

Nevin, Owen ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3513-8053> (2006) Can we afford to let the public visit prime habitat for recreation? Spatial and temporal impacts of human activity on habitat use by brown bears. In: 1st European Congress of Conservation Biology: Diversity for Europe: Learning from Other Continents, 22-26 August 2006, Eger, Hungary. (Unpublished)

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**1<sup>st</sup> EUROPEAN CONGRESS OF  
CONSERVATION BIOLOGY**

**22-26 August, 2006  
Eger - Hungary**

**BOOK OF ABSTRACTS**

**PATRONS OF ECCB 2006**

**László SÓLYOM**  
President of the Republic of Hungary

**Miklós PERSÁNYI**  
Minister of Environment and Water Management of the Republic of Hungary

information on both the quantity and quality of vegetal biodiversity of sites or habitats. We thus could classify them according to their respective contribution to biodiversity and map the zones with the highest potential or real floristic interest. We also examined the impact of the urban characteristics (collective or individual dwellings, parks, commercial zones) on the floristic diversity.

**207. A SPECIES BETWEEN CONSERVATION AND PERSECUTION: THE COMMON HAMSTER (*CRICETUS CRICETUS*, L.)**

**NECHAY, GÁBOR**, Ministry of Environment, Hungary

Population numbers of the Common hamster rise conspicuously in certain years. Reviewing all kind of available information about long-term density fluctuation of *Cricetus cricetus* the followings are concluded. The hamster lives today mainly in cultivated land thus, in habitats being under essential human influence. Detection of population numbers is difficult due to various activity of man including control of hamsters and the lack of long-term series of exact large-scale data. However, the 20<sup>th</sup> century brought about large scale agriculture and certainly the highest expansion and population number of *Cricetus cricetus* in the history. Yet the hamster became endangered in the western part of the range to the 1990s and its population is also decreasing in Central Europe. Even in Hungary where control of hamsters is still mandatory, a downward trend in expansion and size of the population can be observed. Simultaneously, research activity and conservation efforts increased in the west. Most recently successful reintroduction and reinforcement programmes and agrar reserves have been established in the Netherlands, Germany and France. Unfortunately no research activity and no recent information exist on the situation of hamster in the vast eastern areas. The last documented high population occurred here in the 1950s. Recommendations on improved surveillance and management of *Cricetus* will be detailed, on better large scale monitoring and sustainable management instead of control where necessary.

**208. CAN WE AFFORD TO LET THE PUBLIC VISIT PRIME HABITAT FOR RECREATION? SPATIAL AND TEMPORAL IMPACTS OF HUMAN ACTIVITY ON HABITAT USE BY BROWN BEARS.**

**NEVIN, OWEN**, University of Central Lancashire, United Kingdom

Extreme sports, adventure- and eco-tourism are bringing more people than ever into remote backcountry areas worldwide. The number of people visiting our remaining wilderness areas is set to increase further; in fact, nature tourism is the fastest growing sector in the 2.5 trillion global annual tourism market. What impacts will this have on the conservation of these areas and the species which are found there? While Europe is not traditionally seen as an ecotourism destination, the "European Safari" is a new and growing travel market. Romania leads the way in the development of this new genre of ecotourism marketing the Carpathian Mountains as the place to see Europe's "Big Five" - elk, bison, bear, wolf and lynx. With its focus on carnivores, European safari is often referred to as "carnivore tourism" and we can draw lessons from the management of established carnivore tourism operations in North America. This study draws on spatial data collected using high resolution satellite telemetry and direct behavioural observation of brown bears at an exploited backcountry site in British Columbia to examine the impacts of ecotourism on brown bear spatio-temporal distribution and habitat use.

**209. RE-THINKING SUSTAINABILITY: LOCAL INVOLVEMENT AND GLOBAL STRATEGIES TO CONSERVE BIODIVERSITY**

**NIEKISCH, MANFRED**, International Nature Conservation, University of Greifswald, Germany

Participation and Collaborative Management are relatively new strategies to involve local inhabitants in the management of natural resources and protected areas. The aim is to generate benefits locally, de-centralise responsibilities and reduce or avoid potential conflicts arising from restrictions. Despite all progress, there are still major problems with the application of these strategies. In addition it seems that the concept of "sustainability" needs some re-thinking and has to be developed further as it has not lead to a general change in the trends towards massive extinction of species and ecosystems.

At the contrary, as can be seen in global fisheries as well as in tropical forests, the increasing scarcity of a biological resource due to overuse has caused over the last decades mainly prospection for "alternatives" and the shift to the use of "new" species rather than to appropriate management schemes. The recognition that the components of biodiversity are limited resources and that "sustainable development" does not mean "permanent growth" must be put into the focus of concepts and strategies. Delegation of power to the local level and the implementation of global regulations for access and benefit sharing as foreseen in the Convention on Biological Diversity (as opposed to the World Trade Organisation and TRIPS) and their interdependence with successful Participation and Collaborative Management will be discussed as promising strategies for the conservation of biological diversity.

**210. ASSESSING BIODIVERSITY ALONG THE URBAN-RURAL GRADIENT: THE GLOBENET PROJECT**

**NIEMELÄ, JARI**, University of Helsinki, Finland

The ecological effects of urbanisation can be examined by using urban-rural gradients from densely built city cores to increasingly rural surroundings. The gradient occurs all over the world and provides a framework for comparative work. Here, I present results of an international initiative to examine how generalisable the ecological effects of urbanisation are around the world using the gradient approach. The target organisms are carabid beetles which are ecologically and taxonomically well-known in most parts of the world. The results showed that carabid communities along urban-rural gradients were distinctly separated in Helsinki (Finland) and Hiroshima (Japan), but not in Edmonton (Canada) and Sofia (Bulgaria). Studies from Japan and Hungary shed more light on the issue. The results provide some support for the specific predictions made about species responses to urbanisation. However, individual cities did display city-specific community characteristics (e.g. Edmonton was characterised by exotic species). The causes of these city-specific differences should be explored with reference to the 'ecological' history of the cities. Thus, some broad generalisations can be made, but the ecological effects of urbanisation are also to some degree city-specific. The study shows that carabids can be used as indicators of urbanisation for planning and conservation purposes..

**211. CONSERVATION VALUE OF ROADSIDE VERGES IN A HIGHLY FRAGMENTED LANDSCAPE**

**NOORDIJK, JINZE**, Wageningen University, Netherlands; **Schaffers, André**, Wageningen University, Netherlands; **Raemakers, Ivo**, Wageningen University, Netherlands; **Sýkora, Karlé**, Wageningen University, Netherlands

In the Veluwe region, a central part of the Netherlands, many heathlands and driftsands harbor characteristic arthropod species. These areas are highly fragmented and isolated from each other, thereby endangering the survival of these species. We studied roadside verges all over the Netherlands. The