

# HISTORY OF ECOVAST



## A RECORD OF ACTIVITIES FROM 1984 TO 2019

**European Council for the Village and Small Town (ECOVAST)**  
**Conseil Européen pour le Village et la Petite Ville**  
**Europäischer Verband für das Dorf und für die Kleinstadt**

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This report is a record of ECOVAST meetings, documents and publications from the time of its foundation in March 1984 until March 2019. It has been compiled and written by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) using archive material kept in Germany and the United Kingdom, with Michael Dower acting as editor. Thanks go to Angus Fowler (Germany) and Michael Dower (United Kingdom) who were involved in shaping the organisation in the early years; they kept archive material from 1984 to 2000 and provided vital information, adding 'flesh' to the bare bones of 'facts'. Thanks also to Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic (Croatia); Andrea Weigert (Germany); Pam Moore and Phil Turner (United Kingdom) who kept valuable records from 2000-2018; and to all those members referred to in this record, who have given their valuable voluntary time to help make ECOVAST a well-recognised voice of rural concerns all over geographical Europe.

This history is dedicated to the memory of Angus Fowler who died suddenly in December 2017. He was not only a founder member of ECOVAST in 1984, but also a continuous and enthusiastic member of the ECOVAST International Committee including service as Past President, Senior Vice President and Vice President.

*The Logo on the front cover is a copy of a Portuguese tile given to ECOVAST members who attended the meeting in SETUBAL, Portugal on 13 June 1987 by the host of the meeting 'Villages' Magazine*

## **FOREWORD**

This document is the first historic record of The European Council of the Village and Small Town – known as ECOVAST, and its activities over the first 35 years of its existence. In the 1980's it was clear there was a need for a new organisation focused on the well-being of the people and the heritage of Europe's rural area. Rural areas are not just about farming and forestry, nor just about important heritage assets. Europa Nostra and Förderkreis Alte Kirchen put forward the idea for an organisation that supported all rural people and their activities – what we now call 'Rural Development'. So, in 1984 ECOVAST was born. It was given a wide role, focused on ALL the millions of people who live in rural areas and ALL their activities – to promote an understanding not just of their needs but their huge assets of heritage that benefit the whole of their Europe.

We recognise that the countries of Europe come from very different political regimes. We have watched the fall of the Iron Curtain and the gradual emergence of new democracies and strong rural voices – especially of rural women who had usually remained unheard. We watched the horror of the destruction of people and places in the Balkans and the newly emergent nations. Our role is to learn from experience, develop ideas and influence the work of major organisations at local, regional and national level. We seek to influence government policies that affect the lives of rural people.

Our focus is on the whole of Europe, within and far beyond the European Union. We have worked closely regularly with the Council of Europe and the European Commission. We have attracted members from most European countries and taken part in their rural events. We encouraged groups of people in individual countries to work as 'National Sections', in order to influence their governments' policies for rural areas. From them, we gained much knowledge and experience for use at international level. We also set up international working groups to develop ideas in specific fields of policy.

In the beginning, we were much involved with the new opportunities through revitalisation, village renewal, the importance of vernacular architecture with local styles of building using local materials, rural customs and traditions which give Europe such a varied cultural heritage, and new opportunities through rural-based tourism.

In the middle years, we were intimately involved in landscape identification and protection. We helped the emergence of the European Landscape Convention which has been signed and ratified by 40 European countries; and we contributed to the creation of a new organisation called CIVILSCAPE, which is now the 'home of the landscape people'.

We were also concerned with the expansion of the European Union into eastern European countries, and were a founder member of the PREPARE Partnership for Rural Europe, which was set up to help them with their accession. We have shared their experiences across Europe and gained much knowledge from their national rural networks.

In recent years, ECOVAST has concentrated on the importance of small towns with their distinctive historic townscapes, still often unspoilt by modern day intrusions. Small towns form the backbone of rural areas serving a wide hinterland of many villages.

Rural areas have suffered from economies of scale and centralisation to bigger towns and cities and subsequent loss of services. They have also been affected by the serious economic recession. BUT it is not all doom and gloom ! Rural communities have always looked for ways to help their future and have developed an amazing range of activities to help their future survival.

We are not a grant-supported body – we depend on membership fees for our activities. Our ethos is to meet face to face to discuss issues. We arrange conferences, workshops or seminars on particular topics. We go to speak at other organisations' events to promote what we have learned. We take part in study tours of rural areas to meet the real rural actors and see their projects. We promote their ideas to others who could do similar things.

This document is the voice of all those individuals who helped develop ECOVAST. It has been an interesting journey supported by many passionate people along the way. Many of them are still with us. I would like to mention two people whose prodigious memories have filled in the background as to why things happened the way they did: Angus Fowler from Germany, a founder member and Past President who sadly died suddenly in 2017 and Michael Dower, also a Past President who has edited all the many versions of this document as it emerged over the last four years.

**Valerie Carter President of ECOVAST**

# **PART A**

## **Foundation and Purpose of ECOVAST**

**European Council for the Village and Small Town (ECOVAST)**  
**Conseil Européen pour le Village et la Petite Ville**  
**Europäischer Verband für das Dorf und für die Kleinstadt**

### **1. Foundation of ECOVAST**

ECOVAST was founded in March 1984 at Bellnhausen in the Federal Republic of Germany. Prior to 1984 the Förderkreis Alte Kirchen (FAK) Marburg (*Protection Group for Old Churches*) was involved in the preservation of places of worship in rural areas, particularly in the state of Hessen in Germany. It was an active member of Europa Nostra, but was frustrated by what it saw as the excessive preoccupation of that organisation with major monuments and urban areas. FAK and other members of Europa Nostra wished to see a greater focus on protection of the traditional architecture of farmsteads, rural homesteads or other rural buildings and of rural landscapes. In 1975, which was European Architectural Heritage Year, this group began to focus on the wider conservation and development of rural areas across Europe; and in 1978, at a meeting of Europa Nostra, they began to plan the creation of a new pan-European association related to that purpose.

In March 1984, some 20 interested parties, including people from Germany, the United Kingdom, Austria, Greece, France, Denmark and Yugoslavia came together in Bellnhausen, and founded a new organisation focused on rural heritage and rural development. The first President, Francis Noel-Baker of the United Kingdom; was elected, together with Heinz Pammer of Austria as Vice President; and a Board made up of Angus Fowler, Jacob Wagner, Gerhard Henckel and Detlev Simons, all from Germany. Soon after that, Edmund Neville-Rolfe was appointed the first Secretary-General, and he claims to have invented the name 'European Council for the Village and Small Town' (ECOVAST). That name and the logo were agreed and formal statutes were developed.

### **2. The Organisation**

#### **(a) Nature of the Organisation**

ECOVAST is a pan-European organisation. It is an *Association Internationale Sans But Lucratif* (International non-profit making Non-Government Organisation) under French law, with its legal seat at Muttersholtz in Alsace. It is a volunteer-based organisation that seeks to influence policy and action by citizen involvement. It is a membership organisation. It is managed by a formal International Committee elected by its members. This International Committee elects officers who serve as an 'executive' to carry out the agreed work plan.

The ECOVAST network supports its members, and encourages cooperation between them, as they pursue their activities in rural areas. The three languages used by ECOVAST are English, French and German although other National Sections have had documents translated into their own languages.

#### **(b) Formal Aims and Objectives**

The formal aim of ECOVAST is to foster well-being of rural communities and safeguard their built and natural environments. This is set out in two formal objectives:

- to foster the economic, social and cultural vitality and administrative identity of rural communities throughout Europe: and
- to safeguard and to promote the sensitive and imaginative renewal of the built and natural environments of such communities.

The counterpoint between these two formal objectives – which is expressed in ECOVAST's policy documents as a focus upon "promoting the well-being of the rural people and the rural heritage" – is a crucial characteristic of the organisation. We are committed to finding the mutual support between the two objectives.

ECOVAST seeks to influence the work of rural policy makers and other rural stakeholders through research, production of ECOVAST policy statements, staging conferences and workshops and exchanging experiences through meeting and working with rural people from across Europe and their networks.

#### **(c) Registration and Statutes**

As an international NGO, the organisation must have formal Statutes which set down what can be done and which name the officers elected to lead the organization. The Statutes must be agreed by the ECOVAST members and then registered with a formal body. The Statutes can be altered at any time and agreed by the membership. Each change must be ratified by the relevant Tribunal in Selestat. Minutes of every Biennial Assembly which elects members to the International Committee must be sent to the Tribunal in Selestat.

The first ECOVAST Statutes were developed by a special working group and then adopted at the General Assembly held in Wiltz in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg on 15 April 1989. The Formal Legal Seat of ECOVAST was named as the Maison de la Nature 36, Ehnwih 67600, Muttersholtz, Alsace, France.

ECOVAST was formally registered on 24 September 1990 before the Tribunal Court in Selestat, Alsace, France (Volume 17 Folio 58). Amendments were agreed at the General Assemblies held in Attersee, Austria in 1997 and in Hemaven, Sweden in 1999, and in Butgenbach, Belgium in 2000 and the first amended Statutes were submitted to selestat and the Certificate issued 13 November 2003. Further changes were agreed at an Extraordinary Meeting, and the Biennial Assembly, both held in Frantiskove Lazne in the Czech Republic, in 2015. These second amended Statutes were submitted to Selestat who issued a Certificate dated 31 December 2015.

#### **(d) Links with The Council of Europe**

ECOVAST made formal contact with the Council of Europe in 1985. Its General Assembly in 1986 was hosted by the Council of Europe; and a senior officer of the Council, Gérard Baloup, became a Vice-President of ECOVAST and chairman of its national section in France.

ECOVAST contributed strongly to the Council of Europe's Campaign for the Countryside 1987-88. At the closing conference of that Campaign in Lubeck-Travemunde, Michael Dower (ECOVAST President) made a passionate public attack upon the destruction of villages by President Ceaucescu of Romania.

ECOVAST was formally recognised as a 'statutory consultee' of the Council of Europe in 1986. It is a member of the Council's International NGO network. It made an active contribution to the drafting of the European Landscape Convention between 1996 and 2000, and more recently to the process of implementing that Convention.

#### **(e) Links with the European Union**

Although not part of the European Union structures, ECOVAST has worked actively with several EU Directorates and served on some of its committees.

It should be noted that only Belgium, France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom (which all had ECOVAST National Sections) were within the European Union when ECOVAST was founded. Austria and Sweden joined in 1995; Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia in 2004; Romania in 2007 and Croatia not until 2013. The National sections in Estonia and Slovenia had closed down in 2003, before these countries joined the EU.

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and Russia (where ECOVAST has national sections) have never been members of the EU although Macedonia is a candidate for membership.

ECOVAST was represented from 1998 until 2014 on the Rural Development Advisory Group advising DG Agri, and also on the RURBAN group advising DG Regio from 2011 until it completed its work in 2014. In 2016 ECOVAST worked with the European Economic and Social Committee through one of its Committee Chairman, Tom Jones of Wales, to highlight the importance of rural communities. ECOVAST International helped to provide and analyse a questionnaire for the committee, and our national sections in Croatia and Hungary made presentations on small towns and on villages.

### **3. Members**

ECOVAST is a membership organisation with members who can be either individuals or organisations, including government agencies, local authorities, non-government organisations, private sector bodies or networks. It is run by its members through the International Committee, international working groups or national sections. Members do not get paid for working for ECOVAST.

Individual members come from a variety of backgrounds in the public, private and voluntary sectors. They include academics, architects, anthropologists, ethnologists, geographers, historians, industrial archaeologists, researchers, rural practitioners, sociologists, town planners and other professions.

They come from many countries in 'geographical Europe' – from north, south, east, west and central Europe. The number of members fluctuates, particularly as people have been hit hard by the economic recession which started in 2008.

Over the years, ECOVAST Members have come from 37 countries, including: Albania; Austria; Belgium; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Croatia; Czech Republic; Cyprus; Denmark; Estonia; Finland; France; East Germany; West Germany; Greece; Hungary; Ireland; Italy; Latvia; Luxembourg; The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM); Netherlands; Norway; Poland, Portugal; Romania; Russia; Slovenia, Slovakia; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Turkey; Ukraine; and the United Kingdom. Lists of individual members are not published but are kept by the Secretary General and the Treasurer and by the National Sections.

No members' names are published unless they have been elected formally to serve the organisation through the ECOVAST International Committee or a Working Group, or recorded as attending formal meetings or reported in Newsletters.

Members who have given outstanding service to ECOVAST can be awarded Honorary Life Membership.

#### **(a) Fees**

ECOVAST members pay a membership fee. The membership fee structure has to be agreed by the International Committee. There are differing rates for students and retired members, and for organisations, as distinct from individual members. Honorary members are exempt from fees.

#### **(b) National Sections:**

ECOVAST agreed, in 1987, to encourage members in individual countries to set up their own National Sections, with their own National Chairman and committees, to work on projects and events within their own countries which focus on their local rural issues. The concept of having national sections was not universally accepted in the beginning, but it has proved very useful over the years and has led to specific topics which have become internationally important to ECOVAST.

Their work has given ECOVAST a real insight into rural issues across the breadth of geographical Europe. The Members of a National Section are also members of ECOVAST International. A list of Members of each National Section are kept by that National Section but not published – but a copy of the list should be given to the Secretary General from time to time.

A protocol is set out for how National Sections should operate - the first agreed at the International Committee meeting held in Brussels in 1987; amended at the International Committee meetings held in Marburg in 1990 and Fontwell Magna in 1993. They were revised again at Hemaven in 1999 and reviewed and re-stated at the Biennial Assembly held in Illmitz, Austria in 2017. The protocols provide that: they must be properly constituted: they must have formal members and keep lists of these members; these names will not be published unless they have been elected or selected to carry out an international role on a committee or on an international Working Group or formally reported in Committee Minutes or in newsletters; they must collect membership fees (however small) and keep accounts; and must report to ECOVAST International committees about their year's activities. They must democratically nominate a member to serve on the ECOVAST International Committee. ECOVAST International must also provide help to a National Section when required.

ECOVAST National Sections have been founded in the following countries in the years shown:

- Austria December 1998
- Belgium 1988
- Croatia 1993
- Estonia 1997
- France 1987
- German Democratic Republic (East Germany) 1989
- Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) 1988
- A combined national section for Germany was formed in March 1991
- Hungary 1990
- Italy 1996
- Macedonia FYROM (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) in September 1999
- Poland 1990
- Romania 1991
- Russia 1996
- Slovenia 2000
- Slovakia 1993
- Sweden 1995
- United Kingdom 1989

Altogether there have been 17 National Sections. The National Sections of Belgium, Estonia, France, Italy and Slovenia did not last very long. Efforts to found National Sections in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Finland, Norway, Portugal and Serbia were explored but did not materialize.

## **4. Committee structure**

ECOVAST operates through a democratic process set out in the statutes using a committee structure.

#### **(a) General Assemblies**

The organisation must hold a General Assembly every year. Annual assemblies should rotate between western and eastern Europe. Every second year, the meeting is called a Biennial Assembly, and includes the election of a new ECOVAST International Committee. At every Biennial Assembly the existing members of the International Committee are absolved from their duties and members are elected to form a new International Committee to serve for the next 2 years. A member to represent each National Section is nominated and then other members are proposed and seconded and formally elected to serve on the new ECOVAST International Committee.

There have been 110 committee meetings: with 32 Annual Assemblies in 16 countries – held every year since 1984 (except for 1985, 1987 & 2014); with 21 of them held in Western Europe and 11 in Eastern Europe.

#### **(b) ECOVAST International Committee**

This is the body of members that run the ECOVAST organisation. Members of the International Committee are elected by the members at the Biennial General Assembly – although individuals can be co-opted to the Executive Committee at any time. Since 2000 the National Sections can select a member to represent them on the committee rather than using an international election. There can be several members from one country on the committee.

There should be at least one International Committee meeting a year and an annual General Assembly. International Committees can be held at any time, and our custom has been to hold several meetings each year. The Committee usually meets just before an annual assembly, which keeps down costs to the members. Minutes must be taken at every international committee meeting and circulated to members.

Until September 1996, our practice was that those elected to the International Committee originally had to come from specific electoral groups – official government bodies or organisations; NGOs; local authorities; private sector organisations or individuals. This was dropped in September 1996 and it was no longer necessary to specify or control where the candidates come from.

There have been 75 International Committee meetings since 1984 in 15 countries – 58 of them held in Western Europe and 17 in Eastern Europe.

#### **(c) The Bureau and Honorary Auditors**

Immediately after the election of a new International Committee at the Biennial General Assembly, the new Committee elects individuals from its own number to serve as the Executive for the next 2 years. This Executive, which is called the Bureau, includes a President, up to 4 Vice Presidents (of whom one can be designated Senior Vice President), a Secretary General and a Treasurer. The Presidents and Vice Presidents must be from different countries.

The officers of the Bureau are responsible for carrying out the work of ECOVAST for the next two years. The Treasurer manages the ECOVAST Bank Account, keeps the ECOVAST accounts and reports annually to the Assembly meeting. The ECOVAST accounts must be audited annually. For this purpose, two Honorary Auditors are also appointed to serve the same 2 year period as the rest of the Bureau, but they are often changed annually. Honorary Auditors are not part of the Bureau.

#### **(d) Term of Office**

A President or Vice President could originally only serve two terms (a term being 2 years). This was changed at an Extraordinary Meeting in March 2015 which allowed people in these positions to serve more than 2 terms in exceptional circumstances. The Secretary General and Treasurer can serve as many years as the International Committee decides.

### **5. ECOVAST Activities**

The International Committees decide at their meetings what the priorities are for the next few months – influenced by discussion at the General Assembly, priorities emerging through the National Sections or the ECOVAST Working Groups or based on experience gathered through study visits and conferences.

#### **(a) Specialist International Working Groups**

ECOVAST international work has been focused through special International Working Groups which have included a very wide range of interests including:

- Education
- Sustainable Rural Communities
- Integrated Rural Development
- Rural Buildings
- Rural Tourism
- Brown Coal Mining
- Rural Development in Central and Eastern Europe
- Rural Culture / Heritage
- Agriculture and the Environment
- Local Authorities
- Farmers and Rural People
- Agriculture and Forestry
- Baltic 21
- Landscapes
- Small Towns

These Working Groups may have a short life, but some have continued work over many years, notably those focused on architecture, landscapes, rural buildings, rural tourism and small towns. They set their own agenda, influenced by emerging rural issues and local experiences. They set their own programme of meetings, but these meetings often coincide with International Committee meetings at which they report their findings or progress. They must report their activity to both the International Committees and the General Assembly in order to allow discussion and enable other members feed into their work. Their work and the debates should be recorded in the minutes.

#### **(b) Conferences, seminars, workshops and study tours**

A key activity of ECOVAST has been the organisation of conferences, seminars, workshops and study tours, each time in a different country or region and usually in close cooperation between the international officers and a national section which acts as host. The purpose of these events is to encourage multinational exchange on particular themes related to rural people or heritage, and to spread the ECOVAST message. They enable our members to meet people from rural communities in countries with varying political situations, and to hear about their problems and how they are tackling them and they have given ECOVAST a wealth of experience which has influenced its work and also influenced the work of these partnerships.

There have been 69 Study tours (47 of them linked to an ECOVAST meeting). There have been 246 conference events held in 35 countries, with 61 organised by ECOVAST and others by the Council of Europe; the European Union; or by key partners (CIVILSCAPE; EUROPA NOSTRA; PREPARE; Foundation Institute for Eastern Studies; or the European Rural University).

#### **(c) Projects**

ECOVAST has tested its ideas through the development of projects – either leading them or working with other organisations's projects. ECOVAST has been involved with 18 projects: has lead on a project on Integrated Rural Development in 1994; a project to create Heritage Trails from 1995 to 1997; created a Training Manual on integrated development in 2000; formed a methodology on Landscape Identification from 2001 to 2012 and developed a long term project called ASSET (Action to Strengthen Small European Towns) from 2005 until 2016. We set up ECOVAST Associates in 1997 to cooperate on research; and the Euracademy in 2001 which offers training and skills to rural actors. ECOVAST has partnered many European organisations on projects, including on Telecottages in 1989; the House of Rural Europe, also in 1989; the development of Istria in Croatia in 1991; a Small Homelands project in 1996 to set up a centre for education and research; a wine project – WITRANET – in 1997; a forestry project TWIG in 1997; the BARN project in 1997 on redundant farm buildings; and the PRIDE project in 1999 on rural development; the REVITAMIN project on former mining areas. ECOVAST Austria has been involved since 2008 on the former Iron Curtain area; and ECOVAST Germany has been involved in the QUALIST project since 2010 to improve the quality of life in small towns.

#### **(d) Developing Rural Policy**

ECOVAST has attended and taken part in some important rural policy events which have been used to debate future rural policy in Europe (particularly the European Union). They include: the Council of Europe's Campaign for the Countryside during 1987 and 1988; events to help develop the Council's European Landscape Convention from 1992 until its final adoption in 2004; the European Union's rural policy conferences held in Cork in 1996 and 2016; the Agriculture and Rural Convention developed by Forum Synergies and ECOVAST in 2010; and the three European Rural Parliament's: the first held in Brussels, Belgium in 2013; the second held in the small town of Schärding, Austria in 2015 and the third held in the village of Venhorst, Netherlands in 2017.

#### **(e) Working in partnership with other organisations**

ECOVAST does not work alone but is a member or partner of several pan-European organisations and take part in their events. These partners include EUROPA NOSTRA who was one of the founder members of ECOVAST and we have continued to be a member and support their rural campaigns; we worked closely with TELECOTTAGES International between 1986 and 1990, promoting the concept of telecottages which originated in Sweden and spread rapidly to many European countries. Since 1989 ECOVAST members have taken part on summer sessions of the European Rural University, which is organised by the APURE (Association pour les Universités Rurales Européennes) and which connects academics involved with rural issues with rural local practitioners. These sessions are held every other year, each time in a different country, often preceded by workshops or field visits in other countries. In 1996 ECOVAST has been a member of the European Heritage Group which became the European Heritage Alliance 3.3 in 2011. Since 1998 ECOVAST has taken part in the biennial International Buildings Trade Fair of DENKMAL held in Leipzig, Germany. ECOVAST was a founder member of PREPARE which was created in 2000 as a direct sequel to the multinational traveling workshop to Estonia and Sweden organized in 1999 by ECOVAST Sweden and Forum Synergies, with help from Kodukant (Estonia) and Hela Sverige ska Leva (Sweden) and we remain actively involved in the PREPARE programme. ECOVAST was also a founder member of CIVILSCAPE and a member of their Board which was set up in 2008 to promote action by civil society organisations to implement the European Landscape Convention. Since 2010 ECOVAST is also a member of EUROGITES who stage the European Tourism conferences. We have been involved since 2013 with the European Rural Parliaments through PREPARE who is one of the



co-initiators (with ERCA and ELARD). Our members in all three European events and also attended several National Rural Parliaments (for example in Estonia, Hungary, Scotland, Slovenia and Sweden). In 2018 ECOVAST became a partner with the Foundation Institute for Eastern Studies based in Warsaw and has been active at their events – particularly at the European Congress of Local Governments.

## **6 Publicity, promotion and communications**

ECOVAST has developed its ideas over the years and has made its interventions on major European rural policy issues through formal papers and publications. ECOVAST also speaks at international and local national events on a wide range of topics.

### **(a) ECOVAST Policy Statements**

ECOVAST has produced several major rural policy documents. The 'Strategy for Rural Europe' set out its views in 1991 which has been revised and added to in 1996, 2006, 2008 and 2013. It produced a Statement on Traditional Rural Buildings in 1996; a policy statement 'Agriculture and Forestry – Sustaining their Future in Europe' and a Heritage Trails Manual - both in 1997.

It has produced many formal 'Declarations' agreed after conferences – on rural development; rural tourism and Brown Coal Mining - all in 1990; on Manor House Estates in 1994 and 2004; two statements on sustainable rural development in 2000; regeneration in the Balkans in 2001; on cultural development in 2003; and on small towns in 2007 and 2008.

It has made – either on its own or backing up partners – statements on threats of destruction of villagers in Romania in 1988 and the problems that the proposed Rosia Montana gold mine could cause – also in Romania - in 2013 and 2014

It has produced – together with the Carpathian Foundation - a manual on Training on Capacity Building for Rural Innovation in Central Europe in 2000

It has produced major policy statements on Landscapes 2002 and Small towns in 2013 – both of which led to formal publications.

### **(b) Formal Published ECOVAST Documents**

#### **(i) Guide to Landscape Identification**

After the first policy statement made in 2002 – a formal guide was developed and published in July 2006 to help the citizens of Europe to understand, to celebrate and to protect the landscape in which they live; and to assist governments in their work to implement the European Landscape Convention. It was updated in 2012.

#### **(ii) Small Towns**

After the first Position Statement in 2013 on Small Towns, ECOVAST published three documents:

- **'The Importance of Small Towns'** the key ECOVAST Policy Statement on small towns, giving many examples of activities that small towns across Europe have undertaken to improve their well-being - published in 2014
- **'The Evidence Base'**, a record of the pan European research on small towns – how many there are in Europe, how many people live in them; the opinions of small towns; Opinion Surveys from a variety of Rural Partnerships across Europe; and detailed research on the economic, social and historic assets of more than 170 small towns in South East England - published in 2015'
- **'The Importance of Small Towns in the Danube Basin'**, a companion document which gives specific examples of best practice in small towns in the Danube Basin - published in 2015

Two National Sections also carried out studies of their towns and published the results:

- ECOVAST Austria produced a list of its surveys of historic towns in Austria in 2009
- ECOVAST United Kingdom published a database of United Kingdom Towns and Cities in 2017.

### **(c) ECOVAST Leaflet**

The first ECOVAST leaflet was produced in 1986. To celebrate 30 Years since the foundation of ECOVAST, we produced in 2013 a new formal leaflet, which was widely circulated.

### **(d) Newsletters**

ECOVAST has produced periodic Newsletters since January 1988. They are designed to serve our Members by describing ECOVAST activities and providing news of European events and other items in a precise and brief form. They are published in three separate language editions – English, French and German. National sections and individual members are free to copy them, make extracts as they wish for their own newsletters, and to translate them into other languages. Until 1997/98 the Newsletters were printed and distributed by post. Since then, they have been produced electronically and sent around by email.

### **(e) International Website and communication amongst members**

The website [www.ecovast.org](http://www.ecovast.org) was created in 1988 and is in 3 languages – English, French and German. It is managed by ECOVAST UK and is updated regularly. It contains the ECOVAST Formal Objectives; ECOVAST

contacts; ECOVAST Policy Papers and ECOVAST Publications. Many presentations and papers are also lodged on the Dorf Wiki pages which are accessed via the ASSET project page. Members are free to translate the texts into other languages. Until 1999 communication between the Bureau, Committee Members and other members was by telephone or letters. Since the Internet came into daily use in 1999, all communication has been by email. Contact details of the Bureau and other members of the International Committee are displayed on the website

## **7. ECOVAST History and Archives**

The History Report was completed in 2019. It is in two parts: the first part outlines the foundation and purpose of ECOVAST and how it operates; and the second part contains a chronological list of all the ECOVAST activities from 1984 onwards; meetings, newsletters; international conferences arranged by ECOVAST International, or in associations with National Sections or other partners or other organisations but where ECOVAST has played a significant role; and all ECOVAST policy documents and publications. Two Annexes provide a summary of the activities of the International Working Groups and the National Sections; followed by a series of Indexes providing simple summary lists – people who have been elected to serve on the International Committee or the Bureau; or on Working Groups; lists of meetings, study tours and events; operational guidance and Statutes and ending with a 'Glossary of Terms'.

Copies of all the above material are ready to be stored in an ECOVAST Archives. We are trying to negotiate to store our all archives in one place, preferably in Marburg where we were founded. There will be paper and electronic documents (in Word and pdf formats).

## **8. Conclusions**

This work of ECOVAST, over a period of 35 years, has been carried out during times of great change across Europe – including the collapse of the Soviet Union; the fall of the Iron Curtain; the gradual rise of democracy in the countries of eastern Europe; the Balkan Wars and the emergence in that region of six new nation states and the declared independence of a seventh the Europe-wide recession starting in 2008; the annexation of part of Ukraine by Russia; and the recent influx of refugees from the war-torn Middle East and economic migrants from Africa and elsewhere.

We have seen the European Union grow gradually from 6 countries in 1984 to include 28 member states today. The Union gave access to specific support to agriculture and forestry and other rural programmes such as LEADER, with major long term programmes lasting 7 years and limited help to those states awaiting accession. Countries outside the EU have also developed programmes of regional and or rural development.

Many European countries of Europe are also bound by Council of Europe Conventions and by global protocols and treaties agreed by such organisations as the United Nations and the World Trade Organisation.

ECOVAST seeks to keep abreast of these changes and to assist our members in relating to governmental policies and programmes. Our experience of rural actors and rural networks has been gathered from much of geographical Europe, within and beyond the European Union, giving us a valuable insight into rural issues and way they are dealt with in northern, southern, western, central and eastern Europe. We have worked with other pan-European networks and helped many emerging national rural networks.

Our work, and this historical record, will provide a background to future ECOVAST activities throughout Europe.

The following page demonstrates that ECOVAST is a truly pan-European organization.

*All the items listed above have entries in the next section which is a chronological list of all ECOVAST activities and they are also summarized in the Indexes which run from page 172 to 203*

## ECOVAST is a Very Pan-European organisation

The simple table below summarises the geographical extent of ECOVAST work through its own activities or as work with partners.

ECOVAST has been active in most of the countries of geographical Europe either through its own activities or sharing in the activities of partner and other organizations: The text in **bold** lists the 41 individual countries where activities have taken place (in geographical Europe or the Black Sea area) and the years where they were held (some often had several meetings a year and visits were made to many different regions – and towns, small towns and villages - of these countries) and fully illustrate the pan-European nature of ECOVAST.

- ECOVAST national sections enable a rich involvement in national rural groups in the following countries: **Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Estonia, France, Germany (before 1990 West & East Germany), Hungary, Italy, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, and United Kingdom.**
- ECOVAST Presidents, Vice Presidents, Treasurers, Secretary Generals and Honorary Auditors have led ECOVAST work and have come from: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, **Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, West Germany, East Germany, combined Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom**)
- ECOVAST International committee meetings (accompanied by conferences and study tours to meet local people, networks and local projects) and other workshops have been arranged and taken place in Austria (1984, 1987, 1997, 1998, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2017), Belgium (1984, 1987, 1992, 1994, 1996, 2000, 2010, 2011); **Bosnia and Herzegovina** (2001), Croatia (1990, 2004, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2018), **Czech Republic** (1992, 2015), Finland (2002), France (1985, 1986, 1988, 1992), Germany (1984, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1993, 1994, 1995, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2016), Greece (1994, 1998), Hungary (1989, 1990, 1991, 1995, 1998, 1999, 2004, 2013), Italy (1996, 1999), Luxembourg (1985, 1989, 2011) Norway (1999 as part of a study tour); Poland (1993, 1995, 1996, 2001, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2013), Portugal (1987), Romania (1993, 1999, 2000), Russia (2000, 2005) Slovakia (1996, 1998, 2001, 2002, 2005, 2006), Slovenia (1997, 2003, 2005), Sweden (1993, 1999), and the United Kingdom (1986, 1993, 1997, 2010, 2013, 2014, 2015)
- As a founder and still active member of PREPARE, we have been active in their events in the following countries: **Albania** (2016), Bosnia and Herzegovina (2012, 2013), **Bulgaria** (2004), Croatia (2009), Czech Republic (2006), Estonia (1999, 2014), Finland (2014), **Kosovo** (2018), **Latvia** (2013), **Lithuania** (2005), North Macedonia (2010), Poland (2007), Slovakia (2003), Slovenia (2009), Sweden (1999, 2012), and **Turkey** (2012)
- As a member PREPARE we have been part of the European Rural Parliaments staged in Belgium (2013), Austria (2015), and the Netherlands (2017). Members have also taken part in national rural parliaments in Estonia (2005), Hungary (1998), **Scotland** (2014), **Serbia** (2018), and Sweden (1998, 2002, 2008, 2012)
- As a founder and still active member of CIVILSCAPE we have been active in their events in the following countries: Belgium (2010), Germany (2012, 2018), and Italy (2008, 2009),
- As an active member of the organisation of APURE we have also have been active in their events in the following countries: Denmark (1996), France (1989, 2002, 2013), Hungary (2006), **Ireland** (1991), Italy (1998), Poland (2008), Portugal (1993), and the United Kingdom (2004)
- ECOVAST has been a key player in many of the Council of Europe and European Union meetings held in **Andorra** (2015), Austria (2003), Belgium (most years since 1989), Cyprus (2008), France (1992, 1995, 1994, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2007, 2008, 2010), Germany (1988), Hungary (1993, 2003), Ireland (1996, 2006), Italy (1992, 1995, 1998), **Montenegro** (2013), Portugal (1987), Scotland (1992), Slovenia (1998, 2003)
- Individual ECOVAST members have taken part in other events held in many different countries (on topics such as agriculture, energy, Leader, landscape convention, local government, regional studies, rural buildings / culture; rural businesses, rural development, rural tourism, rural studies, rural urban partnerships, and small towns), which have taken place in Austria (1998, 2006); Croatia (2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012), Czech Republic (1994, 2014), Estonia (1995). Finland (2006), France (1991, 2012), Germany (1993, 1994, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016), Greece (1989, 2013, 2014), Hungary (2006), Ireland (2010, 2011), Italy (1998, 2005, 2013, 2017), **Malta** (2006), Netherlands (2011), **Northern Ireland** (1998, 2009), North Macedonia 1998, 2010), Poland (1995, 2005, 2010, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019), Portugal (2007), Romania (2007, 2010, 2012), Russia (1994, 1996, 2010), Scotland (2009), Slovakia (1994, 1996, 1997), Spain (2004, 2008), Sweden (2009) and United Kingdom (1990, 2000 2008, 2015)

The countries of Belarus, Iceland, Moldova, and the Ukraine in geographical Europe and Armenia and Georgia in the Black Sea area have not been visited but ECOVAST members attending PREPARE Gatherings and the European Rural Parliaments and have met and been involved with them in the workshops at these events.

