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Bulletin

International Association for Landscape Ecology

NEW PROPOSAL FOR A EUROPEAN SECTION OF IALE

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A preparation group set up at the European IALE Congress in Faro, Portugal in March 2005 has been working on principles for an upcoming regional organization of landscape ecologists at the European level.

In the last month a consensus in the preparation group has been attained on the following goals for a European section of IALE.

Goals for a European section of IALE:

- a. To further and facilitate exchanges of information, experiences and ideas between European landscape ecologists, e.g. by the promotion of regular meetings, seminars and workshops on landscape ecological knowledge and its applications in Europe or from a European perspective for: individual landscape ecologists and institutions for higher education, research, policy making, planning and management.
- b. To arrange a European Congress of Landscape Ecology every four years in cooperation with European national chapters of the International Association of Landscape Ecology (IALE), to be held mid between the World Congresses of IALE.
- c. To promote unifying concepts and quality standards for landscape ecological approaches in science, education and application.
- d. To define new roles and positions for the future landscape ecology within a united Europe.
- e. To enhance and support the activities of National, Subnational and Cross-National European Regional Chapters and promote the formation of cross-bordering landscape ecological cooperation and activities within Europe.
- f. To foster and develop the highest standards of landscape ecological education in Europe, e.g. by promoting exchanges of experiences on course and curriculum development, and by furthering European co-operation in teaching

and studying, such as by promoting bilateral intra-European agreements.

- g. To promote the interaction between academics and researchers in a Europe-wide academic community engaged in landscape problems of any kind, e.g. by common research agendas, collaborative or complementary research projects.
- h. To promote the position of landscape ecology and related

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...continued from page 1 (European Section of IALE)

- disciplines within Europe's higher education system and in society in general.
- i. To stimulate the dialogue of the academic landscape ecological society with European, supra-European and other transboundary bodies, institutions and organisations with interests in landscape ecology and its education.
 - j. To publish or by other means produce or distribute landscape ecological knowledge about European landscapes.
 - k. To undertake appropriate actions to enhance the use of appropriate landscape ecological knowledge in the development of European landscapes.
 - l. To form Working Groups to address specific issues in European landscape ecology.
 - m. To promote and support a European journal for landscape ecology and its applications.
 - n. To promote landscape ecological aspects in the implementation of the European Landscape Convention and other Europe-wide agreements relevant for landscape ecology (such as Nature 2000, the Habitat directive, etc.).
 - o. To establish cooperation with other supranational organisations in Europe with similar objectives and related fields of interest.

The preparation group also developed an organisational proposal, giving priority to institutional membership, but also with membership in a national section of IALE within Europe as well as membership for European landscape ecologists not affiliated with any national section. In a meeting in Bratislava in October, the principle of goals was strongly supported, but there was a marked scepticism towards the organisational structure, because of the limited possibilities of many institutions (especially in Eastern Europe) to be involved in and afford the fee of an institutional membership.

At the IALE Executive Committee meeting in Roskilde, Denmark on the 17-18th November 2006, there was support for the goals formulated by the preparation group, but also reservations concerning the organisational proposal.

Some proposed changes in the statutes, that will be passed to the Council and submitted to IALE members in the near future might help solving the problems of affiliating institutions to IALE activities at the regional level.

A new preparation meeting will be scheduled at the IALE World Congress in Wageningen next summer.

THE IALE COUNCIL REVITALISED

by Jesper Brandt, IALE Council Chair, brandt@ruc.dk

The IALE Council consists of the members of the IALE Executive Committee, an elected representative from each regional chapter, and the Chairs of each working group. It should work as a background group for the Executive Committee but also as a second chamber, especially expressing the regional and specialized membership interests. Through their representatives in the council, the regions and working groups will have direct access to and influence on the affairs of IALE in the periods between the congresses of IALE. The council has a special role as a discussion forum for the nomination of candidates to the Executive Committee, who are finally selected by a nomination committee which is co-chaired by the chairman of the Council.

For historical reasons, the IALE Council has not yet worked very well. But during the last years the Executive Committee of IALE has worked hard to reestablish it, and it has now started to work. Physically the council is only expected to meet during the world congress, but all other meetings will be held as e-mail meetings, where all communication on the agenda will be exchanged by e-mail.

The council has just started its first meeting, focusing on the perspectives and duties of the council as well as the procedures set up for discussions and decisions. The stimulation of nominations up to the coming election of a new executive committee is a central point.

A coming standard item on the agenda will be the approval or rejection of applications from new regions and working groups that according to the IALE statutes is one of the duties of the council. We expect this work to be stimulating for the development of the activities within the regional organisations by the exchange of information on organisation and practise in the work of the regions and working groups. Up to now the regional organisation of members within IALE has concentrated on the organisation of landscape ecologists at the national level, but there are obviously other relevant ways of stimulating the development of landscape ecology: Sub-national and cross-national organisations, united at the landscape level (a mountainous area or a catchment area, e.g. the Alps, the Donau basin) could be just as relevant. A better organisation of universities and research institutes dealing with matters of landscape ecological relevance within a region could be another alternative example, that however probably will demand a more loose affiliation to IALE, due to the involvement of different organisational bodies.

Among issues to be discussed in the council in the coming time will be a proposal from the executive committee for a revision of the IALE Statutes and improvement of the possibilities for publishing landscape ecological papers of different types.