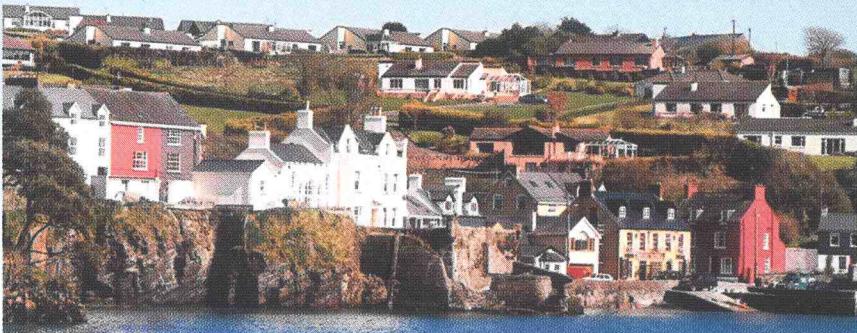




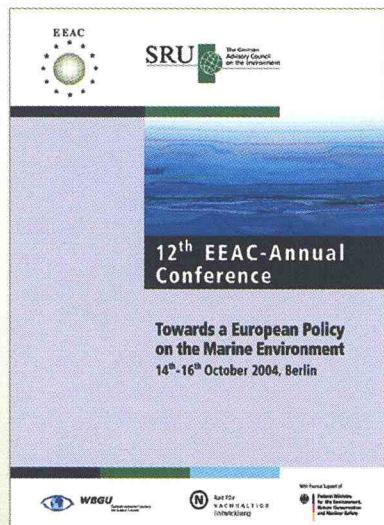
NEWSLETTER

Number 3, July 2004



2 EEAC Marine Environment Conference

The German SRU hosts the EEAC annual conference 2004 in Berlin on 14-16 October. The conference will contribute to the ongoing debate on the EU Marine Strategy. The EEAC WG Marine is preparing a statement that will seek endorsement at the annual conference.



Personal Careers

New appointments and other changes in the composition of the EEAC members

3 Kinsale Challenge

In the course of the conference in Kinsale the EEAC the participants jointly developed a document making a number of suggestions about the review of both the EU SDS and the Lisbon strategy.

4 Kinsale Conference

As part of the EU Presidency the Irish Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Irish National Sustainable Development Partnership (Comhar) hosted a conference entitled "Challenges and Opportunities for Sustainable Development in EU 25" in Kinsale on 15-16 April. The EEAC Working Group Sustainable Development discussed at their meeting first results of their benchmark study on national SD strategies.

New EEAC members: CADS and SDC

EEAC welcomes two new members to the network: the Advisory Council for the Sustainable Development of Catalonia (CADS) and the UK Sustainable Development Commission (SDC).

5 EU Enlargement

A retrospective of the involvement of councils from new EU member states, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia, in the EEAC network.

6 WG Activities

Summary of the most recent activities carried out by the different EEAC Working Groups.

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New advice from EEAC councils

Compilation and summary of the latest advice issued by the EEAC councils.

EEAC changes name

The APS unanimously approved in Kinsale the new denomination of our network: "European Environment and Sustainable Development Advisory Councils" (EEAC). The new name better reflects the composition of the network.

EEAC Annual Conference 2004 in Berlin

The marine environment is under stress. Whilst some reduction in human pressure has been achieved over the last 25 years, a number of problems remain largely unsolved and additional human impacts have led to an increase in the pressure. Fishing, agriculture, shipping and chemicals are the major sources of the overuse of the marine environment as an ultimate sink. Raw material encroachments, mariculture, tourism and the dynamic growth of offshore use of wind energy may add further threats to the marine environment.

Even though the international marine conventions achieved consensus on the need for action and identified key targets, policy implementation at EU national levels and regional levels need

to be considerably improved. The commitment of the EU to elaborate a thematic strategy on the marine environment by 2005 is a unique opportunity to address those challenges and to strengthen the policy profile of the marine protection agenda.

On Thursday 14 October, the EEAC Working Groups (WG) will hold meetings for endorsing their working plans. "Information about members" will take place in a different format and will comprise a session for small discussion groups on topics not covered by a WG, and a reflection on councils' work methods and effectiveness.

The main conference day on Friday 15 October, entitled "Towards a European

Policy on the Marine Environment", will contribute to the ongoing orientation debate on the EU thematic strategy. It will offer first hand insight on the strategic reflections of the European Commission and the Marine Conventions covering the European seas. It will allow for discussion, feedback and exchange of ideas based on the rich advice given by EEAC members. The EEAC Marine Working Group furthermore will present the statement on the EU Marine Strategy and ask for wider endorsement of other EEAC councils.

The EEAC Annual Plenary Session will take place on Saturday 16 October.