## **PART B**

### **Chronological Events of International ECOVAST from March 1984 to March 2019**

#### **Background notes – listed at the beginning of each year**

*United Nation Treaties and World Trade agreements regulating trade in goods and service (General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade or GATT of 1948 replaced in 1994 by the World Trade Organisation (WTO) have influenced European Countries and their activities as well as the two major European bodies – the Council of Europe and the European Community (later known as the European Union).*

*Europe is also part of the world wide agreements on the environment, sustainable development and climate change. The Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit of 3-14 June 1992 resulted in a declaration on measures to set limits to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; prevent the destruction of natural resources on, protection of the environment, forestry principles and a convention to combat desertification. It led to a non-binding Action Plan called Agenda 21 which can be executed at local, national and global levels. In 1997 it led to a Climate Change Convention – called the Kyoto Protocol which set specific legally binding obligations in developed countries to the limits from human-made CO2 emissions into the atmosphere. Rio was updated in 2002 by the Johannesburg Declaration and again in Doha in 2012 and Paris in 2015.*

*The two major pan-European bodies - The Council of Europe and the European Community (later known as the European Union) have legislations and set targets -though not all of them are binding – which have had an influence of on Europe's activities which in turn have had an impact on ECOVAST's work. Europe has also suffered the Balkan War and the break up of states, the emergence of new states and the fall of the Iron Curtain and the unification of Germany. Major activities at world-wide and European level are summarized in background notes for each relevant year.*

*The Council of Europe, founded in 1949 – with 10 member states (Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom). It is an international organisation whose stated aim is to 'uphold human rights, democracy, rule of law in Europe' and 'promote European Culture'. It has grown over the years – the Federal Republic of Germany, Iceland and Turkey in 1950; Austria in 1956; Cyprus in 1961; Switzerland IN 1963; Malta in 1965; Portugal in 1967; Spain in 1977; and Liechtenstein in 1978. Another 26 countries joined between 1984 and 2007 (listed in the notes at the beginning of each year) bringing the total to 47 member states. The Council's headquarters are in Strasbourg, France and its two official languages are English and French. The Council cannot make binding laws, but it has the power to prepare multi-national charters and conventions, through which member states may commit themselves to take action in stated fields – notable examples are the Berne Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, adopted 1979; the Granada Convention for the protection of the architectural heritage, adopted 1985; and the European Landscape Convention, adopted 2000. The Council holds an annual International NGO Conference, which is a space for free and innovative participation of committed citizens offering the possibility to contribute directly to the construction of Europe. ECOVAST is a member of the INGO group. The Council of Europe has launched several initiatives relative to the culture of rural Europe: the European Campaign for the Countryside launched in June 1987 and the Cultural Routes of Europe also in 1987.*

*The European Union has its origins in the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) established by the Treaty of Paris in 1951 and European Economic Community (ECC) under the Treaty of Rome in 1957. The original members – the European Communities, known as the Inner Six, were Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. It is a political and economic union that has established a single market and free movement of people, goods and services. There has been a succession of new expansions. In 1973 Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom joined and Greece in 1981. ECOVAST had members from most of these countries when it was founded in 1984 – but it should be noted that more than half of geographical Europe however was outside the European Community. In 1986 the Community was expanded to include Portugal and Spain. The Maastricht Treaty of 1993 changed the name to the European Union. Austria, Finland, Sweden joined in 1995; Cyprus, Czech Republic; Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia in 2004; Bulgaria and Romania in 2007; and Croatia in 2013 – making 28 member states. The European Union gave access to specific support in grants and subsidies to agriculture and forestry and other rural programmes to support rural people and businesses– with major long term programmes lasting 7 years including the Leader programme and also limited help to those states awaiting succession. Several countries have applied to join the European Union - the following been confirmed as candidates: Turkey (confirmed in 1999); Macedonia (2005); Montenegro (2012); Serbia (2012); and Albania (2014). Other countries wish to join but have not yet formally applied. ECOVAST is a pan-European network covering all of geograohical Europe.*

*ECOVAST was a founder-member of both PREPARE and CIVILSCAPE and has been represented on their formal Organising Committee or Board. These partnerships hold regular international events where ECOVAST gains more involvement with local rural actors of many different countries and and can influence the work of other people. PREPARE is a co-initiator (with ERCA and ELARD) of the biennial European Rural Parliaments: we have taken part in all these events so far, and members have also attended several National Rural*

Parliaments. Leading ECOVAST members have also been or are still members of other important European networks – namely EUROPA NOSTRA, APURE and PURPLE and gain experience from attending their events.

#### **Format of this Diary**

The chronological list of events includes all International activities organised or co-organised by ECOVAST and also other events where ECOVAST played a significant part (as a speaker or in running a workshop) with:

- all ECOVAST meetings (General or Biennial Annual Assemblies; International Committee meetings – recording the ECOVAST Officers who were present; those who formally apologized; the outcome of formal elections of members to the ECOVAST International Committee; the officers elected to serve on the Bureau; the reports from International Working Groups and National Sections to each meeting and any relevant policy statements approved etc
- all ECOVAST Tours or Events organized by ECOVAST International or by ECOVAST National Sections
- all the major pan-European policy events – particularly those held by the Council of Europe or the European Union - which ECOVAST attended and played a key role;
- all ECOVAST projects
- all ECOVAST Newsletters or News Updates with a short note on their contents
- all pan European policy events attended by ECOVAST and all policy statements agreed by ECOVAST
- ECOVAST formal publications, listing who compiled it and a brief thumb-nail sketch)
- There are annexes itemizing the work of the International Working Groups and the contribution made to international work by the National Section

This is followed by the final part of the document - Part C which is a series of simple summary lists

## **1984**

The following 21 states were members of the Council of Europe in 1984 – Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, France, West Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom: and the following 10 states were members of the European Union - Belgium, Denmark, France, West Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom

### **Inaugural Conference for the Village and Small Town held in Bellnhausen, near MARBURG, Hesse, Germany on 16 March 1984**

The event was organised by Angus Fowler on behalf of Förderkreis Alte Kirchen (FAK) of Marburg-Biedenkopf, Hesse, Germany. The event was sponsored by FAK. The event was opened, and the guests were welcomed, by Herr Diethelm Fichtner on behalf of the Oberbürgermeister Drechaler of Marburg Lahn. The Honourable Francis Noel-Baker from EUROPA NOSTRA started the proceedings. He stated that “EUROPA NOSTRA is a pan-European organisation which seeks to preserve and renew cultural monuments in both town and countryside and to promote conservation of the countryside and rural environment. However, it does not have a specific role for the welfare of villages and small towns: a new association is needed to fill the gap.”

Other Speakers included:

- Christian Wagner – a Councillor for Kries Marburg Biedenkopf
- Burgomeister Dellnitz of Gladenbach
- Walter Gerlack one of those responsible for restoring the village church in Bellnhausen
- Alan Leavett of the Development Commission of the United Kingdom
- Heinz Pammer (Austria), of Cultural Affairs in Graz, Austria and President of the International Towns Forum
- Merima Rankovic (Yugoslavia) of the Yugoslav Review publishing house, who described the largely abandoned village of Motovum in Istria – now rebuilt and restored.
- Joachim Skovgaard (United Kingdom), who presented a paper on Danish Villages
- Luigi Zia (Italy) from the League for the Environment, who described his work to help peasants in the Mezzogiorno – a region of great outmigration in southern Italy.
- Edmund Neville-Rolfe was present from the Bureau Européen de Recherches based in Brussels.

### **Excursion connected to the Bellnhausen conference on 17 March 1984**

The excursion visited the villages and small towns around Bellnhausen.

### **ECOVAST Inaugural Committee in Bellnhausen village, near MARBURG, Germany 18 March 1984**

The minutes of this meeting are not available: but the following International Committee held in Brussels, Belgium on 27 April 1984 confirmed it took place.

Participating were some 24 interested parties, from 6 countries including Germany (14 people), the United Kingdom (5 people), Austria, Greece, France, Denmark and Yugoslavia (2).

The committee agreed to found a new organisation interested in architecture, construction, agriculture and rural development. Aims and objectives were discussed and agreed. The meeting then voted to elect

representatives of national organisations; local organisations and individuals from private sector to serve as officers of the new organization.

The new organisation's committee included the following:

- The Hon Francis Noel-Baker (United Kingdom) as the first Chairman
- Heinz Pammer (Austria) as the first Vice Chairman

plus the following Committee members:

- Steen Achton (Denmark)
- Angus Fowler (Federal Republic of Germany)
- Gerhard Henkel (Federal Republic of Germany)
- Detlev Simons (Federal Republic of Germany)
- Jacob Wagner (Federal Republic of Germany)
- Luigi Zia (Italy)
- Joachim Skovgaard (United Kingdom)
- Brano Krstic (Yugoslavia)
- Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom) was elected to be Secretary General and he was also co-opted to be Treasurer

Alan Leavett (United Kingdom) could not be elected as he worked for a government – but he agreed to draw up a draft constitution.

Membership subscriptions were agreed and it was agreed that the organisation's office be provisionally based at the Bureau Européen des Recherches in Brussels.

The name European Council for the Village and Small Town (ECOVAST) was proposed by Edmund Neville-Rolfe and agreed; and an offer by an architect member (John Prizeman) to prepare a logo was accepted.

#### **ECOVAST International Committee held in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 27 April 1984**

The meeting was hosted by the Secretary General – Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom) who also took the role of chair of the meeting as the Chairman was delayed in Switzerland.

Present were 8 ECOVAST members from 4 countries (Austria, France, Germany and the United Kingdom) including the following members including: Hasso Hohmann (Austria) – representing Heinz Pammer; Irmgard Bott, Gerhard Henkel, Jacob Wagner (Federal Republic of Germany). The following other members were co-opted for the meeting: C Houssier (representing M Christophe of RED, France); E Spiegel, Frau Spiegel and Alan Leavett (United Kingdom)

Apologies from the President Hon Frances Noel-Baker and Joakim Skovgaard (United Kingdom)

It was decided that the Chairman should be now known as 'President'

It was agreed to ask Robert Emmett (the accountant for Edmund Neville Rolfe) to act as Honorary Treasurer for ECOVAST and he kindly agreed

The International Committee looked at the first draft of the ECOVAST Constitution drafted by Alan Leavett (United Kingdom) which included the following:

- Classes of membership (1 to V)
- Subscriptions
- Names of meeting and frequency
- The Executive Committee would be by an election from subscribing members
- There should be an annual assembly and voting should take place every 2 years
- The title of Chairman should be changed to President
- Assets and liabilities
- It was agreed that ECOVAST's official languages be German, English and French.

*This document subsequently became the Statutes which were finally approved in 1989 and registered*

It was also decided that a brochure about ECOVAST aims and objectives should be published

#### **ECOVAST International Committee held in Graz Town Hall, GRAZ, Styria on 1 October 1984**

The meeting was hosted by Heinz Pammer –Vice President of ECOVAST and Mayor of Graz, Austria and Hasso Hohmann also of Austria. Present were 15 ECOVAST members from 7 countries (Austria, Cyprus, France, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom and Yugoslavia) including:

President – Hon Frances Noel-Baker (United Kingdom)

Secretary General – Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

ECOVAST Committee Members; Angus Fowler; Detlef Simons (Federal Republic of Germany); Luigi Za (Italy); and Brano Krstic (Yugoslavia)

All the members present who were not on the Executive Committee were co-opted as members of the committee for the day including: Hasso Hohmann (Austria), Lellos Demetriades (Cyprus); Joy Lecore (France); Irmgaard Bott (Germany), Michael Dower, Alan Leavett, Barbara Noel-Baker, Christopher Terry (all of the United Kingdom)

Apologies for Absence: Steen Achton (Denmark); Ake Samberg (Sweden); John Prizeman; and Joakim Skovgaard (United Kingdom)

The Minutes of the previous meeting in Brussels, Belgium on 27 April 1984 were agreed.

It was noted that ECOVAST was growing but the importance of involving the countries of Eastern Europe was stressed and a membership drive was approved.

The accountant Robert Emmett - of Edmund Neville-Rolfe's company - has agreed to act as Treasurer at the present time.

The committee discussed the draft constitution provided by Alan Leavett and recognised that:

- a specific seat for the organisation is needed
- it must be stressed that ECOVAST is a philanthropic organisation and should be able to enjoy tax-free charitable status

It was agreed that ECOVAST should be established in Austria within 12 kilometres of Graz. The constitution must therefore be compatible with Austria State Law.

It was agreed that the first General Assembly should be held in Motovun, Yugoslavia. A conference should be part of the event on the small rural and urban communities in Europe which hopefully might attract new members.

Presentations were made by Luigi Zia (Italy) and Heinz Pammer (Austria) and Brano Krstic (Yugoslavia) and draft newssheet had been prepared by John Prizeman (United Kingdom) was discussed.

## **1985**

*In October 1985 the Council of Europe adopted the Granada Convention to reinforce and promote policies for the conservation and enhancement of Europe's heritage – to come into force in 1987.*

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in STRASBOURG, France on 11 January 1985**

The meeting held in the Palais de Europe in a room had been kindly provided by the Council of Europe (via the private office of the President of the Parliamentary Assembly) and hosted by Gérard Baloup (France), was attended by 9 ECOVAST members from 5 countries (France, Federal Republic of Germany, Luxembourg, Sweden, and the United Kingdom - which included:

President: Hon. Frances Noel-Baker United Kingdom

Secretary General: Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

International Committee: Jean Chanel, Angus Fowler (FR Germany); Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Other members who were co-opted to the Committee for the meeting: Georges Christophe (France); Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg); Gert Carlstedt and Ake Samberg (Sweden)

Apologies from Heinz Pammer, Hasso Hohmann (Austria); Irmgaard Bott, Jacob Wagner (Federal Republic of Germany); Luigi Zia (Italy); Lellos Demetriades (Cyprus); Alan Leavett, Joakim Skovgaard (United Kingdom) and Brano Krstic (Yugoslavia)

Minutes of the previous International Committee meeting held in Graz, Austria were agreed

There was a report from Alan Leavett on the draft constitution and which proposed the headquarters of ECOVAST should be in Frohnleiten, Austria (an invitation by the Mayor) and a subtitle for ECOVAST agreed – 'A European association for rural revitalisation and conservation'.

The first General Assembly meeting was discussed which might be accompanied by a conference. The autumn of 1985 was agreed to be held Yugoslavia or Luxembourg but the conference be delayed until 1986.

Angus Fowler had met the Council of Europe and been informed that the Council was thinking of launching a Campaign for the Countryside and he offered ECOVAST support to this concept and a formal letter of support from ECOVAST was sent to the Council.

ECOVAST is still waiting to hear about its application (June 1985) for 'consultative status' of the Council of Europe – and the committee agreed that it should stress its links with EUROPA NOSTRA and Angus Fowler should formally represent ECOVAST on EUROPA NOSTRA.

The committee approved a formal membership drive by the Hon Frances Noel-Baker; Jean Chanel, Angus Fowler, Ake Samberg and Michael Dower.

### **ECOVAST Formal letter to the Council of Europe dated 15 January 1985**

It offers support the Council's proposal for a European 'Campaign for the Countryside'

### **ECOVAST International Committee held at the Town Hall in WILTZ, Duchy of Luxembourg on 4 May 1985**

Present at the meeting, held in the Hotel de Ville, hosted by Jean Pierre Dichter (Mayor of Wiltz) (Luxembourg) included 8 ECOVAST members from 3 countries (Federal Republic of Germany, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom):

Chairman of meeting was Jean Pierre Dichter – as the President was in hospital

Secretary General – Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

Committee Members: Angus Fowler, Jacob Wagner (Federal Republic of Germany) Joakim Skovgaard (United Kingdom)

Other ECOVAST Members: Irmgaard Bott, Jean Chanel (Federal Republic of Germany); Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Mrs P Skovgaard and Miss H Skovgaard were welcomed as observers

Frau Huber of FAK also attended the meeting

Apologies were received from Heinz Pammer, Hasso Hohmann (Austria); Lellos Demetriades (Cyprus); Prof Calteux (France) and Alan Leavett (United Kingdom)

Minutes of the previous International Committee meeting held in Strasbourg, France were agreed

The revised Statutes were now registered with Austrian authorities and awaiting their views before they can be finally approved.

A report was made on the membership drive

European surveys on redundant churches and barns are to be carried out by FAK Germany and SPAB UK and submitted to Council of Europe and that ECOVAST supported this work.

It was agreed that if the Council of Europe did launch a Campaign for the Countryside then ECOVAST should hold its first Assembly and conference in Strasbourg

*The General Assembly planned to be held on 24 October 1985 in Luxembourg was never held*

## **1986**

*Portugal and Spain become part of the European Community on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1986.*

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in LONDON, England, United Kingdom on 8 April 1986**

Present at the meeting, held at 179 Kennington Road, hosted by Edmund Neville-Rolfe, were 6 ECOVAST members from Luxembourg and the United Kingdom including:

President: Hon Frances Noel-Baker (United Kingdom)

Secretary: Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

ECOVAST Members: Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg); Michael Dower, Joakim Skovgaard and Christopher Terry (United Kingdom)

An invited guest was Nick Dean, the Assistant Secretary of Rural Voice

Apologies for absence were received from: The Vice President Heinz Pammer (Austria); Board Members: Angus Fowler, Gerhard Henkel and Detlef Simons and Jacob Wagner (Germany); other ECOVAST members: Lellos Demetriades (Cyprus); Jean Chanel (Germany); and Alan Leavett, John Prizeman (United Kingdom)

Minutes of the previous International Committee meeting held in Wiltz, Luxembourg were approved

Members asked for consideration to be given to the formation of National branches of ECOVAST.

### **ECOVAST Note on progress produced in July 1986**

Edmund Neville-Rolfe the Secretary General sent, to all ECOVAST members, this report on the progress of the organisation since 1984. It was also timely as ECOVAST was to stage its first international conference in Strasbourg in the autumn. He stated that we have drafted our ECOVAST Statutes for discussion with members. We have declared our full and active support to the Council of Europe's Campaign for the Countryside and our forthcoming conference (which would include a study tour to look at local projects in the Alsace countryside) and has the theme 'Save the European Countryside'. It was clear that finance was a problem – the membership fees barely covered the costs of postage and translations and would not cover all the costs of separate conferences. Therefore, we had to look at ways to afford our meetings, for example using the venues of our speakers and involving local authorities etc. For this first conference in Strasbourg::

- the staging of our conference together with our international meetings will keep costs down.
- we have been honoured with the offer of patronage of the President of the European Parliament



- arranging the conference to take place in the Palais de l'Europe building in the afternoon after the conclusion of the Parliament's monthly plenary session and the offer of full support and co-operation of the administration of the Council of Europe, will greatly reduce the costs of the event
- the Forderkreis Alter Kirchen has generously agreed to undertake the preparations for the conference
- it is hoped that the local French authorities might also help.

#### **ECOVAST events held in STRASBOURG, France on 13-14 November 1986**

This 2 day event, hosted by Gerard Baloup, involved an International Committee meeting; a tour; a conference (the first ECOVAST conference) and the first ECOVAST Biennial Assembly held in the Palais de l'Europe.

#### **ECOVAST International Committee held at Hotel Elisa, in STRASBOURG, France on 13 November 1986**

Those present at the meeting or sent apologies are listed under the Biennial Assembly.

An announcement was made of the sad death of the Vice President Heinz Pammer (Austria)

Minutes of the previous International Committee meeting held in London, United Kingdom were approved

It was still proving difficult to meet the requirements of Austria law. Other venues for siting ECOVAST's legal seat were therefore discussed. It was agreed that it should be somewhere along the line of the Brussels-Luxembourg-Strasbourg axis be chosen.

After discussion again of the Statutes the General Assembly were given the right to approve the Statutes without going through them again.

Formal approval by the Council of Europe that ECOVAST was granted 'consultative status' of the Council as an NGO which allowed ECOVAST to be represented at all meetings involving NGO's and at meetings of the Parliamentary Assembly.

#### **ECOVAST excursion to the Alsace area, France on 14 November 1986**

This took place just before the ECOVAST conference and it visited several villages and a small town

#### **ECOVAST Conference 'Saving the Rural European World – Revitalisation and Conservation' held at the Palais de l'Europe, in STRASBOURG, France on 14 November 1986**

This conference, hosted by Gérard Baloup, was held as part of the annual assembly event. Some grants had been offered to support the ECOVAST conference – FAK; Local authority of Marburg-Biedenhof; The Guinness Trust and the Earnest Cook Trust.

#### **First ECOVAST Biennial Assembly held STRASBOURG, France on 14 / 15 November 1986**

This ECOVAST event held at the Palais de l'Europe was attended by 32 ECOVAST members from 10 countries (Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and Yugoslavia) - including:

President: Hon Frances Noel-Baker (United Kingdom)

Secretary General: Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

International Committee members: Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg); Jean Chanel, Angus Fowler, Gerhard Henkel, Detlef Simons and Jacob Wagner (FR Germany); Michael Dower; Alan Leavett, Joakim Skovgaard, United Kingdom),

Other ECOVAST members: Hans Peter Jesche (Austria); Bernard Mignon (Belgium), Jean-Paul Leclercq, Michel Marechal, Dominique Nanty, Rene Schnepf, Suzanne Thibal (France); Irmgaard Bott, Gunter Kröes, Ralf Folk-Schwinge, Gerhard Henkel, Jacob Wagner (FR Germany); Carlos Miguel de Oliveira Frescata (Portugal); Ake Sambergs (Sweden); Max Schneider (Switzerland); Tony Crofts, Nick Dean, John Sell, John Williams (United Kingdom); Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia)

Apologies from: Hasso Hohmann (Austria); Detlef Simons (FR Germany); Lellos Demetriades (Cyprus); Alan Leavett, John Prizeman (United Kingdom)

The Hon. Francis Noel-Baker was retiring and was thanked for his work, and the Committee agreed he should be recognised and his name appear on ECOVAST letterhead as the 'Founder President'.

Edmund Neville Rolfe announced that he wished to retire from being the Treasurer.

The recent death of Vice-President Dr Heinz Pammer (Austria) was reported, and the Committee paid tribute to his work

Minor changes to the draft Statutes prepared by Alan Leavett were agreed. It was noted that a formal legal seat for ECOVAST must be identified.

The Council of Europe had given formal confirmation to ECOVAST having formal 'Consultative Status'

This being a voting general assembly, the current ECOVAST Committee was formally released from its obligations and the committee members were thanked for their work over the last 2 years (1984-1986).

They first elected the following to become the Bureau or Executive to serve for 1986-1988:

- Michael Dower (United Kingdom) was elected President-

Four Vice Presidents:

- Hans Peter Jeschke (Austria);
  - Gérard Baloup (France);
  - Angus Fowler (Germany),
  - Ake Sambergs (Sweden)
  - Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom) continues to be both Secretary General and Treasurer
- Honorary Auditors: Bernard Mignon (Belgium) and John Sell (United Kingdom) were elected for 1986-1987.

The following day they elected a new Executive Committee to serve for the 1986-1988. They voted in the 5 categories representing the types of members defined in the Draft Constitution. The following 24 members were elected:

*Groups I NGO's National or International and III Representatives of NGO's Regional or Local*

- Jean Chanel (Germany) (FAK)
- Rene Schnepf (France) (Maison Paysannes)
- Ralf-Folke Schwinge (Federal Republic of Germany) (Interessengemeinschaft Bauernhaus)
- Max Schneider (Switzerland) (Schweizer Heimatscheutzes)
- Nick Dean (United Kingdom) (Rural Voice)

*Group II Representatives of Government and Group IV Official Organisations*

- Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg) (Mayor of Wiltz)
- Jean Paul Leclercq (France) (Rural Architecture and Villages of the Auvergne)
- John Williams (United Kingdom) (The Development Commission)

*Group V Individuals –*

- Dominique Nanty (France)
- Suzanne Thibal (France)
- Gerhard Henkel (FR Germany)
- Carlos Miguel de Oliveira Frescata (Portugal)
- Tony Crofts (United Kingdom)
- Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia)

A paper prepared by Michael Dower setting out the new direction of work for the new committed which had been debated at the confence and the general assembly.

The 4 new key areas of work are:

- Building up membership
- Encouragement of National Sections to influence their own countries
- Encourage awareness and understanding of the diversity of rural heritage and rural communities
- Exchange pratical ideas and learn for each other

### **The Proposed Council of Europe European Campaign for the Countryside by the Council of Europe**

The ECOVAST Assembly agreed a Resolution of ECOVAST from the Strasbourg meeting on the proposed launching of this campaign.

## **1987**

*The Granada Covention adopted by the Council of Europe in 1985 came into force in 1987. During the year the Council of Europe also launched 2 major campaigns. The first was the 'Campaign for the Countryside' was launched in June in Lisbon, Portugal. The aim of the campaign was to draw attention to problems facing the countryside in Europe; alert public opinion to rural Europe's development needs; insist on the importance of preserving the traditional assets of rural life; and reconcile conservation with change, development with preservation. The Council of Europe's 'Cultural Routes Programme' was launched in October 1987 with the Declaration of Santiago de Compostela, which is the destination of the first designated Cultural Route. Routes are recognised as significant throughout Europe through promoting shared culture, history, memory and European Integration. The routes must also match some fundamental values promoted by the Council of Europe such as democracy, human rights and intercultural exchanges in the framework of cultural tourism. Since 1989 this programme has been managed by the European Institute of Cultural Routes (EICR) and based in Luxembourg. The European Commission published a report 'The Future of Rural Society', which recognised that the two major developmental policies then operated by the European Union – the Common Agricultural Policy and the Regional Fund – were not meeting the needs of rural communities or of the non-agricultural parts of the rural economy. New thinking was needed about policies to help these sectors.*

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 4 April 1987**

Present at the meeting, hosted by Edmund Neville-Rolfe, were 8 ECOVAST members from 4 countries (Belgium, France, Germany and United Kingdom), including:

President: Michael Dower (United Kingdom) who also chaired the meeting

Vice Presidents: Gerard Baloup (France); Angus Fowler (Germany)

Secretary General: Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom) and who took the notes

Committee members: Jean-Paul Leclercq, Suzanne Tibal (France); Jean Chanel (Germany)

Other ECOVAST members; Bernard Mignon (Belgium)

Apologies for absence were received from: Founder President Hon Francis Noel-Baker (United Kingdom); Vice Presidents: Hans Peter Jeschke (Austria); Ake Samberg (Sweden); International Committee members: Dominique Nanty, Rene Schnepf (France); Gerhard Henkel, Ralf-Folke Schwinge (Germany); Jean-Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg); Carlos Frescata (Portugal); Max Schneider (Switzerland); John Williams (United Kingdom); Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia)

Other ECOVAST members: Rene Schnepf (France)

The Minutes of the International Committee held in Strasbourg, France on 13 November 1986 and the Minutes of the General Assembly on 14 November, both held in Strasbourg were agreed.

- Bernard Mignon (Belgium) was elected Secretary General and as Assistant Treasurer to Edmund.
- Anders Holm (Denmark) was co-opted onto the Executive Committee
- Christian Neumüller (France) was co-opted onto the Executive Committee
- Alan Leavett and John Sell (both of the United Kingdom) were elected as Auditors for 1987-1988

After much discussion, it was agreed to have ECOVAST National Sections – who could undertake more local activities and work with their national rural networks. A formal protocol was agreed:

- they would be part of international ECOVAST and be acting in their name.
- they should raise membership fees
- of which two-thirds should be forwarded to the International Committee and one-third retained by the National Section for them to use as they see fit.

The first National section was formed in France in 1987

New subscription levels were discussed and agreed.

It was also agreed that ECOVAST should prepare and launch a Newsletter.

A lot of discussion followed as to the formal seat of ECOVAST – Belgium, France or Switzerland

It was agreed that Michael Dower, Angus Fowler and Bernard Mignon should represent ECOVAST at the Lisbon Colloquy in June launching the European Campaign for the Countryside.

### **First ECOVAST leaflet published in 1987**

Prepared by the President and Secretary General and agreed by the Executive Committee. It was used to promote the work of ECOVAST at the Council of Europe and the Campaign for the Countryside

*No copy of this document has been found but it is referred to in the minutes of the Setubal meeting held in June.*

### **Launch of Council of Europe's Campaign for the Countryside held in LISBON, Portugal 12 June 1987**

The aim of the campaign was to establish an acceptable standard of living in the countryside by means of appropriate spatial planning and rational development of economic resources: this implied re-thinking of policies on agriculture, forestry and soils; diversification of the economy; and maintaining good transport, communications, housing, training and public services. Michael Dower (United Kingdom) presented a paper to the event. Several ECOVAST members attended this event before the meeting held in Setubal on 13 June.

### **ECOVAST Tour – part of the Executive Committee meeting in SETUBAL, Portugal on 13<sup>th</sup> June 1987**

The excursion visited the Setubal area on the Atlantic coast, together with a visit to the town of Palmela.

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in SETUBAL, Portugal on 13 June 1987**

*The format of this ECOVAST meeting set the pattern for most future ECOVAST committees – with a committee meeting being linked to a conference, and a tour to look at projects and meet local people.*

Present at this meeting, hosted by Carlos Frescata (Portugal) and the 'Villages Magazine', were ECOVAST members from 17 countries (Austria (2); Belgium (3); Cyprus (2); Denmark; France (20); Federal Republic of Germany (26); Greece (2); Hungary; Ireland; Italy (6); Luxembourg; Netherlands (2); Portugal (5); Sweden (2); Switzerland (2); United Kingdom (25); Yugoslavia (2) and several national and local organisations. Present were 12 named ECOVAST members including:

President: Michael Dower (United Kingdom) who also chaired the meeting

Vice Presidents: Hans Peter Jeschke (Austria); Angus Fowler (Germany)

Secretary General: Bernard Mignon (Belgium who took notes)

Executive Committee members: Jean-Paul Leclercq, Christian Neumüller, Rene Schnepf, Suzanne Thibal (France); Gerhard Henkel (Germany); Carlos Frescata (Portugal); Tony Crofts (United Kingdom); Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia)

Apologies for Absence were received from: Vice President Gérard Baloup (France); Executive committee members: Dominique Nanty (France); Jean Chanel, Ralf-Folke Schwinge (Germany); Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg); Max Schneider (Switzerland); Founder President Hon Francis Noel-Baker and Edmund Neville-Rolfe, John Williams (United Kingdom)

The Minutes of the meeting held in Brussels, Belgium on 4 April 1987 were agreed.

All the delegates at the meeting were given a blue and white Portuguese tile as a memento of this first ECOVAST meeting in Portugal (it is illustrated on the cover of this report).

There was a major discussion about the Council of Europe's Campaign for the Countryside and the role that ECOVAST should play. The principle of developing our ideas through Working Groups was agreed in principle and a list of possible topics included:

- Environmental Education;
- Dialogue between protectionists and architects;
- Traditional buildings;
- Organic farming;
- Heritage Management;
- Conservation of vernacular buildings;
- Natural resources;
- Heritage for tourism;
- Farm Diversification and Local autonomy and village culture.

#### **ECOVAST Seminar 'Aspects of Village Renewal – held in LINZ, Austria on 5 December 1987**

The Seminar in Upper Austria, which discussed 'Town Development and Regional Policy in the Countryside' was hosted by Vice President Hans Peter Jeschke (Austria) with delegates from 5 countries:

#### **ECOVAST International Committee held in LINZ, Upper Austria, Austria on 6 December 1987**

Present at this meeting, hosted by Vice President Hans Peter Jeschke, were 10 named ECOVAST members from 5 countries (Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom) including: President: Michael Dower (United Kingdom) who chaired the meeting and took notes.

Vice Presidents: Hans Peter Jeschke (Austria); Angus Fowler (Germany)

ECOVAST Committee members: Anders Holm (Denmark); Jean-Paul Leclercq, Christian Neumüller (France); and Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia)

Other ECOVAST members: Michelle Boitard (Secretary, French National Committee) and Josef Holzner (East Germany) and the Founder President Francis Noel-Baker (United Kingdom)

Apologies for absence from: Vice President Gerard Baloup (France); Secretary General Bernard Mignon (Belgium); Treasurer Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom); Committee members Suzanne Thibal (France); Jean Chanel, Ralf-Folke Schwinge (Germany); and Tony Crofts, John Williams (United Kingdom)

Edmund Neville-Rolfe announced that he wanted to retire

The Minutes of Executive Committee held in Setubal, Portugal were agreed.

Report from the National Section for France

There were now 122 ECOVAST members, but getting in membership subscriptions was proving difficult.

*There was no General Assembly held in 1987*

## **1988**

*San Marino joined the Council of Europe*

#### **ECOVAST Newsletter 1 – produced January 1988 edited by Bernard Mignon No copy available**

This first ECOVAST Newsletter is designed to serve ECOVAST Members by describing ECOVAST activities and providing news of European events and other items in a precise and brief form. It is published in three separate language editions – English, French and German. Members are free to copy it, make extracts as they wish for their own newsletters, and to translate it into other languages.

**Protocol for ECOVAST meetings:** As outlined in the first newsletter - from 1988 onwards the format of each committee meeting should follow the same pattern: a record of the host of the meeting and list of those ECOVAST members who attended and where they were from; a welcome and general report from the President; the Secretary General and the Treasurer; reports from each Working Group and each National Section – which started in 1988.

#### **Meeting of the Connétablie de Guyenne, in the Citadel of BLAYE, Gironde, France on 16 April 1988**

Before the International Committee meeting mentioned above, members of the Committee were invited, through the good offices of Gérard Baloup (Vice-President, who comes of that region of Gascony), to attend a remarkable event in a great vaulted room within the fortified Citadel of Blaye. This was a meeting of the Connétablie de Guyenne (*Constabulary of Guyenne*), which historically constituted the personal guard of the Dukes of Aquitaine, who during the Plantagenet period were also Kings of England. Over the centuries, the role of the Connétablie has changed into a confrérie des viticulteurs (*guild of wine-growers*). The members of the guild arrived in a splendid procession, with tricorne hats and flowing deep blue cloaks with scarlet lining, heralded by trumpets. A ceremony followed, during which – to their complete surprise – our Founder President Francis Noel-Baker and President Michael Dower was summoned forward, garbed in a great cloak and hat, dubbed on each shoulder with an ell (metre-long rod used to test the depth of wine) and invited to swear that they would defend the good name of the wines of Blaye and Bourg, two towns which lie on the banks of the Garonne River. Having done this, they were pronounced to be Conseillers d'Honneur de la Connétablie de Guyenne, and were presented with painted enamel medals and scrolls to record this rank, which gives them “liberté des caves” (the freedom of the cellars) in this wine-producing region. They expressed their personal gratitude, and that of ECOVAST, for this honour.

#### **ECOVAST International Committee held in BLAYE, Gironde, France on 16 April 1988**

Present at the meeting, held at the Salle de la Poudrière, Couvert des Minimes in the Citadel, hosted by Gerard Baloup, were 16 ECOVAST members from 7 countries (Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom) and included:

President: Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Vice Presidents: Gerard Baloup (France); Angus Fowler (Germany)

Secretary General: Bernard Mignon (Belgium)

Treasurer: Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom) ECOVAST

Executive Committee members: Anders Holm (Denmark); Dominique Nanty, Christian Neumüller, Rene Schnepf, Suzanne Thibal (France); Jean Chanel (Germany); and Tony Crofts (United Kingdom)

Other ECOVAST members: Michele Boitard (France); Helmut Korzonnek (Germany); Carlos Frescata (Portugal) and Santiago Navarro (Spain)

The following were co-opted onto the committee.

- Leendert van der Plas (Netherlands)
- Santiago Navarro (Spain)

Apologies for absence were received from Committee members; Gerhard Henkel (Germany); Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia) and John Williams (United Kingdom)

Minutes of meeting in Linz in December 1987 were agreed

Discussion followed on the Working Groups that would be used at the conference in Lubeck in October. The 5 groups agreed were Rural Development, Rural Tourism, Rural Architecture, Sustainable Rural Communities and Education.

A report was received from the National Section in France.

It was reported that there were now 144 ECOVAST members, including members in two new countries - Netherlands and Poland.

#### **ECOVAST International Committee held in, STRASBOURG, France on 4 September 1988**

The meeting was held in the Maison Europe des Regions. Present were 10 ECOVAST members present from 5 countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, and the United Kingdom) including:

President: Michael Dower (United Kingdom) who also chaired the meeting

Vice Presidents: Angus Fowler (Germany),

Secretary General: Bernard Mignon (Belgium)

ECOVAST Committee members: Jean Paul Leclercq, Christian Neumüller, Rene Schnepf (France); Jean Chanel (Germany); Jean-Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg);

Other ECOVAST members: Helmut Korzonnek (Germany); Nick Dean (United Kingdom)

There was a decision to keep the 5 groups of membership I-V

Discussion took place of a proposal called 'EUROPAVIVA' by Dan Bernfield who was asking ECOVAST to provide a framework for demonstration projects.

