

Workshop Report

Business Planning for Protected Areas in Central, Southern and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

June 14th to 17th, 2007

Lee Thomas & Andrea Burmester



Cover Picture: Participants of the workshop (photo: Andrea Burmester)

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Objective of the report

This report presents a summary of the presentations and the main outputs from the working groups of the training course “Business Planning for Protected Areas in Central, Southern and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States”, June 14th to 17th, 2007 on the Isle of Vilm. The report is complemented by a CD-ROM containing the seminar’s presentations and the most relevant background papers (see Annex for an overview of the documents).

Summary

Business Planning for Protected Areas in Central, Southern and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States was the topic of a training seminar organised by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) in collaboration with UNEP/GEF from June 14th to 17th, 2007. It was attended by 18 participants from seven Southern and Eastern European countries and the Commonwealth of Independent States (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Russian Federation and Romania). The workshop took place within a series of workshops held by BfN aimed at capacity building in financing nature conservation.

LEE THOMAS (Australia) and BENJAMIN LANDREAU (Switzerland), both consultants, clarified the concept of Business Planning and its relation to a protected area’s management plan: a Business Plan contrasts the financial needs of a protected area to conduct activities proposed under its management plan with the potential revenue sources to meet those needs.

Case studies on setting up Business Plans were given from Masoala National Park (Madagascar), Banc d’Arguin National Park (Mauritania) and Northumberland National Park (England).

The situation of protected area (systems) in the countries represented at the workshop was analysed and the potential and constraints for applying Business Plans were identified. Based on the Excel Spread Sheets of Mauritania’s Business Plan, participants had the opportunity to prepare Business Plans for their own protected areas under expert advice. This exercise showed that the level of preparation Business Plans varies significantly between the countries.

During the seminar participants recognised the necessity of Business Planning and how to relate it with a protected area’s management plan. Ideas how to enhance the application of Business Planning in their countries were discussed.

List of acronyms and abbreviations

BfN	German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation
BMU	German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CFA	Conservation Finance Alliance
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
MAB	Man and the Biosphere Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PA(s)	Protected area(s)
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
UNEP/DGEF	United Nations Environmental Programme/Division of Global Environment Facility

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1 Capacity building in Conservation Finance by BfN

The German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) with its International Academy for Nature Conservation Isle of Vilm has run a three year series of capacity building seminars on financing nature conservation in Central, Southern and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Five seminars were carried out between 2005 and 2007, generously funded by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU). The training courses dealt with different instruments to finance nature conservation such as environmental trust funds and payment for ecosystem services. The last workshop within this series of seminars focused on Business Planning for protected areas.

Given this focus on Conservation Finance, these capacity building seminars are a contribution to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and especially its Programme of Work on Protected Areas. Mobilising new financial instruments for nature conservation is also crucial for reaching the goal of the CBD to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on earth (decision VI/26).

In total, 84 participants from 15 countries attended the BfN training courses which were carried out in close cooperation with UNEP/DGEF and the Conservation Finance Alliance (CFA). One of the goals was the „Training of the Trainers“ in order to ensure that participants coming from Ministries of Environment, Ministry of Finance, protected areas and NGOs pass their knowledge to colleagues.

2 Business Plans: the concept

The theory and practice of Business Plans for protected areas (PAs) were presented by LEE THOMAS (Australia) and BENJAMIN LANDREAU (Switzerland), both consultants.

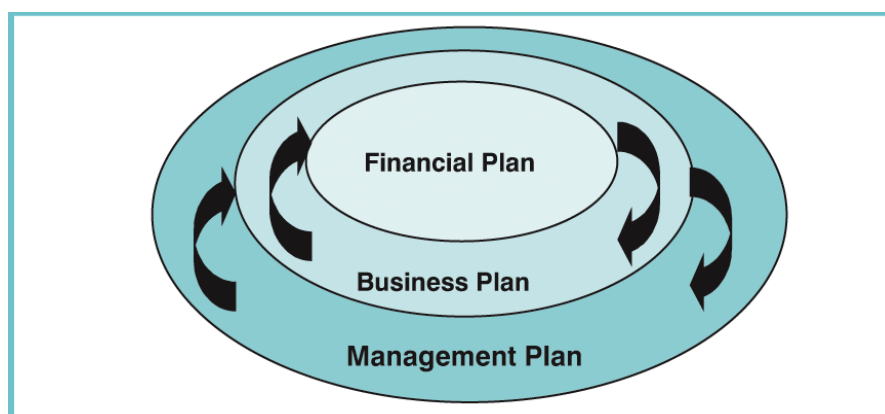
In very simple terms, a Business Plan gives a clear picture of the PA's