EEAC input to the EU Marine Strategy

WG Marine is already working in cooperation with the German SRU on the preparation of the next EEAC annual conference in Berlin. At this conference, a statement will be submitted to all EEAC members for endorsement.

Under the chairmanship of Michael Scott, from the Scottish Natural Heritage, the WG Marine since December 2003 has focused on giving input to the EU Marine Strategy. It has appointed members that participated in the EC Stakeholder Groups, namely Strategic Goals and Objectives (SGO), Ecosystem Approach to Managing Human Activities (EAM), European Marine Monitoring and Assessment (EMMA) and Hazardous Substances (HS).

At their meeting on 30 March in Brussels the WG worked on their "Gap Analysis" for the EU Marine Strategy. This paper was finally submitted by the WG Marine to DG Environment

and Water directors on 21 April.

WG Marine has structured this "Gap Analysis" around higher-level issues, i.e. the aim and principles of the EU Marine Strategy and then focussed on strategic points, addressing specific sectoral issues. WG Marine believes this structure suits the development of the Strategy, noting that it is an evolving process.

The full text of the "Gap Analysis" can be found at www.eeac-network.org/work/groups/coastalzones.htm

The last meeting of the WG Marine took place on 22 June in Brussels and it was hosted by the MiNa-Raad.

EEAC members personal careers - as from September 2003

B-MiNa-Raad

Two members of the Secretariat, Tomas Velghe and Eefje Vlietinck left the Council in April.

D-SRU

The following council members have been appointed in May 2004:

- Prof. Heidi Foth, University of Halle: Toxicology and Ecotoxicology;
- Prof. Paul Brunner, TU Vienna: Waste and Resource Management;
- Prof. Eikmann and Prof. Dohmann have left the Council.

D-WBGu

The WBGu will be re-appointed in October this year.

E-CADS

The former director of the CADS, Mr Jordi Rodó, has been replaced by Mr Joan Roca.

HR-CEPS

A new composition of Council for Spatial Planning was established and it is chaired by Mr Jerko Ro_in.

NL-RLG

Newly appointed council members Huib Silvis and Albertine van Vliet-Kuiper have replaced Joan Leemhuis and J. van Swinnen.

In the Secretariat there is a new staff member, Peter Schildwacht, leader of the "Green and red balance" project.

P-CNADS

Ana Cristina Ferreira, from the CNADS Secretariat has moved to the Ministry of Environment. She will be replaced by Afonso Arlete and Maria das Neves.

UK-CCW

The CCW has undergone a reorganisation in three regions and the EAAC contact is now Mr Rob Owen whose External Relation Unit is monitoring all the relevant regulatory and policy developments in Brussels, London and Cardiff.

UK-RCEP

Peter Hinchcliffe has retired. We miss him as a very engaged EEAC member and we welcome Diana Wilkins to the network.

UK- SDC

There have been several changes in membership. The SDC has lost Maria Adebawale, Ed Crooks, Charles Secrett and Graham Wynne.

They have gained Bernard Bulklin, Tim Jackson, Hugh Raven and Rebecca Willis.

EEAC Kinsale Challenge and SD Conference in Kinsale

The SD Conference

Following two workshops held in The Hague (2001) and Vienna (2003), the Irish Comhar, jointly with the Irish Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, last April hosted the conference on "Challenges and Opportunities for Sustainable Development in EU 25".

We would like to thank especially Noel Casserly and all the Comhar team for the excellent work and co-operation. We would also like to congratulate them on the great organisation and the original and Irish-flavoured side events.

The conference provided an excellent opportunity to consider the planned review of the EU SDS, examine ways towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production and how to increase public and political awareness so as to communicate sustainable development in an enlarged EU. More information on the outcomes of the Conference, can be found at www.comharconference2004.ie.

The presentation given by Catherine Day, Director General of DG Environment, was of special interest for the EEAC network. She informed on the progress of the review of the EU SDS and highlighted the importance of the way it was being

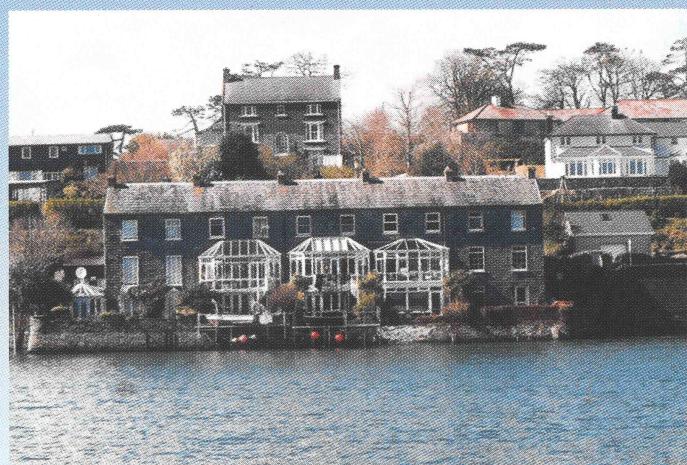
approached, since it will not only set a precedent for future reviews but also will have an influence on the work of the new Commission coming into office on 1 November 2004.