### **ECOVAST event in LÜBECK TRAVEMUNDE, Schleswig Holstein, Germany on 9-14 October 1988**

This 6 day period, hosted by ECOVAST Germany and Helmut Korzonnek, the Lubeck Conference Secretary, saw three ECOVAST Committee meetings; an ECOVAST conference, all held in Hotel Maritime; a short ECOVAST tour; a Council of Europe's International Colloquium, a series of excursions and a formal closing ceremony of the European Countryside Campaign with one event following another but linked in their content.

### **ECOVAST First International Committee held in LÜBECK TRAVEMUNDE, Germany on 9 October 1988**

Those present at the meeting or had sent apologies are listed in the Biennial Assembly below.

The Minutes of the Executive meeting held in Blaye, France on 16 April 1988 and the Executive meeting held in Strasbourg, France on 4 September were agreed.

The expected deficit on the Lubeck conference is now possibly £17,000. An appeal was made to try and find grants and donations. ECOVAST France proposed a loan of 5,000 french Francs

ECOVAST is now recognised by the European Parliament – however ECOVAST remains an organisation without any paid staff.

### **ECOVAST Conference 'Rural Regions as a Challenge to Everyone in Town and Country' held in LÜBECK TRAVEMUNDE, Germany on 10/11 October 1988**

The sub-title was 'Practical perspectives for their further development and the role of non-state organisations'

This conference, organised by Helmut Korzonnek (Germany), was deliberately linked to the official Council of Europe event – Colloquium, Excursions and Closing Ceremony of the European Campaign for the Countryside which had started in 1987.

The list of attendees included 21 ECOVAST members from 11 countries (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Hungary, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, United Kingdom and Yugoslavia) and included; Hans-Peter Jeschke (Austria); Bernard Mignon (Belgium); Anders Holm (Denmark); Jean Paul Leclercq, Christian Neumüller, Pierre de Pontavice, Suzanne Thibal (France); Jean Chanel, Angus Fowler, Helmut Korzonnek, Günther Kröes, Ralf-Folke Schwinge (Germany); András Roman (Hungary); Jean-Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg); Leendert van der Plas (Netherlands); Andrzej Kaleta (Poland); Michael Dower, Edmund Neville-Rolfe; John Sell, Jane Wade (United Kingdom) and Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia).

There were also several guest speakers and attendees from: the Council of Europe, the German Committee of the European Campaign for the Countryside; and the State of Schleswig-Holstein. 10 of the ECOVAST members present led a Working Group as a Leader, a Rapporteur or were part of a discussion panel session.

This is the first reference to actual International Working groups set up by ECOVAST – the first 5 mentioned in the Blaye committee in France in April.

- President Michael Dower opened and chaired the first session and was followed by a welcome by Christina Sandstrom (Sweden) a member of the International organising committee member

The second session was a series of workshops:

- Integrated Rural Development – led by Leendert Van der Plas (Netherlands)
- Rural Tourism – led by Suzanne Thibal (France)
- Rural Architecture – led by John Sell (United Kingdom)
- Sustainable Rural Communities – led by Michael Dower (United Kingdom)
- Education – led by Pierre du Pontavice (France).

### **ECOVAST Tour to Lubeck on 10 October 1988**

This tour formed part of the ECOVAST Conference. It involved a boat trip from Travemunde to the city of Lubeck and an evening of entertainments with the return journey by coach.

### **ECOVAST Biennial Assembly held in LÜBECK TRAVEMUNDE, Germany on 11 October 1988**

Present at this meeting in the Hotel Maritime, hosted by ECOVAST Germany and Helmut Korzonnek, the Lubeck Conference Secretary, were 19 ECOVAST members from 11 countries (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, the United Kingdom and Yugoslavia) including:

President: Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Vice President: Hans Peter Jeschke (Austria); Gérard Baloup (France), Angus Fowler (Germany)

Secretary General and Treasurer: Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

ECOVAST International Committee members; Bernard Mignon (Belgium); Anders Holm (Denmark); Jean-Paul Leclercq, Christiane Neumüller, Ralf-Folke Schwinge, Suzanne Thibal (France); Jean Chanel, Gerhard Henkel, Helmut Korzonnek (FR Germany); Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg); Leendert van der Plas (Netherlands); Andrzej Kaleta (Poland); Carlos Frescata (Portugal); Nick Dean, John Sell (United Kingdom); and Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia)

Apologies were received from the President Frances Noel-Baker (United Kingdom); Rene Schnepf (France); Santiago Navarro (Spain); Tony Croft and John Williams (United Kingdom)

Minutes of the first General Assembly held in Strasbourg, France in November 1986 were agreed

There are now 3 National Sections –

- Belgium which held its first meeting in June where they discussed multi media centres with a second planned for November
- France which is registered as a charity and held 2 meetings and a third is planned in Paris. They have employed 2 people from public schemes for the unemployed to do administration work
- Federal Republic of Germany has been set up and registered as a charity

The ECOVAST Draft Statutes were approved

This being a voting assembly there was a formal release of the current committee from its obligations and the committee members were thanked for their work over the last 2 years (1986-1988). An election to decide the new International Committee for 1988-2000 followed.

The Assembly elected the following members to be the Executive or Bureau for the next years (1988-1990).

- Michael Dower (United Kingdom) was elected President for a second term

Four members were elected to serve as Vice Presidents

- Gérard Baloup (France)
- Angus Fowler (Federal Republic of Germany)
- András Román (Hungary)
- Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg)
- Bernard Mignon (Belgium) was elected Secretary General

Although Edmund Neville-Rolfe wished to resign he agreed to stay on as Treasurer until the end of the year:

- Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom) was elected to continue as Treasurer

The following members were elected to form (with the Bureau) the new ECOVAST International Committee

*Groups I NGO's National or International and III Representatives of NGO's Regional or Local*

- Hans Peter Jeschke (Austria)
- Anders Holm (Denmark)
- Jean Paul Leclercq (France)
- Christian Neumüller (France)
- Jean Chanel (Federal Republic of Germany)
- Helmut Korzonnek (Federal Republic of Germany)
- Ralf-Folke Schwinge (Federal Republic of Germany)
- Nick Dean (United Kingdom)

*Group II Representatives of Government and Group IV Official Organisations*

- Leendert van der Plas (Netherlands)
- Andrzej Kaleta (Poland)

*Group V Individuals –*

- Suzanne Thibal (France)
- Gunter Kröes (Federal Republic of Germany)
- Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia)

Honorary Auditors – John Sell and Alan Leavett (both from the United Kingdom) – elected for 1988-1990.

Angus Fowler and Helmut Korzonnek (Germany) and Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom) were elected as Honorary Life Members. The president offered warmest thanks to Helmut Korzonnek for his efforts in organising the ECOVAST conference and Assembly.

### **ECOVAST Second International Committee held LUBECK-TRAVEMUNDE, Germany on 11 October 1988**

This meeting, held again in the Hotel Maritime, followed after the General Assembly meeting – specifically to discuss a new proposed organisation called EUROPVIVA – the final decision would need to go to the next committee meeting

### **Council of Europe's Tour to villages & small towns in Schleswig-Holstein, Germany on 12 October 1988**

There were six excursions, looking at different examples which demonstrated six different themes: the countryside: tourism, agriculture, nature conservancy and recreation; urban and village development; transport and energy supply.

### **Council of Europe's Colloquium held in LUBECK-TRAVEMUNDE, Germany on 11-13 October 1988**

This conference, 'Perspectives for the Future of Rural Areas' was sponsored by the Council of Europe; the National Academy for Regional Research and Planning; the German Committee of the European Campaign for the Countryside and the Government of the State of Schleswig-Holstein.

**Closing event of the Council of Europe's Countryside Campaign was held in OSTHOLSTEIN, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany on 14 October 1988.**

This official event, was held in the Hasselburg Barn, was attended by the President of Germany. It marked the end of a 2 year campaign which had been launched and attended by ECOVAST members in Portugal in 1987. Michael Dower (President), spoke, among other condemning President Ceausescu's 'systematisation' programme in Romania, which involves the forced movement of people from Transylvanian into 'agri-industrial centres' and the total demolition of evacuated villages.

**ECOVAST formal Statement on Threat to Villages in Romania published by Michael Dower on 14 October 1988**

ECOVAST joined with many other bodies at the closing of the Countryside Campaign in Ostholstein on 14 October 1988 to protest against the plans by the Government of Romania for wholesale demolition of over half the villages in that country. They all consider that the proposal will gravely affect the economic well-being of Romania causing immense suffering to the people and drastically diminish both the cultural heritage of Romania and Europe.

**ECOVAST International Committee held in MUTTERSHOLTZ, France on 26 November 1988**

Present at this meeting, held at the Centre Permanent d'Initiation l'Environnement in hosted by Christian Neumüller (ECOVAST France who works at the centre) were 13 ECOVAST members from 5 countries (Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom) including:

President: Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Vice Presidents: Angus Fowler (Germany); Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg);

Secretary General; Bernard Mignon (Belgium)

Treasurer: Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

ECOVAST Committee Members: Anders Holm (Denmark); Jean Paul Leclercq, Christian Neumüller, Suzanne Thibal (France); John Chanel, Helmut Korzonnek, Gunter Kroes (Germany);

Other ECOVAST members: Rene Schnepf (France)

Several members arrived late because on bad weather (Michael Dower, Jean Chanel and Helmut Korzonnek)

Three members were co-opted to the new committee for the period 1988-1990:

- Santiago Navarro (Spain)
- Rene Schnepf (France)
- Michel Marechal (France)

Apologies for absence were received from: Vice President András Román (Hungary); members Leendert van der Plas (Netherlands); Nick Dean (United Kingdom) and Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia)

Reports were received from ECOVAST National Sections in Belgium, France, and the Federal Republic of Germany

Discussion took place on the Lubeck financing where the large deficit would be covered by loans from members.

**ECOVAST Newsletter 2 was published at the end of 1988 No copy found**

## **1989**

*The year saw the end of communism in many parts of Europe. 1 November 1989 saw the fall of the Berlin Wall. Finland joined the Council of Europe. In December 1989, President Ceausescu of Romania was deposed and killed.*

**ECOVAST Events in WILTZ, Duchy of Luxembourg on April 14-15 April 1989**

This consisted of two Executive Committees and a General Assembly meeting, hosted by Jean Pierre Dichter.

**ECOVAST International Committee held in WILTZ, Duchy of Luxembourg on 14 April 1989**

*Those present at these meeting or had sent apologies are listed in the General Assembly below.*

It was agreed that Gunther Reusch (Germany) should be co-opted onto the Committee to become the new Treasurer once the 1988 accounts had been finalised by Edmund Neville-Rolfe

The Minutes of Committee meeting held in Muttersholtz, 26 November 1988 were approved

The ECOVAST Bank account is moved from Brussels, Belgium to Bank Populaire de Strasbourg, France.

**ECOVAST General Assembly held in Schloss Wiltz, WILTZ, Duchy of Luxembourg on 14 April 1989**



Present at this meeting were ECOVAST members from 22 countries (Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Germany (FRG), Germany (DDR); Hungary, Ireland; Italy; Luxembourg; Malta; Netherlands; Norway; Portugal, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and Yugoslavia) including:

The President Michael Dower (United Kingdom) was in the chair

Vice Presidents: Angus Fowler (Germany); Jean-Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg);

Secretary General: Bernard Mignon (Belgium)

Treasurer: Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

ECOVAST Committee Members: Anders Holm (Denmark); Jean Paul Leclercq, Michel Marechal, Christian Neumüller, Rene Schnepf, Suzanne Thibal (France); Helmut Korzonnek (Germany); Leendert van der Plas (Netherlands); Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia)

Other ECOVAST members: Andres Kaleta (Poland); and Frances Noel-Baker (United Kingdom)

Apologies were received from: Vice President: Gérard Baloup (France); András Román (Hungary); ECOVAST Committee members: Hans Peter Jeschke (Austria); Gunter Kröes, Rolf-Folke Schwinge (Germany),

- The Committee were informed that Gunter Reusch (Germany) has agreed to be the new Treasurer to succeed Edmund Neville-Rolfe at the end of the year

The Minutes of the General Assembly held in Lubeck on 11 October 1988 were agreed.

Reports were received from ECOVAST National Sections in Belgium, Germany and the United Kingdom. The French National Section was reported to be inactive.

Reports were received from the 5 Working Groups that they now had agreed objectives. Only the Rural Architecture Group was functioning but the other 4 are still developing them - Integrated Rural Development under Leendert van der Plas (Netherlands); Rural Tourism under Suzanne Thibal (France); Sustaining Rural Communities under Anders Holm (Denmark) and Environmental Education under Christian Neumüller (France)

The Statutes which had been discussed at the meeting in Lubeck Travemunde in 1988 were approved.

A new Legal Seat for ECOVAST has now been found through the good offices of ARIENA (an ECOVAST member organisation) in 36 Rue de Selestat, Einwihr, Alsace, Muttersholtz F67600 France had been agreed.

### **ECOVAST Second International Committee held in WILTZ, Duchy of Luxembourg on 15 April 1989**

The new ECOVAST Statutes were signed by Bureau elected in Lubeck Travemunde and all members present.

### **Signed First Statutes submitted to the Tribunal at Selestat, France for formal Registration April 1989**

The First ECOVAST Statutes which were finally agreed at the General Assembly held in Wiltz, Luxembourg on 15 April 1989 were signed by the following ECOVAST Members: Michael Dower – President (United Kingdom); Bernard Mignon – Secretary General (Belgium); Edmund Neville Rolfe – Treasurer (United Kingdom); Anders Holm (Denmark); Jean Paul Leclercq, Christian Neumüller, Suzanne Thibal (France); Jean Chanel,, Angus Fowler, Helmut Korzonnek, Rene Schnepf (Germany); Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg); Leendert Van der Plas (Netherlands); Frances Noel-Baker (United Kingdom); Miljenka Fisher (Yugoslavia).

The Statutes consisted of 14 Articles:

- Article 1 Name and Legal Seat
- Article 2 Objectives
- Article 3 Assets
- Article 4 Members
- Article 5 Rights and Obligations of Members
- Article 6 Ending of Membership
- Article 7 Subscriptions on Members
- Article 8 Organs of the Association
- Article 9 The General Assembly
- Article 10 The Executive Committee
- Article 11 Finance
- Article 12 Auditors
- Article 13 Working Languages
- Article 14 Dissolution of the Association

*These 14 Article headings remain the same for both amendments made in 2001 and 2015.*

These first Statutes and subsequent amendments were first written and discussed in English – the language of our committees. They were then translated into French to be sent to the Tribunal in Selestat, France and officially registered on their *Associations du Tribunal d'Instance de ceans* and a formal Certificate confirming this registration as Volume 17: Folio 58 was issued dated 24 September 1990. The Statutes were also translated into German.

**ECOVAST Newssheet No 1 published May 1989 – edited by Bernard Mignon (Belgium) included:**

- Report on General Assembly in Wiltz April 1989
- Report on Rural Architecture Group by András Román
- Reports on National Sections of Belgium, Federal Republic of Germany, and the United Kingdom
- Update on Romanian Villages
- Report on Telecottages International and ECOVAST initiative
- Proposal to link with other European Organisations
- Report on founding member FAK and its award from the county of Marburg
- Report on growing membership – 194 members in 21 countries including 61 organisations

#### **Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly meeting held in BRUSSELS, Belgium in May 1989**

The Council debated a report from its Committee of Culture and Education on redundant religious buildings – based on a survey of such buildings carried out by Angus Fowler (ECOVAST Vice President) for the Council. A resolution was passed calling on churches, governments and local authorities to take measures to preserve such buildings and secure for them an appropriate future use.

#### **ECOVAST / Telecottages International Project developed during May 1989:**

At the ECOVAST Assembly held in Wiltz in April 1989 the President of Telecottages International, Henning Albrechtsen, who had pioneered the first Telecottage in Vemdalen in Sweden, presented the idea of a joint project with ECOVAST to create a network of Telecottages in the villages and small towns of Europe and to set up a European databank concerned with rural policy and action. The ECOVAST President (Michael Dower) and other delegates had attended a conference in April in Lisbon, Portugal where Telecottages Europe (TCE) was set up under the auspices of Telecottages International and where ECOVAST members welcomed and hoped it would sustain the impetus of the Council of Europe's Campaign for the Countryside – launched in Portugal in 1987 and the subject of a major conference in Lubeck Travemunde, Germany in October 1988.

#### **Local Enterprise Development (LEDA) Workshop held in CRETE, Greece in June 1989**

A 'Rural Enterprise and Rural Development Workshop, supported by the European DG V (Social Fund) was a practical exchange of projects using examples from rural regions in Denmark, Greece, France, Ireland, Italy, Portugal and Spain. Michael Dower (ECOVAST President) and Henning Albrechtsen of Telecottages International took part.

#### **First European Rural University held in VIUZ en SALLAS, Savoy, France in 26-30 August 1989**

ECOVAST members; Anders Holm (Denmark), Enrico Capo (Italy); Charles Touzan (France), Charlotte Hursey, Malcolm Mosely, Linda Mottram, and Michael Dower (United Kingdom) took part in this first session of the European Rural University in France, with its theme 'A Call for European Rural People'. Michael Dower (ECOVAST President) reported on the value of the event to ECOVAST – particularly the rich that had been made with the French organisation *Federation Nationale des Foyers Ruraux* (FNFR).

#### **ECOVAST Hungary / HAVT Symposium on Tourism held in BALATONFOLDVAR, Hungary at the end of August 1989**

The event had been organised by the Hungarian Association of Village Societies. András Román (Hungary), Angus Fowler (Germany) and Suzanne Thibal (France) were part of this event.

#### **ECOVAST Executive Committee held in HÖXTER, West Germany on 21 October 1989**

Present at the meeting, held in Kloster Brenkhausen at Höxter, North Rhine Westphalia, in West Germany, were 14 members from 8 countries (Austria, Denmark, Belgium, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Luxembourg, United Kingdom and Yugoslavia), including:

President: Michael Dower (United Kingdom) who also chaired the meeting

Vice Presidents: Angus Fowler (Germany); Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg)

Secretary General: Bernard Mignon (Belgium) who took notes of the meeting

Treasurer: Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

Executive Committee members: Hans Peter Jeschke (Austria); Anders Holm (Denmark); Jean Chanel, Gunter Kröes, Helmut Korzonnek (Germany); and Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia)

Other ECOVAST members: Andrzej Kaleta (Poland); Rene Schnepf (France); Gunther Reusch. (Germany)

Apologies were received from: Vice Presidents: Gérard Baloup (France) and András Román (Hungary); and Committee members: Christian Neumüller, Suzanne Thibal (France); Leendert van der Plas (Netherlands) and Nick Dean (United Kingdom)

The Minutes of the 2 Executive Committee meetings and the General Assembly meeting, all held in Wiltz, Luxembourg on the 14 and 15 April 1989 were all agreed.

ECOVAST now had 212 members made up of 66 organisations, 143 individuals and 3 European bodies

It was reported that the organisation of Romanian Villages had received a formal invitation from the Council of Europe to attend a hearing in Paris at the National Assembly on 13<sup>th</sup> November 1989 which was to discuss the protection of Europe's architectural heritage.

Reports were received from ECOVAST National Sections in Belgium France and Germany and Hungary. A new National Section for the German Democratic Republic (DDR) (East Germany) had been founded in June 1989 in Thuringia, Germany.

The President reported on a project between ECOVAST), Telecottages International and the Town Council of Hõxter about the possible use of Kloster Brenkhausen as a base for a 'House of Europe' study centre.

**ECOVAST Newsletter 3 published in October 1989**      *No copy found*

### **ECOVAST Project The House of Rural Europe, November 1989**

The idea to create a project 'The House of Rural Europe' within a disused monastery building at Brenkhausen near Hoxter in West Germany to be a centre for information, education and research about rural Europe, was suggested at the ECOVAST meeting held in Hõxter, Germany in October 1989. It was put forward by Professor Anne Wolf of Paderborn University, Germany and supported by Henning Albrechtsen of Telecottages International, and the town of Hoxter. A founding company was set up with Henning Albrechtsen, Anne Wolf, Michael Dower (ECOVAST President), Gunter Kroes (ECOVAST Germany) and Walther Anderson (Stadtdirektor of Hoxter) and negotiations started to secure funding from the State of North Rhine-Westphalia and other bodies. The concept was designed to serve, in a highly decentralized way, those who are concerned about protecting the well-being of rural people and of rural heritage. In November 1991 it was reported that the finance was not forthcoming and the project came to an end.

**ECOVAST Newssheet No 2 published December 1989 – edited by Bernard Mignon (Belgium) included:**

- A report on Romanian villages
- A report on Local Employment Development
- A report on the European Rural University event held in Viuz-en-Sallaz in France
- A report on a conference on Hungarian villages in Balatonfoldvar
- A short note on Telecottages
- A report on a proposal to create a 'House of Rural Europe' as a study centre
- Reports on the Rural Architecture Working group meetings held in Hungary and France
- Reports from the following National Sections: France from Gerard Baloup; The Federal Republic of Germany from Helmut Korzonnek; the United Kingdom by Peter Hood ; and Poland will create a group
- A report on the proposed spring conference to be held in Arcadia Greece

## **1990**

*Hungary joined the Council of Europe. The two separate countries of Germany – the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic were united on 3 October 1990 and the whole of Germany became part of the Council of Europe and part of the European Community. The two ECOVAST National Sections also combined to form ECOVAST Germany. Following the death of President Ceausescu in December 1989 in Romania the terrible programme of 'systemisation' of villages was abruptly halted. The country's borders were opened and this allowed Operation Romanian Villages – a Brussels based international campaign which has been strongly supported by ECOVAST to activate humanitarian aid.*

### **ECOVAST / Zagreb University Workshop held in KRIŽEVCI, Croatia on 20-22 May 1990**

This international event was organised by ECOVAST's Rural Architecture Working Group, led by John Sell (United Kingdom) and the Institute of Historical Studies at the University of Zagreb. Present were 80 delegates from 9 countries, including Angus Fowler (Germany) and Eva Kralova (State Conservation Office, Bratislava, Slovakia). The workshop, focused on the policies needed to protect the rural architectural heritage, was held in the historic town of Krizevci (population 11,000) in central Croatia. There were presentation from Poland, Austria and Yugoslavia, and the results of this workshop will eventually form part of report on the work of ECOVAST's Rural Architecture Working Group.

### **ECOVAST Tour associated with the KRIŽEVCI meeting, Croatia on 23 May 1990**

The workshop included a study tour of historic buildings in the town and the surrounding countryside.

### **ECOVAST Workshop held in KARLOVAC, Croatia in May 1990**

Three ECOVAST experts - John Sell, Jane Wade and Angus Fowler - visited the town of Karlovac, to see and advise on the restoration of timber- framed houses and other historic buildings. They gave short talks

on their own work on restoration of barns and timber-framed houses in England and of timber-framed churches in Germany. There was a tour associated with this workshop where Dr Durdica Cvitanovich an architectural historian guided the delegates to nearby villages to see the problems of the restoration of rural architecture.

### **ECOVAST / LEDA Conference on Local Development of Disadvantaged Rural Regions held in VYTINA, Arcadia in the Peloponnese, Greece 24-27 May 1990**

ECOVAST set up the conference in association with the LEDA (Local Employment Development Action) programme of the EEC and the Arcadia Association of Local Authorities, with financial support from the Commission of the European Communities, the AG Levantis Foundation, the Ernest Cook Trust and the Greek Ministry of Culture.

The event attracted more than 60 delegates from government, local authorities and non-governmental agencies from 15 countries (Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany, France, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom - England and Wales - and the United States). The ECOVAST members who attended were:

President: Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

President: Vice Presidents: Angus Fowler (FR Germany), Jean-Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg);

ECOVAST Committee members: Anders Holm (Denmark), Suzanne Thibal (France), Jean Chanel (FR Germany)

Other ECOVAST members: Pierre Coulmin (France), Rudiger Maul (FR Germany), Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece), Enrico Capo (Italy), Staffan Bond (Sweden) and James Derounian, Hon Francis Noel-Baker, John Sell and Jane Wade (United Kingdom)

The conference opened with presentations about initiatives by the European Community and the Leda programme on approaches to local development; followed by a session on rural development and human resources. This was followed by practical initiatives in Sweden – where Steffan Bond (Sweden) spoke about the sparsely populated areas in Sweden; other examples in Cyprus, Turkey, United States and finally in France where Pierre Coulmin (France) spoke about rural development and rural housing. The last session was on heritage and tourism and practical examples were given by Suzanne Thibal (France) and John Sell (United Kingdom).

The conclusions of the conference were expressed in the Arcadia Resolution which was sent to the EEC, Council of Europe and member governments.

### **The Arcadian Resolution resulting from the conference in Vytina held 24-27 May 1990**

- Recognise that the countryside is a major asset to all Europeans
- The problems of sparsity and weak economies represent a challenge to radical change in Eastern Europe and the move to a single market
- Encouraged that there is growing concern about this by national, regional, local authorities and NGO's
- Any solutions must come through partnership working
- Any solution must involve social, economic, culture and environment aspects
- Urge governments to provide adequate and sustained finance
- Urge to put the emphasis on human resources based on local action
- Call for a creative reappraisal of inherited resources in each area and forms of development that respects this heritage
- Note the wide differences in culture between different European countries
- Emphasise the profound importance of mutual respect and the powerful contribution which must be made by the rural people themselves

### **Rural Life Conference 'Rural Britain in Europe' held at KEELE University, England in July 1990**

The event was organised by ACRE and Rural Voice. Many ECOVAST members attended the event. ECOVAST organised a workshop which was attended by 80 people with presentations from Michael Dower and John Sell (ECOVAST United Kingdom) which stimulated a lively debate on the balance of modern needs – such as housing – and protecting historic buildings. The debate has helped shape ECOVAST's policy statement 'A Strategy for Rural Europe' (finally published in 1991).

### **ECOVAST Event 'The future of villages and rural areas in Germany' held in GIESSEN in July 1990**

This event was part of the European Congress of Rural Sociologists who met in Giessen, East Germany. It was attended by ECOVAST Germany – both east and west, and Poland and others. ECOVAST also mounted several exhibitions. The discussions were led by Angus Fowler and Gunter Kröes of ECOVAST Germany.

The final session saw a resolution developed on the problems facing East Germany which was sent to all ECOVAST members in Germany and to politicians and Ministers and ECOVAST will continue to help the Rural Sociologists continue their work on East-West relations.

**ECOVAST News No 3 published August 1990 – edited by Bernard Mignon (Belgium) included:**

- A short report on the Arcadia Conference and the Krizevci Workshop
- New National sections in Hungary, Poland and East Germany
- A report on Mission to the EEC
- A report on the House of Rural Europe
- A report on progress of ECOVAST Strategy for Rural Europe
- A report that there re 275 Members in 23 countries of Europe and 76 organisations
- A report on the Giessen Conference
- A report on National Section of West Germany
- Possible National section in Czechoslovakia
- A report of meeting in Karlovac, Croatia in May
- A report on Rural architecture group
- Launch of Rural Tourism Competition by EUROTER
- A report that Council of Europe will form a grouping on NGO's
- An update on Romania following the death of President Ceausescu
- New magazine 'Eastern European Countryside
- An article on EEC Rural Policy

**ECOVAST International Committee meeting in MARBURG, Hesse, West Germany on 15 September 1990**

Present at the event, held in Evangelischer-Pfarramt-Ost, were 12 ECOVAST members from 8 countries (Belgium, East Germany, East Germany, Federal Republic of Germany, France, Netherlands, Poland, and the United Kingdom) including:

President: Michael Dower (United Kingdom) who also chaired the meeting

Vice Presidents: Angus Fowler (Federal Republic of Germany); Jean-Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg)

Secretary General: Bernard Mignon (Belgium)

ECOVAST Committee members: Suzanne Thibal (France); Jean Chanel, Helmut Korzonnek, Gunter Kröes, Ralf-Folk Schwinge (Federal Republic of Germany); Leendert van der Plas (Netherlands)

Other ECOVAST members; Armin Niemeyer (East Germany); Barbara Weber (Poland)

Apologies were received from: Vice President Gérard Baloup (France); Treasurer Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom); and members Phillippe Richert, Michel Marachal (France); Gunter Reusch (Germany) and Andrzej Kaleta (Poland).

Christian Neumüller (France) resigned from the committee

The Minutes of the Executive Committee held in Hoxter, West Germany on 21 October 1989 were agreed.

Reports were received from ECOVAST National Sections in Federal Republic of Germany; United Kingdom and members group in Yugoslavia. New National Sections had been set up: Hungary in April; Poland in May and East Germany in June 1990

Revised Guidelines for the relationship between the International Committee and the ECOVAST National Group – set out by Bernard Mignon – were laid before the committee. The 15 points of this protocol were:

- The National Section must create a proper legal structure, conforming with the ECOVAST European Statutes while respecting the provisions of the national laws
- A copy of the national statutes and the banking arrangements must be sent to the Secretary General
- The President of the International committee should receive, before each general assembly of the national group, the papers for the assembly plus an invitation to attend
- The Secretary general should receive the official minutes of the general assemblies and a list of those elected to the committee of that group
- The joining of members will operate by means of a simple letter to the Secretary General
- Each member of the national group is automatically a member of the European Association – assuming that the national group sends to the Secretary General a copy of the membership form and the Minutes of the national group accepting his/her membership and description of the new member.
- The national subscriptions may not be of an amount less than those set for the European body, unless agreed otherwise by the European committee
- The national subscriptions shall be set in national; currency and paid into a bank account opened in the name of ECOVAST in the country concerned
- Each quarter a bank statement on that account shall be sent to the Secretary General
- The annual accounts of the national group must be audited by 2 auditors who are not members of the national committee and copies of this audited account sent to the Secretary General
- For those Eastern countries with non-convertible currencies- the international committee will not demand the payment on to the committee of part of their national subscriptions
- The international committee can ask national groups to contribute towards ECOVAST activity at European level and towards the pursuit of common purpose

- For the western countries, the subscription received from members will be divided as 2/3 to the International Committee and 1/3 to the national group. The national groups are free to raise and use directly, other funds within the country
- Where no national committee exists, subscriptions will be collected directly by the Secretary general
- Having been granted by the Council of Europe the right to use its logo, the European body must guarantee the proper use of that logo by national groups. For that reason, the use by the national group of ECOVAST's name, logo and letter heading is subject to prior authorisation by the International President.

*This protocol was updated at Fontwell Magna, England in 1993 and at Bütgenbach, Belgium in 2000 and again in Neusiedler, Austria in October 2017.*

Report on the 'House of Rural Europe' proposal to be a centre (in Brenkhausen near Hoxter, Germany) for education and research on rural Europe

Michael Dower is analysing the comments on the second draft of the Strategy for Rural Europe

It was reported that the death of President Ceaușescu of Romania had halted the terrible programme of systematic destruction of villages; and that the organisations involved in Opération Villages Romains, which during the Ceaușescu era had offered covert support to the rural people affected by the programme, were able to move into open practical support to the Romanian people.

### **ECOVAST/HAVT International Conference 'European Villages and Village Tourism' held in KAPOSVÁR, Hungary on 15-18 October 1990**

The event was held in the Pannonian Agricultural University and initiated by 4 bodies: Hungarian Association for Village Tourism (HAVT); ECOVAST; Tourism in Rural Europe (EUROTER) and Telecottages International (TCI). The main aim of the conference is exchange ideas, and to animate action, on village based tourism / green or rural tourism / throughout the whole continent of Europe. It had a particular focus on cooperative action for marketing of rural tourism among national and regional organisations. A secondary aim; and the reason for holding the conference in Hungary, is specifically to help Hungary and other East European countries to develop rapidly their capability in this field, which can have crucial importance for their economic, cultural and social well being. It is hoped that by the year 2000 these countries will work their economies up to the standard of the EEC and be closely associated with it. There was a strong representation from many European countries, within a total of 90 delegates from 14 countries (including Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, United Kingdom as well as Hungary). There were a series of workshop discussions

- Village and Rural Tourism – chaired by ECOVAST's Maria Meier Gresshoff (Germany):
- Village and Heritage – chaired by Michael Dower, President of ECOVAST (United Kingdom)
- Village and Rural Tourism as a source of income – chaired by Suzanne Thibal of EUROTER
- Marketing of village and rural tourism chaired by Henning Albrechtsen President of TCI/ Telecottages

### **Study Tour of the area around KAPOSVÁR, Hungary on 17 October 1990**

The tour, arranged by HAVT, after the conference, to look at features of rural tourism, visited the villages and towns in the Pannonian area (the Great Hungarian Plain) around Kaposvár – in the counties of Bács-Kiskun County to the east and Somogy County to the west. It included visits to the towns of Baja and Kaposvár and the villages of Császártöltés, Hajós, Gálosfa and Szenna

### **The Kaposvar Resolution resulting from the KAPOSVÁR Conference 18 October 1990**

The policy document on rural tourism arising from the conference held in Kaposvar on October:

- Emphasised the principles of rural tourism – as part of integrated rural development; must have accommodation, infrastructure and other services and suit the capacity of the area
- It congratulates the Council of Europe on their resolution linking rural tourism and the environment and their launching the European Year of Tourism
- Urges the regional governments of Europe to include rural tourism in their policies and programmes
- Urges those organisations involved to work together
- Seeks the support of the media
- Records with pleasure the number of delegates from the countries of Central Europe who attended.

### **ECOVAST events held in GEORGENTHAL, Thuringia, East Germany on November 24-25 1990**

This 2 day event involved the Biennial Assembly followed by an Executive Committee meeting – which resulted in a formal resolution on the threats posed by Brown Coal mining.

### **ECOVAST Biennial Assembly held in GEORGENTHAL, Thuringia, East Germany on 24 November 1990**

Present at the Assembly were 48 delegates from 9 countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Luxembourg, Poland, Sweden, United Kingdom and Yugoslavia): 16 further members had sent in proxy votes. The meeting was hosted by two representatives of the Landrat- Mr Scharff and Mrs Baumann who introduced us to the village of Georgenthal and the plans to renew it for tourism purposes.

There were 22 apologies and the following we named from: Hans Hohmann, Hans Peter Jeschke (Austria); Lellos Demetriades (Cyprus); Christian Neumüller, Rene Schnepf, Suzanne Thibal (France) and Mr Atkins, M. Bertrand, Baron von Landsberg-Velen, M. Bouritsas, M. Baross, M.Lavergne, Marques Moreira, M. Stucki, Mr.Stirling and Mrs Wilkins

This being a voting general assembly there was a formal release of the existing committee from its obligations and the members were thanked for their work over the last 2 years (1988-1990).

The following were elected to the new International Committee to serve for 1990-1992.

*Groups I NGO's National or International and III Representatives of NGO's Regional or Local*

- Bernard Mignon (Belgium)
- Anders Holm (Denmark)
- Pierre Coulmin (France)
- Jean Chanel (Germany)
- Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg)
- Ralf-Folke Schwinge (Germany)
- Csaba Csaky (Hungary)
- Ralf-Eric Lundgren (Sweden)
- Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia)

*Group II Representatives of Government and Group IV Official Organisations*

- András Román (Hungary)
- Andrezj Kaleta (Poland)
- Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

*Group V Individuals –*

- Gunther Kröes (Germany)
- Ursula Stratenwerth (Germany)
- Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

Honorary Auditors Peter Hood and John Sell (United Kingdom) were elected for 1990-1992.

A report had been received on the Rural Architecture Group

Reports had been received on the National Sections for Germany (now one group), Hungary and Poland, followed by updates on Telecottages and the proposed House of Rural Europe projects.

Michael Dower was thanked for his work as President over the four years 1986-1990, and Bernard Mignon was awarded an ECOVAST Honorary Life Membership.