- financial needs to conduct proposed activities under the management plan
- potential revenue sources to meet those needs

Hence, a Business Plan

- examines the likely revenue and cost streams
- takes into account the customer's needs and ability to pay
- and the range of goods and services provided by the PA

A Business Plan also takes into account the implementation strategies and priorities for the PA provided in the management plan. It provides financial plans and may include marketing or other associated plans.



Phillips (2000)

THOMAS and LANDREAU stressed the need to make Business Plans consistent with the Management Plan for the area. One should not forget that the commercial arrangements entered into should not be to the detriment of conservation values. The presenters also pointed out that a Business Plan is an essential tool to use in a changing world of increased accountability and need to argue strongly for resources in a competitive budget environment (both with governments and donors).

3 Case studies: Business Planning in Madagascar and Mauritania

The Business Plan for Masoala National Park in Madagascar was presented by LEE THOMAS as a model for use by participants where a full scale plan was required. The Banc d'Arguin National Park in Mauritania Business Plan case study was advocated by BENJAMIN LANDREAU as an example to be followed in cases where only limited information was available and it was desired to integrate new proposals into the existing work programme (both presentations on CD-ROM).

4 Exercise: the potential and constraints of Business Planning

Participants from the different countries represented at the seminar were asked to give answers to the questions that had been posed to them prior to the seminar: what are the major challenges in your PA (system)? How would a Business Plan help to overcome these problems?

Country	What are the major challenges in your PA (system)?	How a Business Plan would help to overcome these problems?
Georgia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of equipment and resources • Mistakes made in previous planning • Lack of corridor connectivity for wildlife • Lack of community cooperation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging management effectiveness • Ensure a more favourable visitor opinion • Attracting more investments from the private sector
Croatia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracting people back into cultural landscapes • Developing markets for the sale of local produce including cheese, honey, charcoal and other local products • Develop a plan for reconstruction of old buildings for the purpose of establishing small agro/eco tourism households • Develop a various 2-3 days tours (trekking) across the Park to keep the visitors in the Park area for more than just one day 	A Business Plan would examine these issues and help to find solutions
Bulgaria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate ski field development • Lack of finance and equipment • Uncoordinated policy and actions due to numerous Government agencies being involved in park matters • Fragmented law enforcement 	A range of policy initiatives at the top level of government were required in order to overcome the problems being experienced. However given that EU funding was becoming available slowly it was agreed that matters were improving and that Business Planning would help in the process.

Romania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The preservation of cultural traditions • Water management • Agricultural conflicts • Tourist activities • Education and awareness 	<p>It was considered that links between the Management Plan and the Business Plan were essential. Also that there was a need to balance visitor entry fees between the park and local communities.</p> <p>The risk was noted of becoming too entrepreneurial and not preserving the conservation values</p>
Armenia	<p>Armenia commented on the risk to the zapovedniks (strict nature reserves) of tourism and how a Business Plan might help to manage this more effectively. In particular it was noted that attempts to put a road through the park had the potential to both harm the conservation values on the one hand and to increase levels of tourism and employment on the other.</p>	<p>A Business Plan would help to balance the competing needs.</p>
Azerbaijan	<p>Lack of resources available</p>	<p>It is hoped that new policies and initiatives could be developed to overcome the problems. Specifically it was proposed that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments and donors be approached to secure increased support from them • A programme of environmental education be embarked upon in and around PAs • Selected tourism (back packers) be encouraged as a means of increasing revenue • Zoning plans be introduced as a means of allowing a range of new activities to be undertaken.
Russia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of mechanisms for approving Management and Business Plans • No incentives for managers to generate income • Unstable working environment and government policy • Salaries for park workers below market rates for similar work elsewhere 	<p>The way ahead was seen in changes to policy which would see approval mechanisms adopted for Management Plans and in the formation of cooperative arrangements with mining companies and other partners. A paradigm change was seen as essential for reforming the working environment and achieving effective levels of operation</p>