She believed that the main two risks are that the EU SDS review can be overshadowed by the Lisbon process and the call of industry for a pause in environmental regulation.

Catherine Day also stated that the Commission would like to use the SDS review to bring national, European and international sustainable development strategies closer together.

The Kinsale Challenge

During the conference, the EEAC participants jointly developed the "Kinsale Challenge". This document makes a number of suggestions about the approach to the review of the EU SDS and the Lisbon process, which are both to be undertaken by spring 2005. This appears as an important opportunity to draw the two processes closer together in a more coherent way, which is more supportive of the overarching integrative goals of sustainable development. The Lisbon review is currently prepared by the Task Force lead by Wim Kok, and a consultation document for the SDS review will be put on the DG Environment website



in summer or autumn.

The "Kinsale Challenge" was sent to the most relevant members of the EU Commission, Prime Ministers and Ministers of the former, current and future EU Presidency, i.e., Ireland, Netherlands and Luxembourg.

The EEAC WG SD will take up the challenge to give further input to these processes with the aim of enhancing their synergies. The document can be found at www.eeac-network.org/.

EEAC mid-term APS in Kinsale on April 17 in Kinsale

EEAC organised a mid-term plenary session during which the members unanimously agreed on changing the network's name to "European Environment and Sustainable Development Advisory Councils". An increase of the subscription

fee that is aimed at improving the performance and communication capacity of the network was approved.

One of the major topics for discussion, the creation of a Stichting (Foundation) for EEAC, was introduced by Frans Evers (RMNO, NL). He explained that the Stichting is a management tool for the network, which does not change the identity of the network but is meant to improve its efficiency and performance. The proposal was broadly welcome by the members who decided in favour of establishing a Stichting.

A couple of members will seek further clarification whether this legal entity might conflict with certain regulations of their respective Ministries. Also, some details of the draft statutes for the Stichting should be revised. In order to get all the views on board, a small committee for finalizing a proposal for the statutes was established and it will meet on July 7. The October APS in Berlin will decide about the statutes.

The report of the Auditing Committee was presented by Hubert David (Flemish MiNa-Raad) and the budget reports for 2002 and 2003 were unanimously approved.



WG Sustainable Development in Kinsale

It has been a hectic term for the WG SD preparing the input for the Kinsale Conference and a meeting with DG Environment Secretary General. Also, some members took the lead in organising interviews the outcome of which will be reflected in the SD benchmark study. There has been a high degree of commitment and enthusiasm shared by all the WG SD members. The WG SD met in Kinsale on April 14. Inge Niestroy, EEAC Executive Secretary, presented the first findings of her benchmark study on different national SD Strategies (see article below). Both chairmen of the WG SD, Derek Osborn (UK SDC) and Günther Bachmann (German RNE), met with Sylvain Bisarre - Director Programming and Commission Policy Coordination and Mona Bjorklund - Administrator in section Strategic planning and coordination, at the Secretariat - General of the European Commission on 24 May. The WG SD will meet on 13 October in the EEAC annual conference in Berlin. We would like to welcome Christian Baumgartner, managing director of the Austrian SD Forum, to the WG SD.

Presentation of the Benchmark Study (IN)

There is a widespread perception that both national SD strategies and the EU SDS

are less effective than they ought to be and that they are not driving enough relevant changes in policies and action. During the last years' cooperation, the WG SD identified the lack of coherence and complementarity between the national and EU dimension of sustainable development, as well as the gaps between words and action.

In two workshops, held in The Hague 2002 and Vienna 2003, SD staff of national Ministries and SD councils started to gather information on the state of art of implementing national SD strategies. The WG though realized that there is still not enough insight in the structure, process and content of national SD strategies. The following councils hence decided to finance and participate in a short benchmark study:

Belgian FRDO-CFDD, Finnish FNCSD, German RNE, Hungarian OKT, Irish Comhar, Dutch RMNO, Portuguese CNADS, Swedish MVB, and the UK SDC and English Nature.

With the benefit of lower costs, improving the linkage of councils and the EEAC network and an already sound knowledge about functioning of councils it turned out as a win-win situation that the EEAC office was able to conduct the study.

* The study explores in depth

– how horizontal and vertical coordination are organized within government, the latter both towards the regional and local level and towards the EU,

– which other actors play a role in SD processes,

– how stakeholder participation is performed and

– what role the Councils play both regarding stakeholder involvement, developing, implementing and monitoring a national strategy.

* It looks into priority fields of countries, and asks which of those are most difficult to make progress in.