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in GEORGENTHAL, Thuringia, Germany on 25 November 1990**

The new ECOVAST International Committee elected the following members to be the Bureau for 1990-1992:

- Jean-Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg) was elected as the new President
- Michael Dower (United Kingdom) was elected to be Senior Vice President

3 other members were elected to become Vice Presidents:

- Gunter Kröes (Germany)
- András Román (Hungary)
- Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia)
- Bernard Mignon (Belgium) was elected to continue as Secretary General
- Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom) was elected to be Treasurer

Honorary Auditors Peter Hood and John Sell (both of the United Kingdom) were elected for 1990-1992

There were 3 others co-opted onto the new Committee

- Suzanne Thibal (France)
- Angus Fowler (Germany)
- Maria Meier Gresshoff (Germany)

Action to pursue the brown-coal resolution was delegated to Andras Roman and Ursula Stratenworth

### **ECOVAST Brown Coal Resolution agreed in Georgenthal, Germany on 25 November 1990**

The formal resolution agreed by ECOVAST covered 4 points:

- We view, with high concern, the imminent threat of the extended mining in the area of Niederlausitz in Eastern Germany which will cause destruction of landscape and the abandonment and demolition of the village of Volkenburg and of other villages including many fine buildings
- We call upon responsible authorities at European, National and local level to review brown-coal mining
- We recognise that mining makes a major contribution to regional and national economies and energy supplies and local employment – but such mining poses a grave threat to the environment and the heritage
- Meanwhile we demand that the proposed extension to mining in Niederaustiz be delayed until this review is completed.



### **COPA Conference on 'Rural World' held in BRUSSELS, Belgium in November 1990**

COPA is the European agriculture organisation for agriculture and rural training. The event was attended by President Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg), Vice President Michael Dower (United Kingdom) and Bernard Mignon (Belgium). The idea of a non-profit organisation called EURURAL (a consortium of COPA, CEPFAR, ECOVAST and others) was promoted to serve as a formal liaison between local initiatives emerging in the many rural regions of Europe. In the event this body was not chosen by the EEC but it is likely they will ask this body to organise conferences in each of the 12 countries of the Community during the next 3 years. Jean Pierre Dichter is the Vice President of EURURAL.

**ECOVAST Newsletter 3 was published** *No copy of this Newsletter has been found*

## **1991**

*Poland joined the Council of Europe. The Yugoslav Wars started on 3 March 1991 and lasted until 12 November 2001. They led to the break-up of the former Yugoslav Federation into eventually 6 independent states. Croatia and Slovenia became fully independent states on 25 June 1991 and Macedonia (now called The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – FYROM) on 8 September 1991. In this year, the European Commission introduced the first EU-wide measure in rural development, namely the LEADER (Liaison entre les acteurs de l'économie rurale) Community Initiative, through which the Commission provided funding directly (rather than through national governments) to sub-regional partnerships of public, private and civil-society organisations to prepare and implement local development strategies. This measure has evolved over the last 27 years to become a key part of national rural development strategies, with over 2,300 local action groups now deploying LEADER funding within the 28 Member States, and growing interest in this technique in other parts of Europe and the world. ECOVAST has been an advocate of this approach since 1991.*

### **ECOVAST / ICAM Project January 1991**

Following a fact finding visit to Motovun in 1990, ECOVAST proposed to form a limited Company with the International Centre of Anthropology in Motovun, Croatia to support the development needs of the Istrian peninsula – by creating a Regional Park and restoring and converting derelict buildings and rebuilding the very fragile economy.

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in the Savoyal Palace in RACKEVE, Hungary on 23 March 1991**

Present were 20 ECOVAST members from 8 countries (Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Luxembourg, Poland, United Kingdom and Yugoslavia) including:

President: Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg)

Vice Presidents: András Román (Hungary); Michael Dower (United Kingdom); Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia)

Treasurer: Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

ECOVAST Executive Committee members: Anders Holm (Denmark); Pierre Coulmin (France); Angus Fowler, Ursula Stratenwerth (Germany); Csaba Csaky (Hungary); Andrzej Kaleta (Poland);

Other ECOVAST members: Jean Chanel, Maria Meier-Gresshoff (Germany).

Other members who attended: Francoise Coulmin (France), Sergiu Josipescu and Lazslo Szabo (from Romania) and Alice Deak, Andrea Gadoczi, Marta Velcony and Marmand Daia,.

Apologies for absence were received from: Vice president Gunter Kröes (Germany); Secretary General Bernard Mignon (Belgium); and ECOVAST members Ralf Folke Schwinge (Germany) and Suzanne Thibal (France).

Minutes of Executive Committees held in Marburg, Germany on 15 September 1990; and in Georgenthal, Germany on 25 November, and the Minutes of the Biennial Assembly Committee held in Georgenthal, Germany on 25 November 1990 were all agreed.

Two new members were co-opted onto the ECOVAST Executive Committee:

- Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece).
- Enrico Capo (Italy)

Report on proposed International Working Groups: the Committee agreed the principle proposed by the President, and Maria Meier-Gresshoff volunteered to initiate a working-group on rural tourism, starting with Central and Eastern Europe and replace Michael Dower as ECOVAST's representative on EUROTER; Ursula Stratenwerth volunteered to initiate a working-group on protected areas and environment; Edmund Neville-Rolfe expressed willingness to lead a group on Rural Development; Andras Roman asked that Miljenka Fischer, rather than himself, be the main Executive Committee contact on Rural Architecture.

Report on the national sections so far indicated the Belgium was a formally constituted group; France seems to have fallen into abeyance; Germany is formally constituted and now was a combination of the previous groups



for East and West Germany; Poland is formally constituted; Hungary is a group without formal constitution, but with a Chairman and Secretary; and the United Kingdom is also group without formal constitution but with Chairman, Secretary and bank account

The protocol for frequency of meetings was agreed that the full Executive Committee should meet two times a year, one of the meetings to coincide with the General Assembly.

A second draft of the Strategy for Europe had been sent round to members. A third draft of the Strategy was now being prepared.

### **ECOVAST / CEPFAR Conference on 'Adult Education and Rural Development, held at the German Academy of Rural Youth at FREDEBURG in May 1991**

President Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg) and 5 other ECOVAST members were invited as experts. Michael Dower (Vice president – United Kingdom) delivered a paper on 'Problems in Application of EEC Policies for Rural Development'

### **Second European Rural University held in SCHULL, Ireland in June 1991**

This event in this gathering at the Community Council in West Cork County in south western Ireland had the theme 'Agriculturalists and Others Working Together in Rural Development. Several ECOAST members including Enrico Capo (Italy) and Michael Dower (United Kingdom) took part in this event which was accompanied by local visits to rural projects.

### **VIRGILE European Programme Seminar held in FOURAS, France on 10-12 October 1991**

The conference theme was 'Agriculture, Environment and Management of Space'. The first day had the opening speech on 'Notions of the Environment' by Marc Colmou –from an environmental organisation UNCIP based in Paris; followed by 'Decomartmentalization in Agriculture and the Environment; Regional Diversities; and Partnership.

The afternoon session had examples of experiments in space management from Holland and Portugal and land planning in Charente Maritime (France).

The second morning had more examples from France and the United Kingdom and a presentation of European Space Management Policy by Bertrand Delpuech of DG XI – Commission of the European Communities. The afternoon session about regional diversities was chaired by Enrico Capo (Italy) and Michael Dower (United Kingdom) was one of the speakers.

The final day was split into 4 workshops which then got together to draft proposals.

### **ECOVAST Event in NIEDERBRONN LES BAINS, Alsace, France on 7-9 November 1991**

This was a three day event in France with the first day given over to the meetings of International Working Groups; and followed by an Executive Committee and then the General Assembly.

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in NIEDERBRONN LES BAINS, France on 8 November 1991**

Those present at the meeting or sent apologies are listed under the General Assembly notes below.

Bernard Mignon offered his resignation as Secretary General which the Committee accepted.

- The committee elected Pierre Coulmin (France) to the post of Secretary General on a temporary basis.

The Minutes of the Executive Committee held in Rackeve, Hungary on 23 March 1991 were agreed

Report that the House of Rural Europe project had collapsed

### **ECOVAST General Assembly held in NIEDERBRONN LES BAINS, France on 9 November 1991**

*Only part of the Minutes have been found but a report exists in Newssheet 4*

Present at the meeting were 11 ECOVAST members from 7 countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Luxembourg, United Kingdom, and Yugoslavia) including:

President: Jean-Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg)

Senior Vice Presidents: Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Vice President: Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia):

Secretary General: Bernard Mignon (Belgium)

Treasurer: Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

Committee members: Angus Fowler, Ursula Stratenworth (Germany); Csaba Csaky (Hungary);

Other ECOVAST members: Pierre Coulmin, Suzanne Thibal (France); Jean Chanel (Germany)

Apologies for absence were received from: Vice Presidents Gunter Kroes (Germany); Andras Roman (Hungary); Executive Committee members: Anders Holm (Denmark); Andrzej Kaleta (Poland); Ralf Erik Lundgren (Sweden) and Maria Meier Gresshoff (Germany);

The Minutes of the previous General Assembly held in Georgenthal, Germany in November 1990 were agreed.

The International Working Groups on Agriculture, Rural Tourism and Rural Development reported from their meetings on the first day. The Assembly agreed to the setting up of 2 new groups:

- Agriculture and the Environment which will be run by Vice president Michael Dower (United Kingdom) and Stratenworth (President of the German national Section)
- Rural Culture – where members were requested to join and there were reports from the Working groups on Agriculture and Environment; Rural Tourism; Rural Development

The General Assembly approved a resolution on Croatia – calling for an end to the brutal war there and offering the expertise of the ECOVAST network towards the major co-operative effort that will be needed to rebuild the life and to make good the appalling damage to the heritage of Croatia when the conflict is over

**ECOVAST Newssheet No 4 published November 1991 – edited by Pierre Coulmin (France): included**

- An obituary for Ralf-Folke Schwinge (Germany) of the German organisation for historic farm buildings
- A short report on the Executive Committee in Rackeve, Hungary in March 1991
- A report on the final approval of ECOVAST Strategy for Rural Europe at the Executive meeting in Rackeve
- A report on the Annual General Assembly held in November 1991 in Neiderbronn-les Bains in France
- Resignation of Bernard Mignon and election of new Secretary Pierre Coulmin of France
- A report on Rural Architecture Group
- Reports on Working groups; Agriculture and Environment; Rural Tourism; Rural Development in Central and Eastern Europe and new group on Rural Culture
- Reports on National Sections of Germany, Poland
- Report on the Council of Europe who have set up 8 working groups – ECOVAST is represented on 3 of them: (a) Culture and Education; (b) Rural Development and (c) Towns and their relations
- Report on Brown Coal
- Report on 'Rural World' conference in Brussels organised by COPA and the decision to set up a non-profit organisation called EURURAL with Jean Pierre Dichter as Vice President
- Report on Fredeburg Seminar in May 1991
- Report on Second European Rural University held in Schull in southwest Ireland
- Report on the House of Rural Europe initiative which has now been dropped

**ECOVAST Strategy for Rural Europe was published December 1991**

This was the first major ECOVAST policy statement on rural Europe. It was compiled by Michael Dower after many discussions with ECOVAST members. It was first presented to the International Committee in Marburg, Germany in September 1990; a revised draft was discussed at the Biennial Assembly in Georgenthal, Germany in November 1990 and suggested alterations made and a third draft discussed at the ECOVAST International Committee in Rackeve, Hungary and again at the General Assembly in Niederbronn les Bains, France in November 1991 and the final document agreed in December 1991 and published in the same month.

The Strategy starts with the following statement: 'The Countryside of Europe covers 85% of the continents land area; the source of most of its food, much of its timber, minerals and other raw materials; and offers beauty, peace and recreation. It is also a rich reserve of wildlife and human culture. The people who live in it are facing major changes and this ECOVAST statement is designed to alert the peoples and decision makers of Europe to these changes and the need for action to protect the well-being of the countryside of Europe and its people. The action is in the interest to all Europeans including those who live in cities who draw benefit from the countryside in many ways'. ECOVAST, as a pan European body whose membership embraces governmental agencies, no –government bodies and individuals, wishes to strengthen the voice and illuminate the action of rural people everywhere.

The report lists the impacts of change – such as depopulation of many peripheral areas; expansion of cities; modernisation of agriculture; pollution of soil, water and air; ill-conceived development of recreation and tourism; centralisation of commerce, industry and government and the fact that many policies are animated by urban thinking or priorities. ECOVAST is committed to the search for policy and action which will tackle these problems. The policy proposals are animated by three key principles:

- People and the environment – wanting to see modern and sustainable quality of life which involves long-term stewardship of natural resources and inherited cultures
- Integrated action involving both government and local people
- With consultation and involvement of local people

The report is set out under the following headings:

- Proposals for Policy and Action subdivided into; the revival of Rural Economies; Agriculture: changing the emphasis; Forestry; Manufacturing, craft and service industries; Rural Tourism; Rural Housing; Telecommunications; Rural Services; Social and Cultural Vitality; Safeguarding the Heritage; The natural Heritage; The Cultural Heritage; Interpretation and Education
- Partnership in Policies and Action

ECOVAST's role as a pan European body whose membership embraces governmental agencies, non-government bodies and individuals wishes to strengthen the voice and illuminate the action of rural people everywhere.

*This main policy document setting out ECOVAST opinions has been reviewed several times.*

- *There was a review in 1994; in 1996 through its Work on Rural Architecture; in 1997 with a more specific and detailed report on 'Agriculture and Forestry'; in 2000 the statement called 'All Europe shall live' was published; and updates in 2006; in 2008 and in 2013.*

## **1992**

*The Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit in June set out a new agenda on world environment and development and set out a new – but non-binding Action Plan called Agenda 21 – where 21 refers to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It set out new principles for forestry; a convention on biological diversity; a framework for climate change and a convention to combat desertification. Bosnia and Herzegovina became an independent state on 1 March 1992. The remaining part of former Yugoslavia (made up of Serbia and Montenegro) became called The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Bosnia and Herzegovina; Croatia and Slovenia became members of the United Nations on 22 May 1992. Bulgaria joined the Council of Europe. The same year saw major changes to the Common Agricultural Policy - one of the oldest policies of the European Union created in 1962 to help farmers. The 'MacSharry Reforms', named after the Irish Commissioner, replaced the support for products through prices by support for producers through income support and direct payments. The Structural Funds were also reformed to speed up the adjustment of agricultural and rural structures, with new Objectives 5a which supported farmers and 5b which listed rural areas where development could be given special support.*

### **ECOVAST / Federation Rural Housing and Planning Conference on Rural Tourism held in AVIGNON, France in April 1992**

ECOVAST were co-organisers (Pierre Coulmin France and ECOVAST Secretary General) with the French National Federation of Rural Housing and Planning. It was supported by the European Commission, the French Government and the Department of Vaucluse. The Federation had prepared a charter for the definition of a new rural tourism product, under the title 'Rendez-vous en France' consisting of accommodation at a characterful site, tourism information, regional products, locally based activities and an organisational structure. Several pilot projects will be launched in France. The purpose of the meeting is to review similar experiences from elsewhere in Europe and to discuss the creation of a network of projects of this type. The European Commission expressed interest. ECOVAST speakers were Pierre Coulmin (France); Maria Meier Gresshoff (Germany); Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg) and Richard Dickinson (United Kingdom).

### **The First LEADER Gathering held in BRUSSELS, Belgium held on 14-16 May 1992**

The new EEC new programme of LEADER launched in 1991 which has a network of 213 local rural development groups – each of which is developing a community programme over the next 3 years 1992-1994. The first gathering of all representatives was in May under the auspices of DGVI where the Commissioner Ray McSharry made a strong statement to integrated and locally based rural development (the LEADER model) – also the kind of rural development advocated in ECOVAST's Strategy for Rural Europe). President Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg) and Vice President Michael Dowe (United Kingdom) represented ECOVAST

### **ECOVAST International Workshop held in USTEK, Bohemia, Czech Republic in May 1992**

Present at the workshop, was convened by John Sell (United Kingdom and Chair of Rural Architecture Working Group), were 60 people from 11 countries. They discussed the results of a questionnaire survey on national systems on the protection of historic buildings, and debated the scope of a draft Strategy for Rural Architecture prepared by Detlef Simons (Germany), which should be published in the autumn and will provide a basis for future campaigning by the Working Group. Concern was raised about the impact of armed conflict on people and buildings in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia and John Sell agreed to relay this concern to the International Committee.

### **ECOVAST Tour connected to the USTEK workshop in the Czech Republic in May 1992**

There was a study tour of farmsteads and villages led by ECOVAST members Vera Voderova and Suzana Syrova, which revealed a remarkably fine heritage of traditional buildings and a strong state system for protection. However it was noted that new Czech legislation will tax every roofed building which may lead to the abandonment of many rural buildings.

### **Council of Europe Colloquy event held in PALERMO, Sicily, Italy in June 1992**

President Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg) spoke on the theme of 'Tourism as an Element in Lasting Development'

### **European Community European Conference on Rural Development held in INVERNESS, Scotland, United Kingdom on 2-3 July 1992**

The event attracted 500 delegates and discussed the emphasis on community-based approach to rural development and the need for clearer links between rural development and other EC measures. President Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg) represented ECOVAST.

### **EURURAL Network was established in 1992**

This alliance was established by 25 networks from European bodies or national organisations from 12 countries. ECOVAST became a member. The objective was to lobby the European Commission on behalf of rural issues. EURURAL is based with its member organisation CEPFAR in Brussels, Belgium.

### **ECOVAST News No 5 published by Pierre Coulmin (France) in August 1992: included:**

- The Rural Tourism conference in Avignon France held in April 1992
- Article on the Council of Europe and our ECOVAST representation on 3 of their working groups of NGO's
- Article on the progress of EURURAL and the proposed conferences - the first conference has been organised in Greece and the second is expected in Portugal
- Report on the new EEC new programme of LEADER launched in 1991 which has a network of 213 local rural development groups – each of which is developing a community programme over the next 3 years 1992-1994. The first gathering of all representatives was in May under the auspices of DGVI where the Commissioner Ray McSharry made a strong statement to integrated and locally based rural development (the LEADER model) – the kind of rural development advocated in ECOVAST's Strategy for Rural Europe)
- Report on their First meeting in May 1992
- Report on the EC Conference on Rural Development in Inverness, Scotland
- A new National section has been set up in Romania
- Report on the Rural Architecture Group and meetings in Ustek, Bohemia in May 1992 and Croatia in July

### **ECOVAST International Committee meeting held in PARIS, France on 4 October 1992**

Present at the meeting, hosted by Pierre Coulmin, held at the offices of the Federation Nationale de l'Habitat Rural, were 7 ECOVAST members from 5 countries (France, Germany, Hungary, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom) including:

President: Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg)

Vice President: András Román (Hungary)

Secretary General: Pierre Coulmin (France)

ECOVAST Executive Committee members: Angus Fowler (Germany); Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Other ECOVAST members: Jean Chanel (Germany); Enrico Capo (Italy)

Apologies were received from: Vice Presidents: Gunter Kroes (Germany) and Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia); Treasurer Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom); ECOVAST Executive Committee members: Ursula Stratenwerth (Germany); Csaba Csaky (Hungary); Andrzej Kaleta (Poland); other ECOVAST members: Bernard Mignon (Belgium); Suzanne Thibal (France) and Maria Meier Gresshoff (Germany)

Reports were received from International Working Groups: Rural Architecture, by John Sell and Jane Wade: Local Authorities Working Group, by Jean-Pierre Dichter: and Farmers and Rural People, by Enrico Capo and Claude Brette

Reports on National Sections were received from: Poland, Slovakia and a new group in Romania

### **ECOVAST events held in REMOUCHAMPS, Liege Province, Belgium on 22-25 October 1992**

This 4 day event in Belgium involved a Scientific Forum, a tour, followed by an Executive Committee meeting and a Biennial Assembly and concluding with another tour.

### **University of Liege Scientific Forum held in REMOUCHAMPS, Belgium on 22 October 1992**

The forum discussed the 'management of farmland and forests in Europe and in Belgium and was attended by several ECOVAST members who were attending the 3 day Biennial Assembly event the next day.

### **ECOVAST tour of the Ardennes region of Belgium on 23 October 1992**

Charles Christians (ECOVAST Belgium), and his colleagues of the Ourthe-Ambleve Group for Regional Economic Revival, acted as hosts of the first tour of the Ardennes region, Liege Province, of Belgium with Charles Christians. We saw a strong contrast between the main valleys where the towns and traffic had been growing rapidly because of the Liege conurbation and the Ardennes plateau where efforts are being made to diversify the rural economy in the face of agricultural decline.

### **LEADER Programme Event held in REMOUCHAMPS, Belgium on 24 October 1992**

The second event was a LEADER discussion on the second day which was attended by many ECOVAST members and was led by Yves Champetier, leader of the Central Project group for the LEADER programme

based in Brussels. This was followed by Jean Pierre Dichter (the ECOVAST President) who is organising a LEADER project in Luxembourg. Members welcomed the LEADER approach which is the same as that advocated in ECOVAST's own Strategy for Rural Europe.

### **ECOVAST Biennial Assembly held in REMOUCHAMPS, Belgium on 24 October 1992**

Present at the meeting were 35 ECOVAST members including:

President: Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg)

Secretary General: Pierre Coulmin (France) who also announced that he did not want to continue.

Treasurer: Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

Senior Vice President: Micahel Dower (United Kingdom) and Vice Presidents- Gunter Kröes (Germany) and András Román (Hungary)

ECOVAST Committee member: Angus Fowler (Germany) and Auditor John Sell (United Kingdom)

The names of those who apologised were not given.

The Minutes of the General Assembly held in Neiderbronn-les-Bains, France on 9 November 1991 were agreed.

The 3 International Working Groups had held a meeting just before the assembly: Rural Architecture by John Sell (United Kingdom); Farmers and Rural People working together for Rural Development by Enrico Capo (Italy) and Claude Brette (France); and the Role of Local Authorities by Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

A new National Section had been founded in Slovakia

A resolution was made on the devastating impact of the war in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina on their people and historic and natural heritage and how ECOVAST and the Rural Architecture Working Group should get involved in the future reconstruction

The Ustek meeting of the Rural Architecture Group had discussed on the new law introduced in the Czech Republic on taxation on property and the expected impact on historic buildings in small towns and villages. The resolution was to ask the Czech government to reconsider this legislation.

This being a voting general assembly there was a formal release of the existing committee from its obligations and the members were thanked for their work over the last 2 years (1990-1992). The following members were elected to the new committee for 1992-1994 under the different categories:

#### *Groups I NGO's National or International and III Representatives of NGO's Regional or Local*

- Pierre Coulmin (France)
- Gésine Deserbais (France)
- Jean Chanel (Germany)
- Angus Fowler (Germany)
- Hans Schwiderski (Germany)
- Ursula Stratenwerth (Germany)
- Sandor Köles (Hungary)
- Enrico Capo (Italy)
- Ulf Brangefeldt (Sweden)
- Peter Hood (United Kingdom)

#### *Group II Representatives of Government and Group IV Official Organisations*

- András Román (Hungary)
- Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg)
- Andrzej Kaleta (Poland)
- Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia)

#### *Group V Individuals –*

- Charles Christians (Belgium)
- Maria Meier Gresshoff (Germany)
- Gunter Kröes (Germany)
- Rudiger Maul (Germany)
- Călin Hoinărescu (Romania)
- Michael Dower (United Kingdom)
- Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in REMOUCHAMPS, Belgium on 24 October 1992**

*No note of this meeting have been found but a report is made on it at Fontwell Magna, on January 1993*

The new International Committee then elected the following members to be the Bureau for 1992-1994.

- András Román (Hungary) as the new President

Four members as Vice Presidents

- Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg)
- Gunter Kröes (Germany)

- Michael Dower (United Kingdom)
  - Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia/Croatia)
  - Peter Hood (United Kingdom) to become the new Secretary General
  - Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom) to continue as Treasurer
- Honorary Auditors Peter Hood and John Sell (both of United Kingdom) were elected for 1992-1994

#### **ECOVAST Tour associated with the REMOUCHAMPS assembly on 25 October 1992**

The final day was a tour of the spectacular grottos of Remouchamps; the floral village of Deigne and the Chateau Villars-Ste-Gertrude which has been restored by the local community into a hotel and chalets.

#### **European Conference on 'Landscapes in a new Europe' held in BLOIS, France in October 1992**

ECOVAST has been working since 1991 with two other NGO's – the Landscape Research Group and the European Federation of National and Nature Parks to promote the idea for a European Convention on Landscapes. Michael Dower (United Kingdom) and Jean Chanel (Germany) attended this event in France which secured broad support for a convention on the protection of rural landscapes. Afterwards contact with the Cultural Division of the Council of Europe found that they were already thinking along the same lines.

#### **ECOVAST Newsletter 6 published December 1992 – edited by Peter Hood (United Kingdom): included:**

- Obituaries on John Prizeman (United Kingdom); Henning Albrechtsen from Denmark (Telecottages International) and Hans de Koster of EUROPA Nostra
- A report on the gathering in Remouchamps, Belgium in October 1991
- A reference to the scientific forum held at the University of Liege on 22<sup>nd</sup> October
- An article on the ECOVAST tour of the Ardennes organised by Charles Christians and his colleagues
- A report on the presentations on the LEADER programme meeting on Saturday 24 October
- A report on the meetings of 3 Working Groups
- A report on the Biennial Assembly meeting itself – followed by a reception with the Mayor of Aywaille.
- A report of the tour following the assembly
- The Resultion on Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina
- The recent law on taxation of property in Bohemia and Moravia and and the impact on historic monuments
- An article on the impending ECOVAST Strategy for Rural Architecture
- Reports from the National sections: Germany from Ursula Stratenwerth; Poland from Barbara Weber; Slovakia from Josef Usak; and the United Kingdom from Edmund Neville-Rolfe

### **1993**

*The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) became a member of the United Nations on 8 April 1993. Estonia, Lithuania, Romania Slovenia, Czech Republic and Slovakia joined the Council of Europe.*

#### **ECOVAST Interntional Committee held at FONTWELL MAGNA, England on 23 January 1993**

Present at the meeting, held in the Springhead Trust Offices, hosted by Peter Hood were 20 members from 7 countries (Germany, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom); including:

President: Andras Román (Hungary)

Vice Presidents: Gunter Kröes (Germany); Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Secretary General: Peter Hood (United Kingdom)

Treasurer; Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

Executive Committee members: Jean Chanel, Angus Fowler, Maria Meier Gresshoff, Ursula Stratenwerth, Hans Schwiderski (Germany); Sandor Köles (Hungary); Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg); Enrico Capo (Italy); Andrzej Kaleta (Poland); Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); Ulf Brangefeldt (Sweden)

Other ECOVAST members: Frances Noel-Baker, John Sell, Jane Wade (United Kingdom) and Monica Danesa (Romania)

- Josef Ušák (Slovakia) was copted onto the Executive Committee

Apologies for absence were received from Vice President Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia); ECOVAST Executive Committee members: Charles Christians (Belgium); Pierre Coulmin, Gésine Deserbais (France); Rudiger Maul (Germany) and ECOVAST member Suzanne Thibal (France).

The Minutes of the Paris Committee and the Remouchamps Committee both held in 1992 were agreed.

It was agreed to send a letter on our Bosnian resolution to the Presidents of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia; the EC and UN Peace Negotiators; the President of the European Commission and the United National Secretary General and others.

It was also reported that the proposed tax system in Bohemia and Moravia in the Czech Republic (reported at the meeting in Remouchamps, France) had now been revised the Committee welcomed this change.

A revised Protocol for ECOVAST National Sections in Eastern Europe was discussed. It was confirmed that:

- National Sections in Eastern Europe were free to set their own level of membership fee, BUT two thirds of it must be used for international activity and the remaining third could be used for their own activities
- Sections must inform the International Committee who must give approval to their subscriptions.
- National Sections should ensure they keep membership lists, with correct addresses.

### **Council of Europe meeting of landscape experts held in STRASBOURG, France in February 1993**

Gésine Deserbais (France) represented ECOVAST at this meeting which focussed on the conservation and management of heritage sites where they agreed to form a recommendation to be put to the Council of Europe.

### **ECOVAST Newsletter 7 published April 1993 – edited by Peter Hood (United Kingdom): included**

- An article on Cultural Landscapes
- A response to ECOVAST resolution on Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina from the European Commission
- A short report on the Environmental Effects of War on Croatia and visits to Karlovac and Dubrovnik
- Reports from National Sections: Germany from Ursula Stratenwerth; Hungary from Vera Muszik; Slovakia from Josef Usak; United Kingdom from Michael Dower
- An article on Romania and the potential work to be carried out

### **ECOVAST Seminar held at the Agricultural University, UPPSALA, Sweden in April 1993**

The meeting was arranged by Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden) and Michael Dower (United Kingdom). The event marked the starting point of a membership campaign in Sweden.

### **Third European Rural University held in EVORA, Portugal in 20-23 May 1993**

Enrico Capo (ECOVAST, Italy) and Phil Turner (United Kingdom ECOVAST) took part in this event in the Alentejo in Portugal with its theme 'Culture and Identity as a Driving Force for Local Development'

### **ECOVAST Conference on Traditional Rural Architecture held at PSZCZYNA, Poland on 20-25 May 1993**

This event, organised by ECOVAST Poland included a meeting of the Working Group on Rural Architecture.

### **Council of Europe International Scientific Conference on Cultural Landscape held in BUDAPEST and KESZTHELY, Hungary on 7-13 June 1993**

The event, held under the auspices of the Hungarian National Committee of ICOMOS and involving UNESCO, was organised by ECOVAST President Andras Roman (Hungary). Michael Dower was the keynote speaker.

### **ECOVAST International Committee held at OELDE, North Rhine Westphalia, Germany on 10 July 1993**

Present at this meeting, hosted by Maria Meier Gresshoff, were 23 ECOVAST members from 11 countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden and the United Kingdom) including:

President: András Román (Hungary)

Vice Presidents: Gunter Kröes (Germany); Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg); Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

ECOVAST Executive Committee members: Charles Christians (Belgium); Gésine Deserbais (France); Jean Chanel, Angus Fowler, Maria Meier Gresshoff, Ursula Stratenwerth, Hans Schwiderski (Germany); Enrico Capo (Italy); Andrzej Kaleta (Poland); Calin Hoinarescu (Romania); Josef Ušák (Slovakia); Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden)

Other invites included Madame Christians (Belgium); Gunter Reusch, Detlef Simons, Gerda Stachowitz (Germany); Hannalore Gelhausen, Monica Daneasa (Romania)

Apologies for absence were received from: Vice President Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia); Secretary General Peter Hood (United Kingdom); Treasurer Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom); ECOVAST Committee members: Rudiger Maul (Germany); Sandor Köles (Hungary); and Suzanne Thibal (France)

The Minutes of the meeting at Fontwell Magna on 23 January were agreed.

There were reports from Working Groups: Rural Architecture by Michael Dower (United Kingdom); Agriculture & Environment by Ursula Stratenwerth (Germany); and Rural Tourism by Maria Meier Gresshoff (Germany).

There were reports from National Sections from Germany, Hungary from András Román; Slovakia from Josef Ušák and Sweden from Ulf Brangenfeldt where a new national group is developing

### **ECOVAST General Assembly held in SINAIA, Romania on 23 October 1993**

Present at this assembly in Prahova County, hosted by Magdalena Banu and ECOVAST Romania, were 44 ECOVAST members from 7 countries (France, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden and the United Kingdom) including:



President: András Román (Hungary)

Vice President: Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Secretary General: Peter Hood (United Kingdom)

ECOVAST committee members: Angus Fowler, Maria Meier-Gresshoff (both from Germany); Sandor Köles (Hungary); Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); Josef Ušák (Slovakia); Edmund Neville-Rolfe, John Sell (United Kingdom)

Guests representatives of Romanian regional government – C Hartia and N Balanoui

Apologies were received from 11 members from Belgium, Croatia, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Poland, and the United Kingdom (England and Scotland)

The Minutes of the Biennial Assembly held in Remouchamps, Belgium on 24 October 1992 were agreed.

Reports were received from International Working Groups on Rural Architecture by John Sell: Rural Tourism by Maria Meier Gresshoff

Reports were received from the National Sections from Germany, Hungary, and Romania and newly formed Sections in Croatia and Slovakia, and the United Kingdom.

### **ECOVAST Tour of villages in the local area associated with Sinaia event held on 24 October 1993**

The coach tour visited the villages in the Sinaia area. On the tour there was an impromptu committee meeting although no minutes were taken.

### **Conference on the Brandenburg Dwelling House, held in MOGLIN, Germany in October 1993**

The conference held in the hamlet of Moglin, east of Berlin in the State of Brandenburg, was organised by agencies for building and rural development, and the House for Rural Areas in Brandenburg. Gerda Stachowitz and Angus Fowler (ECOVAST Germany) took part.

### **ECOVAST/University of Wrocław Conference held in ŚWIERADÓW-ZDRÓJ in Poland in November 1993**

The theme 'Coal – People – Environment' was arranged by both ECOVAST Germany and ECOVAST Poland with the Institute of Sociology of the University of Wrocław; FAK and Sachsischer Verein für Volksbauweise. Angus Fowler reported on the continuing destruction of villages and the landscape and particularly on the loss of churches. A declaration was developed by the conference delegates.

## **1994**

*The GATT agreement is replaced by the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Andorra joined the Council of Europe. 1994 saw the second round of the EU rural support called LEADER. It was still restricted to limited areas but covered the period 1994-1999.*

### **ECOVAST Strategy for Rural Europe was updated in 1994**

The original document was published at the end of 1991. This 1994 revision which was in effect a major re-write.

It sets out ECOVAST policy for rural areas under the following headings:

- Introduction – The countryside of Europe contains the homes of millions of people; severely affected by major forces of change. The purpose of the Strategy is to alert the peoples and decision-makers of Europe to these changes and to highlight the need to protect the well-being of both countryside and rural people.
- The impact of change
- The three key principles;
  - people and the environment
  - integrated action
  - consult and involve the people

The next 14 headings are the same as those in the first Strategy published in 1991

The conclusion of this 1994 revision emphasised:

- The central role which rural people themselves should play in the evolution of policy and in taking action to serve their own well-being and to protect their heritage – because Government alone cannot do the job;
- ECOVAST as a pan-European body whose membership embraces government agencies, non-government bodies and individuals – is committed to the creation of links between rural people and governments. ECOVAST wishes to strengthen the voice, and actions, of rural people everywhere.

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in MARBURG, Hesse, Germany on 5 February 1994**

The meeting marked the tenth anniversary of the founding of ECOVAST. It was formally opened by the President who welcomed the Founder President Francis Noel-Baker (who chaired the meeting) and all



those attending. Present at this meeting, hosted by Angus Fowler (Germany) were 17 members from 8 countries (Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom) including:

President: Andras Roman (Hungary)

Vice Presidents: Gunter Kröes (Germany); Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Secretary General: Peter Hood (United Kingdom)

Treasurer: Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

ECOVAST International Committee members: Jean Chanel, Angus Fowler, Maria Meier-Gresshoff, Rudiger Maul, Hans Schwiderski, Ursula Stratenwerth (Germany); Enrico Capo (Italy); Andrzej Kaleta (Poland); Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); Jozef Ušák (Slovakia) and Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden)

Founder President: Francis Noel-Baker (United Kingdom)

Guests included Herr Dietrich Moller (Mayor of Marburg) and Bernard Henning of FAK Berlin/Brandenburg and 3 others.

Apologies were received from: Vice Presidents – Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg) and Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia) and ECOVAST International Committee members: Charles Christians (Belgium); Gésine Deserbais (France), and Sandor Köles (Hungary).

