1993. Since then the population has been steadily increasing and now stands at around 120 pairs. In 2011, the growth trend was significantly boosted by a new skill - nesting on industrial buildings. Thanks to cooperation with site operators, installation of boxes and targeted protection, the population on construction sites has now reached more than 35 pairs and is steadily increasing.

Cristina Amador López / Biologist

Turbine stopping program in Spanish wind farms

Wind energy has grown very fast in the last 15 years. The exploitation of wind as a renewable and pollution-free source of energy has led to the proliferation of wind facilities across Spain. But wind farms can have substantial effects on raptor populations when turbines are placed in migration corridors. A technique that reduces avian mortality is necessary. I'll present a method that only exists in wind farms located in the South of Spain, which consist in manually stopping selective turbines, taking into account the conservation status of birds of prey and current weather conditions. I'll share my direct experience on this program, share some research on its effectiveness, and will describe other systems that could be implemented in wind farms.

Lukáš Poledník / ALKA Wildlife

[Critically endangered European ground squirrel in agricultural lands](#)

Current European ground squirrel colonies occur mainly in artificial suburban localities such as airports, golf yards and camps. However long term survival of that critically endangered species depends on agricultural landscapes and their quality, so it depends on farmers and their way of farming. Therefore, our activities help the EGS population focus on communication with farmers. Depending on the kind of farm and its products, sousliks could do damage to vegetables, corn and other crops, on the contrary in vineyards and orchards they do any harm to farmers. We have created and used trademarks "Souslik friendly wine" and "Souslik friendly orchards" as a tool for communication, education and PR. The success of a tool such as a trademark depends on many factors and is not automatic and self-running. To reduce potential conflict we also try to quantify damages and to develop mitigation measures.

Arthur F. Sniegon / Save-Elephants, z.s.

[Mitigation of human-wildlife conflict in Central Africa \(elephants, hippos, "bushmeat"\)](#)

Central Africa belongs to one of the least developed regions of the world and the same is true in terms of wildlife research, conservation and management. Yet the region – spanning from the rainforests of the Congo basin to the plains of Sahel – is a refuge for numerous taxa threatened elsewhere in the continent. The presentation will introduce the natural and social features to the viewers and will give examples of major threats to nature and possible solutions in the region. Presented information is first-hand experience from more than a decade of travelling, volunteering and working in countries such as Chad, Cameroon, CAR and Congo. Specifically the talk will focus on mitigation strategies to reduce the elephant and hippopotamus crop-raiding in Chad which deepens food insecurity of local rural inhabitants and aggravate the dim options for long-term survival of the elephants and hippos. Moreover some up-to-date information regarding bushmeat hunting and commercialisation mainly in the Congo basin will be shown.

Prokop Svoboda

[Refuge - environmental land Fund](#)

The goal of the Fund is to create a portfolio of environmentally valuable lands in the Czech Republic in order to protect and restore them according to ESG principles – green, responsible, and sustainable investment strategies. "Wetlands and water retention have recently been discussed from A to Z, whether in the context of landscape adaptation to climate change, small water cycles, or the loss of biodiversity. Similarly, the protection of steppe and semi-steppe habitats is key to preserving our natural heritage for future generations. I believe that investing in this type of land is worthwhile and environmentally responsible. These refugia are natural preservers of financial resources. As society becomes more and more aware of the natural value of these disappearing habitats, it can rightly be assumed that their financial value will also increase."

Alberto Parada-Siles and David Mazuelas / Aventuras Barbudas

[Pollinators, Man and the Biosphere: connecting people and landscapes](#)

We are working on a project to improve biodiversity in a highly humanized environment. We have focused on the group of pollinators and the work area is a Biosphere Reserve in La Rioja, a region in northern Spain. In our lecture we will talk about the parts of our project: research, outreach and conservation (focusing on local people/landowners), with greater emphasis on the latter. We are at the beginning of the development of the project so our intention is to share our ideas for the future in the conference since we will start the field work in 2022.

Radka Musilová / Zamenis

[Action Plan for the Aesculapian Snake \(*Zamenis longissimus*\) in the Eger River Valley](#)

The Aesculapian snake (*Zamenis longissimus*) is a nonvenomous thermophilous species with current distribution in the southern part of Europe. In the Czech Republic the species occurs in three separated populations. The population in Eger River Valley is isolated and represents the northernmost site of occurrence of the snake species. This population is a relic of a wider distribution during warmer conditions, now surviving under a sub-optimal climate. Many factors including isolation, limited area, landscape changes, increasing anthropogenic pressure and non-native predators make the population especially vulnerable to extinction. The population size is estimated from 400 to 600 individuals and the occurrence area is assessed to only 12 km². The success of the reproduction considerably varies among seasons and hatching places. Snakes very often use anthropogenic formations such as walls, embankments, navigation, roads and buildings such as sheds, cowsheds, houses, woodsheds, garages, etc. An Action Plan in the Czech Republic for this species was approved in 2008. The main objective of this Action Plan is to preserve viable population in the Eger valley by managing important existing biotopes such as hibernacula and egg-laying sites. Building new egg-laying sites is one of the most important measures. Further research and environmental education are essential parts of the Action Plan as well. Therefore, all effort should be made to preserve these populations and to understand their ecological requirements and evolutionary adaptations to the environment they occupy.