* It examines

– to what extent experiences so far have lead to some changes in the way the Councils are addressing the SD challenge, and

– which patterns of recommendations and communication efforts turned out to make the most difference.

* It will inform

– about the role of national Councils in advising on their national strategies and reflect on the criteria for success and failure the national

Councils themselves set up to monitor SD Strategies;

– what Councils are doing to strengthen the link with the EU SDS and to ensure more coherence and improved implementation.

The study compiles and compares national experiences and seeks to identify lessons of practice that may be useful both at national and at the European level. The attempted outcome is a benchmarking assessment of some of the major SD processes on national level. Intermediate results were presented at the WG SD meeting last April, which already fed into discussion at the Kinsale conference. The study will be finalized in August. It will provide both more opportunities for councils to learn from others' experience, including possible capacity building in countries where no council (yet) exists, and is expected to produce significant input to the review of the EU SDS in 2004-2005.



New EEAC members: CADS and SDC

The Catalan CADS

The Advisory Council for the Sustainable Development of Catalonia (CADS) has joined the EEAC network as a full member after having been an associated member since 2003. The CADS was created

by means of a Regional Decree in 1998 and it is a body assigned to the Department of Presidency of the Government of Catalonia that acts with independence and functional autonomy. It is composed of 15 members,

appointed by the Government, which are selected for their role in economic, social and scientific fields. The council acts in the framework of established principles in the international instruments on sustainability

and, specifically, in those included in the future SDS of Catalonia. The CADS is chaired by Gabriel Ferraté i Pascual, Dean of the Open University of Catalonia.

The CADS has an important

role as government advisor on sustainable development policies, including issues such as land planning, climate change and tourism. The CADS contributes to building a more sustainable culture in the Catalan society and promotes scientific research in the field of sustainable development.

One of the major achievements of the Council has been the "Governance for Sustainable Development Project" (www.iigov.org/gds/). In the wake of this project, several workshops have been organized in the last years, the last one being held in Barcelona in June on Institutions for Sustainable Development, where Inge Niestroy presented findings on the functioning of advisory councils and the EEAC network.

The coordinator of the Council, Mr Arnau Queralt, has always cooperated with the EEAC network enthusiastically and he expects to hearing and sharing experiences from other councils. www.cat-sostenible.org

The UK Sustainable Development Commission
On 8 June the plenary of the UK Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) agreed to join the EEAC network as full members. The SDC has been an associated member to EEAC since 2002.

The SDC was set up in 2000 as a result of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy "A better quality of

life"; it succeeded two other advisory bodies. The SDC is chaired by Jonathon Porritt and has 21 other members, drawn from a wide range of backgrounds and from all parts of the UK. Its remit is to advocate sustainable development across all sectors in the UK, particularly within government (including the devolved administrations), and build consensus on the actions needed if further progress is to be achieved.

Derek Osborn, a member of the SDC, has been co-chairing the EEAC WG on SD since its re-establishment in December 2002 and is playing an active part in its work on the EU SDS. He is supported by Philip Dale (Deputy Secretary).

www.sd-commission.gov.uk

New EEAC associates:
Greek NCSD and Austrian SD Forum

We would also like to welcome two new associates, the Austrian Forum for Sustainable Development and the Greek National Center for the Environment and Sustainable Development (NCSD) whose representatives, Christian Baumgartner and Christina Theorachi, expressed their interest in establishing a close collaboration with the EEAC network. The Austrian SD Forum intends to take part in the meetings of the WG Sustainable Development whereas the Greek NCSD showed its interest in participating in the discussions of the WG Marine.

EU Enlargement: EEAC members

EEAC has early been aware of the importance of the accession countries for the European environment and has been contacting councils and experts.

The first council joining the network was the Hungarian OKT, which hosted the EEAC annual conference 1999 in Budapest which addressed the impact of the EU enlargement and environmental policy. Its Secretary General, Miklos Bulla, was also member of the EEAC Steering Committee from 1999 to 2001. The Hungarian OKT was established in 1995 as a stakeholder council giving advice to the government and particularly to the Ministry of Environment. It has members from business, environmental NGOs and academia, with the chair rotating between these groups. The Budapest conference boosted contacts to CEE countries, and in order to keep that momentum the Slovenian CEPRS organized a special meeting in Bled in September 2000. Experts from Ministries and partly from evolving advisory bodies met with the EEAC Steering Committee and looked into establishing and strengthening their collaboration. The participants also explored potentials for creating councils in countries where they did not exist yet.

The Slovenian CEPRS was set up in 1993 by the National Assembly and became EEAC member in 2001. Its main role is to contribute to policy development by providing its factual expertise and setting new policy agendas and priorities. The eleven Council Members are scientific experts appointed by the Parliament on the advice of the Universities, Academies, NGOs, Professional Associations, and Political Parties.

The 2002 APS appointed CEPRS President Franc Lobnik as Steering Committee chair for the next two years.