The minutes of the International Committee meeting held in Oelde, Germany on 10 July 1993 and the minutes of the General Assembly held in Sinaia, Romania on 23 October were both agreed.

A report was received from the National Section in Sweden

The current 'leaflet' was discussed and a decision to update it by a working group of Peter Hood, Michael Dower, Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom) and Gunter Kröes and Jean Chanel (Germany).

#### **ECOVAST Tour associated with the Marburg event held on 6<sup>th</sup> February 1994**

As part of the celebration was a tour – led by Angus Fowler - of villages in the area focussing on old churches saved by FAK and also visited the village hall of Bellnhausen, the site of the formal founding of ECOVAST.

#### **Conference on Village Renewal within the DEBAL Fair in ROSTOCK, Germany in February 1994**

Angus Fowler (Germany) gave a talk with slides on the preservation of threatened village churches in Europe.

#### **ECOVAST Poland / University of Torun Conference of Rural Sociologists on Agricultural Change and Rural Households held near GDANSK, Poland in March 1994**

The events were also sponsored by the Agricultural Advisory Centre in Gdansk and the German Federal Research Institute for Agricultural The participants came from Poland, the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, and Russia. Andrzej Kaleta of ECOVAST Poland and the University of Torun and Angus Fowler took part and Angus spoke on the work and activities of ECOVAST.

#### **EUROPA NOSTRA Award Ceremony held in BRHLOVCE, Slovakia in April 1994**

Angus Fowler (ECOVAST Germany) presented a diploma for the restoration of a traditional farmstead. The Slovakian Ministry of Culture attended. The building is now used as a local agricultural and Folklore Museum.

#### **ECOVAST Newsletter 8 published May 1994 – edited by Michael Dower (United Kingdom): includes**

- A report on the General Assembly held in Sinaia, Romania
- A report on the Tenth ECOVAST Anniversary meeting held in Marburg in February 1994
- Reports on National Sections from Croatia, Germany, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden and the UK
- Reports on the International Working Groups: Agriculture and Forestry by Michael Dower (United Kingdom); Integrated Rural Development from Enrico Capo (Italy); Rural Architecture from John Sell (United Kingdom) and Rural Tourism by Maria Meier Gresshoff (Germany)
- A request for a Working group on Folk Art and Handicrafts from Calin Hoinarescu (ECOVAST Romania)
- Article on conference 'Coal – People – Environment' held in Świeradów-Zdrój in Poland in November 1993
- Article on Forderkreis Alte Kirchen (FAK) who celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> birthday
- Article on EUROPA NOSTRA Awards 1993 & Tellow Museum restored by Rolf-Peter Bartz
- Welcome to the new National Section in Croatia by John Sell (United Kingdom)

#### **ECOVAST / University of Brno Conference held in PRIKAZY, Moravia, Czech Republic in May 1994**

The topic of this conference was 'Clay and Earthen Architecture' and had been organised by Suzanne and Jiri Syrova (ECOVAST members) and the University of Brno. Participants came from France, Germany, Hungary, Slovakia as well as the Czech Republic. Angus Fowler (Germany) and Vera Muszik (Hungary) also took part.

#### **ECOVAST International Committee held in Abbaye Kolen, LIÈGE, Belgium on 11 June 1994**

Present at the meeting, hosted by Bernard Mignon, were 19 ECOVAST members from 6 countries (Germany, Hungary, Italy, Slovakia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom) including:

President: Andras Roman (Hungary)

Vice Presidents: Gunter Kröes (Germany); Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Secretary General: Peter Hood (United Kingdom):

Treasurer: Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

International Committee members: Jean Chanel, Angus Fowler, Maria Meier-Gresshoff, Rudiger Maul, Ursula Stratenwerth (Germany); Enrico Capo (Italy); Jozef Ušák (Slovakia); Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden); Francis Noel-Baker (United Kingdom)

Other ECOVAST members: Bernard Mignon, Luk Robyns, Karel Bollen, Adrian Mork (Belgium) and Justus Bohl (Germany)

Apologies were received from: Vice Presidents - Jean-Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg) and Miljenka Fischer (Croatia); ECOVAST International Committee members: Andrzej Kaleta (Poland) and Suzanne Thibal (France)

The Minutes of the Committee held in Marburg, Germany on 5 February 1994 were agreed.

The main part of this meeting was a discussion on publicity and the membership campaign

### **Council of Europe meeting on Cultural Landscapes Areas held in STRASBOURG, France in June 1994**

Gesing Deserbais (ECOVAST France) was one of the specialists who developed a formal Recommendation on the Protection of Cultural Landscape Areas to be part of Landscape policies now being considered by the Committee of Ministers

### **ICOMOS Conference on Village Churches held at TABOR, Bohemia in Czech Republic in June 1994**

The event was organised by ICOMOS with participants from the Czech and Slovak Republics and Hungary. Angus Fowler made a presentation on saving and restoring and finding new uses for threatened village churches in Hessen, Germany and the work of FAK and similar organisations in Eastern Germany and Poland

### **Russian Institute for Cultural Research Conference on the 'Consequences of Modernisation Processes in Russia in the Socio-cultural Sphere' held in MOSCOW in July 1994**

Delegates came from USA, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Greece, Spain and Bulgaria. Hans Peter Jeschke (Austria) spoke about the identification of architectural and cultural heritage and Angus Fowler talked about the practical problems of heritage protection and rural development. There was a **tour** of the local area associated with this Moscow Conference.

### **EUROPA NOSTRA Forum held in BERLIN, Germany in September 1994**

The theme of the conference was 'Restoration and Use of Historic Buildings – the Public and Private Partnership. Angus Fowler led an excursion to see the historic town of Luckau and the castle and park of Branitz near Cottbus. He also talked about the damage and destruction being caused by brown-coal mining in Lausitz.

### **ECOVAST Germany / EUROPA NOSTRA Award Ceremony held in TELLow, Germany on 24 September 1994**

A Diploma was awarded to ECOVAST member Rolf-Peter Bartz for the excellent long-term restoration of the manor house and complex, residence of the 19<sup>th</sup> century economist and agrarian reformer Johann-Heinrich von Thunen. The conversion provides a museum, conference centre and restaurant and a barn for events.

### **ECOVAST Germany International 'Symposium on Manorial Estate Complexes' held in TELLow, Mecklenburg Vorpommern, Germany on 24 September 1994**

The award ceremony was followed by a symposium at the Thunen Museum on the problems of preservation and use on manor houses and their estates which are typical in the rural areas in the Baltic region. This led to the **First Tellow Declaration** which set out the how to maintain these estate complexes. *No copy of this document has been found*

### **ECOVAST event held on EUBOEA Island, Greece on 13-16 October 1994**

The 5 day event, was hosted by Founder President Francis Noel-Baker whose home is on the island of Euboea and held in the Candili Conference Centre. The first day was given over to International Working Groups and talks from Michael Dower on the ECOVAST Strategy and from Olga Sevan on her work with the Russian Cultural Institute. The second day was used for the International Committee meeting and the third day for the Biennial Assembly meeting followed by a reception attended by the British Ambassador to Greece and a presentation about the proposed Candili Nature Park. The final day was a study tour

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in PRIKOPE, on Euboea Island, Greece on 14 October 1994**

*The members present and those who apologies are listed in the assembly minutes below.*

The minutes of the meeting held in Liège, Belgium on 11 June 1994 were agreed.

Discussion took place on the ECOVAST Development Programme and the European Rural Charter with action to be taken forward by Michael Dower. The agenda for the following days Assembly were agreed.

## **ECOVAST Biennial Assembly in PRIKOPE, on Euboea Island, Greece on 15 October 1994**

Present at this meeting were more than 40 ECOVAST members from 8 countries (Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden and United Kingdom) including:

President: András Román (Hungary)

Vice President: Michael Dower (United Kingdom) – who chaired the meeting

Secretary General: Peter Hood (United Kingdom)

Treasurer: Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

International Committee members: Angus Fowler Rudiger Maul, Ursula Stratenwerth (Germany); Sandor Köles (Hungary); Enrico Capo (Italy); Andrzej Kaleta (Poland); Calin Hoinarescu (Romania); Josef Usak (Slovakia); and Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden)

Apologies were received from: Vice Presidents Gunter Kröes (Germany) and Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia); Committee members: Jean Chanel, Maria Meier Gresshoff, Hans Schwiderski (Germany) and Suzanne Thibal (France).

The Hon. Frances Noel-Baker (Founder President) was awarded Honorary Life Membership to ECOVAST.

The Minutes of the General Assembly held in Sinaia, Romania on 23 October 1993 were agreed.

Reports were also received from 3 Working Groups - Rural Architecture by John Sell; Agriculture and Forestry by Michael Dower; and Rural Tourism by Peter Hood on behalf of Maria Meier Gresshoff

Reports were received from the 9 National Sections of Croatia; Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. A national section is being formed in Russia

This being a voting general assembly there was a formal release of the existing committee from its obligations and the members were thanked for their work over the last 2 years (1992-1994), and the following members were elected to form the new ECOVAST International Committee for 1994-1996.

*Groups I NGO's National or International and III Representatives of NGO's Regional or Local*

- Bernard Mignon (Belgium)
- Suzanne Thibal (France)
- Jean Chanel (Germany)
- Angus Fowler (Germany)
- Ursula Stratenwerth (Germany)
- Sandor Köles (Hungary)
- Enrico Capo (Italy)
- Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden)
- Peter Hood (United Kingdom)

*Group II Representatives of Government and Group IV Official Organisations*

- Miljenka Fischer (Croatia)
- András Román (Hungary)
- Andrzej Kaleta (Poland)
- Nigel Curry (United Kingdom)

*Group V Individuals –*

- Rolf Peter Brantz (Germany)
- Gunter Kröes (Germany)
- Rudiger Maul (Germany)
- Maria Meier Gresshof (Germany)
- Călin Hoinărescu (Romania)
- Josef Ušák (Slovakia)
- Michael Dower (United Kingdom)
- Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

Immediately after the Assembly the new ECOVAST International Committee elected the following members to be the Bureau for the next 2 years (1994-1996)

- András Román (Hungary) as President for a second term)
- Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden) as Senior Vice President

Three other members as Vice Presidents

- Angus Fowler (Germany)
  - Enrico Capo (Italy)
  - Andrzej Kaleta (Poland)
  - Peter Hood (United Kingdom) to continue as Secretary General
  - Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom) to continue as Treasurer
- Honorary Auditors Peter Hood and John Sell (both of United Kingdom) were elected

- Michael Dower was elected Director of Development

The revised 1994 version of the ECOVAST Strategy for Europe was discussed

### **ECOVAST Tour associated with the Euboea event 16 October 1994**

The ECOVAST tour of Euboea area on the last day gave time for some of the delegates to visit the classical site of Delphi before going home. The tour associated with the Euboea event visited villages and forests and the proposed national park and visited the seaside town of Limni

### **European Rural Charter being developed by the Council of Europe during 1994**

The Rural Interest Group of non-government organisations which have consultative status with the Council of Europe have been able to comment on drafts of the European Rural Charter being prepared under auspices of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Jean Pierre Dichter (ECOVAST Luxembourg and Past President) has been part of this NGO group. This Charter will be the focus of the Third European Agricultural Forum to be held in March 1995 in Verona, Italy.

### **ECOVAST Project on Integrated Rural Development submitted to the EU in December 1994 -1997**

The idea to seek funds to carry out research work related to the participation of local people in integrated rural development was first conceived at the ECOVAST meeting in Remouchamps, Belgium in October 1992. It was led by Enrico Capo (Italy) and developed by other members including Gunter Kröes (Germany), Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg), Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden), and Michael Dower (United Kingdom). It was submitted to the EU in 1994. However, in June 1996, the EU decided to ask for ideas for major research in the field of "equal opportunities" and the role of women in agriculture. ECOVAST submitted another bid for research and experiments in 4 countries (Italy, France, Greece and England) – related to the effects which changes in local services in rural areas can have upon the lives and work of women. The EU asked for additional partners from Austria and Ireland to be added. ECOVAST was not the contracting partner, but assisted in facilitating meetings and disseminating information.

### **ECOVAST Newsletter 9 published December 1994, edited by Michael Dower (United Kingdom): includes**

- A report on the events held on the island of Euboea, Greece 13-17 October 1994
- Reports on International Working groups: Rural Architecture from John Sell (United Kingdom); Rural Tourism from Maria Meier Gresshoff (Germany)
- Reports from the following National Sections: Croatia from Miljenka Fischer; Germany from Ursula Stratenwerth; Hungary from Vera Muszik; Poland from Barbara Weber; Slovakia from Josef Ušák; Sweden from Ulf Brangenfeldt and the United Kingdom from Edmund Neville-Rolfe
- Reports on the ECOVAST initiatives on promotion and membership campaign; strengthening NGO's in Central Europe and the Leader 2 programme of the EU by Michael Dower
- Response from the EU on ECOVAST proposal for research into the process of integrated development
- Article on Albanian Schools – request from Council of Europe for potential twinning with schools

## **1995**

*Austria; Finland and Sweden became part of the European Community on 1 January 1995. Latvia, Albania, Moldova, FYROM Macedonia, and Ukraine joined the Council of Europe.*

### **Council of Europe European Landscape Convention was launched in 1995**

Michael Dower of ECOVAST was on one of three experts charged with drafting the original text which finally came into force in March 2004. The work underpinned the ECOVAST development of an International Landscape Working Group which in turn led to guidance of landscape identification in 2002 and the publication of the ECOVAST of "Landscape Identification : a Guide" in 2006 and revised in 2012.

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in LANDAU, Germany on 18 February 1995**

Present at the meeting, held in the Rhineland Palatinate, were 14 ECOVAST members from 8 countries (Belgium, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom) including:

President: András Román (Hungary)

Senior Vice President: Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden)

Vice Presidents: Angus Fowler (Germany); Enrico Capo (Italy); Andrzej Kaleta (Poland)

Treasurer: Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

ECOVAST Committee members: Bernard Mignon (Belgium); Rolf-Peter Bartz, Jean Chanel, Rudiger Maul, Ursula Stratenwerth (Germany); Josef Ušák (Slovakia) and Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Two members were co-opted onto the Committee

- Charles Christians (Belgium)
- Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece) and
- Suzanne Thibal (France)

Apologies were received from: Secretary General Peter Hood (United Kingdom); International Committee members: Miljenka Fischer (Croatia); Maria Meier Gresshoff (Germany); Sandor Köles (Hungary); Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); Nigel Curry (United Kingdom)

The Minutes of the Candili meeting in Greece were approved

A sub committee was set up to review the Statutes which included Bernard Mignon, Gunter Kroes, Angus Fowler and Ulf Brangenfeldt

The Integrated Rural Development application has been renamed 'Participation of local people to promote Integrated Rural Development' and the papers centralised and sent to the EU by Gunter Kröes.

#### **International Conference on Rural Development held in TALLIN, Estonia in 25-26 February 1995**

This conference, hosted by Kodukant (the Estonian village movement), was focussed on strengthening the economies of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania following their independence. Present were delegates from Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. ECOVAST members included Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden and University of Uppsala) and guest speakers included Michael Dower (United Kingdom) and Angus Fowler (Germany)

#### **Council of Europe Third European Agricultural Forum held in VERONA, Italy on 8-9 March 1995**

The Forum focussed upon a draft European Charter for Rural Areas written by the Council of Europe but much criticised at the conference. Michael Dower (United Kingdom) was one of the key note speakers and wrote to the Council with recommendations for changes to the document.

#### **ECOVAST International Committee held in TORUN, Pomerania, Poland on 6 May 1995**

Present at the meeting, held in the Agriculture Advisory Centre, hosted by ECOVAST Poland, were 12 ECOVAST members from 7 countries (Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Sweden and the United Kingdom) including:

President: András Román (Hungary)

Senior Vice President: Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden)

Vice Presidents: Angus Fowler (Germany); Enrico Capo (Italy); Andrzej Kaleta (Poland)

Secretary General; Peter Hood (United Kingdom)

Treasurer; Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

Committee members: Gunter Kröes, Rudiger Maul (Germany); Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece);

Other ECOVAST member in attendance: Vera Muszik (Hungary)

Apologies were received from: Charles Christians, Bernard Mignon (Belgium); Suzanne Thibal (France); Jean Chanel (Germany); Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); Josef Ušák (Slovakia); Nigel Curry (United Kingdom)

The Minutes of the Committee held in Landau, Germany on 18 February 1994 were agreed.

The Integrated Rural Development Project developed by Enrico Capo (Italy); Gunter Kröes (Germany) and Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden) conceived at Remouchamps had been submitted to the EU and they had asked for new partners from Ireland and Austria to be added with Michael Dower (United Kingdom) to represent ECOVAST.

#### **EUROPA NOSTRA Forum on Wooden Architecture in Europe' held in KRAKOW, Poland on 13 May 1995**

John Sell (United Kingdom and Chair of ECOVAST's Rural Architecture Group gave the key-note speech and Angus Fowler (Germany) led a working group on publicity, advocacy and education and Andras Roman (Hungary and ECOVAST President) presided over the final session. A proposal for a new European Network for wooden religious buildings gained much support. There was a **tour** to visit churches on 14 May 1995.

#### **ECOVAST Newsletter 10 published July 1995 – edited by Michael Dower (United Kingdom) included:**

- Reports on the International Working Groups: Agriculture and Forestry from Michael Dower (United Kingdom); Rural Tourism from Maria Meier Gresshoff (Germany)
- Reports from the following national Sections: Croatia from Miljenka Fischer; Germany from Detlef Simons; Hungary from Vera Muszik; Poland from Andrzej Hałasiewicz; Romania from Călin Hoinărescu; Slovakia from Maria Medvecká; United Kingdom from Edmund Neville-Rolfe
- An article on brown coal mining – the 3 areas in Germany under threat – by Angus Fowler (Germany)
- An article on the threat posed by gold mining in western Turkey by Rudiger Maul (Germany)
- An article on European Rural Charter and the Verona event in March by Michael Dower (United Kingdom)
- A note that the ECOVAST proposal to seek funding for research (referred to in Newsletter 9) has failed
- A report on the Krakow Forum on the threat to wooden architecture by Angus Fowler

#### **ECOVAST Event in NOSZVAJ, Hungary from 6-10 October 1995**

This was a long week-end event organised, held in the Old Manor House in Novszvaj in Eger County was hosted by Marta Marczis and the Hungarian National Section. The event consisted of an International Committee

meeting; a scientific symposium, followed by a General Assembly and a tour. The names of those attending are listed under the General Assembly.

#### **ECOVAST International Committee held in NOSZVAJ, Hungary on 6 October 1995**

The meeting was held in the old Manor House and the modern training centre to Noszvaj. The names of those who attended the events or sent their apologies are listed in the General Assembly notes below.

The Minutes of the Committee held in Torun, Poland on 6 May 1995 were agreed.

Peter Hood had been Secretary General for the last 3 years and he resigned through pressure of his main work with the Springhead Trust and the committee elected Michael Dower to become the new Secretary General

#### **ECOVAST International Scientific Symposium held in NOSZVAJ, Hungary on 7/8 November 1995**

The Hungarian National Section had managed to raise sponsorship from official bodies in Hungary and from the Fund for the Development of the Carpathian Euro-region to help fund this event. The symposium had speakers from 12 countries and attracted many Hungarian experts as well as ECOVAST members

#### **ECOVAST General Assembly held in NOSZVAJ, Hungary on 8 October 1995**

*No copies of these Minutes been found but reports are included in Newsletter 11.*

This assembly took place in the afternoon after the second day of the symposium. Present at the Noszvaj events were 18 ECOVAST members from 8 countries (Belgium, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Slovakia, Sweden and United Kingdom); including:

President: András Román (Hungary)

Senior Vice President: Ulf Brangefeldt (Sweden)

Vice Presidents: Angus Fowler (Germany); Enrico Capo (Italy);

Secretary General: Peter Hood (United Kingdom)

Treasurer: Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

Committee members: Charles Christians (Belgium); Rolf-Peter Bartz, Angus Fowler, Maria Meier Gresshoff, Gunter Kroes, Rudiger Maul (Germany); Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece); Sandor Köles (Hungary); Josef Ušák (Slovakia); Nigel Curry, Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Apologies were received from: Vice President Andrzej Kaleta (Poland); ECOVAST Committee members Bernard Mignon (Belgium); Suzanne Thibal (France); and Jean Chanel, Ursula Stratenwerth (Germany)

There were reports from the following Working Groups: Rural Architecture by Michael Dower for John Sell; Agriculture and the Environment by Ursula Stratenwerth and Rural Tourism by Maria Meier Gresshoff and a new Working group on Integrated Rural Development was agreed.

There were reports from the National Sections of Germany, Hungary, Slovakia, and Sweden. A Swedish National is about to be founded and Italy is trying to create a National Section.

#### **ECOVAST tour associated with the Noszvaj event on 9 November 1995**

The tour of the region, on the last day, included a boat trip on the river Tisza and visits to a collective farm and other enterprises. The day ended with a dinner in a village hall with two hours of singing.

#### **Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE) held in STRASBOURG, France in November 1995**

The Congress is the voice, within the Council of Europe's Regions and Municipalities. It provides a forum where local and regional elected representatives can discuss common problems, pool their experience and express their views to governments and it advises the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on all aspects of local and regional policy. CLRAE set up a Working Group to prepare a draft international convention for the protection and management of European Landscapes. Michael Dower was one of the experts appointed to advise the CLRAE working group.

ECOVAST was among a set of partners that had been lobbying for such a convention for 3 years: Jean Chanel (Germany) had lobbied at an event in Blois, France in 1992; Gésine Deserbais (France) had lobbied a meeting of experts in Strasbourg; and Andras Roman (Hungary) lobbied at the International Scientific Conference on Cultural Landscapes held in June 1993 in Hungary. The first hearing of the text prepared by Michael Dower was in Strasbourg, France in 1995. The purposes agreed at this meeting reflected the aims set out in the ECOVAST's 'Strategy for Rural Europe'.

#### **ECOVAST Heritage Trails Projects starting in December 1995**

Many European regions are rich in 'heritage sites' – such as castles, churches, historic villages, natural caves, viewpoints, museums and art galleries – which could be used for tourism. Small towns were added to this list when they became a priority for ECOVAST from 2005 onwards. The challenge was to bring them into such use in a way that truly benefits the people and the economy of the area and which is sustainable so that tourism does not damage the heritage sites.

ECOVAST and Ecotourism Ltd (UK consultancy) and PRISMA were awarded a grant by the EU Tourism Directorate (DG XXIII) and supported by the governments and local authorities of the two chosen pilot areas to develop two tourist trails in Dolenska/Bela Krajina in Slovenia and the Dobroudja region in Bulgaria. The ECOVAST team included Michael Dower, John Sell and Jane Wade (United Kingdom) and Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece).

The project team defined a 'Heritage Trail' as "a regional network of natural and cultural sites which is created within a well-defined product identity". In each of the 2 regions the team studied a range of heritage sites; identified those which might attract visitors and worked closely with the landowners and local people to decide whether each site had the capacity to receive visitors. They undertook detailed marketing studies; prepared an outline of the trail and created a Heritage Trail Association to be responsible for setting up and marketing the trail. The project team gave detailed advice on standards and product quality to hotels and other enterprises who will service the Trail.

The Dolenska/Bela Krajina Trail was first marketed at the World Tourism Fair in London 1996. The trail in Bulgaria was completed in the summer of 1997.

ECOVAST held a European Seminar in April 1997 which promoted the concept which proved popular and other areas wanted to look into it. A second project phase, using regional funding, involved ECOVAST Croatia and ICAM developing a trail in the Karlovac and Rijeka regions of Croatia in 1998 led by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic (Croatia) and Marko Koscak (Slovenia). ECOVAST and PRISMA applied to the EU for funding for another phase of trails in 1998, and although originally agreed in principle the funding was later withdrawn and this project did not go ahead.

ECOVAST and PRISMA produced a manual on heritage trails in 1997.

## **1996**

*Russia and Croatia joined the Council of Europe. The first major rural European conference to debate future rural policy for the European Union was held in Cork, Ireland November 1996 (see below).*

### **The European Heritage Group launched in 1996-2000**

The first steps of the EU to support culture was launched 1996 with specific programme called RAPHAEL, devoted to cultural heritage which provided help to help establish network and partnerships, innovation, research and training, as well as to encourage cooperation between countries and international organisations such as UNESCO and the Council of Europe. ECOVAST became a member in 1996 represented by John Sell (United Kingdom). It was replaced with EU 2000 Framework Programme, which ran from 2000 to 2006, which highlighted the socio-economic aspects of cultural heritage, and the need to integrate its conservation and preservation in cohesion funds. A new network, the European Heritage Alliance 3.3 was launched in 2011.

### **ECOVAST Small Homelands Project 1996**

An original project to develop a programme of actions to strengthen the socio-cultural vitality of local communities had been run successfully for 3 years in Poland by the Polish Culture Foundation. ECOVAST members from 9 countries led by ECOVAST Poland and including members from Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Sweden and the United Kingdom submitted a bid for funding in xxxx 1996. This failed but a revised bid was submitted under the EU RAPHAEL programme

### **ECOVAST Traditional Rural Buildings – Policy Statement published in 1996**

This work builds upon part of ECOVAST's 'Strategy for Europe' first published in 1991 and updated in 1994. It was produced by a Working Group, following a sequence of meetings. It is addressed to all policy-makers and practitioners at European, national, regional and local level. It consists of the following sections:

- Introduction and Current state of traditional rural buildings in Europe
- Brief review of current policies
- A policy framework for the future defining of heritage; protecting and caring for the heritage
- Who should take responsibility '
- Annex 1 Questionnaire used in the review of systems to protect historic buildings
- Annex 2 Comparison of systems in 12 countries

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in Hotel Atrium, MALACKY, Slovakia on 3 February 1996**

Present at the meeting, hosted by ECOVAST Slovakia, were 15 ECOVAST members from 8 countries (Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom) including:

President: András Román (Hungary)

Senior Vice President: Ulf Brangefeldt (Sweden)

Vice Presidents: Angus Fowler (Germany); Enrico Capo (Italy); Andrzej Kaleta (Poland)



Treasurer: Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

Committee members: Rolf Peter Bartz, Ursula Stratenwerth (Germany); Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece); Sandor Koles (Hungary); Josef Ušák (Slovakia); Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Other ECOVAST members: Márta Márczis, Vera Muszik (Hungary) and M.Kisola.

Apologies were received from: Secretary General Peter Hood (United Kingdom); ECOVAST committee members: Charles Christians, Bernard Mignon (Belgium); Miljenka Fischer (Croatia); Suzanne Thibal (France); Jean Chanel, Gunter Kröes, Rudiger Maul, Maria Meier Gresshoff (Germany); Nigel Curry (United Kingdom)

Peter Hood had resigned and Michael Dower was elected to be Secretary General until the assembly meeting.

The Minutes of the International Committee held at Noszvaj, Hungary on 6 October 1995 were agreed and the Minutes of the General Assembly also held in Noszvaj were noted.

Michael Dower presented a paper on the potential of the European Countryside Foundation

**ECOVAST Newsletter 11 published March 1996 – edited by Michael Dower (United Kingdom):** included

- A report on the 1995 General Assembly and the International Committee meeting in Malacky
- Reports on the European Landscape Convention and the Working Group to advise it
- Reports from the National Sections: Croatia by Miljenka Fischer; Germany by Detlef Simmons; Hungary by Márta Márczis and Vera Muszik; Italy by Enrico Capo; Sweden and the Baltic States by Ulf Brangenfeldt
- Short reports on projects: Heritage Trails; Small Homelands
- A report on Bosnia and the conflict and the terrible on both people and heritage
- A report on joint work on Brown Coal being done by ECOVAST and EUROPA NOSTRA by Angus Fowler

**Fourth European Rural University held in VEJLE, Denmark on 23-27 May 1996**

Phil Turner and Pam Moore (ECOVAST United Kingdom) helped the Danish organisers arrange this event and attended. The theme was 'Rural areas, an Educational Environment for all Townspeople and Rural Dwellers'.

**ECOVAST International Committee held in SPA, Liege Province, Belgium on 15 June 1996**

Present at the meeting, hosted by Professor Christians, and held in the Sol Cress Centre, were 16 ECOVAST members from 7 countries (Belgium, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Slovakia and United Kingdom) including: Senior Vice President – Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden) who took the Chair as the President could not attend

Vice Presidents: Angus Fowler (Germany); Enrico Capo (Italy);

Rolf Peter Bartz (Germany) who acted as Minutes Secretary

Treasurer: Edmund Neville- Rolfe (United Kingdom)

Committee members: Charles Christians Bernard Mignon (Belgium); Rolf Peter Bartz, Jean Chanel, Rudiger Maul, Maria Meier Gresshoff, Ursula Stratenwerth (Germany); Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece); Sandor Köles (Hungary); Josef Ušák (Slovakia); Michael Dower (United Kingdom);

Other ECOVAST member Justus Bohl (Germany) also attended.

Apologies were received from: President Andras Roman (Hungary); Vice President : Andrzej Kaleta (Poland); ECOVAST International Committee members: Miljenka Fischer (Croatia); Suzanne Thibal (France), Gunter Kröes (Germany); Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); and Nigel Curry (United Kingdom)

Minutes of the International Committee Meeting held at Malacky, Slovakia on 3 February 1996 were agreed.

A report was received that the National Section of Italy has just adopted its statutes and its first formal meeting will be in Santa Maria di Leuca in September

Michael Dower reported on the Heritage trails project which would culminate in April with an International Workshop in Slovenia. Both Angus Fowler and Maria Meier Gresshoff (both of Germany) commented that interest was growing in tourist trails and ECOVAST should take advantage of this interest.

Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden) reported on behalf of Andrzej Kaleta (Poland) that the Small Homelands project was submitted to the European Commission's SHINE programme

Angus Fowler reported on the recent EUROPA NOSTRA meeting in Vienna on the reconstruction in Bosnia and that ECOVAST should continue to be involved.

Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece) reported that a project to create a network for the preservation and cultural enhancement of European wine region – called WITRANET – was awaiting approval from the European Commission.

Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden) reported on the Council of Europe meeting in Bucharest, Romania in May where he was a speaker

Michael Dower reported the grant received from the European Countryside Foundation, to fund an ECOVAST magazine, was causing a lot of administrative work for ECOVAST, and that more sponsors should be found.

The Committee discussed proposed changes in ECOVAST Statutes.

**International Scientific Conferences on Monasteries – Cultural and Spiritual Centres of Russia held in MOSCOW, Russia on 20 September 1996**

A number of ECOVAST members took part in this event organised by Russian Institute for Cultural Research – Olga Sevan. At a meeting in Moscow it was agreed to set up an ECOVAST National Section in Russia.

**ECOVAST Scientific Conference on ‘European Agriculture on the Way to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century’ held in PRZYSIEK, Poland in September 1996**

This was an international meeting focussing on agriculture co-organised by Andrzej Kaleta (Poland). Three members of the Agriculture Group, Ulf Brangefeldt (Sweden), Pavel Starosta and Andrzej Pilichowski (Poland) also took part.

**ECOVAST events held in SANTA MARIA DI LEUCA, Italy 26-30 September 1996**

This 5 day event, the first ECOVAST event in Italy, and held in Apulia, was organized and hosted by Enrico Capo (Italy). We were welcomed to this seaside resort on the heel of Italy, and the Terminal Hotel provided a fine venue with comfortable rooms and friendly staff. The first day focussed on ECOVAST's International Working Groups, organised as a joint meeting of the groups which provided a stimulating format, giving members a chance to see what each group had been doing, and discuss themes where the interests overlap. The agriculture and tourism groups focussed together on the rapid growth in farm tourism throughout Europe, and on ways which farm products can be interpreted and sold to tourists. They discussed the maintenance and adaptation of traditional farm buildings, and the design of new farm buildings and of new buildings for tourist use. The second day was a symposium and the third day the Biennial Assembly followed by an International Committee and a tour.

**ECOVAST Scientific Symposium ‘Development and Local Culture’ held in SANTA MARIA DI LEUCA, Italy on 28 September 1996:**

The symposium was jointly organised by LABOS, the GAL LEADER Project, and ECOVAST. The theme was introduced by Enrico Capo, on behalf of LABOS: followed by Yves. Champetier, of AEIDL, who talked about the LEADER Programme and rural development. Papers were delivered by four ECOVAST speakers; - Andras Roman (rural architecture), Olga Sevan (rural settlement), Charles Christians (rural space), and Michael Dower (environment and tourism). Then the coordinator of the local LEADER team, offered a thoughtful and positive analysis of the meaning of local identity, and this was followed by a discussion.

**ECOVAST Biennial Assembly held in SANTA MARIA DI LEUCA, Apulia, Italy on 29 September 1996**

Present at this assembly were 70 ECOVAST members from 15 countries (Belgium, Croatia, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden and the United Kingdom) including:

President: András Román (Hungary) who was in the Chair.

Senior Vice President: Ulf Brangefeldt (Sweden)

Vice Presidents: Angus Fowler (Germany); and Enrico Capo (Italy)

Treasurer: Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

Committee members; Gunter Kröes (Germany) Maria Meier Gresshof, Ursula Stratenworth (Germany); Sandor Köles, Josef Josef Ušák (Slovakia) Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Other ECOVAST members: Ksenja Markovic (Croatia); Tõnu Otsason (Estonia), Gunter Kröes, Horst Schubert, Detlef Simons, Márta Márczis (Hungary); Salvatore Di Fazio (Italy); Andrzej Hałasiewicz (Poland); Magdalena Banu (Romania); Olga Sevan (Russia); Mária Nadová, Maud Olosson (Sweden); John Sell (United Kingdom)

Apologies for absence were received from: Vice President Andrzej Kaleta (Poland) and ECOVAST Committee members Bernard Mignon (Belgium); Miljenka Fischer (Croatia), Suzanne Thibal (France) and ECOVAST member Adrian Mork

Outgoing President András Román was thanked for all his work over the last four years as President and he was awarded Honorary Life Membership of ECOVAST

Reports from the International Working Groups (referred to above) included: Agriculture and Forestry from Michael Dower (United Kingdom); Rural Architecture from John Sell (United Kingdom); and Rural Tourism from Maria Meier Gresshoff (Germany)

Reports were received from the National Sections in Croatia; Germany; Hungary; Poland; Romania; Slovakia; Sweden; and the United Kingdom. New national sections had been formed and reported from Italy and Russia. A new National Section is developing in Estonia.

The Minutes of the General Assembly held in Nosvaj, Hungary on 8 October 1995 were agreed.

The assembly debated proposals from the International Committee for the future development of ECOVAST. The Committee's strong concern is that, despite growth in membership, ECOVAST is financially very weak. We

have no full-time staff and thus cannot service the members properly or tackle many of the challenges that face rural Europe. The Committee has therefore put in hand a development programme.

Phase I of this includes a push to expand our membership and influence; and a search for financial support from the European Commission and other sponsors. This is yielding benefit, but is not enough to support full-time staff or more ambitious work.

The Committee therefore proposes a second phase of development, aiming to secure more substantial funds. This might involve the setting up of a European Countryside Foundation, with a broad brief to promote the well-being of the people, heritage and environment of rural Europe. The Foundation is conceived as a means of building on the 12 years' work of ECOVAST. A tentative structure for the Foundation was outlined in the paper distributed before the Assembly. These proposals provoked much debate. None of the speakers doubted the need to raise significant funds, or opposed the principle of a Foundation. But several expressed strong concerns that a Foundation, and particularly one with both powerful Trustees and a membership structure, could damage the vitality of the existing voluntary network. They urged the International Committee to look carefully at optional ways of securing funds; and to safeguard the identity and vitality of ECOVAST. Some felt that this might best be secured by keeping the Foundation quite separate from ECOVAST and without a membership structure.