The constraints mentioned by the participants for implementing Business Plans can be summarised as follows:

- Lack of financial and personal resources for developing and implementing Business Plans
- Lack of institutional memory for continued work
- Indifference and misunderstanding by (local) authorities, PA specialists, authorities and NGOs of what Business Planning is
- Lack of international exchange of experiences in management and Business Planning
- Language barrier (background documents available only in English)

5 Exercise: Preparing “own” Business Plans

Five working groups were formed to develop basic Business Plans using the Excel Spread Sheets based on the Mauritania example (see CD-ROM for English and Russian version). The presenters outlined the processes that had been adopted in arriving at new projects desired to be undertaken and the cost and financial implications of doing this. The working groups were urged to consider the demand and supply methods of achieving a balance point between cost and expenditure and were challenged to justify their proposed actions during their presentations. For example, why where labour costs increased so much when compared with long term figures. It was concluded that this was a useful exercise in learning how to develop a basic Business Plan.



6 Identifying new sources of revenue

The second day focused on identifying new sources of revenue. Presentations were made on how to generate new revenue and an example given of an exercise in Turkey with respect to visitor entry fees (LEE THOMAS, see CD-ROM).

Working groups were formed to use the suggested spread sheets so that participants could gain experience in identifying new sources of revenue for their PAs and establishing links to consumers. The discussion points within the working groups are summarised as:

1. The importance of being specific when identifying goods and services, consumers and methods of payment
2. Noting that it may be necessary to take the exercise through several cycles to get to a meaningful end point
3. The importance of developing a marketing plan as part of the Business Plan to ensure that time lines are introduced as well as defining responsibilities and risk management processes
4. Need to present professionally developed proposals when dealing with potential business partners and being in a position to do deals with them on an equal commercial footing (if necessary engaging consultants and specialist staff for these tasks)

7 Case study and group exercise: Northumberland National Park (UK)

The third day started with a presentation of a case study on recent experiences with Business Planning and new initiatives in Northumberland National Park in England (GRAHAM TAYLOR, consultant). The seminar was advised that the new initiatives developed under the plan had resulted in funding being obtained from a diverse range of donors and that the government input to the Park's budget had reduced to below 50 %. This had enabled a new range of activities to be undertaken and given staff the opportunity to be challenged and learn new skills. The initiatives taken by the park agency had embraced new partnerships and community based cooperation which had been very successful also in raising the level of support for the park as well as the revenue stream.

Participants undertook an exercise based upon the Northumberland experience to apply in their own PAs (see CD-ROM). The results presented are encapsulated as follows:

- In recognition of the importance of tourism; partnerships need to be entered into with tourist organisations to both encourage the activity and place it on a sustainable basis
- The support of local communities is also of vital importance and this can be encouraged by finding alternative livelihoods and raising the level of education and understanding of the role of PAs for nature conservation
- A number of problems stem from policies that try to circumvent good management planning. Partnerships with local and international NGOs and conservation partners that can lobby effectively is to be encouraged as a way around this problem
- Problems were also noted in relation to dual jurisdictions applying in PAs. To the extent that governments can give PA agencies more exclusive control, this should be sought.
- In the context of the countries represented the use of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) concept provides a solution which is recommended to be applied.

8 Case study: financing protected areas in Austria

The presentation by WINFRIED SÜß (Österreichische Bundesforste AG, ÖBf; see CD-ROM) on approaches and experiences in financing PAs in Austria indicated how a corporation could manage forests and PAs and make a profit at the same time. The recommendations that were made to the participants and could be applied in our countries are:

- Consider voluntary conservation agreements to link local communities to core conservation activities. The support of local people is extremely valuable and should be encouraged
- Business principles and Business Plans provide valuable tools for good management and are critical in considering costs/revenue/profits
- PAs could benefit from using attractive logos and publicity to encourage donors and public support
- The vision of the ÖBf could be considered for adoption
- Apply a customer orientation to all actions to encourage public support
- Adopt and apply consistent policy and make staff accountable for their actions. Use of annual reports and the web-sites help with this
- Join forces with NGOs to help with lobbying and to get their support for fund raising, noting that Business Plans underpin this activity