The Polish Environmental Council PROS has been participating in the aforementioned "CEE activities" since 1999 and became EEAC member in 2002. The PROS was firstly set in 1985 as an advisory council to the Prime Minister and in 1990 they became advisors to the Ministry of Environment. The PROS, statutory since 1992, is composed of 25 members with scientific background nominated and dismissed by the Minister of Environment. The Polish council participates in the EEAC WG Marine, Sustainable Development, Agriculture and Governance. Other new member states have only partly or temporarily established advisory councils, with the Estonian SD Commission as the longest lasting, and a new Czech SD council as a promising new foundation. All new member states chose for the government lead model for such "councils". EEAC wishes the existing councils much success in their work and hopes to see more advisory bodies evolving as means of "good governance". Many thanks again to our members in Hungary, Poland and Slovenia for their continuous engagement in EEAC.



EEAC Working Groups Activities

WG Energy initiated a debate on target setting and WG Governance is looking into new fields of action.
WG Agriculture met in June under the chairmanship of the Dutch RLG.
The Kinsale APS established a new WG on Biodiversity.

Working Group Energy
WG Energy met in Austria on 23 and 24 February. The discussion focused on strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. No consensus could be reached on setting up targets for mid and long-term greenhouse gas emissions and for renewable energy production and supply for the year 2020. The WG chair Horst Steinmüller, (OeVAF/ Energieinstitut), is preparing an overview on the existing and forthcoming EU directives on energy and environment by the beginning of September. The draft will be then sent to the WG members for comments and a final report will be discussed in the annual EEAC conference in Berlin.

Working Group Governance
After the publication of the EEAC statement on Environmental Governance and the related book last December,

the WG Governance has been looking into how to further develop its activities. The last WG meeting was chaired by Susan Owens on June 16 in Cambridge and the following work-priorities were set: **1) input on (Environmental) Impact Assessment and Appraisal, 2) discussion on governance related to the marine environment at the EEAC annual conference in Berlin and 3) look into governance for Environmental Policy Integration.**

Working Group Agriculture
WG Agriculture met in Amersfoort on 10 and 11 June. The attendants discussed the implementation of the CAP-reform at Member State level, the preparation of the new Rural Development Regulation post 2006 and the way EEAC could contribute to this process. The debate moved towards what should be covered within a new Rural Development Framework. European rural areas face problems connected to over- and under-utilization. These problems are interlinked and can only be understood in a global context. Rural development is about delivering public goods (e.g. biodiversity, landscape quality,

viable rural communities, quality of life), therefore economic activities and public involvement are needed. The present delivery system of public goods is inadequate, and deactivation in rural areas is a major problem causing loss of biodiversity, vanishing landscapes and a collapse of the rural economy. There is a lot of creativity and willingness to realise a sustainable rural development at the local level. It is imperative to develop a new delivery system that empowers the local level to reach the targets that have been set in the Lisbon and Gothenburg strategies. WG Agriculture ended their meeting with a fieldtrip to the Green Forest in Boxtel which is the rural area in the triangle of the cities Tilburg, Eindhoven and 's-Hertogenbosch. The deputy mayor, Ger van den Oetelaar, showed how local innovation and creativity can meet the challenge of a sustainable rural development. In this area nature and landscape is protected and further developed while creating room for a reconstruction of agriculture, water management and outdoor recreation facilities. WG Agriculture is now

preparing a position paper reflecting these ideas. This position paper will be distributed to all councils for endorsement in September. On 26 November 2004 - after a pre-meeting on 25 November - the ideas of the paper will be presented to a selection of experts from all over Europe. The new Commissioner(s) will receive it together with the results of the meeting.

Working Group Biodiversity
A new WG on Biodiversity firstly met on 8 March. The meeting was attended by English Nature, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Portuguese CNADS and chaired by Sue Collins (English Nature). Its setting up was approved by the APS in Kinsale. The focus of this new Working Group is looking into the EU Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) implementation and review. The WG chair prepared a short background paper and hopes for wider participation in the group. The WG also plans to develop a proposal for the EEAC Annual Conference to be held in the UK in September 2005.

EEAC Councils Advice - as from September 2003

Belgium (Flanders): MiNa-Raad

Recommendation of 22 April 2004 on the draft Flemish Allocation Plan on CO2 emission rights and the draft decision on tradable rights for the emission of greenhouse gases and the amendment of Vlarem I and II (April 2004)
The Flemish allocation plan is the result of the mutual European agreements to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the European Union. Both the federal government and the three Belgian regions have drawn up

an allocation plan which was linked to a public enquiry. The Council considers this to be rather excessive, and therefore asks for better coordination when the next national allocation plan is drawn up in 2006.

Orientation on the European Commission thematic strategy for urban environment (April 2004)
This advice is the response to this thematic strategy that is of special relevance in Flanders due to the high population density of urban areas.

