

Minutes from IENE General Assembly

October 1, 2010, 14.30 – 18.00

Velence, Hungary

1) Opening of the IENE General Assembly (GA)

2) Approval of the Agenda for the GA

3) Election of secretaries for the GA minutes (2 persons)

Antonio Mira and Carme Rosell were elected.

4) IENE open day and GA meeting 2011

Arcturos has offered to host the IENE open day and GA meeting in Greece in 2011. Dimitris Bousbouras (substituting Lazaros Georgiadis) from Arcturos introduced the NGO and their activities. The location proposed for the GA meeting in 2011 is Kastoria (Nymfeo), in Greece, a region with several Natura 2000 sites, located in a bear distribution area.

The name will be “IENE 2011 Open Day” or similar, but not using the word “Conference” which is reserved for the international conferences. Dates must not overlap with the ICOET conference 21-25 August 2011. The meeting will take place at the end of September.

Belgium colleagues proposed to host the IENE Open day in 2013, and the proposal was accepted by the GA.

5) IENE international conference 2012

The GA accepted the proposal of Marita Böttcher from the Agency for Nature Conservation from Germany to organise the next IENE International Conference in 2012

6) Collaboration with ICOET

Paul Wagner, chair of the ICOET conference that will be held at Seattle in August 2011 presented opportunities for common works.

Linkages between the two conferences (ICOET and IENE) are important and provide a framework for cooperation and win-win actions. Hans Bekker is the official representative of IENE in the ICOET SC but will leave the position in 2011. The IENE SC must propose a replacement soon and Hans Bekker suggested that it would be good to have a representative from the transport sector.

M. Puky asked P. Wagner about the existence of grants or other mechanisms to stimulate the participation of professionals and students from Europe. Paul explained that different ways for supporting international participation already exist, but will take into account the proposal.

7) Report from the IENE SC

a. Secretariat, host

A.M. Wremp gave a short presentation of IENE, its organisation, history and strategy.

b. Economy / funding

J-O Helldin presented the economic report for the year 2009 and first semester of 2010.

Concerning funds for the forthcoming months, budget provided by the Swedish Road Administration (SRA) covers the activity until the end of 2011 but in the future it is necessary to find more stable ways to obtain funding. At present the IENE Secretariat is financed by the SRA, as a Swedish project with international activities.

The total budget for 2010 is EUR 36 000 and most part of it has been spent in the organisation of the IENE international conferences. The General Director of the SRA has sent a letter to Road Administrations of other European countries asking them to collaborate for funding IENE, but no responses were received so far.

E. Van der Grift strengthened that other funding sources must be identified (for example European budget from the EC) and suggested that the Secretariat should have a task focused on this goal.

c. Members

A. M. Wremp presented the data about IENE members

At present IENE has

- 115 individual members, representing 31 countries
- 61 organisations, representing 25 countries.

There are still country gaps and it is highlighted that it is important to maintain the diversity of organisations and cover the country gaps.

Most individual members are from the Biology/Ecology area. In organisations, from different areas (transportation, NGOs, Ecology) are well represented.

d. IENE award

E. Spindler explained the goals of IENE Awards and the procedures for the approval of the candidatures and the election of the winners. The Awards were approved by the GA.

e. International Conference 2010

M. Puky summarised his impressions about the conference outcomes and strengthened the fact that a good atmosphere was created among all the IENE community. "People got together due to professional reasons but now our ties are stronger than that", he said.

f. IENE web site

IENE still has two different websites, one external open to everybody and one internal, for members only. It is remarked that it is important to keep the internal site active. A. Seiler encourages all the members to use it.

IENE members can include a link to IENE website in their own websites.

A.M. Wremp will send to IENE members guidelines about how to use internal website.

A. Sjölund asked for suggestions to improve even more the website.

8) IENE Strategy for the future

Anders Sjölund and Andreas Seiler presented the aims and actions of IENE, and introduced different levels of ambition and goals according to the budget available.

Four activity levels of the secretariat were identified related to the budget:

1. “survival budget” (*ca. 10% of full time salary*): only maintenance service; static website; e-mail list maintained; membership administration; and participation at SC meetings
2. “maintenance budget” (*ca. 20% of full time*: Communicator (one person)); active website updating; passive news spread (e-mail, RSS-feed); participation and practical support of SC tele meetings; limited support of GA meetings; and communication with members
3. “Communication budget” (*ca. 40% of full time*: communicator (20%) and second person as backup(20%)): active development of website; active spread of and search for news (newsletters); full SC and GA participation and support; initiation and administration of web discussions; support of initiatives for new IENE projects; limited activity in expansion of network
4. “Development and collaboration budget” (*plus than 60% of full time*: Communicator (30%) with backup assistant (10%), plus second person (>20%): Active website development and expansion; literature monitoring and database function ; webinars, education support; initializing and developing new IENE projects; support for EU research applications; active expansion of member network; active collaboration with other official bodies and NGO’s

After an open discussion around the question ‘What should we aim at?’ the need to obtain a stable budget was remarked as an essential point. Nevertheless, most contributions of the assistants remarked that it is necessary that IENE aims to reach levels 3 or 4. Information and communication are considered very important. But it also is fundamental to be active, to promote projects and best practices, to have initiatives, to be involved in social and economic arenas to improve the way in which transport infrastructures are developed. A clear need for increasing activity and give priority to fund raising actions was identified. Several members stated that the IENE Secretariat should have a specific task dedicated to compile information about fund raising opportunities at the EU level.

A. Seiler presented IENE activities and differentiated them in two main groups:

- Core activities: secretariat, SC and GA, information and communication
- Projects with own budget: international conferences and any other activity

The possibility to create active Working Groups (Website, Fund raising, Open Days, associated projects, etc.) was discussed and it was agreed that this point was very important.

