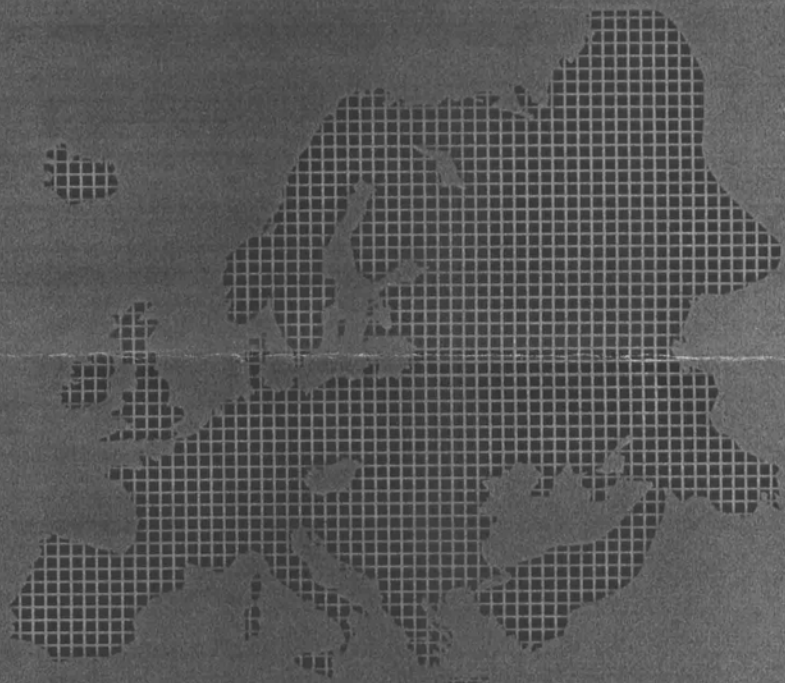


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domestic environmental conservation has become commonplace. This practice can negatively affect biodiversity conservation planning if natural resource harvest is merely pushed across political borders. Both Finland and China began major forest protection programs in the mid-1990's, and the amount of hectares of forests protected from harvest in both countries has increased exponentially. However, consumption of wood products has increased as well. The simultaneous increase in consumption of both protected forests and forest products is made possible by forest harvesting in Russia, where the current protected areas are inadequate to preserve most of the naturally dynamic and old growth forests. While the impact of Russian forest harvest on China's protected forests is unclear, the threat to Finland's forests is more troubling. Finnish populations of some species depend upon dispersal from Russian populations, which is only possible through three increasingly impacted land corridors in the Karelia region. Thus, increased importation of wood from northwest Russia to Finland may jeopardize the long term viability of species in high diversity conservation areas in both Russia and Finland.

194. GENETIC CHARACTERISTICS OF WHITEFIN GUDGEON, *GOBIO ALBIPINNATUS* (LUKASCH, 1933) IN EUROPE

MENDEL, JAN, Institute of Vertebrate Biology, Czech Rep.; **Vasileva, Ekaterina D.**, Moscow State University, Russian Federation; **Luskova, Vera**, Institute of Vertebrate Biology, Czech Rep.; **Lusk, Stanislav**, Institute of Vertebrate Biology, Czech Rep.; **Kosco, Jan**, University of Presov, Slovakia; **Ruchin, Alexander**, Mordovian State University, Russian Federation; **Halacka, Karel**, Institute of Vertebrate Biology, Czech Rep.; **Papousek, Ivo**, Institute Of Vertebrate Biology, Czech Rep.; **Vetesnik, Lukas**, Institute of Vertebrate Biology, Department of Ichthyology, Czech Republic

Gobio albipinnatus is among the fish species that are protected by European and national legislative norms. Recently, there appeared tendencies to define, within the species range, indigenous subspecies perhaps even populations on the grounds of their morphometric differences. We carried out genetic analyses of samples from various localities in central and Eastern Europe. The analyses involved both, the nuclear genome, represented by the intron S7 protein (632 bp), and the mitochondrial genome, with the analysed part of the control region (724 bp). The values of genetic variability obtained between the samples tested varied between 1.5 to 1.9% (control region) and 0.8 to 1.0% (S7 marker). We do not consider differences on this level to be sufficient for specific separation. Both markers appeared to be a suitable solution in difficulties connected with the differentiation of this species within the genus *Gobio* based solely on morphometric analyses. The results obtained have provided a basis for a revision of the structure and distribution of *G. albipinnatus* as well as of the proper genus *Gobio*. The results were obtained within project rio.VaV SM/6/05 of the Ministry of Environment of the Czech Republic.