Advice on the reform of the EU

Common Agricultural Policy (April 2004)

In this unanimously adopted advice, the MiNa-Raad asks the Flemish government to take into consideration the necessary measures to implement the CAP reform.

Advice on the European Summit (February 2004)

The MiNa-Raad highlights the most important issues of this summit, namely the innovative environmental technology in the recent Commission Action Plan, the economic internalisation of environmental costs, the

transport sector and the role of the European Constitution.

Letter on the Flemish Strategy for Sustainable Development (January 2004)

In this paper, the council urges the Flemish government to take SDS as a political principle in their program, for the participation of society and for a transversal approach for better governance.

Advice on the emission reduction programme for the Flemish Community for the pollutants SO₂, NO_x, VOS and NH₃ in the frame of

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the Directive 2001/21/EU (October 2003)

The MiNa-Raad states the need of analysing the outcome of the planned measures such as economic instruments and other incentives in the emission reduction plan before the negotiations with the UN and EU start in 2004.

www.minaraad.be (in Dutch)

Belgium (Federal): FRDO-CFDD

Advice on the evaluation of local projects for sustainable development (May 2004).

The Minister for Sustainable Development, Freya Van den Bossche, requested this advice in order to make sure that the stakeholders in the local level have the necessary tools to evaluate the progress of their community towards sustainable development.

Advice on the proposal for the Federal Plan for Sustainable Development 2004-2008 (May 2004).

This advice examines the proposal for a Federal Plan for Sustainable Development recently submitted by the Belgian Government. According to the FRDO-CFDD, the Plan does not respond to the needs of the country and does not ensure the necessary balance among the three pillars of a SDS.

Advice on the proposed modification of EU Directive 92/42/EEC on efficiency requirements for energy consuming products (May 2004)

The proposed amendment for the Directive aims at taking into account the eco-requirements of energy consuming goods so as to guarantee the free circulation of those products among the Member States. The FRDO-CFDD states that a sustainable development approach in this field would require the adoption of radical changes in development, production and consumption.

Advice on mobility compatible with sustainable development (February 2004)

The advice contains an overview on the current situation of mobility and transport in Belgium, together with a series of recommendations on how to integrate sustainable development in the mobility policy in the country.

Advice on the participating process of setting up indicators for sustainable development in Belgium (February 2004)

This advice responds to the need of having a set of indicators to measure the progress towards sustainable development in the country. According to the council, all stakeholders should be involved in the drafting of the board of indicators.

Advice on the vertical integration of sustainable development and the multi-level governance (December 2003)

The advice focuses on the importance of cohesion and integration among the different decision-making levels in sustainable development in a federal structure like Belgium and in the international arena.

www.belspo.be/frdocfdd/fr/pubfr/avis/avis.htm (in French) and www.belspo.be/frdocfdd/nl/pubnl/adviezen/adviezen.htm#2004 (in Dutch)

Belgium (Wallonia): CWEDD

Advice on the agreement of greenhouse gas emission reduction and energy amelioration towards 2010 (May 2004)

Advice on the proposal for a Decree on a Code for Water (March 2004)

Advice on the proposal for a Decree on a Code for the Environment (February 2004)

Advice on the proposal for a Decree on natural parks (January 2004)

Advice on setting indicators for Walloon Environment (December 2003).

www.cwedd.be (in French)

Germany: DRL

Forest management's contribution to the establishment of a nationwide habitat system (2004)

Nature protection in Germany - the story of a success? (December 2003) www.landespflege.de/texte/zielebr.html (in German)

Germany: RNE

More value for land: the "30-hectare objective" for a sustainable development of urban and rural areas (April 2004)

Statement of the Council on the consultation paper of the Chancellery for the "Progress report 2004 Perspectives for Germany - Our strategy for sustainable development" (March 2004)

Recommendations submitted by the Council to the German Government on the issue "Export of used goods and building practice for buildings" (November 2003) The transfer of used machinery and industrial equipment as well as vehicles from industrial nations to developing countries can promote sustainable development in the importing countries. However, it can also pose a threat. From the point of view of sustainability, it is therefore necessary to be discerning when evaluating foreign trade and the practices involved in erecting new buildings.

www.nachhaltigkeitsrat.de/documents/statements/index.html (in German)

Germany: SRU

Ensuring Environmental Protection

Capacity: 12 recommendations from the Environmental Report 2004 (May 2004)

The SRU issued in the beginning of May a policy paper with 12 recommendations from the Environmental Report 2004. The recommendations range from taking the opportunity of the power plants renewal to eliminate the use of coal based energy, implementation of Natura 2000, bring about environmental friendly agriculture, soil protection, green genetic engineering, air, noise and water protection, reassessment of 30,000 chemicals, policy actions to tackle health-related environmental risks and pointing out the serious problems caused by the German division of competences (Federal-Laender) as regards the implementation of EU legal requirements. www.umweltrat.de/index_II.htm (in English)