9 Enhancing the application of Business Planning

When evaluating the course, the participants came up with a number of suggestions on how to enhance the application of Business Planning in their countries:

- Share and disseminate information received at this course with colleagues (from Ministry or other PAs); demonstrate the benefits of Business Plans
- Identifying the exact training needs of the country
- Conduct regional and in-country training seminars in the native language for PAs' managers and government authorities on
 - how to set up a Business Plan
 - how to link it with Management Planning
 - how to "popularise" Business Planning
- Conduct special training on the ecotourism sub-programme of Business Planning (it is one of the main subprograms in many PA of Russia and the CIS)
- Prepare a Business Plan for the PA
- Amend the regulation on Management Plans to include Business Plan requirement
- Special training on fundraising
- Exploring different types of additional funding from various donors
- In general:
 - make sure to speak the same "language" of Business Planning (agree on a definition!)
 - start with the most simple steps at the beginning
 - networking with partners is essential
 - take into account the specifics of the country's PA management system and
 - as suggested by non-English speaking participants: learn to speak English!



10 Annex: Overview of key documents on the CD-ROM

10.1 Seminar's presentations

- 00 Stolpe Protected Areas represented on Vilm
- 00 Stolpe Welcome
- 01 Thomas Business Planning Introduction
- 02 Thomas Business Planning in Turkey
- 03 Thomas Identifying new sources of revenue
- 04 Suess Approaches and Experience in Financing NP
- 05 Landreau Case study Mauritania
- 06 Verghelet Romanian Pas
- 07 Verghelet Romania visitor center
- 08 Taylor BP in Northumberland NP
- 09 Taylor Summary

10.2 Group exercises

- 01 Introduction to the spreadsheets
- 02 Model Business Plan Spread Sheet by TNC
- 03 Model Business Plan Spread Sheet (Russian language)
- 04 Screening Goods and Services
- 05 Usage Table
- 06 Markets and Consumers Analysis
- 07 Business Plans for Protected Areas in a Wider Context
- 08 Taylor Briefing for case study exercise

10.3 Examples for Business Plans

- 01 Big South Fork National River and Recreational Area Business and Management Plan (USA)
- 02 Fire Island National Seashore Business Plan (USA)
- 03 Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore Business Plan (USA)
- 04 Business Plan Masoala National Park (Mauritania)

10.4 Background documents on Business Planning

- 01 Alain Lambert: Business Planning for Protected Areas. In: Conservation Finance Guide. Conservation Finance Alliance (CFA).
- 02 Emerton, Lucy; Bishop, Joshua; Thomas, Lee (2006): Sustainable financing of protected areas: a global review of challenges and options. International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. Gland. 97 S. Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series 13.
- 03 Adrian Phillips [Hrsg.] (2000): Financing protected areas: guidelines for protected areas managers. International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. Gland. 58 S. Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series 5.
- 04 Scott Edwards (2005): Business Plans for two national parks in Belize: A Case Study Center for Park Management, National Parks Conservation Association. Powerpoint presentation. September 28, 2005.
- 05 Scott Edwards (2005): Two Business Plans in Belize. Center for Park Management. TNC/CFA Parks in Peril -Lima, Peru. Powerpoint presentation. April 18, 2005.
- 06 United Nations Development Programme (2007): Financial Sustainability Scorecard for National Systems of Protected Areas.
- 07 European Commission DG Environment (2005): Financing Natura 2000. Guidance Handbook

10.5 Seminar Programme

Programme

Training Seminar: Business Planning for Protected Areas in Central, Southern and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

June 13th- 17th, 2007

at the International Academy for Nature
Conservation
Isle of Vilm, Germany

organised by
the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation
(BfN)

in cooperation with UNEP/GEF



Wednesday, June 13th, 2007

13.41 *Departure from Berlin Central Station with RE 38314*

17.51 *Arrival in Lauterbach/Mole*

18.10 *Departure from Lauterbach/Mole to Vilm by ferry (alternative:
20.10)*

18.30 *Registration and dinner*

Welcome (facilitation: GISELA STOLPE, BfN)

19.30 Welcome and presentation of the seminar series on Conservation
Finance Objectives and overview of this training

Self-introductions of the participants and speakers and expectations
regarding the training course

Thursday, June 14th, 2007

07.30 *Breakfast*

A. Introduction (LEE THOMAS, consultant, Australia):

09.00 1. What is a Business Plan?