195. BROWN BEAR AND WOLF CONSERVATION STATUS IN THE SE BALKAN REGION. HOW TO RESPOND TO LOCAL CONDITIONS WITHIN A HOLISTIC FRAMEWORK?

Mertzanis, Yorgos, NGO "Callisto", Greece; **Godes, Constantinos**, NGO "Callisto", Greece

The SE Balkan region remains the only region of Southern Europe where brown bear and wolf populations still maintain a continuous distribution range, extending over a large area shared by as many as eight different contiguous countries. Maintaining transboundary connectivity between shared populations of the two species is among the key issues for a long term overall conservation policy in this region. From the legal aspect, although "umbrella" systems, such as the Bern Convention and the EU directives, allow a generalized approach,

the to develop common management strategies and practices which would take into account local conditions is a growing challenge.

Over the Dinaric - Pindos bear and wolf ranges, this challenge becomes a necessity given the mosaic of the existing differences in; current status (ranging from protection to harvest) and practices, priorities set by national policies, social & cultural values regarding wildlife and conservation issues, socio-economic context, accessibility to funding tools, existing methodologies and scientific capacity levels, bureaucratic procedures and political will. Until now, several steps to meet local conditions under the overall objective have been made, with the establishment of a Balkan network of cooperation and the refinement of the CoE Action Plans as milestones.

Regarding EU policy, special emphasis should be given on conflicting funding tools which compromise biodiversity and therefore bear and wolf survival in cases such as the construction/extension of transport networks related to habitat fragmentation. This situation is illustrated by the case of the Egnatia highway in the Pindos mountain range (Greece).

196. STEPS ACHIEVED TOWARDS CONSERVATION OF BUTTERFLIES IN ROMANIA

MIHUT, SERGIU, Focal Centre for Biodiversity Monitoring and Conservation, Romania

Butterflies are representing key bioindicator species for nature conservation, possessing a high capacity for a swift assessment of biodiversity indexes. Designation of sites dedicated to butterfly conservation is therefore responding to complex requirements for number of associated species. Making appeal to the procedural blue-print developed under the European program for the identification of the Prime Butterfly Areas, a network of protected sites was designed for Romania; based upon 9 criteria species. The proposed network is representing a fundamental component for Natura2000 network in Romania. The associated GIS database developed in order to pinpoint the butterfly diversity hot-spots is intended to become an objective and useful tool with wide applicability in conservative management, as well as in regional durable development strategies, climate change early alarming system, long term environment assessment and trends.

197. THE ROLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL NGOS IN PUBLIC AWARENESS RAISING AND PROTECTION OF ENDANGERED SPECIES (STEP TOWARD THE COMMUNITY-BASED CONSERVATION)

MIKAC, BARBARA, Marine Research Centre, Ruder Boskovic Institute, Croatia

Endemic *Posidonia oceanica* meadows are the richest community in the Adriatic Sea. Only a few decades ago they were widely distributed along the whole Istrian coast in Croatia. Due to the human impacts they are today almost extinct. Together with them hundreds of other species are disappearing. Despite that, Croatia didn't apply any legal protection measures and people are unaware of importance and threats to *Posidonia*. Recognizing these problems, as well as the power of community-based conservation and role of NGOs in that process, environmental NGO Green Istria started awareness raising campaign on the importance and protection of *Posidonia* meadows, aimed for local inhabitants, school children and tourists. Different educational material was printed and distributed. Traveling exhibition of underwater photographs of *Posidonia* and its inhabitants, with following lectures, were organized in several public spaces, schools and events. 15 minutes educational underwater documentary, which was later screened and awarded on several World underwater film festivals, was made and presented. The interest and cooperation of local government, inhabitants, tourists and media was amazing. Many schools and diving clubs included film and leaflets in their regular education. This project is just the first but