Marine Environment of North and Baltic Seas still at risk (February 2004)

www.umweltrat.de/english/edown-loa/specrepo/SG_Meer_2004_kf_en.pdf (in English)

Germany: WBGU

World in Transition: Towards Sustainable Energy, Systems (2003)

It is essential to turn energy systems towards sustainability worldwide - both in order to protect the natural life - support systems on which humanity depends, and to eradicate energy poverty in developing countries. Nothing less than a fundamental transformation of energy systems will be needed to return development trajectories to sustainable corridors. A further important aspect is that such a global reconfiguration of energy systems would promote peace by reducing dependency upon regionally concentrated oil reserves.

The Council is currently working on the issue "poverty and environment" for the new 2004 report which is planned to be submitted to the German Government in October.

In addition, the WBGU Secretariat participated in the Renewables 2004 conference in Bonn with an exhibition on 1-4 June 2004. The WBGU will organize a side event "Milestones for an energy transformation roadmap" which highlighted the key opportunities for steering pertinent energy systems towards sustainability. www.wbgu.de/wbgu_jg2003_kurz_engl.html (in English)

Spain (Catalonia): CADS

Principles for territorial sustainable development in Europe (November 2003)

Envisaging the importance that land planning would have after the enlargement for Europe, the CADS reports

on the principles of territorial sustainable development as established by the Council of Europe.

www.cat-sostenible.org/pdf/papers_6.pdf (in Catalan)

Finland: FCNR

Statement for natural Resources on marine environment: Regional differences of marine environments - Sustainable Use of natural resources in the Northern Baltic Sea (June 2004)

The Finnish Council for Natural Resources has prepared this statement to raise the very topical question of regional differences of marine environments. The target is the EEAC Conference 2004 on Marine Environment and the issue is to point out the importance of acknowledging the differences between the sea areas in different regions, which should be taken into account in the EEAC Common Statement on Marine Environment.

Statement on evaluation and development of fishery management in terms of environmental compensations (2004)

Statement on the damages caused by seals and the possibilities for compensations to the fishermen (2004)

Hungary: OKT

The Council is currently working on its functioning rules and integrating NGOs among its members. The most recently published statements are as follows:

Statement on Draft Amendment of 203/2001. (X. 26.) Proposal on Certain Rules of Surface Water Quality Protection (December 2003)

Statement on Draft Proposal of Treatment of Biological Originated Waste and the Technological Requirements of Composting (December 2003)

Statement on Proposal of Public Procurement (December 2003)

Statement on the Proposed Amendment of the Act XXI of 1996 on Regional Development and Landscape Management (November 2003)

Statement on the Participation of Hungary in "Partnership for Principle 10". Initiation founded in Johannesburg (October 2003)

Statement on the Status and Tasks of Waste management (September 2003)

Statement on the Environmental Load Fee (September 2003)

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decided to levy environmental load fees for environmental protection and raising social awareness in order to achieve this goal.

Ireland: HC

Bere Island County Cork Conservation Plan (2003)

Portlaw County Waterford: Heritage Conservation Plan (2003)

Co. Carlow Heritage Plan (2003)

Co. Leitrim Heritage Plan (2003) Seeking for your views on water quality (2003)

Guidelines for the production of Local Biodiversity Action Plans (2003)

www.heritacouncil.ie (in English)

Ireland: COMHAR

Comhar has co-sponsored and been the joint host with the Department of Environment of the Kinsale Conference in April 2004 and has been also present at Convergence Festival of Sustainable Development that took place in Dublin in April 2004. The Council has also participated at UNEP's Global Civil Society Forum in Jeju (Korea) and the Irish Presidency event on national sustainable partnerships at CSD 12 in New York.

A new working group on Biodiversity has been established in March 2004 whose aim is to provide a mechanism for stakeholder input through Comhar on the implementation of Ireland's National Biodiversity Plan (2002-2006). The working group has been invited to offer advice on the full interim review of progress in implementing the Plan which is to be submitted for consideration by Government by the end of 2006 and the matters relevant to the prioritisation to the Minister in autumn 2004. The Irish Heritage Council is also a member of this working group.

Comhar has published the following recommendations:

Recommendations to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government on the Draft Guidelines for Regional Planning Authorities on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) (April 2004)

This Recommendation is the response to the requirement of integrating SEA in the case of Development Plans and Local Area Plans likely to give rise to environmental effects.