Several members remarked the importance of organising a working group dedicated to fund raising. It was highlighted that probably the activity level would suffice for developing the network, but higher priority should be given to activities addressed to obtaining funds than to some activities aiming at communication.

J-O Helldin also suggested that any country can provide funds for coordination, not for paying people in another country but for organising working groups dedicated to the coordination of IENE in their own countries.

The audience agreed that a priority list of activities should be elaborated by the SC and that time (and budget) should be spent in finding ways to obtain funding.

IENE should show to the transport administration (that can provide funds) how useful the organisation can be for them. To do this, IENE must show them what kind of problems can be solved with IENE activities. C Rosell remarked that the recognition of IENE at the international level was in a good part due to the quality of

the documents produced during COST 341: European Review, Handbook, etc. These materials offered clear and rigorous information and it was remarked the importance of maintaining the high quality and expertise knowledge of all the IENE products. This will also help to improve the possibilities of obtaining funding for new projects.

It was agreed to establish a Fund Raising WG lead by the IENE SC. Two IENE members volunteered already: Marie Jakobi and Johan Lammerant.

9) IENE projects

a. IENE Geographic database on fauna passages

A. Seiler presented the project and strengthened the fact it is not a replacement for the 2003 Wildlife and Traffic Handbook but rather it is an addition to it.

H. Bekker remarked that it is important to know what measures were implemented several years ago (eg before 2003, publication of Wildlife and Traffic Handbook) and since then.

C Rosell and other members remarked that members from several countries do not agree on the publication of the detailed geographic location of wildlife passages on the internet because of the risk of increasing human perturbation (visitors, poachers, etc.). It was also remarked the need to ensure that the passages presented were examples of good practices and that there no contradictions with the criteria of the Handbook. It was remarked that bad practises must not be showed at all.

The quality control of the examples showed and the agreement of the promoters of the implemented measures for the inclusion of the information on the database were proposed for discussion and approval on the SC.

b. Built fauna passages and identified green corridors in Europe

A. Sjölund presented the project that was based on information asked by the Swedish Road Administration. It consists on statistics about fauna passages and green corridors, per European country. Audience was asked to provide information if contacted by people related with the project.

c. Handbook following up

The projects aims to produce a IENE handbook for monitoring fauna passages. Last meeting of the WG was in 2009. An elaborated outline of the handbook contents has been developed, but due to the lack of funding there has not been no further activity since then.

H. Bekker explained that some kind of monitoring guidelines will be included in the CEDR documents project. Hence, there is still an interest in such a handbook after all .

E. van der Grift informed that a document with guidelines for monitoring is already available in Dutch. He will translate the document to English and will put it on the website. He also informed that ALTERRA will soon produce a document on monitoring the effects of passages on population level (not only passage use).

C. Rosell pointed out that technical prescriptions for the monitoring of wildlife passages were published in Spain in 2008

d. Regional meetings

In Sweden, IENE has developed a national network and two regional meetings have already taken place.

In Spain, the activities of the WG on Habitat Fragmentation due to Transport Infrastructure are maintained, under the coordination of the Spanish Ministry of Environment.

In The Netherlands an active WG on this topic also exists.

e. Other regional projects

H. Bekker informed that CEDR aims to make an update of the 2003 Handbook.
 A. Seiler proposed that a glossary concerning transportation ecology terms done in a wikipedia website form could be a new IENE project.
 A list of ideas for projects could be created on the IENE internal website, based on proposals of IENE members.

10) GA decisions

a. Changes to the Memorandum of understanding (MoU)

- i. SC, tasks and duties etc - Changes were approved. The most relevant is to enlarge the SC to 7-10 members.
- ii. National contact persons – Approved in a general way but needs further discussion in the SC.
- iii. IENE awards - Approved.

b. IENE steering committee, election

Four members asked to leave the actual Steering Committee:

- **Johan Peymen**, Research Institute for Nature and Forest, Belgium.
- **António Mira**, University of Évora, Portugal
- **Agnes Török-Szabó**, National Infrastructure Ltd, Hungary
- **Katja Pobolsjaj**, Center for Cartography of Fauna and Flora, Sloveni

A certificate attesting their presence in the SC was given to each of these members.

A new Steering Committee was proposed by the H. Bekker as representative of the Election Committee. The proposal was as follows:

- **Anders Sjölund**, Swedish Transport Administration
Transport, Administration, Sweden
- **Elke Spindler**, Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology
Transport, Administration, Austria
- **Andreas Seiler**, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences,
Environment, Research, Sweden
- **Miklós Puky**, Hungarian Academy of Sciences,
Environment, NGO, *Organiser of the last IENE conference*
- **Lazaros Georgiadis**, Arcturos
Environment, NGO, Greece
- **Marguerite Trocmé**, Federal Road Administration
Transport, Administration, Switzerland
- **Tony Sangwine**, Department for Transport, Highways Agency, UK.
Transport, Public company, United Kingdom
- **Robert Myslajek**, Association for Nature Wolf
Environment, NGO-Research, Poland
- **Marita Böttcher**, Federal Agency for Nature Conservation
Environment, Administration, Germany (*Organizer of the next IENE conference*)

The new SC was approved by the GA.

c. IENE Election Committee

Four IENE members, representing four countries, as follows

- **Hans Bekker**, The Netherlands
- **Carme Rosell**, Spain
- **Vaclav Hlavac**, Czeck Republic
- **Katja Paboljsaj**, Slovenia

were elected for the new Election Committee.

10) Any other business

No other issues were discussed.

11) Closing the IENE GA meeting

At 6:00 pm, the chariperson of the SC, Anders Sjölund, closed the IENE General Assembly.