The following motion was agreed "The Assembly endorses the broad approach to the strengthening of ECOVAST, proposed by the International Committee ; asks the Committee to pursue vigorously the Phase I proposals, with help from all national sections and members; and also asks the Committee to pursue the concept of a Foundation, and to negotiate with relevant bodies and individuals, on the understanding that the formula for any new body should be such as to sustain and strengthen the network of ECOVAST and the individual commitment of members, preferably also using the name of ECOVAST. The Assembly asks the Committee to keep members and national sections informed of progress, and to bring forward proposals to a future General Assembly.

This being a voting general assembly, the current International Committee was formally released from its obligations and the Committee members were thanked for their work over the last 2 years (1994-1996).

An election to decide the new International Committee for 1996-1998 followed. This was the first time that any candidates could be nominated whatever their electoral groups (NGO's; Government bodies or individuals) and be elected. The following 24 members were elected to become the new ECOVAST Committee for 1996-1998

*Groups I NGO's National or International and III Representatives of NGO's Regional or Local*

- Miljenka Fischer(Croatia)
- Rolf Peter Bartz (Germany)
- Angus Fowler(Germany)
- Ursula Stratenwerth(Germany)
- Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece)
- Sandor Köles (Hungary)
- Andrzej Hałasiewicz (Poland)
- Olga Sevan (Russia)
- Mária Nadová (Slovakia)
- Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

*Group II Representatives of Government and Group IV Official Organisations*

- Gunter Kröes (Germany)
- András Román (Hungary)
- Josef Ušák (Slovakia)
- Zvezdana Kozelj (Slovenia)
- Nigel Curry (United Kingdom)

*Group V Individuals –*

- Charles Christians (Belgium)
- Maria Meier Gresshoff (Germany)
- Enrico Capo(Italy)
- Salvatore Di Fazio (Italy)
- Magdalena Banu (Romania)
- Călin Hoinărescu (Romania)
- Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden)
- Maud Olofsson(Sweden)
- Edmund Neville-Rolfe(United Kingdom)

Honorary Auditors Richard Oram and John Sell (both from United Kingdom) were elected for 1996-1998.

**ECOVAST International Committee held in SANTA MARIA DI LEUCA, Italy on 28 September 1996**

*No minutes have been found but it has been reported in Newsletter 12. This meeting followed on from the Biennial Assembly.*

The new committee then elected the members of the ECOVAST Bureau for 1996-1998

- President – Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden) as President as a second term

Three members as Vice Presidents

- Angus Fowler (Germany)
- Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece)
- Enrico Capo (Italy)
- Michael Dower (United Kingdom) to continue as Secretary General

Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom) announced that he was retiring as Treasurer after 12 years' service.

- Jean Chanel (Germany) was co-opted on the International Committee
- Roy Brigden (United Kingdom) was elected to become the Treasurer when Edmund Neville-Rolfe retired

### **ECOVAST Tour of the local area around SANTA MARIA DI LEUCA, Italy on 29 September 1996.**

On the last day, we had a Salento peninsular, guided by Tommaso Marsano and his GAL Leader colleagues. This is a landscape of red soil, limestone walls and olive groves, set with field-barns of dry stone construction and varied shape, called pagliare. The older buildings in the villages are built of honey-coloured stone, and there are frequent shallow quarries where tufa was cut. The economy of the area is fragile, with a very short tourist season, and there is high unemployment. The Leader project, one of the great network of such projects funded by the European Commission, is seeking to rebuild the sense of identity and entrepreneurship among the people.

We visited several enterprises which Leader has helped with advice and small grants. They included a firm making high-quality handmade floor tiles; a farmer who had raised the quality and price of his olive oil by use of a small modern press; and a man who makes turned products out of olivewood. Of high interest was a group of disused historic houses in the town of Specchia, which are being converted into holiday flats at the cost of the Leader programme, while remaining in local ownership. Our final evening was spent in a fine farm-restaurant, run by a local sculptor in a restored masseria, a traditional house of an extended farming family.

### **Rural Development Conference 'Rural Europe' held in CORK, Ireland on 7-9 November 1996**

This was the first pan European conference on rural policies and sponsored and organised by the European Commission. It was attended by about 1000 delegates, including President Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden) and Secretary General Michael Dower (United Kingdom) as representatives of ECOVAST. The conference made the following key points:

- The countryside is a major multi-purpose asset for Europe – but faces many threats
- Agriculture and forestry have a major role to play but it is diminishing compared to economic and social importance
- EC spending is too heavily focussed on agriculture through the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)
- Regions are affected by a confusing multiplicity of programmes, of which most are 'top-down'
- LEADER is beginning to demonstrate how rural development should be addressed
- We should move towards an integrated approach to rural development
- The formal Cork Declaration which had 10 different categories: Rural Preference; Integrated Approach; Diversification; Sustainability; Subsidiarity; Simplification; Programming; Finance; Management; and Evaluation and Research.

ECOVAST's work as a pan-European networking organisation was acknowledged in the final Plenary Session of the conference.

The Cork Declaration led to the creation of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, as a second pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy. This has done much to stimulate action by national governments and rural stakeholders to sustain the social, economic and environmental well-being of rural areas.

*Note: In 2016 the Cork 2 Conference was held: as a 20 year review of what has happened since Cork 1*

### **ECOVAST Newsletter 12 published November 1996 – edited by Michael Dower (United Kingdom)**

The following articles were reported in this newsletter:

- Report on the General Assembly 1996; description of the Tour on the last day and a list of those elected to form the new ECOVAST committee to serve from 1996 to 1998 reported in the Minutes
- Report on International Committee held in Malacky, Slovakia in February
- Report on the International Committee held in Spa, Belgium in June
- Report from the International Working Groups: Agriculture and Forestry by Michael Dower; Rural Architecture by John Sell; Rural Tourism by Maria Meier Gresshoff and Fouli Papageorgiou
- Reports from the following National Sections: Croatia by Miljenka Fischer; Germany by Detlev Simons, Hungary by Márta Márczis and Vera Muszik; Italy by Enrico Capo; Poland by Władysław Misiak; Romania by Călin Hoinărescu; Russia by Olga Sevan; Slovakia by Josef Ušák and Maria Medvecká; Sweden and the Baltic States by Maud Olofsson; United Kingdom by Michael Dower

- Short reports on issues: European Landscape Convention by Michael Dower, Rural Development by Enrico Capo; Small Homelands by Andzej Kaleta; Bosnia by John Sell; Brown Coal by Angus Fowler; European Heritage Group by John Sell

**International Conference 'Tradition for the Future; Upkeep, Conservation, Restoration and New Functions for Cultural Monuments held at DUNAJSK STREDA, Slovakia on 14/15 November 1996**

Organised by ECOVAST Slovakia but attended by ECOVAST Germany and ECOVAST Hungary.

**ECOVAST Bureau Meeting held in Marburg on 1 December 1996**

There were 7 ECOVAST members of the Bureau were present at this meeting from 6 countries (Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Sweden and United Kingdom) Present: Ulf Brangefeldt (President, in the chair), the 4 Vice Presidents: Enrico Capo, Angus Fowler, Sandor Köles, and Fouli Papageorgiou: Secretary General Michael Dower (Secretary General), and Edmund Neville-Rolfe the retiring Treasurer.

The minutes of the Biennial General Assembly (Santa Maria di Leuca), and of the International Committee meeting following the Assembly, were noted.

There were discussions on ECOVAST projects on the involvement of people, particularly women, WITRANET, AEOLOS, European Countryside Foundation and a possible foundation.

## **1997**

*The Kyoto Protocol of December 1997 extended the Rio Convention on Climate Change and established legally binding obligations for developed countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions in the period 2008-2012.*

**ECOVAST Bureau Meeting held in London on 8-9 February 1997**

Present at this meeting, hosted by Edmund Neville-Rolfe, were 7 ECOVAST members from 6 countries (Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Sweden and United Kingdom) including:

President Ulf Brangefeldt (Sweden)

Vice Presidents: Angus Fowler (Germany); Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece); Sandor Köles (Hungary) and Enrico Capo (Italy)

Secretary General; Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Treasurer Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

The Bureau discussed applications to the EC for project funding: Small Homelands; WITRANET, Heritage Trails; a new idea called ECOS-OUVERTURE; the European Countryside Foundation and they discussed the proposed setting up a formal research network. They also discussed the changes in ECOVAST Statutes that were put forward at the Spa meeting in Belgium in June 1996

**ECOVAST / PRISMA International Project WITRANET February 1997**

The project was to add value to wine and wine-related culture – piloted in 5 regions of Europe - East Attica, Greece, Vale do Ave, Portugal, Feldbach, Austria and Crotone, Italy. ECOVAST was a sub-contractor of PRISMA Consultants (Greece) and also sub-contracted their work to the Community Research Unit at Cheltenham College (CCRU). The ECOVAST team was Michael Dower (United Kingdom) and Donatella Murtas (Italy). The project came to an end in 1999. There was an ECOVAST / WITRANET conference held in Greece in September 1998.

**TWIG (Transnational Woodland Industries Group) International Project 1997**

The partnership, with funding from the EU RECITE II (part of the ERDF) programme involved 5 pilot regions: in Jonkoping, Sweden, Chilterns England, Northern Euboa, Greece; and Trier and Thuringia in Germany. The focus is to improve woodland management, and added value to woodland products. ECOVAST (led by Michael Dower – United Kingdom was responsible for networking and dissemination as a sub-contractor of PRISMA, the Greek partner. The project was reported in many Newsletters.

**ECOVAST International Workshop on Heritage Trails held in OTOČEC, Slovenia in April 1997**

This international workshop was part of the project referred to in December 1995 and jointly initiated by ECOVAST, Ecotourism and PRISMA to create Heritage Trails. Nearly 100 delegates from 22 countries attended the workshop – including 11 countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

The Workshop showed that this type of initiative would be of interest to many countries present. It particularly suggests that there should be several other initiatives that should be or are being considered in Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Macedonia (FYROM), Poland, Romainia, Russia and Slovenia. ECOVAST offered professional help with any initiatives that might be taken up. A Manual on Heritage Trails in is production.

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in OTOČEC, Southeast Slovenia, Slovenia on 13 April 1997**

Present were 20 ECOVAST members from 11 countries (Belgium, Croatia, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom) including:

President: Ulf Brangerfeldt (Sweden) who chaired the meeting

All four Vice Presidents: Angus Fowler (Germany); Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece), Enrico Capo (Italy); Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Treasurer: Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

International Committee members: Charles Christians (Belgium); Miljenka Fischer (Croatia); Rolf-Peter Bartz (Germany); Salvatore di Fazio (Italy); Andrzej Hałasiewicz (Poland); Magdalena Banu (Romania); Olga Sevan (Russia); Zvezdana Kozelj (Slovenia); Rainis Cedrins (*representing Maud Olofsson of Sweden*);

Other ECOVAST members: Justus Bohl, Hans Schwiderski (Germany); Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); G Kovacic, M Zupancic-Vicar (Slovenia).

Apologies for absence were received from: ECOVAST International Committee members: Jean Chanel, Maria Meier Gresshoff, Ursula Stratenwerth (Germany), Sandor Köles; András Román (Hungary); Mária Nadová, Josef Ušák (Slovakia); Maud Olofsson (Sweden); Nigel Curry (United Kingdom) and ECOVAST member Gunter Kröes (Germany)

The Minutes of the Biennial Assembly held at Santa Maria di Leuca in on 27 September 1996 were noted and the Minutes of the International Committee meeting held on 28 were agreed. The Minutes of the Bureau meetings held on 1 December 1996 in Marburg and 9 February 1997 in London were noted.

Reports were received from National Sections in Italy (a new National Section with legal status) and Russia

A report from the Rural Architecture Working Group was presented by Salvatore di Fazio and Zvezdana Kozelj, focussed on 'New Buildings in the Countryside' and how to develop an ECOVAST strategy on this theme. The text for the Strategy for Traditional Rural Buildings compiled by John Sell (United Kingdom) and the group is now complete but not yet published. Michael Dower reported, on behalf of the Agriculture and Forestry Working Group, that the policy document prepared by the group, "Agriculture and Forestry: Sustaining their Future in Europe", is complete. Fouli Papageorgiou reported that the Rural Tourism Working Group has produced a draft statement on "Sustainable Rural Tourism" for discussion

Michael Dower presented his paper 'progress on Membership campaign and a general discussion followed

### **European Parliamentary Conference on Rural Development held BRATISLAVA, Slovakia in 5-6 May 1997**

The event was staged by the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly and was to discuss future perspectives for a common rural European policy with parliamentarians from the Council of Europe's member states, delegates from the European Commission, European Parliament, NGO's and others. ECOVAST was represented by Sandor Koles (Hungary). The principles agreed at Cork formed the basis of discussions. The delegates agreed a formal declaration.

#### **The Bratislava Declaration – A Living European Countryside produced on 6 May 1997**

This urged Europe's policy makers to:

- raise public awareness of the importance of making a new start in rural development policy
- to make rural areas more attractive to people to live and work in and become centres of a more meaningful life for a growing diversity of people of all ages;
- play an active role in promoting sustainable rural development;
- to support the principles and goals embedded in the Cork
- foster the preparation of a European Charter for the Rural Areas of Europe

### **ECOVAST and Partners BARN project 1997**

A project 'Buildings Adapted for Rural Innovation' was set up by ECOVAST and four research units in Italy, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom and submitted to the EU in 1997 to the FAIR research programme funded by DG VI to assemble experience of good policy and practice whereby public benefits may be secured through appropriate and imaginative new uses of redundant agricultural buildings.

#### **ECOVAST Newsletter 13 published June 1997 – edited by Michael Dower: included**

- Reports from International Working Groups: Agriculture and Forestry from Michael Dower; Rural Architecture from Salvatore di Fazio and Zvezdna Kozeli; Rural Tourism from Fouli Papageorgiou.
- Reports from National Sections: Croatia from Miljenka Fischer; Germany from Detlef Simons and Angus Fowler; Hungary from Márta Márczis; Italy from Donatella Murtas; Romania from Magdalena Banu and Călin Hoinărescu; Russia from Olga Sevan; Slovakia from Maria Medvecká; Sweden from Staffan Lund and United Kingdom from Michael Dower.
- Reports on projects; WITRANET; Small Homelands; Buildings Adapted for Rural Innovation (BARN)
- Special Report on the Cork Declaration
- Report on Bratislava Declaration – A Living European Countryside 6 May 1997



### **ECOVAST Bureau Meeting held in Cheltenham on 5/6 July 1997**

Present at the meeting, hosted by Michael Dower, were 7 ECOVAST members from 5 countries (Germany, Greece, Italy, Sweden, United Kingdom) and including:

President: Ulf Brangefeldt (Sweden) who chaired the meeting

Vice Presidents: Angus Fowler (Germany); Foulis Papageorgiou (Greece); Enrico Capo (Italy)

Secretary General: Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Treasurer: Edmund Neville Rolfe (United Kingdom)

ECOVAST International Committee member Nigel Curry (United Kingdom) for Item 5

Apologies for absence were received from Vice President Sandor Köles (Hungary).

Minutes of the Meeting of the International Committee held in Slovenia on 13 April 1997 were noted.

The Bureau discussed: the LEADER programme and its implications for ECOVAST. AEIDL would be happy to involve ECOVAST in a seminar and Projects WITRANET, Small Homelands; AEOLOS, Sustainable new use of redundant agriculture buildings; and RECITE II

A draft of a request to Mr Soros for funding for ECOVAST was discussed. We must be clear that it is short term development funding not long term subvention

### **ECOVAST Manual on Heritage Trails published in September 1997**

The manual was jointly produced by Ecotourism Ltd, PRISMA and ECOVAST following the pilot projects in Slovenia and Bulgaria and through ECOVAST. It is 62 pages long with 9 chapters: Introduction: Tourism Planning: Assessing Cultural Assets: Assessing Social, Physical and Environment Carrying Capacity: Marketing the Heritage Trail: Creating a Tourism Association: Providing Information and Interpretation to Visitors: Standards and Accommodation and Useful Addresses

### **ECOVAST events in the Salzkammergut, Austria 11-13 September 1997**

This was a three day event with a tour, Symposium and committee meetings

#### **ECOVAST Tour of the Salzkammergut, Austria on 11 September 1997.**

This first day was an excursion to the Salzkammergut area under the guidance of Hans Peter Jeschke, visiting the narrow alpine valley which contains the lake and small town of Hallstatt – centre of the famous salt-mines which lie just above the town and have been worked for about 4,000 years. We went on to meet the local LEADER group in Bad Goisen and then the Hochkreut Wildpark ending with supper in a handsome lodge within the park. The excursion provided some sense of context for the next day's symposium.

#### **ECOVAST / ISG / Austria EUROPA NOSTRA International Symposium held at the Town Hall, ATTERSEE, Salzkammergut, Austria on 12 September 1997.**

The event was jointly initiated by ECOVAST with the Austrian branch of EUROPA NOSTRA and the Internationales Stadtforum (ISG). 100 people from 17 countries attended the symposium. The theme of the conference was 'Rural Development in the Alpine Regions of Europe; new strategies for protection and future rural development'. The morning session was chaired by Hans Peter Jeschke. The keynote speaker was Laurent Van Depoele of the European Commission, who referred to the newly published policy document 'Agenda 2000'. He explained that until 1987 the focus of EU policy was on adjusting the structure of farming which changed in 1988 to a multi-sectoral policy and greater synergy between funds. New funds such as Objectives 1, 2, 5b and 6 had been introduced to help the most vulnerable areas. He announced that funding could be reduced and the number of Objectives also reduced, causing many adverse views. The afternoon session was about perspectives in Alpine countries and the need for a successful Mountain Areas Policy, it being noted that (for example) 70% of the land area of Austria is classified as 'mountainous'. Hans Peter Jeschke opened discussion on the theme of cultural landscapes. Angus Fowler (Germany) stated the need to protect and enhance all landscapes and settlements and Justus Bohl (Germany) pointed out the contradictions in the EU Common Agricultural Policy. Michael Dower (United Kingdom) summed up the conference proceedings and hoped that Agenda 2000 provided a chance for debate about the very serious issues raised by the European Commission.

#### **ECOVAST International Committee held in ATTERSEE, Salzkammergut, Austria on 12 September 1997**

*No minutes have been found but the Minutes were approved at the Committee held in Rugen in 1998*

#### **ECOVAST General Assembly held in ATTERSEE, Salzkammergut, Austria on 13 September 1997**

Present at the Assembly, hosted by Hans Peter Jeschke and Countess Marguerite Kottulinsky, were more than 70 ECOVAST members from 11 countries (Austria, Croatia, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Russia, Slovakia and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Ulf Brangefeldt (Sweden):

Secretary General – Michael Dower (United Kingdom)



International Committee members: Angus Fowler, Ursula Stratenwerth (Germany); András Román, Sandor Köles (Hungary); Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece) Enrico Capo, Salvatore Di Fazio (Italy); Magdalena Banu, Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); Olga Sevan (Russia); Mária Nadová, Josef Ušák (Slovakia); and Kjell Roger Karlsson (Sweden)

Other ECOVAST members attending including Hans Peter Jesche, Arthur Spiegler, Norburt Burda (Austria); Renate Husinec (Croatia); Urmas Selirand (Estonia); Justin Bohl, Detlef Simmons, Horst Schubert, Gerda Stachowitz of Germany; Vera Muszik (Hungary); Donatella Murtas (Italy); Eva Dziekowska (Poland); Eva Kralova (Slovakia); John Sell and Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

Apologies for absence were received from ECOVAST International Committee members: Charles Christians (Belgium); Miljenka Fischer (Croatia); Rolf Peter Bartz, Maria Meier Gresshoff, Gunter Kröes (Germany), and Roy Brigden (United Kingdom)

The Minutes of the Biennial Assembly in Santa Maria de Leuca, Italy in 1996 were agreed.

The following reports were received from the Working Groups

- Rural Architecture report by Vera Muszik. The group had heard papers from Hasso Hohmann (Austria), Charles Christians (Belgium), Nuno Santos Pinheiro (Portugal), Angus Fowler (Germany) and András Román (Hungary).
- Rural Tourism report by Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece): the draft strategy for sustainable rural tourism was now being prepared.
- Rural Development (a new group) was presented by Michael Dower (United Kingdom).
- Agriculture and Forestry Group had completed its work.
- A formal network of members interested in research was discussed – it could become a new group.

Reports were received from the National Sections of Croatia; Germany; Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden and the United Kingdom. The National Section for Italy was approved in March 1997 and the Russian National Section is now officially registered. There are initiatives to create new National Sections in Austria and Estonia.

It was agreed that ECOVAST must make more use of electronic means of communications – although not all national sections yet had access to this.

There was a worrying report announcing that expenditure for 1997 exceeded income.

A debate followed on the continuing concerns about the denial of votes to Honorary members and the disparity between the present structure of the ECOVAST membership and the provision in the Statutes for election of the International Committee. The following amendments were agreed:

- Honorary members shall have the right to vote in General Assemblies and the right to elect officers or be elected to office
- All members, in whatever Group, shall be entitled to stand for election and to vote for candidates - a decision to stop voting in divisions
- The Presidents and Vice-Presidents may not be re-elected for more than two successive periods of office.

John Sell reported on the European Heritage Group and the work they are doing on 'heritage and employment'. He represents ECOVAST on this group.

It was also proposed that ECOVAST should consider how they could help make good the damage to heritage caused by flooding in the Czech Republic, Germany, Poland and Slovakia.

It was reported that ECOVAST was working closely with AEIDL – the network that manages the LEADER European Observatory.

Michael Dower (United Kingdom) had written the leading article for the forthcoming issue of the LEADER magazine on 'Heritage as an Asset for Local Development'.

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in READING, United Kingdom on 15 November 1997**

*Minutes of this meeting have not been found*

### **ECOVAST Policy Paper 'Agriculture and Forestry: Sustaining Their Future in Europe; produced 1997**

This Policy Paper produced by an ECOVAST Working Group during 1997 and published with an introduction by the ECOVAST President Ulf Brangenfeldt - a companion to ECOVAST's main policy document, the "Strategy for Rural Europe", first published in 1991 and updated in 1994. It was the outcome of a sequence of meetings and is addressed to all policy-makers and practitioners at European, national, regional and local level. It sets out ECOVAST's vision of a sustainable future for agriculture and forestry in the whole of Europe; and sets out the implications for policy and practical action; and illustrates with practical examples. The contents include:

- Background - the current state of agriculture and forestry in Europe; the changes since the War; the effect of these changes and recent events and the need for a new approach
- Principles which should guide a new approach

- An outline of practical policies for the future under the following headings: Integrated Rural Development as the essential context; Sustainable agriculture; Farming everywhere; Quality of food; Sustainable, multipurpose forestry; Added value to farm and forest products and
- Who should take responsibility?

**ECOVAST Newsletter 14 published December 1997 – edited by Michael Dower; included**

- Reports from National Sections: Croatia; Germany; Poland; Romania; Sweden and the United Kingdom
- Report on the ECOVAST General Assembly in Attersee
- Report on International Working Groups: Rural Architecture from Salvatore de Fazio (Italy) and Vera Muszik (Hungary); Rural Tourism from Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece); Rural Development from Michael Dower (UK)
- Reports on the Research Network; and LEADER
- Special Report on the Attersee Conference

## 1998

*Start of war in Kosovo, formerly an autonomous province of Yugoslavia in March.*

### **ECOVAST ASSOCIATES Project set up on 23 January 1998**

A meeting was held at the ECOVAST meeting in Attersee, Austria where members who are interested in multi-country research, consultancy and action projects in the fields of rural development and heritage protection in rural Europe, discussed the idea of setting up a formal network of those who are interested in such work. The aim was to facilitate working together more effectively to launch projects and secure funding for them from the European Commission and other bodies. A questionnaire was sent out to all members; further discussion followed in Reading and the final decision to set up was taken in Brussels: with the founding partners being the University of Helsinki, Finland; The University of Dortmund, Germany; the Hungarian Academy of Sciences; the Nicolaus Copernicus University, Torun, Poland; LABOS of Rome, Italy; the Carpathian Foundation, the University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden; the South Pembrokeshire Action for Rural Communities (SPARC), and The Development Consultancy in Montgomery (both in Wales): the National Rural Enterprise Centre, Warwickshire; and the Countryside & Community Research Unit, Cheltenham & Gloucester College and the Sell Wade consultancy in Faversham, England (all of the United Kingdom); and ECOVAST itself. Endorsement of the founding of the project followed at the ECOVAST meeting in Binz, Rugen in March 1998.

### **Swedish Rural Parliament held in LINKOPING, Sweden on 27 February -1 March 1998**

ECOVAST was one of the organisers of this event, which attracted 1200 village people from all over Sweden. The programme included an International Day and had a focus on Agenda 2000: this was attended by 130 participants from 17 countries, including ECOVAST and other European networks.

### **Ulster Architectural Heritage Society on 'The Future of Rural Buildings in Ulster, Northern Ireland, United Kingdom held in March 1998.**

ECOVAST speakers included Salvatore Di Fazio (Italy); Dick Oram and Susan Denyer (United Kingdom). A report on the event was published in 1999.

### **ECOVAST International Conference on Agenda 21 held in BINZ, on Rugen Island, Mecklenburg, Germany on 14 March 1998**

It was organised by the National Sections of Germany and Sweden and held the day before the ECOVAST International Committee meeting, and aimed at influencing the governments of the Baltic region in pursuit of Agenda 21. A new formal International Working Group called Baltic 21 was set up.

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in BINZ, on Rugen Island, Germany on 15 March 1998**

The meeting was held at the Arkona Strand Hotel. Present were 18 ECOVAST members from 6 countries (Estonia, Germany, Latvia, Poland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom) and including:

President: Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden)

Vice President: Angus Fowler (Germany)

Secretary General: Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

ECOVAST International Committee members: Ralf-Peter Bartz, Maria Meier Gresshoff, Ursula Stratenwerth (Germany)

Other ECOVAST members: Tõnu Otsason (Estonia), Horst Schubert, Detlev Simons, Hany Westermark (Germany); Asnate Ziemela (Latvia). Eva Dziekowska, Jan Kurek, Tadeusz Sedzikowski (Poland); Per Årman, Staffan Bond (Sweden); Trevor Kearley, Paul Richardson (United Kingdom).

There had been many apologies as members found it both difficult and expensive to this area of Germany.

The Minutes of the International Committee held on 12 September 1997 and the General Assembly on 13 September 1997 both in Attersee, Austria were agreed. The Minutes of the Bureau meeting held in Reading, England on 15-16 November 1997 were noted.

Reports on National Sections had been received from Estonia (a new section set up during 1997) and Poland. Per Arman reported that a new Baltic Working Group had been set up in pursuit of Agenda 21 to support the process of local development in the Baltic countries. The Committee hoped it would also be able to help the setting up of new National sections in Denmark, Finland, Latvia and Lithuania.

Staffan Bond (Sweden) reported on a major event in Sweden called the Swedish Rural parliament. It included an International seminar which focussed on Agenda 2000 and involved ECOVAST. There were reports from National sections of Poland and Estonia and a report from Latvia.

Paul Richardson reported on a meeting held in Reyjavik, Iceland to discuss co-operation in marketing sustainable tourism and he asked for help from ECOVAST Associates.

#### **Conference on the European Landscape Convention held in FLORENCE, Italy in early April 1998**

The purpose was to discuss the draft text of the future convention with representatives from 30 governments and 20 European NGO's attending. Donatella Murtas represented ECOVAST.

#### **First Hungarian Rural Parliament was held in BUDAPEST, Hungary on 22 April 1998**

This first Hungarian Rural Parliament event was co-convened by Marta Marczis of ECOVAST Hungary and ECOVAST International and 8 other national no-government bodies.

#### **ECOVAST International Committee held in SOPRON, Hungary on 30 May 1998**

*No minutes found (but most of the papers discussed do exist and the meeting reported in Newsletter 15)*

The event which took place over 5 days was organised by ECOVAST Hungary and was held in the regional headquarters of the National Board for Protection of Historic Monuments housed in a fine medieval house in the historic centre of Sopron. The Rural Architecture Group and the Rural Tourism Group both held meetings in Sopron with a full-day tour by the Rural Architecture Group and a half-day tour by the Rural Tourism Group. There was a reception by the Mayor of Sopron.

Reports on projects: Heritage Trails, WITRANET, TWIG, Capacity building, and ECOVAST Associates.

The Membership Policy and Campaign was agreed.

Liaison with other membership organisations should be explored.

ECOVAST has been part of the creation of a network of networks and is now working with 2 new initiatives led by VIRGILE and RED (*Ruralité Environnement Développement*).

ECOVAST members were urged to use electronic means of networking which would allow decentralisation by dealing directly with each other rather than using the Secretariat.

#### **ECOVAST becomes a formal member of the new European Commission Advisory Committee on Rural Development in 1998**

The Committee will meet in Brussels, Belgium and Michael Dower will be the member to represent ECOVAST.

#### **ECOVAST Newsletter 15 published June 1998 – edited by Michael Dower: included**

- A short report on Agenda 21 and the Baltic and the new International Working Group
- Donatella Murtas reported on the Inter-Governmental Conference held in Florence, Italy in April to discuss the new draft European Landscape Convention
- Trevor Kearley – the new Honorary ECOVAST Development Officer on the potential of a website
- ECOVAST offered a place on the new EC Advisory Committee on Rural Development (led by DG Agri)
- A short report on projects: Heritage Trails and the PHARE Partnership Programme that had, in principle, approved projects to create Heritage Trails; WITRANET; TWIG; Capacity Building in the Carpathian area of Europe; the founding of ECOVAST Associates

#### **Conference on Cultural Tourism – a Seminar held in SKOPJE, Macedonia in July 1998**

ECOVAST was among the bodies that provided expert advice which aimed to launch a development programme of cultural tourism in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

#### **ECOVAST News update 1 August 1998: includes**

- A report on Hungarian Rural Parliament – the first session held in April 1998
- A report on Swedish Rural Parliament held in Linköping in February which included an International Conference on Agenda 2000 and rural development with 130 participants from 17 countries and ECOVAST and other networks

- A report that the draft text for the European Landscape Convention has been prepared – with Michael Dower (United Kingdom) being one of the expert advisors
- A report on seminar on Cultural Tourism held in Skopje, Macedonia in July 1998

#### **ECOVAST event in MARATHON, Greece held 10-14 September 1998**

This 5 day ECOVAST event in Greece took place from 10-14 September. The first 2 days (10-11) were the conference followed by the ECOVAST International Committee meeting; the Biennial Assembly on 12-13 September, and the final day was a Tour of East Attica.

#### **ECOVAST Witrinet Conference held in MARATHON, Attica, Greece on 10/11 September 1998**

The conference on Wine Cultivation was attended by 70 members from 15 countries. The event coincided with the European Wine Festival, organised as part of the WITRANET (Wine Tradition Network) project, in which ECOVAST is a partner. The International Symposium was co-organised by ECOVAST and other WITRANET partners. It was opened by the Prefecture Council of East Attica and the Greek national Tourism Organisation. This was followed by a session on WITRANET Initiatives; The European Wine Networks and on the second day a session on the use of Wine and Wine related heritage in Local Development.

There were a series of evening events, including a gastronomical evening with wine and food from Austria, Greece, Italy and Portugal and folk music and dances from Greece, Italy and Portugal; a performance of the ancient Greek comedy 'Aharnes' by Aristophanes and a concert by the Greek singer Elli Paspala.

#### **ECOVAST International Committee held in MARATHON, Attica, Greece on 11 September 1998**

*The minutes of this short meeting have not been found but it was reported on at the meeting in Roznava Slovakia*

#### **ECOVAST Biennial Committee near MARATHON, Attica, Greece on 12 September 1998**

Present at the Assembly, held in The Golden Beach Hotel at Schinias hosted by Fouli Papageorgiou, were 33 ECOVAST members from 12 countries (Austria, Croatia, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Sweden, United Kingdom) including:

President – Ulf Brangefeldt (Sweden)

Secretary General – Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

International Committee members present included; Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Ksenija Markovic (Croatia); Tonu Otsason (Estonia); Maria Meier Gresshoff, Gunter Kröes (Germany); Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece); Sandor Köles, Márta Márczis (Hungary); Enrico Capo, Salvatore di Fazio (Italy); Anne Siri Skamskar (Norway); Andrzej Hałasiewicz (Poland); Magdalena Banu, Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); Olga Sevan (Russia); Mária Nadová (Slovakia); Ulf Brangefeldt, Kjell Roger Karlsson (Sweden); Roy Brigden, Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Other members attending included: Ksenija Markovic (Croatia); Endel Ervin (Estonia); Detlef Simmons and Horst Schubert (Germany); Vera Muszik (Hungary); Per Årman (Sweden); Joan Ashby, Simon Berry; Trevor Kearley; John Sell, Jane Wade (all from the United Kingdom)

Apologies for absence were received from: ECOVAST's founder president Francis Noel-Baker was delivered by his son Philip, together with the gift of a ceramic plaque based on the ECOVAST logo. Greetings were received also from András Román, past President, and Miljenka Fischer, past Vice-President. Apologies for absence were reported from Vice President - Enrico Capo (Italy) and Angus Fowler (Germany); from 10 members of the International Committee; and from a number of other members.

The Minutes of the General Assembly held in Attersee, Austria on 13 September 1997 were agreed.

This being a voting general assembly, the current International Committee was formally released from its obligations and the Committee members were thanked for their work over the last 2 years (1996-1998). An election to decide the new International Committee for 1998-2000 followed.

The following members were elected to serve on the new International Committee:

- Arthur Spiegler - Austria
- Tõnu Otsason
- Maria Meier Gresshoff - Germany
- Gunter Kröes - Germany
- Fouli Papageorgiou - Greece
- Sandor Köles - Hungary
- Márta Márczis - Hungary
- Enrico Capo - Italy
- Salvatore di Fazio - Italy
- Anne Siri Skamskar - Norway
- Andrzej Hałasiewicz - Poland
- Magdalena Banu - Romania

- Călin Hoinărescu - Romania
- Olga Sevan - Russia
- Mária Nadová - Slovakia
- Ulf Brangefeldt - Sweden
- Kjell Roger Karlsson - Sweden
- Michael Dower - United Kingdom
- Roy Brigden – United Kingdom

Two other ECOVAST members were voted onto the International Committee retrospectively in Worriken, Belgium in 2000 and so are co-opted members for 1998-2000

- Charles Christians (Belgium)
- Angus Fowler (Germany).

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in MARATHON, Attica, Greece on 12 September 1998**

*No Minutes of this meeting held immediately after the Biennial Assembly have been found but is reported Newsletter 16.*

The new ECOVAST International Committee elected to the ECOVAST Bureau for 1998-2000

- Ulf Brangefeldt (Sweden) as President for a second term

Four members as Vice Presidents:

- Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece)
- Sandor Köles (Hungary)
- Enrico Capo (Italy)
- Magdalena Banu (Romania)
- Michael Dower (United Kingdom) to continue as Secretary General
- Roy Brigden (United Kingdom) to continue as Treasurer

Honorary Auditors John Sell and Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom) were elected for 1998-2000:

Trevor Kearley was asked to continue as Development Officer

Michael Dower and Stephen Whitwell (United Kingdom) were elected an Honorary Life Members of ECOVAST.

The new ECOVAST website was declared open: <http://ecovast.org>.