Recommendations to the Minister for the Environment Heritage and Local Government on Draft Guidelines on Rural Housing (2004)

Netherlands: RLG

Countryside at the steering wheel (April 2004)

Prospects for recreation (January 2004)

Policy on animal diseases (I and II) (December 2003)

The farmer in the chain (September 2003)

With this advice the Council addressed the question on how farmers and growers could consolidate their position within the chain in order to achieve a better reward from the input of labour, capital and entrepreneurship.

www.rlg.nl (in English and Dutch)

Netherlands: RMNO

Study: Options and challenges of financial constructions for nature management. September 2003.

Advice: How to stimulate sustainable transitions? (popular version of advice). November 2003.

Study: Environmental Governance in Europe (RMNO/EEAC). December 2003 (in English).

Study: A natural basis for spatial planning en development. January 2004.

Advice: Demography and lifestyles; about migration, segregation and lifestyles. February 2004.

Working book Sustainable development and methods for foresight. March 2004.

Advice: Knowledge for regional spatial planning and development. April 2004.

RMNO Working Programme 2004-2006: Boundary Work. April 2004.

Study: Not afraid of uncertainty. April 2004.

Forthcoming:

Study: Research and development for transitions (August 2004)

Study: How 'green' and sustainable is the new economy? (August 2004)

Advice: North Sea without boundaries - Knowledge for sustainable management of the North Sea (September 2004).

RMNO studies and advice are in Dutch. English summaries are or will be available shortly on www.rmno.nl

Netherlands: VROM - Raad

Tools for spatial development policies (April 2004)

Advice on Building Outside (May 2004)

Advice on Energy Transition (on going)

Advice on the future of agriculture and the countryside (on going)

Municipal networks in the international perspective (on going)

www.vromraad.nl (in Dutch)

Netherlands: WSC

The Wadden Sea Council organized a conference on the European Water Framework Directive and Coastal Waters on the 13th and 14th of May 2004 in Leeuwarden, The Netherlands.

Advice concerning sustainable fishing in the Wadden Sea (April 2004)

This advice begins by sketching the lines along which sustainable fishing for all forms of fishing in the Wadden Sea can develop. Maintaining the biodiversity and meeting the requirements that the Wadden ecosystem sets for physical and chemical processes in the area form an important precondition for achieving sustainable fishing in the Wadden Sea.

Advice concerning the Wadden Sea as a particular sensitive area (April 2004)

The discrepancy between the recognition of the vulnerability of the Wadden Sea on the one hand, and a number of developments that reduce the protection of the area on the other, has prompted the WSC to publish this unsolicited advisory document.

www.raadvoordewadden.nl/index_eng.asp (in English)

Portugal: CNADS

Comments on the new initiatives related to National Ecologic Reserves (REN) and National Agricultural Reserves (April 2004)

Comments on the consequences for the environment and sustainable development of the new European Convention (2004)

Advice on the Implementation Plan for National Sustainable Development Strategy (December 2003)

UK: CCW

Campaign Spring to Life (March 2004)

SD is at the core of CCW's activities and with this action, CCW aims at promoting a sustainable lifestyle in the Welsh society. There will be an assessment of this campaign carried out next year.

www.ccw.gov.uk/springtolife/Index.html

EU Innovative Actions

The Welsh National Assembly leads a network of different European objective 1 and 2 regions that are looking on how to make regions more sus-

tainable. This project is funded by DG Regional Policy.

Green Economy

This publication was launched last summer. It looks into the importance of environment for creating jobs.

UK: JNCC

Introduction to the forthcoming review of potential new Wetlands of International

Importance (under the Ramsar Convention) in the UK and the UK Overseas Territories (2003)

The status and legislative protection of birds of prey in Europe (2003)

On-going contributions to Clearing House Mechanism for Biodiversity available at www.chm.org.uk

UK: RCEP

Special Report: Biomass as a Renewable Energy Source (May 2004)

This study was carried out following the publication of the Energy White Paper. RCEP recommended that by 2050 up to 16 Gigawatts (about 12%) of the nation's energy should come from biomass. This would be a clear but not dominant role for biomass within a larger, diversified energy portfolio.

www.rcep.org.uk/bioreport.htm

Study on environmental effects on marine fisheries (due by October 2004)

The Commission's study of the environmental effects of marine fisheries is being conducted in two stages: first to scope the topics to be included in the Study and second to seek evidence and reach conclusions. The scoping stage commenced in June 2002; the request for evidence was issued in February 2003.

www.rcep.org.uk/fisheries.htm

UK: SDC

The UK Government has published a framework for sustainable consumption and production. The SDC advised them on the need to promote changes in consumption patterns. Policies for Sustainable Consumption brings together the findings of research and shows how policy should be amended to reflect them.

Healthy Futures (2004)

Sustainable development opportunities for the National Health Service (NHS) introduces the SDC's "Healthy Futures" project, which helps the NHS to explore how it can maximise its contribution to a healthier population, a better environment and stronger economies and communities. It has been followed by Healthy Futures: food and sustainable development. There will be another in the series, on sustainable construction in the health sector, later in 2004.