2. What is its relation to a management plan?

3. Why do we need Business Plans?

4. What are the preconditions for developing a Business Plan?

5. Content and elements of a Business Plan

6. Steps for preparing a Business Plan (overview)

10.30 *Coffee break*

11.00 Participants' presentations à 10 minutes according to the assignment
(Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Croatia, Bulgaria, Romania, Russian
Federation)

12.30 *Lunch*

14.00 **Case study 1: Business planning in the Banc d'Arguin
National Park in Mauritania** (BENJAMIN LANDREAU, consultant,
Switzerland)

1. General characteristics of the National Park and its main
environmental threats

2. Reasons for the need of a Business Plan

3. Method used to carry out the research

4. Results of the Business Plan

5. Strengths and weaknesses of the final document

B. Long-term financial planning for protected areas

15.00 What does long-term financial planning for protected areas mean? Theoretical background and introduction to the spreadsheets (BENJAMIN LANDREAU)

15.30 *Coffee break*

16.00 **Case study No. 1: Long-term financial planning in the Banc d'Arguin National Park in Mauritania** (BENJAMIN LANDREAU)

16.20 **Group exercise** split by protected areas: drafting a long-term financial plan for your protected area using the spreadsheets and existing Business Plans of other protected areas (facilitation: BENJAMIN LANDREAU)

17.45 Presentation of working group results

18.30 *Dinner*

Friday, June 15th, 2007

07.30 *Breakfast*

C. Identifying New Sources of Revenue

09.00 Theory (LEE THOMAS):

1. Identifying goods and services in protected areas
2. Ranking key goods and services. Introduction to worksheet
3. Identifying consumers of key goods and services. Introduction to worksheet
4. Identifying markets for key goods and services. Introduction to worksheet

10.00 **Case study No. 2: Experiences from Russia**
Business Planning in Russian protected areas – need, chances and challenges (SERGEY SHESTAKOV, Russia)

10.20 Preparing management plans in nature reserves and national parks in Russia: achievements and challenges (ELENA KORSHUNOVA, Russia)

10.40 *Coffee break*

10.50 **Case study No. 3: Business Planning in Masaola National Park (Madagascar) as well as experiences from Georgia and Turkey** (LEE THOMAS)

11.40 **Group exercise** split by protected areas: Identifying new sources of revenue in your protected area using the worksheets and existing Business Plans of other protected areas (facilitation: LEE THOMAS)

12.30 *Lunch*

13.30 *Excursion on Vilm (ANDREA BURMESTER, BfN)*

15.00 *Coffee break*

15.30 Continuation of working groups

16.45 Presentation of working groups

18.30 *Dinner*

Saturday, June 16th, 2007

07.30 *Breakfast*

09.00 **Case study No. 4: Business planning for sustainable development in a protected landscape - a case study from Northumberland National Park in England** (GRAHAM TAYLOR, consultant, UK)

09.30 **Group exercise** split by protected areas: setting Business Planning for protected areas in a wider context (facilitation: GRAHAM TAYLOR)

11.30 Presentation of working group results

12.30 *Lunch*

D. Sustainable Financing of Protected Areas

14.00 Financing the Protected Area System in Romania (MIRCEA VERGHELET, The Romanian National Forest Administration)

14.30 Financing a visitor centre in Romania (MIRCEA VERGHELET)

15.00 Conservation finance. Approaches and experiences in national parks and other protected areas in Austria (WINFRIED SÜß, Austrian Federal Forests AG Consulting)

15.30 *Coffee break*

E. Closing (facilitation: GISELA STOLPE, BfN)

17.00 Technical conclusions and way forward (LEE THOMAS)

17.30 Evaluation of the seminar by the participants

18.30 *Dinner*

20.00 *Farewell party (to be organised by participants - you may bring traditional food, clothes or music from your region!)*