The next day, Sunday 13 September, was the day for reports: the European Landscape Convention by Donatella Murtas; the first Hungarian Rural Parliament staged by Márta Márczis; and projects involving ECOVAST – Heritage trails; WITRANET, TWIG, and Capacity Building for Rural Innovation in Central Europe.

There were also reports from ECOVAST Associates (a formal network of ECOVAST members who are involved with research); the European Heritage Group an alliance of NGOs concerned with heritage; and the European Rural University even in Val Soana in northern Italy attended by several ECOVAST members.

Reports had been received from 4 Working Groups - the Baltic 21 Group which had been set up in March 1998 by Per Årman; Rural Architecture by Salvatore de Fazio; Rural Development by Michael Dower and Rural Tourism also by Michael Dower.

Reports were also received from 11 National Sections – from Croatia by Ksenija Markovic; Estonia by Endel Ervin; Germany by Detlef Simons and Angus Fowler; Hungary by Márta Márczis and Vera Muszik; Italy by Salvatore Di Fazio; Poland by Władysław Misiak and Elzbieta Raszeja; Romania by Magdalena Banu and Călin Hoinărescu; Russia by Olga Sevan; Slovakia by Mária Nadová; Sweden by Kjell Roger Karlsson and the United Kingdom by Michael Dower

There was a report that new ECOVAST National Section was about to be created in Macedonia (the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia – FYROM)

### **ECOVAST Tour of Attica area, Greece on 14 September 1998**

The tour visited sites in the hills of north Attica and the plain of Mesogeia with Vassilis Triantafyllou and Fouli Papageorgiou acting as guides and who were creating Heritage Trails in east Attica. The tour included a visit to the battle site of Marathon; and saw the devastation caused by the years massive forest fires; and saw modern vineyards and a winery of Kambas and the byzantine church of Palipanagia.

### **Fifth European Rural University held in CAMPIGLIA SOANA, Italy on 16-20 September 1998**

This gathering was held in the Val Soana in Piedmont, which falls within the Grand Paradiso National Park spanning the Alpine border of Italy and France. Its theme was 'Lifelong Education in the Rural Environment: Participation, Culture and Development'.

It was organised by Enrico Capo who is a member of both APURE and ECOVAST, with support from ECOVAST members Michael Dower, Phil Turner, Pam Moore and Valerie Carter who are also on the APURE International Committee.

**Expert Seminar on Sustainable Rural Development organised by World Tourism and Travel Council and held in FLORENCE, Italy – September 1998**

Michael Dower outlined ECOVAST thinking

**Council of Europe's Colloquy on 'The Prospects for Rural Areas held in LJUBLJANA, Slovenia in September 1998**

Michael outlined the initiative planned by ECOVAST for training in local mobilization in the context of the proposed rural development programmes in the 10 accession states of central Europe under the SAPARD element of Agenda 2000.

**ECOVAST Austria 'Symposium on Small Towns' held in MURAU, Austria on 26-27 September 1998**

The meeting, arranged by Arthur Spiegler, was the first ECOVAST event concentrating on small towns. Michael Dower (United Kingdom) gave the keynote speech. The event led to several other symposiums held by ECOVAST Austria. It also eventually led to the major ASSET project on small towns and the setting up of a National Section for Austria.

**European Symposium 'Monument Ensemble' held in DURNSTEIN, Austria in early October 1998**

It was organised by the Austrian Government. Michael Dower spoke on 'ECOVAST's Activities for the Preservation of Cultural Landscapes.

**DENKMAL Trade Fair 1998 and EUREGIA event held in LEIPZIG, Germany on 28-31 October 1998**

This is a leading EUROPEAN Trade Fair, started in 1994, and dedicated to the conservation, restoration and old building renovation and held in Leipzig, Germany every two years. Rural buildings are a key interest for ECOVAST and are an International Working Group which meets regularly and develops ECOVAST policy. ECOVAST participation at the fair is through an arrangement with EUROPA NOSTRA. The international presence of ECOVAST is organised and attended by ECOVAST Germany.

From 1998 a new biennial event ran alongside DENKMAL - called EUREGIA - dedicated to local and regional development in Europe including employment, development, energy, climate change, rural development, landscape, regional management and tourism. ECOVAST often arranges special seminars at the DENKMAL event. 1998 was the first year that ECOVAST attended DENKMAL and EUREGIA and they held a seminar on 'Cultural Landscapes in central and eastern Europe' which attracted a good audience – and marked the start of the ECOVAST protest against opencast coal mining which was destroying whole villages. This event was followed by a concert in the church of Heuersdorf (a village threatened by brown coal mining).

**Formal Launch of ECOVAST Web-site on the Internet 26 November 1998**

**ECOVAST Newsletter 16 published November 1998 – edited by Michael Dower:** included:

- A report that the European Commission had produced a consultation paper about the scope of its cultural work in the period 2000-2004. The European Heritage Group (John Sell represents ECOVAST on this group) is about to respond, and would like to see the EU's Common Agricultural Policy replaced by a Common Cultural Policy focussing on protection of both the unity and the diversity of European Culture.
- A report on the new European Countryside Movement and suggestion that ECOVAST should join
- The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) is proposing a new ECOVAST National Section
- Reports on International Working Groups: Baltic 21 by Per Årman; Rural Architecture by Salvatore de Fazio and John Sell; Rural Development by Michael Dower; and Rural Tourism by Fouli Papageorgiou
- Reports from National Sections: Croatia by Ksenija Markovic; Estonia by Endel Ervin; Germany by Detlev Simons and Angus Fowler; Hungary by Márta Márczis and Vera Muszik; Italy by Salvatore di Fazio; Poland by Władysław Misiak and Elżbieta Raszeja; Romania by Magdalena Banu and Călin Hoinărescu; Russia by Olga Sevan; Slovakia by Mária Nadová; Sweden by Kjell-Roger Karlsson; and the UK by Michael Dower
- Report on ECOVAST Project ECOVAST Associates
- Reports on the European Heritage Group; European Rural University; Denkmal; Sustainable Rural Tourism; and small towns

**European Countryside Movement December 1998**

This is a network of major European non-government organisations including farmers, landowners and hunting bodies, which offers the chance to influence the attitudes of the member organisations, and of the European Commission. It was argued that ECOVAST would not lose its independence of action and we joined the network in December 1998, which is chaired and serviced by RED (*Ruralité Environnement Développement*).

**ECOVAST News update 2 December 1998:** included:

- Report that ECOVAST formally joined the European Countryside Movement in December 1998
- A note that ECOVAST had attended its first Advisory Committee on Rural Development held in Brussels

### **ECOVAST Joint Project with International Centre for Anthropology Motovun (ICAM) Croatia agreed 1998**

- ECOVAST is to help create 2 Heritage Trails in the Croatian regions of Rijeka and Karlovac.

### **ECOVAST Slovakia International Conference on Heritage Trails held in ROZNAVA, Slovakia on 3-6 December 1998**

The conference focussed on the potential of heritage trails in Slovakia.

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in ROZNAVA, Slovakia on 5 December 1998**

Present at the meeting, hosted by Eva Kralova – who welcomed the Committee on behalf of ECOVAST Slovakia - were 10 ECOVAST members from 7 countries (Austria, Estonia, Germany, Norway, Slovakia, Sweden, United Kingdom) including:

Secretary General; Michael Dower (United Kingdom) who chaired the meeting

ECOVAST International Committee members: Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Tõnu Otsason (Estonia); Angus Fowler (Germany); Anne Siri Skamsar (Norway); Mária Nadová (Slovakia); Kjell-Roger Karlsson (Sweden)

Other ECOVAST members: Horst Schubert (Germany); Eva Kralova, Josef Ušák (Slovakia).

Apologies for Absence: Michael Dower reported that the President was unable to attend because of flu, and that other Committee members had sent apologies, for a variety of reasons. (We had no word from Vice President Sandor Köles and International Committee member Márta Márczis (Hungary), but heard later that they were held up by atrocious road conditions, following heavy snow.)

The Minutes of the two International Committees held on the 11 and 12 September; and the Minutes of the Biennial Committee on the 12 September all held in Marathon, Greece were agreed.

Report that formal meetings were about to be held to establish new National Sections in Austria and Macedonia (FYROM) and Slovenia

### **ECOVAST submission to the European Commission on Agenda 2000 in December 1998**

This led to ECOVAST being awarded with a seat on the EC's new Advisory Committee on Rural Development.

The new Agenda proposals introduced new Structural funds and the LEADER programme.

*ECOVAST remained a member until the 2014 revision of the EC committees and the arrival of Civil Dialogue groups – on which we had no seat.*

### **ECOVAST becomes a member of the VIRGILE Network of European Rural Organisations**

ECOVAST and VIRGILE agreed to have informal cooperation and shape a common approach to Agenda 21

## **1999**

*End of War in Kosovo (June) and the area was then administered by the United Nations. Georgia joined the Council of Europe. In the European Union a new programme Agenda 2000 was established whose main objectives were to reform the Common Agricultural Policy and Regional Policy and establish a new financial framework for the 7 years 2000-2006. It included a new round of LEADER – called LEADER+ which covered the same 7 years 2000-2006 but it was open to all Europe to apply. In June 1999 the European Union established the Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (SAPARD) to help countries of Central and Eastern Europe deal with the problems of structural adjustment in their agricultural sectors and rural areas, in preparation for their joining the European Union.*

### **ECOVAST Hungary / Hungarian Rural Parliament held in BUDAPEST, Hungary in February 1999**

This event, co-organised by the Hungarian Rural Parliament & ECOVAST Hungary, Michael Dower (ECOVAST Secretary General) spoke about the implications for Hungary of the European Union's new Agenda 2000 proposals.

### **ECOVAST Romania / Transylvania Trust Conference on 'Vernacular Architecture', held at TUSNAD, Romania. In March 1999**

This was one of a series of conferences to be held in the very small town of Tusnad in Harghita District in Transylvania to discuss what constitutes success in conservation and the preservation of built heritage which involve places to live, commerce and culture. ECOVAST members of International Working Group Rural Architecture were invited and attended the 1999 event.

### **ECOVAST News update 3 March 1999: included:**

- A news update with brief reports about the Swedish Rural Parliament in February
- A report on the first Hungarian Rural Parliament
- A report that the Heritage Trails project idea is being followed up in Croatia and Slovakia



- A report that Michael Dower (United Kingdom) is acting as an expert adviser to the Laona Foundation (an ECOVAST member) on a demonstration project of sustainable development in Cyprus
- A report that a new Austrian National Section was formed after the small towns event in Murau.
- A report that ECOVAST has joined the European Countryside Movement chaired and serviced by RED

#### **ECOVAST /Carpathian Foundation Project on Training started in March 1999**

Sandor Koles of the Carpathian Foundation (and Vice President of ECOVAST) invited ECOVAST to develop proposals for expert training in 'Capacity building for Rural Innovation in Central Europe' for people involved in integrated rural development in Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine. The ECOVAST Team was Michael Dower and Joan Ashby (United Kingdom) and Staffan Bond and Birgitta Wiberg (Sweden). The project resulted in a formal Training Manual finally published in June 2000.

#### **ECOVAST tour associated with the Grosseto conference in Tuscany, Italy on 13 May 1999**

The ECOVAST event in Tuscany took place over 4 days (13-16 May) and was organised by Enrico Capo and ECOVAST Italy. The event started with visits to local historic centres and nature reserves.

#### **ECOVAST / Tuscany Region Conference 'Global Tendencies and Local Answers - New Opportunities for Rural Europe' and Tour held in GROSSETO, Maremma, Tuscany, Italy on 14-15 May 1999**

The conference, jointly initiated by ECOVAST and Regione Toscana, enabled the comparison of the different experiences in various European countries which can contribute to the development of integrated and sustainable development. The need to strengthen local economies, develop rural tourism; the conservation of biodiversity and agri-environmental measures were also discussed. Franz Fischler, European Commissioner for Agriculture attended and speakers included Donatella Murtas and Michael Dower from ECOVAST.

#### **ECOVAST International Committee held in the Military Veterinary Centre in GROSSETO, Maremma, Tuscany, Italy on 16 May 1999**

*Copy of the Minutes not available but all the associated papers are.*

Present at the meeting were 11 ECOVAST members from 9 countries (Austria, Belgium, Germany, Greece, Italy, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United Kingdom) including:

President - Ulf Brangefeldt (Sweden)

Vice Presidents - Enrico Capo (Italy) and Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece)

Secretary General – Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

ECOVAST International Committee members; Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Charles Christians (Belgium); Maria Meier Gresshoff (Germany); Salvatore di Fazio (Italy); Anne Siri Skamskar (Norway); Olga Sevan (Russia)

Other ECOVAST members: Horst Schubert (Germany)

Reports were received from the National Section of Austria. It was noted that FYROM Macedonia had still not come into being and Norway and Slovenia were still thinking about forming National sections

Reports from Working Groups of Baltic 21 by Per Årman; Landscape; Rural Architecture by John Sell; Rural Development by Edmund Neville Rolfe; and Rural Tourism by Fouli Papageorgiou

The Committee discussed the conclusions published by the EU after the Berlin Summit held on 24-25 March 1999 based on the report from helmut Korzonnek who attended the summit on behalf of ECOVAST and the ECOVAST submission to the EC on Agenda 2000 in December 1997 – which led to our seat on the EC's new Advisory Committee on Rural Development.

#### **ECOVAST News update 4 June 1999: included**

- A report on the Swedish Conference on Sustainable Local Development in Sparsely Populated Rural Areas
- An article on the Grosseto conference
- An article on creating partnerships for Pre-Accession (PREPARE)
- A report on the following projects: WITRANET, Heritage Trails; Carpathian Training
- An article on reconstruction in the Balkans – the well-being of the people and of heritage
- Reports from the following national sections: newly formed Austria, Croatia, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, and Sweden

#### **Travelling Workshop in Estonia and Sweden in June 1999**

Prior to the proposed enlargement of the European Union; in June 1999 ECOVAST was among the organisers of a one-week Travelling Workshop in Estonia and Sweden in June 1999. The aim of the event was to enable government officials and NGO representatives of the 10 pre-accession countries of central Europe to see practical examples of rural development: this experience would help them prepare for programmes and finance under the EU SAPARD programme. The Workshop was initiated at the request of, and with funding from, the European Parliament; and was jointly organised by Forum Synergies (formerly called the European Network for Experiences in Sustainable Development – ENESD), ECOVAST Sweden and the rural organisations Kodukant (Estonia) and Hela Sverige Ska Leva (All Sweden Shall Live). ECOVAST provided contacts with participants in

the 10 countries, many of whom were in ECOVASTS's network. ECOVAST Secretary General Michael Dower was also among the participants.

The report of the travelling workshop, edited by Michael Dower, was published by the European Parliament in December 1999. The report urged the governments of the pre-accession countries to pursue full partnership with local populations, NGOs and other actors in their rural development programmes; and to so shape those programmes as to encourage the strengthening of civil society. As a direct consequence of this traveling workshop, ECOVAST joined with Forum Synergies, ECOVAST Sweden, Hela Sverige ska Leva (Sweden), Kodukant (Estonia) and the Hungarian Rural Parliament to found the Pre-Accession Partnership for Rural Europe (PREPARE), with the aim to promote the strengthening of civil society in the pre-accession countries, and to foster multinational exchanges in rural development. Michael Dower represents ECOVAST on the Working Group, and took responsibility for seeking funds for PREPARE's work.

#### **PRIDE (Partnerships for Rural Development in Europe) International Project: 1999**

ECOVAST is one of 7 partners of a research project to investigate the nature, dynamics and effects of partnerships involved in rural development in different EU countries. The project is led by Community Research Unit at Cheltenham College (CCRU) and funded by the European Union

#### **ECOVAST Newsletter 17 published June 1999– edited by Michael Dower: included:**

- A report on the Grosseto Conference held in Italy in 1998 by Salvatore di Fazio
- A report of the travelling workshop in June on creating Partnership for Pre-Accession led by ECOVAST Sweden; together with the European Network for Experiences in Sustainable Development (ENESD) and Kodukant in Estonia and Hela Sverige ska leva (All Sweden Shall Live) to help them prepare for programmes and finance under the EU SAPARD programme.
- Reports on projects involving ECOVAST – including WITRANET (local economies adding value from wine and wine-related culture; TWIG (Transnational Woodlands Industries Group); Heritage Trails project in Slovakia and Bulgaria; ECOVAST Associates network of research and consultancy units; and Carpathian Training project with the Carpathian Foundation.
- A report on the Advisory Committee for Rural Development meetings, set up in 1988, by Michael Dower.
- A report on the Council of Europe campaign 'Europe; A common Heritage' to be launched in Glasgow, Scotland, United Kingdom in September and closing in 2000. The campaign marks the Council of Europe's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Report by Michael Dower suggests that ECOVAST contribution should mostly focus on the theme of landscape.
- A report of reconstruction in the Balkans after the conflict in Kosovo by John Sell, which seeks to encourage ECOVAST members with relevant knowledge to offer help - particularly on the revival of rural economies and the restoration of older buildings.
- Reports on International Working Groups: Baltic 21 by Per Årman (Sweden); Rural Architecture by Salvatori Di Fazio; Rural Development by Michael Dower and Rural Tourism by Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece)
- Reports on National Sections: Austria from Arthur Spiegler; Croatia from Ksenija Markovic; Valerija Kelemen Pepeonik and Tihana Stepina Fabijanić; Estonia by Tõnu Otsason; Germany by Detlev Simmons; Hungary from Vera Muszik; Italy from Salvatore Di Fazio; Macedonia (FYROM) who are still progressing; Norway who were still thinking about a section; Poland from Władysław Misiak; Romania from Magdalena Banu and Călin Hoinărescu; Russia from Olga Sevan; Slovakia from Mária Nadová; Slovenia from Marko Koščak who are still trying to launch a section; Sweden from Per Årman and the United Kingdom from Michael Dower.;

#### **ECOVAST events in northern Sweden 15-18 September 1999**

These events, hosted by ECOVAST Sweden and organised by Kjell-Roger Karlsson and Leopold Sjöström, were the first ECOVAST events to be held in Sweden, and were centred on the town of Hemaven in a sparsely populated region, quite close to the Arctic Circle. The organisers had asked Scandinavian airways for cheap flights for members from distant countries: the airline agreed to this, on the understanding that they could chose the route. Some of the participants found themselves flying into Stockholm, from there to Oslo, on from there to Bødo (Norway), beyond the Arctic Circle, and then by bus back across the Arctic Circle to Hemaven – a long and stimulating day.

#### **ECOVAST Tour associated with the Hemaven conference on 15 September 1999**

The first event was a Study Tour on 15 September by bus from Hemaven (Sweden) to Bødo (Norway), visiting many community initiatives and enterprises in Lapland north of the Arctic Circle. Our hosts were the local LEADER network and we were divided into four groups looking at different issues: the first focussing on 'land' who visited the site of a dam used for hydro power and had a discussion with a reindeer farmer from the Saami people who still lived a nature-based life; the second focussed on the local economy who crossed the border into Norway to visit the Saami culture centre at Hattfjelldal; the third group about 'people' looked at a variety of social facilities in Västerbotten county; the fourth group focussing on 'process the way in which rural development programmes are organised – and visited the adult education centre and the fishing centre at Tarnaby; and a project aimed at providing sustainable tourism and a local development association.

On the evening of 15 September, the conference delegates gathered for a mystery presentation in a large sports hall near Hemaven. Onto the stage came a short lady in full Lapp costume, who made a 10 minute speech in Sami language and then introduced two tall girls and two smart men with guitars, all in full Spanish dress, who entertained us for half an hour with dramatic flamenco dancing. When we asked the connection between the Sami people and such dancing, we were told that one of the girls was a Lapp, had studied in Spain, and had acquired both flamenco skills. Our surprise was matched by the warmth of our applause.

### **ECOVAST Conference 'Sustainable Local Development in Sparsely Populated Rural Regions held in HEMAVEN, Västerbotten County, Sweden on 16 September 1999**

The second day (16 September) was the conference which was attended by 80 ECOVAST members for 14 countries. The participants in this conference included Hannes Lorenzen, co-President of Forum Synergies, who in his capacity as an official of the European Parliament had secured the support of that organisation for the Travelling workshop in Estonia and Sweden in June 1999 (see above). He and Michael Dower were the prime movers of the PREPARE Partnership, of which Forum Synergies and ECOVAST were founder members and which was instrumental in extending ECOVAST's contacts (though not always its membership) progressively through the countries of Central Europe, the Balkans and the Black Sea region.

The first part of the conference started with a report from the four tour groups – which began to reveal the key issues of local development which one can expect to find in many sparsely populated areas and the special features associated with the co-existence of the Saami people and the Swedish community. This was followed by a presentation from Professor Kjell Havnevik of the University of Uppsala on 'Conditions for Sustainable Rural Development'; followed by a session of five parallel workshops focussing on how local communities can address sustainable local development; followed in turn by 3 students from Umea University – but based in the small town of Storuman - who demonstrated how decentralised education and high quality education can be offered on a local basis in rural regions. The afternoon session had Hannes Lorenzen and Vanessa Halhead describe the work of the European Network of Experiences in Sustainable Development (ENESD) who had been a co-organiser with ECOVAST of the travelling workshop in June 1999 for creating Partnership for Pre-Accession – as reported in Newsletter 17. The concluding session saw Professor Leif Mattson of the Mountain Mistra Programme give a brief talk on the techniques that can be used to assess the value to society, and the cost, of different uses of natural resources. There were 8 distinct conclusions:

- Sparsely populated regions tend to have high environmental quality – both a major asset and also an inhibitor for development
- These areas tend to have severe physical disadvantage – hard climate; poor soils; poor communications and long distance to markets
- Sparse populations who live in small communities with an unbalanced age-structure
- May have people of varied ethnic origin whose rights and cultures may clash
- Up to now the economy has been based on primary and extractive industries – often simply producers of raw materials processed elsewhere. Today mechanisation and world trade threaten farming and local jobs.
- There is a need for secondary and tertiary industries to support a local economy
- Tourism needs clear-headed management if it is going to lasting benefits to the region
- Local development needs to be based on partnership between many interests and self help should be encouraged and supported by governments.

### **ECOVAST General Assembly held in HEMAVEN, Västerbotten County, Sweden on 18 September 1999**

Present at the Assembly, hosted by ECOVAST Sweden, were 55 ECOVAST members from 14 European countries (Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Norway, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom). There was also a guest from the United States of America. Those members present included:

President Ulf Brangefeldt (Sweden) who chaired

Vice Presidents: Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece); Magdalena Banu (Romania)

Secretary General: Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Treasurer: Roy Brigden (United Kingdom)

Committee Members: Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Angus Fowler, Anne Skiri Skanscar (Norway); Olga Sevan (Russia); Kjell-Roger Karlsson (Sweden);

Other members: Juha Niemelä (Finland); Heinar Henckel, Rudiger Maul, Horst Schubert (Germany); Iren Kukorelli (Hungary); Eva Kralova (Slovakia); Per Årman (Sweden); Trevor Kearley, Edmund Neville-Rolfe, John Sell (United Kingdom)

Apologies for absence had been received from our Founder President: Francis Noel-Baker (United Kingdom); Vice Presidents: Enrico Capo (Italy) and Sandor Köles (Hungary); 4 members of the International Committee: and a number of other members.

The co-options were confirmed for 2 members to the committee:

- Charles Christians (Belgium)
- Angus Fowler (Germany):

Minutes of the Biennial Assembly in Marathon 12 September 1998 were approved.

An updated Protocol for the Creation and Work of National Sections: had been prepared in July 1999 and put to the meeting. ECOVAST recognised that it is not easy for all members to travel abroad, and many value exchanges with others, and activities, within their own countries. It is also a real benefit to receive ECOVAST news in their own languages. This revised protocol states:

The **role** of each national section is:

- to serve the members in that country by circulating ECOVAST new and other international material
- to organise activity in the country, within ECOVAST's field of interest, and at the request of the members, and
- to provide a focus for exchange and activity in the country, to benefit its rural communities and rural heritage

A national section can be **created** where the members want it, subject to the following requirements which are designed to protect the integrity of the European body:

- it must be supported by at least 10 people or organisations within the country, who are already members of ECOVAST or prepared to join, and they must include a variety of professions or interests
- it must have the formal support of a member of the ECOVAST International Committee
- it must be formally constituted as a non-government and non-profit organisation under national law; its statutes must meet the requirements of that law, but should be broadly consistent with the purposes and democratic basis of the international statutes of ECOVAST
- the national section may not formally use the name of ECOVAST until the International Committee is satisfied that it is properly constituted and the ECOVAST General Assembly has formally approved it

All the **members** of ECOVAST are, first, members of the European organisation, and shall be treated as such. Where national sections exist, the members have the right to be regarded as members of the national section **or** stay outside the section. The national section may not have members who are not members of the European organisation.

Once formally constituted, is free to organise **activities** within its own country as members there wish, within the framework of its own statutes. Any international activities (other than conferences or meetings) or proposed European policy statements by an international section must be approved in advance by the International Committee.

National Sections are responsible for raising **subscriptions** from members in their own country. The basis is different between western and eastern countries

- national sections in Western countries must levy subscription at at least the international level which are fixed periodically by ECOVAST – or above. They may retain one-third for use within their own country and two-thirds paid to the ECOVAST International Treasurer
- national sections in Central or Eastern Europe are free to fix a subscription suited to the state of their national economy – but they are asked to move progressively towards the international level of subscriptions as their economies grow

National sections have other **duties**:

- national sections must maintain an up-to-date record of ECOVAST members (name and address and contact details and type of member)
- national sections must help circulate ECOVAST News to their members
- national Sections must provide periodic reports of their activity

National sections are not governed by the ECOVAST Statutes but by internal rules agreed by the ECOVAST International Committee.

A debate followed about the Statutes and the need to include Students - a new rate of membership for students was approved and the following change to the ECOVAST Statutes agreed:

A new group – Group VI: Students to be added to the list of categories of members – Article 4(3)

Michael Dower announced that he must step down from being Secretary General in September 2000.

Reports were received from the National Sections of Austria from Arthur Spiegler; Croatia from Michael Dower; Estonia from Staffan Bond, Germany from Angus Fowler and Ralf Bokermann; Hungary from Iren Kukorelli; Romania from Magdalena Banu and Călin Hoinărescu, Russia from Olga Sevan, Slovakia from Eva Kralova, Sweden from Kjell-Roger Karlsson. Anne Siri Skamsar and Juha Niemelä were trying to get new National Sections started in Norway and Finland. Provisional approval for a new group in Macedonia was confirmed.

Reports had also been received from the Working Groups: - Baltic 21 by Per Årman; Landscape; Rural Architecture by John Sell; Rural Development by Edmund Neville Rolfe; and Rural Tourism by Fouli Papageorgiou

Trevor Kearley reported on the work he has undertaken on the ECOVAST website.

It was agreed that the ECOVAST Strategy for Rural Europe agreed in 1991 and amended in 1994 needed further amendments and the text for this to be discussed at the Biennial Assembly to be held in Belgium in 2000.

Members of ECOVAST Associates held a separate meeting in Hemaven

**ECOVAST Newsletter 18 published October 1999 – edited by Michael Dower:** included:

- Reports from the following National Sections: Austria from Arthur Speigler; Croatia from Michael Dower with help from John Sell (United Kingdom) and Marko Koščak (Slovenia); Estonia – a description of the Assembly of Estonian Villages and Small Towns from Staffan Bond (Sweden); Germany from Ralf Bokermann and Angus Fowler; Hungary from Iren Kukorelli; Romania from Magdalena Banu; Russia from Olga Sevan; Slovakia from Eva Kralova; Anne Siri Skamsar from Norway and Juha Niemelä from Finland reported on the efforts to develop new national Sections
- Reports on the following International Working Groups: Baltic 21 from Per Årman (Sweden); Rural Architecture from John Sell (United Kingdom); Rural Tourism from Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece); Rural Development from Michael Dower (United Kingdom)
- Report on the need to set up a new working group on landscape led by Arthur Speigler (Austria)
- Report from András Román (Past President from Hungary) that Călin Hoinărescu from ECOVAST Romania had received an award from the Hungarian government for his work in monument protection.
- Report from Angus Fowler and Horst Schubert that ECOVAST needs to strengthen its corporate identity to make ECOVAST better known and use more fully the great range of skills among the members
- Report on the progress of ECOVAST Associates.

**ECOVAST News Update 5 published in December 1999:** No copy of this update has been found

## **2000**

*The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) became a member of the United Nations on 1 November 2000. The Council of Europe's European Landscape Convention (also known as the Florence Convention) was finally adopted on 20 October 2000 and was open for signature. It promotes the protection, management and planning of European landscapes. The European Union's new 7 year programme to support agriculture and rural development starts in 2000 and runs until the end of 2006. Finance is through direct payments to farmers and the Rural Development Programme. The LEADER programme is available to all Member States. DG Agri has a Rural Advisory Group with representatives from all the EU countries (farming networks) and other pan-European bodies – including ECOVAST. Those that benefit from these programmes are limited to Austria; Belgium; France; Germany; Luxembourg; Italy; Netherlands; Portugal; Spain; United Kingdom*

**ECOVAST Report on 'All Europe Shall Live – the opportunity of a new era for rural areas' January 2000**

This was prepared by the Working Group for Rural Development at Hemaven (subsequently approved at Butgenbach and sent out to key European organisations). ECOVAST members and National sections are encouraged to submit it to national, regional and local governments and other bodies. The Statement sets out 9 key areas considered essential to well-being of rural areas of Europe under the following headings:

1. People – at the heart of rural development
2. Agriculture and rural development
3. Sustained and sustainable agriculture
4. Forestry – a major asset for rural Europe
5. Variety and flexibility
6. The challenge to governments
7. Rurality
8. Partnership and local mobilisation
9. Heritage and environment

The report concludes with a statement that the rural areas and the rural people of Europe are a magnificent and highly varied asset for the whole of Europe's population and can offer leadership in the search for more sustainable ways of living, and resources which are crucial to Europe's long-term life.

**ECOVAST Newsletter 19 published January 2000 – edited by Michael Dower:** included:

- A full report on the new ECOVAST Policy document 'All Europe Shall Live'
- A report from Enrico Capo report on the European Rural University event held in Val Soana, Italy.
- A report on the European Countryside Movement (ECOVAST is a member) that it has put in hand a set of studies in four regions of the EU to see how regional and national governments were interpreting the rural development regulations issued by the European Commission in the context of Agenda 21.
- The German State of Brandenburg study was undertaken by Gabriela Kaufmann for ECOVAST Germany.
- A report on the desk top study by CCRCU on PRIDE – Partnership for Rural Integrated Development in Europe- a project which involved three University-based research units within the ECOVAST network.
- Reports from the following National Sections: Croatia from Ksenija Markovic; Romania from Magdalena Banu and Călin Hoinărescu; Russia from Olga Sevan: and Slovenia by Marko Koščak.

**ECOVAST News Update 6 published February 2000:** *No copy of this update has been found*

**ECOVAST Romania / Transylvania Trust Conference on 'Practical and Theoretical Issues of Built Heritage Conservation' held in TUSNAD, Romania on 21 March 2000**

A further event following that held in March 1999, which was attended by Phil Turner (United Kingdom) who made a report on the event. A tour of the local area took place on 22-23 March

**ICOMOS UK Conference on Cultural Landscapes held in OXFORD, United Kingdom on 3 May 2000**

Several members of the Landscape Working Group took part.

**Partnerships for pre-Accession International Workshop held at ETYEK, Hungary on 15-20 May 2000.**

At this event, co-organised by ECOVAST and the Hungarian Rural Parliament Association, discussion was focussed on a 5 page paper called "A three-year action plans: ideas for discussion". The meeting agreed to proceed with the search for funds to support a campaign to strengthen civil society in the rural areas of the pre-accession countries of central Europe and to promote multi-national exchange in rural development. This led to the creation of PREPARE, the Pre-accession Partnership for Rural Europe.

**ECOVAST Manual on Integrated Rural Community Development published in June 2000**

ECOVAST had been invited by the Carpathian Foundation to organise a series of training courses in 'Integrated Rural Community Development' for people who were involved at local level in Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and the Ukraine in projects funded by the Foundation. This material has been gathered into a 'Manual on IRCD' and is now published jointly by the Foundation and ECOVAST.

**ECOVAST Newsletter 20 published June 2000 – edited by Michael Dower:** included:

- Reports on International Working Groups from: Baltic 21 by Per Årman (Sweden); Landscape Working Group by Arthur Spiegler; Rural Development by Michael Dower (United Kingdom) and Rural Tourism by Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece)
- Reports from National Sections: Austria from Arthur Spiegler; Croatia from Ksenija Markovic; Germany from Ralf Bokermann; Hungary from Iren Kukorelli; Italy from Salvatore Di Fazio; Macedonia; Poland from Elzbieta Raszeja; Romania from Magdalena Banu; Russia from Olga Sevan; Slovakia for Eva Kralova; Slovenia from Marko Koščak; Sweden by Kjell Roger Karlsson and United Kingdom from Michael Dower.
- A report by Phil Turner on the Tusnad 2000 conference in Romania on Built Heritage and Conservation held in March 2000

**EUROPA NOSTRA Forum on Cultural Heritage as an Asset for Sustainable Local development held in PRAGUE, Czech Republic on 10 June 2000**

ECOVAST helped shape the programme for the one day forum which attracted about 20 ECOVAST members and had 3 main speakers from ECOVAST included Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Angus Fowler (Germany) and Michael Dower (United Kingdom).

**ECOVAST News Update 7 Published June 2000:** included:

- All Europe Shall Live policy statement on rural development sent out in January 2000
- EUROPA NOSTRA annual meeting and Forum on 'Heritage as an asset for Sustainable Local Development' held in Prague in June
- A report on PREPARE
- A report on projects: Manual on Integrated Rural Development; TWIG; and Heritage Trails
- Reports from the following National Sections: Austria, Croatia, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia and Slovenia

**ECOVAST Slovenia / University Of Ljubljana conference held in LJUBLJANA, Slovenia on 27 June to 2 July 2000**

The event which was organised by the University of Ljubljana in association with ECOVAST was concerned with the 'Development Problems in Marginal Rural Areas.

**ECOVAST Events in Belgium 21-25 September 2000**

This was a 5 day event as part of the ECOVAST Biennial Assembly in Belgium for 2000. The location of the event was in a border area which allowed visits to rural enterprises and villages in the Wallon region of Belgium; the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the Rhineland-Palatinate of Germany

**ECOVAST Tour connected to the event held in Bütgenbach, Belgium on 21 September 2000**

The first day was dedicated to a tour visiting rural enterprises and activities in villages within these three different countries. Charles Christians (ECOVAST Belgium) and Jean-Pierre Dichter (ECOVAST Luxembourg) acted as guides.



**ECOVAST pan-European Conference on 'Sustainable Rural Development in the Whole of Europe' was held at the Worriken Centre, in BÜTGENBACH, Belgium on 22-23 September 2000**

The conference, organised by Charles and Madeleine Christians of ECOVAST Belgium was aimed at provoking dialogue between the countries of the European Union and of Central and East Europe on the theme of sustainable rural development, at the moment when programmes of rural development are coming on stream both within and outside the Union, within the framework of Agenda 2000. A panel of speakers were from the European Commission, Forum Synergies, the Carpathian Foundation, the European Countryside Movement and ECOVAST was chaired by Michael Dower (United Kingdom ECOVAST). On the second morning the delegates split into working groups on the rural economy, the environment and heritage and landscape.