David Anthony Jackson / Andean Bear Foundation

[Methods for the mitigation of Andean bear conflicts with humans in northern Ecuador](#)

Due to the advancement of agricultural boundaries in Ecuador, Andean bears (*Tremarctos ornatus*) are more frequently coming into contact with humans, causing damage to crops and livestock. At the Andean Bear Foundation, we have been conducting in situ biological research on wild Andean bear populations over the past 20 years, gaining vital information on bear movement patterns and habitat use in order to better manage conflict situations. We have used a number of methods to mitigate human/bear conflicts including, 1. the identification and reforestation of wildlife corridors, 2. compensation programs to reimburse bear inflicted damages, 3. the implementation of social projects to gain favour in communities near bear habitat, 4. providing non-destructive alternative sources of income to counter slash and burn agriculture techniques that deplete bear habitat, 5. application of a signposting system and speed reducers on highways where bears frequently cross in search of food, 6. execution of workshops to advocate better farming practices and provide methods to reduce the risk of conflict, 7. environmental education and outreach campaigns to complement the biological research and instil an appreciation for wildlife and promote the protection and conservation of their habitats. The methods we have used have had varying success both short term and long term. At the ALKA Wildlife Conference 'Wildlife Conservation in Human Landscapes', I would like to present the results of our many years of experience dealing with human/ wildlife conflict situations and share our successes, the problems we have faced along the way, and how we dealt with these problems to improve Andean bear conservation in fragmented human landscapes.

Kristi Foster / Terra Incognita

[Conservation through ecotourism](#)

Take a tour of Conservation through Ecotourism with Terra Incognita, a social enterprise dedicated to promoting ethical ecotourism. This talk explores three innovative projects to conserve wildlife and support local communities, led by three leading ecotourism operators in Panama, India and The Gambia. Get insights into the challenges, successes and lessons learnt for conservation through ecotourism, and inspiration for how we can drive more positive impacts for wildlife and people as tourism resumes.

Sara Pinto / Brutal

[Involving society in a bat conservation project](#)

Bats offer important ecosystem services to humans. Among other benefits, they serve as natural controllers of disease vectors and agriculture pests. During my talk, I'll show promising results from a novel coordinated effort between several sectors of society: wine makers, research institutions and the general public. All working together to improve bat conservation in a sustainable and rewarding symbiosis.

Fernando Mateos González / Nature Research Centre and ALKA Wildlife

[Anglers as ambassadors of freshwater biodiversity](#)

Citizen science can increase appreciation for both common and rare species, while improving available data and providing indicators of biodiversity status. Examples of this success are particularly common in taxonomic groups such as birds and insects, but they are still quite rare for freshwater biodiversity. When people use freshwater ecosystems for recreation, they do so by keeping largely unaware of what's underneath the surface. One clear exception is recreational anglers, a large citizen group who spend substantial time on or near the water and have a keen interest in fish and freshwater habitats. While angling can have detrimental effects on freshwater ecosystems, would it be possible to engage this citizen group so they become our Trojan horse for freshwater biodiversity conservation? This project has received funding from European Regional Development Fund (project No 01.2.2-LMT-K-718-02-0006) under grant agreement with the Research Council of Lithuania (LMTLT).

Asta Audzijonyte / Nature Research Centre

[Importance of fish body size information in citizen science data collection tools](#)

Modelling tools, citizen science and collaboration with industry to assess where and how much people fish. Recreational fishing is playing an increasingly important role. It is important for economy, a common way for people to spend time in nature and to learn about the life under the waves. But recreational fishing can have a large impact on some species and in some ecosystems. But just how large? Estimating the intensity of recreational fishing is notoriously hard. I am currently leading a large project in Lithuania, with a team of researchers at the Nature Research Centre and funded through the Research Council of Lithuania. We aim to develop new technologies to estimate the intensity of recreational fishing in Lithuania.

This project has received funding from European Regional Development Fund (project No 01.2.2-LMT-K-718-02-0006) under grant agreement with the Research Council of Lithuania (LMTLT).

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