Sunday, June 17th, 2007

07.30 *Breakfast*

09.20 *Departure from Vilm (alternative: 07.25)*

10.05 *Departure from Lauterbach/Mole (alternative: 08.05)*

14.16 *Arrival in Berlin Central Station (alternative: 12.16)*

10.6 List of participants

No	Name	Institution	Address	Country
1.	Aghasyan, Aram	Head of Special Protected Areas Management Division of the Bioresources Management Agency	Erevan, Davltason IV Kvartal 22/66	Armenia
2.	Burmester, Andrea Organisation	Federal Agency for Nature Conservation Academy for Nature Conservation Isle of Vilm	Isle of Vilm 18581 Putbus	Germany
3.	Chobanyan, Roman	Chief Specialist of the Nature Protection and Environmental Economics Division		Armenia
4.	Georgieva Hristova, Tzonka	Directorate of Roussenski Lom Natural Park	7, Skobelev blvd. 7000 Rouse	Bulgaria
5.	Grgurev, Marin	Public Institution Ucka Nature Park	Liganj 42 51415 Lovran	Croatia
6.	Ivanov Iliev, Gencho	Central Balkan National Park	3, Bodra smiana Str., PO Box 80 5300 Gabrovo	Bulgaria
7.	Karimov, Seymur Marifoglu	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources Deputy Director of Shirvan National Park	Sabirstr. Dalan 9 5200 Salyan	Azerbaijan
8.	Kirillova, Anna	Protected Areas Service of Krasnoyarsk Region Expert of Biodiversity Conservation Department	41, Lenina st. Krasnoyarsk 660049	Russian Federation
9.	Korshunova, Elena	State nature biosphere reserve "Kerzhensky"	Street Kostina, 2 home office 162 Nizhny Novgorod	Russian Federation
10.	Landreau, Benjamin Speaker	Consultant en Gestion de l'Environnement et Ecotourisme Carbon Management Consulting	Chez M. Mouton 222 allée des Charmanches 38 920 Crolles	France
11.	Mammadov, Vugar Firdovsioglu	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources Head of Hirkan National Park Direktor	Lenkoran siti, E.Aliyev str. 24	Azerbaijan
12.	Mkrtchyan, Ruben	Head of "Shikahogh" State Reserve SNCO		Armenia
13.	Moistsrapishvili, Lasha	Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources of Georgia Head of the protected area department	6 Gulua str Tbilisi	Georgia

No	Name	Institution	Address	Country
14.	Mullova, Ludmilla	Interpreter	Melsunger Strasse 17 a 60389 Frankfurt	Germany
15.	Nikolaeva, Elena	EcoCenter "Zapovedniks" Environmental Education Program	Nakhimovsky pr., 32 117218 Moscow	Russian Federation
16.	Shestakov, Sergey	Laplansky state nature biosphere zapovednik	Zeleny per. 8, Monchegorsk 184506 Murmansk region	Russian Federation
17.	Sotirov Belberov, Milko	Directorate of Roussenski Lom Nature Park	7, Skobelev blvd. 7000 Rouse	Bulgaria
18.	Stolpe, Gisela Chair	Federal Agency for Nature Conservation International Academy for Nature Conservation	Insel Vilm 18581 Putbus	Germany
19.	Süß, Winfried Speaker	Österreichische Bundesforste AG Consulting	Pummergasse 10-12 3002 Purkersdorf	Austria
20.	Tashev, Kiril Dimitrov	National Forestry Board Senior expert of protected areas management	55, H. Botev blvd. 1040 Sofia	Bulgaria
21.	Taylor, Graham Speaker	High Close, Leazes Lane	Hexham NE46 3AZ Northumberland	United Kingdom
22.	Tevzadze, Lali	Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources of Georgia Department of the protected areas	6 Gulua str Tbilisi	Georgia
23.	Thomas, Lee C. Speaker	Management Consultant specialising in management policy, planning and financing	P.O. Box 251 A.C.T Hall 2618	Australia
24.	Tukvadze, Vakhtang	Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources of Georgia Department of the protected areas	6 Gulua str Tbilisi	Georgia
25	Verghelet, Mircea	The Romanian National Forest Administration	Magheru 31 010325 Bucharest	Romania