**The Conference discussed and adopted The Declaration of WORRIKEN on 23 September 2000**

This declaration consisted of 9 points of agreement:

- which covered: a valued European countryside
- the need for diversified approach to rural development
- welcome to the emphasis of Agenda 2000 but hope that there will be full integration of agricultural and rural development in the candidate countries joining the European Union
- the need for sustained political effort
- determined action to revive and strengthen the economies of Europe's rural regions
- recognition of the rich environmental heritage of rural Europe
- warm welcome for the new initiative of LEADER+
- recognition of the challenges facing people and governments of central and eastern Europe and a call on them to use SAPARD and other programmes to achieve a sustainable approach to rural development
- and finally a recognition of the difficult circumstances facing the Balkans and hope that any regeneration programmes used there will include a broad and integrated approach to rural development.

**ECOVAST Biennial Assembly held in BÜTGENBACH, Belgium on 24 September 2000**

Present at the Assembly meeting held in the Worriken Centre, hosted by Charles and Madeleine Christians (Belgium) were 35 ECOVAST members from 11 countries (Austria, Belgium, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Ulf Brangefeldt (Sweden);

Vice Presidents – Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece)

Secretary General – Michael Dower (United Kingdom);

Other International Committee Members included Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Charles Christians (Belgium); Ralf Bokermann, Angus Fowler, Gabriella Kaufmann; Andrea Weigert (all from Germany); Marianne Labbancz (Hungary); Enrico Capo (Italy); Elzbieta Raszeja (Poland); Magdalena Banu and Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); Ľubica Pinčíková (Slovakia); Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

Others: Madeleine Christians (Belgium); Horst Schubert (Germany); Philip Noel-Baker (Greece)

Apologies for Absence were received from: Founder President Francis Noel-Baker (United Kingdom); Past Presidents Andras Roman (Hungary), and Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg); Vice President Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece); Treasurer Roy Brigden (United Kingdom), and several others who were not named.

Two members were given retrospective approval of co-option onto the International Committee for 1998-2000.

- Charles Christians (Belgium)
- Angus Fowler (Angus Fowler)

Tribute was paid to Miljenka Fisher-Devetak who had died in September. She was a former Vice President of ECOVAST and was a co-founder of ECOVAST Croatia and Croatia NOSTRA.

It was announced that 2 co-founders of ECOVAST had been awarded civil honours:

- Jean Chanel (Germany) has been awarded the Diploma of Honour of the German federal State of Hessen for his work related to documentation and protection of historic buildings and in the Forderkreis Alte Kirchen
- Angus Fowler (Germany) is to be awarded the Service Cross First Class of the Service Order of the Federal Republic of Germany for his outstanding service in various fields, including the work with Forderkreis Alte Kirchen, EUROPA NOSTRA and ECOVAST.

The Minutes of the General Assembly held in Hemaven, Sweden on 18 September 1999 were agreed.

Michael Dower reported that there were now 670 ECOVAST members – most of them individuals – from 36 European countries and the United States. There are now 14 National Sections.

Reports on the following ECOVAST Working Groups: Baltic 21 Working Group by Gabriella Kaufmann; Landscape Working Group by Arthur Spiegler and Rural Development Working Group by Michael Dower

Reports from ECOVAST National Sections: Croatia by Michael Dower on behalf of Ksenija Markovic; Germany by Ralf Bokermann; Hungary by Marianna Labbancz; Italy by Enrico Capo; Macedonia by Ulf Brangefeldt on behalf of Viktoria Momevaparmakovska; Poland by Elzbieta Raszeja; Romania by Magdalena Banu; Russia by



Michael Dower on behalf of Olga Sevan; Slovakia by Lubica Pincikova and Slovenia by Michael Dower on behalf of Marko Koscak.

A report was made on two projects which involved ECOVAST - the Transnational Woodland Industries Group (TWIG) project and PREPARE

Angus Fowler reported that the village of Heuersdorf had been saved from destruction by open-cast mining. The village is a member of ECOVAST.

It was agreed that Ulf Brangefeldt (Sweden) should be awarded Honorary Life Membership of ECOVAST.

There was discussion on the formal Review of ECOVAST's Strategy for Rural Europe – Michael Dower introduced the topic through a paper 'All Europe Shall Live' and everyone was invited to send in comments

Two major items were discussed by the meeting.

Discussion took place about the amendment of ECOVAST Statutes which took into account the previous agreed amendments made at Attersee, Austria in 1997 and Hemaven, Sweden in 1999. The need to have a reference to National Sections (and how they operate) in the Statutes was discussed, agreed and added to the list of changes to be made in the ECOVAST Statutes. The amendments made in Attersee and Hemaven had already been agreed by members. The additional amendments made at Butgenbach were:

- a new Article 4(6) National Sections to be governed by internal regulations – Article 10(14)
- the words 'or an approved National Section' to be added in Article 5; Article 6. Article 7 and Article 10
- National Sections may nominate one member to represent the Section in the Executive Committee and these nominees shall be elected, unopposed, by the General Assembly – Article 10(1)
- The words 'non governmental' added to Article 1(2)

The second report discussed the management of ECOVAST's activities and the relationship of ECOVAST International with the ECOVAST National Sections. There was much discussion about National Sections nominating their representative unopposed onto the ECOVAST International Committee. But, although not everyone was comfortable with the concept that it should be adopted, it was agreed that this practice should continue, in view of the fact that the Sections usually had a legal status and are democratic bodies and they fulfil a vital function delegated to them by the International Committee. A new revised Protocol for the creation and work of National Sections was agreed and confirms that:

- National Sections are there to serve the members of that country; to circulate ECOVAST news and other International material; to organise activities in their country; and to provide a focus for exchange ideas.
- They should have at least 10 members and be properly constituted.
- Their members must be members of the European organisation.
- They must raise subscriptions.
- They may keep one third of subscription income for their local activities, but the other two-thirds should go to ECOVAST International.
- They are responsible for nominating a person to represent their country on the International Committee.

This being a voting general assembly, the current International Committee was formally released from its obligations and the Committee members were thanked for their work over the last 2 years (1998-2000), followed by an election to decide the new International Committee for 2000-2002.

For the first time the National Sections nominated the member that should represent them on the International Committee:

- Arthur Spiegler (Austria)
- Andrea Weigert (Germany)
- Marianne Labbancz (Hungary)
- Enrico Capo (Italy)
- Elzbieta Raszeja (Poland)
- Călin Hoinărescu (Romania)
- Olga Sevan (Russia)
- Eva Kralova (Slovakia)
- Marko Koščak (Slovenia)
- Rigmor Sylven (Sweden)
- Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

There were no nominations from the National Sections of Croatia; Estonia or Macedonia (FYROM) and the former Belgian and French Sections are no longer active.

The following 10 individual members were also elected onto the new committee

- Juha Niemelä (Finland)
- Angus Fowler (Germany)
- Gabriella Kaufmann (Germany)

- Philip Noel-Baker (Greece)
- Gábor Rajnai (Hungary)
- Magdalena Banu (Romania)
- Josef Ušák (Slovakia)
- Per Årman (Sweden)
- Ulf Brangefeldt – Sweden
- Roy Brigden (United Kingdom)

The new ECOVAST International Committee elected the following members to be the Executive or Bureau for the next 2 years (2000-2002)

- Angus Fowler (Germany) as the new President
- Magdalena Banu (Romania) as Senior Vice President
- Marianne Labbancz (Hungary) as Vice President
- Gabriella Kaufmann (Germany) as the new Secretary General
- Roy Brigden (United Kingdom) to continue as Treasurer

Honorary Auditors Edmund Neville Rolfe and John Sell (both United Kingdom) were elected for 2000-2002

### **ECOVAST Russia / Ministry of Culture conference held in ZVENIGORAD, Russia on 9-11 October 2000**

The conference on 'Participation in Partnership and Implementation of Development Programmes' which was co-sponsored by the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, ECOVAST and local authorities attracted more than 60 people. The conference was divided into 3 working groups: the socio-economy and culture, tourism moderated by Olga Sevan (Russia) and Michael Dower (United Kingdom); landscape, ecology and architecture by Arthur Spiegler (Austria) and Vladimir Krogus (Russia); and Management and Self-government by Gunter Kröes (Germany); Boris Sazonov (Russia) and Staffan Bond (Sweden). There was a study tour.

### **ECOVAST Newsletter 21 published October 2000 – edited by Michael Dower: included:**

- A copy of the Worriken Declaration
- Reports on ECOVAST projects TWIG: and PREPARE
- Reports on the Working Groups; Landscape; Rural Architecture and Rural Development
- Reports from the National Sections of Germany, Poland, Romania, Russia; Slovakia; and Slovenia
- A report on the amendments of the ECOVAST Statutes – (nomination from National Sections) but President and Vice President elected by the General Assembly)

### **ECOVAST International Committee in HUERSDORF, Leipzigland, Germany held on 28 October 2000**

Present at the meeting, hosted by Horst Bruchmann – the Mayor of Heuersdorf, were 10 ECOVAST members from 4 countries (Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Sweden) and included:

President: Angus Fowler (Germany)

Vice President Marianne Labbancz (Hungary)

Secretary General: Gabriella Kaufmann (Germany)

ECOVAST Committee members: Andrea Weigert (Germany); Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Elzbieta Raszeja (Poland) and Per Årman (Sweden)

Other ECOVAST members: Maria Meier Gresshoff, Peter Thran (Germany)

Apologies were received from: Roy Brigden, Michael Dower, Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom) and others

There was a report on the Working Group on Rural Tourism by Maria Meier Gresshoff (Germany).

A draft ECOVAST leaflet was discussed.

After the committee meeting there was a **tour** of the area by the Mayor Horst Bruchmann (ECOVAST Germany).

### **DENKMAL and EUREGIA 2000 held in LEIPZIG, Germany on 25-28 October 2000**

ECOVAST has a presence at each of these leading biennial EUROPEAN Trade Fairs through an arrangement with EUROPA NOSTRA. The international presence of ECOVAST is organised and attended by ECOVAST Germany. In 2000 ECOVAST Germany and the Baltic 21 Working Group staged a Conference on Sustainable Local Development around the Baltic Sea.

### **The 'Declaration of the Carpathian Memorial' made in Nowy Sacz, Poland in November 2000**

The inhabitants, NGO's and local enterprises got together in Poland and made a formal statement that they would like to get actively involved in the conservation and culture of central Europe – and use the advantages of their region and tourist opportunities and cross border cooperation. They signed a declaration on 14 November 2000 in Nowy Sacz, Poland. ECOVAST has many members in this Carpathian region.

### **ECOVAST News update November 2000: included:**

- A report on Europa Nostra Forum in Prague 8-11 June

- A report on Worriken Conference September 2000
- A copy of Worriken Declaration resulting from the Conference
- A report on the Manual on Integrated Rural Community Development - now published
- A short update on the TWIG project
- A report on Baltic 21 Working Group
- A report on Heritage trails now being developed in Croatia
- Short updated reports of the National Sections: from Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia and Slovenia

## **2001**

*Armenia and Azerbaijan joined the Council of Europe. The Balkan War finally ended in November 2001*

An update of the figures about ECOVAST membership in February 2001, reported that there are now members from Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom and Yugoslavia (33 countries).

### **Signed 1<sup>st</sup> Amendments to the ECOVAST Statutes submitted to the Tribunal at Selestat, France for Formal Registration April 2001**

These first amendments incorporated 3 separate agreements by ECOVAST members:

- The General Assembly held in Attersee, Austria on 13 September 1997 made 3 changes
- The General Assembly held in Hemaven, Sweden made on 18 September made one change
- The General Assembly held in Butgenbach, Belgium on 24 September 2000 made several other changes

All these changes were incorporated into the First formal amendment to the ECOVAST Statutes which were finally agreed at the General Assembly held in Butgenbach, Belgium and were signed by the new International Committee on 24 September 2000..

The Statutes in French were submitted to Selestat on 6 April 2001 and accepted by the Tribunal on 2 July 2001. They were officially registered at Selestat and the Certificate confirming the registration on 13 November 2003. Copies of the Statutes were translated into English and German.

### **ECOVAST events in Poland from 20 -22 April 2001**

The tour over several days was organised by Elzbieta Raszeja of ECOVAST Poland and her colleagues. It included a tour of the local area, including a restored monastery, a seminar held in a village and an ECOVAST Committee meeting held in the town of Skepe.

### **ECOVAST tour associated with the Skepe event in Poland on 20-21 April 2001**

The tour, which spread over 2 days, first (20 April) visited a monastery in Skepe which was being restored, followed by a coach trip to town of Dobrzyn nad Wisla where we met the Town Council and local leaders and we visited a refrigeration plant for local fruit and vegetables was being built to improve the local economy and provide 180 new jobs. We then visited the villages of Czarne and later Chrostkowo where we held our seminar.

The second day (21 April) saw a tour of the Carmelite monastery of Obory where we met students from the Poznan Technical University – where Elzbieta Raszeja works- and also met Andrzej Kaleta and Andrzej Halasiewicz from the University of Torun. We then visited the restored the castle of Golau built by the Teutonic order in 1293.

### **ECOVAST Seminar held in CHROSTKOWO village, Poland, held on 20 April 2001**

This seminar on the 'Problems of the Development of Rural Area in Poland' took place in the evening of the first day of the tour, in the village of Chrostkowo in the Wichowo Culture House, and hosted by Elzbieta Raszeja and included discussions with the inhabitants of the Lipno area, local authorities and local leaders.

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in SKEPE, Lipno District, Poland on 22 April 2001**

*No copies of the Minutes have been found, but the associated tour and seminar is fully reported in Newsletter 23 and the Minutes of the committee meeting were agreed at Fojnica in October 2001.*

### **Euracademy International Project 2001**

ECOVAST was invited to join a pan-European project called 'Euracademy' which will offer training and skills to rural actors such as entrepreneurs and the staff of rural development agencies. It is funded under the EU Leonardo da Vinci Programme. It will use summer schools to deliver this training – the first being in Sweden in

2002. ECOVAST as an organisation was not an official partner although ECOVAST members - Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden), Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece), Iren Kukorelli (Hungary), Juha Niemelä (Finland), and Andras Kaleta (Poland) were partners and Michael Dower (United Kingdom) was involved as a consultant

### **ECOVAST Landscape Identification Project 2001-2012**

This project was set up by the ECOVAST Landscape Working Group set up in 2001 and led by Arthur Spiegler (Austria). This was a major ECOVAST project lasting many years. It resulted in a formal policy statement in 2002 and a publication (with Michael Dower United Kingdom) in 2006 and updated in 2012.

#### **ECOVAST Newsletter 22 April 2001 – edited by Andrea Weigert:** included:

- A report on the tour in Poland in April 2001
- The 'Declaration of the Carpathian Memorial' made in Nowy Sacz in November 2000
- Three reports on the International Conference of Participation and Partnership held in Russia in October 2000 by Arthur Spiegler (Austria) ;Olga Sevan (Russia) and Michael Dower (United Kingdom)
- Short reports on the following projects; PREPARE; Heritage trails; TWIG
- A report on the European Rural University and Euracademy and the European Countryside Movements

### **ECOVAST Austria International Landscape Workshop held at the Stupava Hotel, in STUPAVA, Slovakia on 24-26 May 2001**

The small town of Stupava in the Bratislava Region, Malacky District was the venue for this 2 day international workshop to demonstrate the wholistic approach of identifying landscapes based on their character which should be a major part of regional planning. The work is connected at European level through the European Landscape Convention, which has not yet come into force. The first day involved an introduction by Michael Dower (United Kingdom) on the rising interest in landscapes throughout Europe; followed by a description of the character of the Weinviertel area of Austria by Arthur Spiegler (Austria) who leads the Landscape Working Group. Three different landscapes were visited, studied and used as a practical model using the methodology developed through Arthur Spiegler's group. Each area was visited and studied to define the landscape matrix and was then discussed in an evening session. The first day visited Austria and the second day had excursions to the 2 landscapes in Slovakia. These 3 areas which are adjacent to one another were:

- The Weinvertel or 'Wine Quarter' in Austria
- The Small Carpathians in Slovakia and
- The Morava Lowlands – a border zone of Slovakia and Austria - called 'Zahorie':

The ECOVAST methodology was devised so that individual citizens can use it and develop their own understanding of their local landscapes. The decision was taken at the event for ECOVAST to prepare a formal handbook.

*The policy statement on landscapes was agreed in 2002 and the handbook using these 3 examples was produced in 2006 and revised in 2012*

#### **ECOVAST News Update 9 published in July 2001:** included:

- Another copy of the Worriken Declaration
- An update on PREPARE
- Updates on ECOVAST projects: the Manual; the Carpathian Declaration; TWIG; Heritage Trails; and Euracademy
- A report on the International Workshop on Landscapes held in Stupava, Slovakia
- National Section reports from Austria; Germany; Hungary; Poland; Romania; Russia; Slovakia and Slovenia

#### **ECOVAST Newsletter 23 July 2001 – edited by Andrea Weigert:** included:

- Reports from National Sections: Germany by Andrea Weigert; Hungary by Vera Muszik and Gábor Rajnai; Romania by Magdalena Banu and Călin Hoinărescu; Russia from Olga Sevan; Slovenia by Marko Koščak; and United Kingdom by Michael Dower
- A report on the Workshop on landscapes held in Stupava by Arthur Spiegler and Michael Dower

### **ECOVAST event in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 11-13 October 2001**

This event in the Balkans covered 3 days and involved a seminar, committee meetings, tours and a declaration on Kosovo's heritage. There was concern over holding meetings in Bosnia & Herzegovina and several members had been advised not to travel there.

### **ECOVAST Conference on Sustainable Development in Rural Areas: its practical role in Regeneration of the Balkans held in Hotel Reumal, FOJNICA, Bosnia & Herzegovina on 11-12 October 2001**

The conference was staged before the ECOVAST General Assembly. In spite of the difficulties with travel there were 88 delegates who attended from 11 countries (Austria; Belgium; Bosnia & Herzegovina; Croatia; France; Germany; Norway; Slovakia; Slovenia; Yugoslavia Republic; and the United Kingdom).

Angus Fowler made a presentation 'The Development of Civil Society and Democracy at the Local Level – an International View'. Michael Dower made a presentation 'Enhancing and Stimulating Development at the Local Level'.

The delegates then went into workshops on rural architecture and heritage; rural development or tourism. Each of the three workshops included a study with visits to the Rama-Prozor community, Fojnica and Travnik. The conference was summarised by Michael Dower in the final plenary session.

#### **ECOVAST International Committee held in FOJNICA, Bosnia-Herzegovina on 12 October 2001**

The names of those who attended the event held in the Hotel Reumal in Bosnia and those who sent apologies are listed in the minutes of the assembly below.

- Renate Husinec (Croatia) was co-opted onto the ECOVAST International Committee

Minutes of the International Committee held in Skepe, Poland were approved

Report was received from National Section in Croatia

#### **ECOVAST General Assembly Committee held in FOJNICA, Bosnia Herzegovina on 13 October 2001**

Present at the events in Bosnia were 19 ECOVAST members from 7 countries (Austria, Croatia, Germany, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden and the United Kingdom) and 1 guest including:

President: Angus Fowler (Germany)

Treasurer: Roy Brigden (United Kingdom)

ECOVAST Committee members: Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Renate Husinec (Croatia); Andrea Weigert (Germany); Josef Ušák (Slovakia); Rigmor Sylven (Sweden); Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Other ECOVAST members: Stjepan Lončarić (Croatia); Ralf Bokermann, Rudiger Maul, Detlef Simons, (Germany); Lubica Pincikova, Hergan (Slovenia); Trevor Kearley, Pam Moore, John Sell, Phil Turner, Jane Wade (United Kingdom). Guest: Polly Woolley representing the website from the United Kingdom

Apologies received from: Senior Vice President: Magdalena Banu (Romania); Vice President Marianne Labbancz (Hungary); Secretary General: Gabriella Kaufmann (Germany); International Committee members: Phil Noel-Baker (Greece); Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Enrico Capo (Italy); Elzbieta Raszeja (Poland) Olga Sevan (Russia); Marko Koščak (Slovenia); Eva Kralova (Slovakia); Per Årman, Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden); Other ECOVAST members: Charles Christians (Belgium); Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece); Iren Kukurelli, Vera Muszik (Hungary); Salvatore di Fazio (Italy); Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg); Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); and, Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

Gabrielle Kaufmann resigned as Secretary General

- Andrea Weigert (Germany) was elected as Secretary General

The minutes of the last General Assembly in Bütgenbach, Belgium in 2000 were approved.

Reports were received from the National Sections of Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Poland; Slovenia, and Sweden. There was no response from Estonia, Italy or Macedonia.

Michael Dower reported on the updating of the 'ECOVAST Strategy for Rural Europe

#### **FOJNICA Declaration on the Protection of KOSOVO's Cultural Heritage– made on 13 October 2001**

The Declaration, based on the proceedings at the Fojnica Conference and the ECOVAST Assembly, called for

- Preparation of a formal report on the present state of cultural heritage in Kosovo, with recommendations for care and protection
  - The creation of an expert advisory body
  - Organisation of cultural heritage monitoring teams
  - Establishment of a UNESCO/Council of Europe office in Kosovo
  - Support for all the listed cultural heritage sites in Kosovo
  - Creation of a public web-site open to public suggestions and proposals
  - Close co-operation between institutions for the protection of cultural heritage in Kosovo to avoid duplication
- The declaration of the delegates was signed by Angus Fowler (Germany) and Silvo Devetak of ISCOMET

#### **ECOVAST tour of Bosnia and Herzegovina on 14-17 October 2001**

Most of the delegates went on an extended tour of the country visiting Sarajevo; the mountain area around it – Beljascina; Umljani and the shepherds village of Gradina and onto to Jablanica and Mostar and Pocitelj village.

**ECOVAST Newsletter 24 published December 2001– edited by Andrea Weigert:** included:

- A summary report on the Fojnica conference held 10-13 October 2001 and the Formal Fojnica Declaration
- A report on the post conference tour of Bosnia and Herzegovina

- A report from the following National Sections; Austria by Arthur Spiegler; from Croatia from Ksenja Markovic; from Germany from Andrea Weigert; Hungary by Vera Muszik and Gábor Rajnai; Poland from Elzbieta Raszeja, and Sweden by Hans Olaf Stalgren
- Short reports from the Swedish Rural Parliament and PREPARE

## **2002**

*A 10 year review of the Rio World Summit, held in Johannesburg in August 2002, led to new agreements – including one to restore the world's depleted fisheries. Bosnia and Herzegovina joined the Council of Europe.*

**Council of Europe International NGO Group meeting held in STRASBOURG, France in January 2002**  
ECOVAST represented by Angus Fowler

### **ECOVAST Paper 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas – Its Practical Role in Regeneration of the Balkans' published in April 2002**

This was the report of the ECOVAST Conference and Workshop' held in October in Fojnica, Bosnia and Herzegovina - edited by John Sell (United Kingdom), Chairman of ECOVAST Working Group on Rural Buildings.

### **ECOVAST Newsupdate 10 published early 2002: included**

- A report on Euracademy
- A report on projects: PREPARE, Heritage Trails and TWIG

### **Swedish Rural Parliament held in PITEÅ, Sweden on 14-17 March 2002**

Swedish Rural Parliaments have been organised every two years since 1989 by a national organisation *Hela Sverige Ska Leva* ('All Sweden Shall Live'). Many ECOVAST members took the chance to visit sub-Arctic Sweden in mid-March, to take part in the event held in a great conference hall, near Piteå, on the frozen shores of the Gulf of Bothnia, with 1200 people attending. The European Programme, a side event of the Parliament, was attended by 100 people from 22 European countries, from Iceland to Georgia, from France to the Barents Sea. ECOVAST Sweden was strongly represented at both events. The first day was spent on study trips, driving and then walking through deep snow. Each trip was focussed on one of four themes – Land, People, Economy and (the rural development) Process. We met some of the many local action groups, initiatives and enterprises who contribute to rural well-being in this vast county of Norbotten. On our second day, we shaped conclusions from the field trips; broke off for two hours to attend the opening of the Rural Parliament; and then had a useful session on European policies and programmes. The third day was devoted to an 'open space' approach to discussion of themes proposed by the participants. It was made clear at this event that we urgently need a radical change in European Union policy. The Common Agricultural Policy, with a pathetically under-funded 'second pillar' of rural development, should give way to a fully integrated European Rural Development Policy with more effective support for practical action in rural development in the pre-accession countries of central Europe. Civil society should be strengthened at local level throughout Europe.

### **ECOVAST Newsletter 25 published April 2002 – edited by Andrea Weigert: included**

- An article by Angus Fowler on the 'the Reduction of Value Added Tax on Historic Buildings and Landscapes'
- A report from Rudiger Maul (Germany) on the Rural Architecture Working Group meetings; the ecological construction and biology of buildings discussed in Skepe, Poland in 2001 and in Fojnica, Bosnia in 2001
- Reports from the following National Sections: Poland by Elzbieta Raszeja; Romania by Magdalena Banu and Călin Hoinărescu; Russia by Olga Sevan; Slovakia by Ľubica Pinčíková.
- Short reports on projects PREPARE; Heritage trails; TWIG; Euracademy; and the visit to the Swedish Rural Parliament by Michael Dower
- An article on Sustainable Solutions for Environment and Agriculture (Solar Energy) by Renergiepartners
- An article on the European Agricultural Convention by Hannes Lorenzen
- A report on the Euracademy Summer School 2002 on Developing Sustainable Rural Tourism held on the island of Gotland, Sweden 10-21 August by Michael Dower
- An article on the European Rural University events and the event of 2002 in Montagne Saint Emilion, Gironde, France by Josy Richez and Jean-Marie Lavergne

### **ECOVAST published a policy document paper - 'Guide to Good Practice on Landscapes' in May 2002**

This was prepared by Arthur Spiegler – chair of the ECOVAST International Working Group and based upon practical fieldwork by ECOVAST Members in Slovakia and Austria. *The techniques outlined in this document were used during a workshop in Makarska, Croatia in May 2003; the Council of Europe Annual Implementation*

*Workshop in March 2004; a workshop in Cork Ireland where Michael Dower represented ECOVAST; and an ECOVAST Symposium held in Austria in 2006 which led to a formal ECOVAST published document – which was revised and updated in 2012*

**European AgriCultural Convention (EAC) held in BRUSSELS, Belgium 6-7 June 2002.**

The convention is supported by the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Agriculture Committee of the European Parliament to promote discussion between decision-makers, stakeholders and citizens of the EU and the candidate countries about the role that rural areas will play in the larger Europe and how that role should be expressed in policies and institutions of the EU. The main working paper for the meeting was written by Michael Dower (United Kingdom) and the ECOVAST Delegation to the event was led by Angus Fowler (Germany).

**ECOVAST Newsletter 26 published August 2002 – edited by Andrea Weigert:** included

- Reports on projects PREPARE; Heritage Trails; TWIG; Euracademy
- An update on Euracademy; and European Agriculture Convention and the Mid-Term review of CAP
- Reports from the following National Sections: Austria and the Mljet Island Project by Eva Hody; Croatia by Darja Radović Mahečić and Ratko Vučetić; Germany by Andrea Weigert; Hungary by Vera Muszik; Poland by Hans Schwiderski (of Germany).

**Sixth European Rural University held in MONTAGNE SAINT EMILION, France from 29 August to 1 September 2002**

This event was held in the Gironde in the heart of the Bordeaux vineyards. Phil Turner and Pam Moore (ECOVAST United Kingdom) attended the event. Phil Turner was elected President of APURE.

**Finnish Village Action Movement Travelling Workshop held in Finland on 25 September 2002**

25 members of the PREPARE network (including Michael Dower of ECOVAST) made a four-day visit to Finland. They were impressed by three aspects of the Finnish approach to rural development – the national Rural Policy Committee, which is able to influence the programmes of 10 government ministries or agencies; the almost total coverage of the country by local action groups, funded under either European programmes (LEADER+, Objective 1) or national programmes; and the lively Village Action Movement.

**ECOVAST event at SEIFHENNERSDORF, Saxony, Germany and tour 3-6 October 2002**

The 4 day event had been organised by Horst Schubert; Jurgen Cieslak, Mrs Singer, Olda Cepelka, and Barbara and Detlev Simons. The start of the event was the first day devoted to the International Working Groups.

**ECOVAST Tour of the coal mining area around SEIFHENNERSDORF, Germany on 4 October 2002**

The second day was an excursion which visited three countries visiting coal mining areas - in Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic. It also looked at the local styles of architecture; the massive open-caste coal mine in Turow in the Zittau 'pan-handle of Poland – the largest hole in Europe; met the mayor of the Sudenten village of Visnova, in the Czech Republic and finally to Obercunnersdorf in Saxony, Germany where they offer training in local handicrafts. The visit to Visnova included a meeting with the Mayor, who described with some emotion the difficulty of sustaining morale in a community based on people who were forcibly moved in 1946 from their native lands in Slovakia and Ukraine to replace the people of German stock who were ejected from Sudentenland at the end of World War II. The Mayor was attempting to build pride of the community by twinning the village with a commune in France, so that villagers could have a chance to visit France and then receive French people in their own homes.

**ECOVAST Conference on 'Problems and Development of a Neglected Frontier Region held in SEIFHENNERSDORF Germany on 5 October 2002**

The conference focussed on the problems of this disadvantage border region in the light of EU enlargement – a weak economy; loss of population, poor infrastructure and a damaged environment

**ECOVAST International Committee held in the Windmill Training Centre, SEIFHENNERSDORF, Saxony, Germany on 5 October 2002**

*Minutes of this meeting have not been found but the Minutes were agreed at the meeting in Modra in December.*

**ECOVAST Biennial Assembly held in SEIFHENNERSDORF, Saxony, Germany on 6 October 2002**

Present at the meeting, held in the Windmill Training Centre, were 34 ECOVAST members from 9 countries (Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Sweden and the United Kingdom):

President – Angus Fowler (Germany);

Senior Vice President – Magdalena Banu (Romania)

Secretary General – Andrea Weigert (Germany)



International Committee Members –Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Elzbieta Raszeja (Poland); Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Other ECOVAST members – Olda Cepelka, Jurgen Cieslak (Czech Republic); Ralf Bokermann; Horst Schubert; Barbara Simmons; Detlef Simmons (all from Germany); Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece); Per Årman (Sweden); Nan Dower, Edmund Neville Rolfe, Trevor Kearley; and Polly Woolley (United Kingdom) . The Treasurer Roy Brigden sent a written report.

Apologies were received from Roy Brigden (Treasurer and United Kingdom; Marianne Labbanz (Hungary and Philip Noel-Baker (Greece) and a number of other members.

The Minutes of the General Assembly held in Fojnica, Bosnia and Herzegovina on 15 October 2001 were agreed.

Reports were also received from the Working Groups - the Baltic 21 Working Group by Per Årman who reported that the Baltic Working Group is being disbanded (and the funding raised was used to pay of the Swedish Section debts); Landscape Working Group by Arthur Spiegler; and the Rural Development Group

There were reports received from the following Working Groups which met on 3<sup>rd</sup> October – before the General Assembly proper: The Baltic 21 Working Group by Per Årman who reported that the Baltic Working Group is being disbanded (and the funding raised was used to pay of the Swedish Section debts); Landscape Working Group who also went on a field trip by Arthur Spiegler; and the Rural Development Group; and a new group on Rural Tourism and a small Energy Group that prepared a formal Resolution on the impact of brown coal mining. Reports were received from the National Sections of Austria; Croatia; Germany; Hungary; Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia.

This being a voting general assembly, the current International Committee was formally released from its obligations and the Committee members were thanked for their work over the last 2 years (2000-2002). An election to decide the new International Committee for 2002-2004 followed.

The following members were nominated by their National Section to serve on the International Committee:

- Arthur Spiegler (Austria)
- Jasenka Kranjčević (Croatia)
- Andrea Weigert (Germany)
- Gábor Rajnai (Hungary)
- Enrico Capo (Italy)
- Lech Michal Rosciszewski (Poland)
- Călin Hoinărescu (Romania)
- Olga Sevan (Russia)
- Ľubica Pinčíková (Slovakia)
- Marko Koščak (Slovenia)
- Kristina Ohman (Sweden)
- Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

*There were no nominations from Estonia or Macedonia*

A competitive election selected the following 9 other individual ECOVAST Members

- Angus Fowler (Germany)
- Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece)
- Iren Kukorelli (Hungary)
- Elzbieta Raszeja (Poland)
- Magdalena Banu (Romania)
- Josef Ušák (Slovakia)
- Per Årman (Sweden)
- Michael Dower (United Kingdom)
- Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom)

The new International Committee then elected the new Bureau Members to serve the next two years

- Angus Fowler (Germany) as President for a second term
  - Michael Dower (United Kingdom) as Senior Vice President
  - Arthur Spiegler (Austria) as Vice President
  - Andrea Weigert (Germany) to continue as Secretary General
  - Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom) to continue as Treasurer
- Honorary Auditors Roy Brigden (United Kingdom) and Marlis Lier (Germany) were elected for 2002-2004

There were two resolutions arising from the Seifhennersdorf event:

- Brown Coal Mining and Alternative Energy and
- the Conservation of the Umgebindehauser houses in Germany, Czech Republic and Poland

The Committee were asked to send these resolutions to the relevant local authorities.

### **ECOVAST Austria Second Symposium on Small Towns held in Waidhofen an der Ybbs, Lower Austria on 17-20 October 2002**

This was the second international event on small towns organised by ECOVAST Austria. The event was dedicated to new technologies of telematics and telecommunications

### **DENKMAL Trade Fair 2002 and EUREGIA held in Leipzig, Germany on 30 October-2 November 2002**

ECOVAST has a presence at each of these leading biennial EUROPEAN Trade Fairs through an arrangement with EUROPA NOSTRA. The international presence of ECOVAST is organised and attended by ECOVAST Germany. In 2002 ECOVAST Germany staged a major seminar 'Evaluation and Controlling Projects' at EUREGIA.

### **ECOVAST International Committee held Hotel Pod Lipou, Modra, Slovakia on 15 December 2002**

Present at the meeting were 9 ECOVAST members from 6 countries (Austria, Germany, Hungary, Slovakia, Sweden and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Angus Fowler (Germany);  
Senior Vice President – Michael Dower (United Kingdom);  
Other Vice President – Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Gábor Rajnai (Hungary)  
Secretary General – Andrea Weigert (Germany);  
Treasurer – Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom);  
Other International Committee Members – Ľubica Pinčíková, Josef Ušák (Slovakia); Per Årman (Sweden)  
Apologies were not listed

The minutes of the meetings of the International Committee held on 5 October, and the Biennial Committee held on 6 October both held in Seifhennersdorf were discussed and minor amendments agreed.

It was decided to assign specific tasks to International Committee Members:

- Arthur Spiegler (Austria) – National Sections and membership;
- Gábor Rajnai (Hungary) and Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom) – website and communications;
- Michael Dower (United Kingdom) – international projects and relations.

A discussion on strategic issues from the Focus Working Group was led by its Chairman Trevor Kearley with the aim to clarify the main objectives for ECOVAST in the future. The Committee agreed to ask the National Sections and individuals to list their key issues for the next 2-5 years; to work on the profile of ECOVAST; to increase the membership; to consolidate financing; to start an initiative for more communication.

Reports were received from the Landscape Working Group which is planning to hold a workshop. It was also suggested that an event on small towns should take place in one of the accession states

It was noted that there are hopes of setting up a National Section for Bosnia.

It was agreed that Michael Dower should continue to represent ECOVAST at the EU DG Agri Rural Advisory Committee but after the time when Hungary joins the EU he should be replaced by Gabor Rajnai.

### **ECOVAST Newsletter 27 published December 2002 – edited by Andrea Weigert: included:**

- A report by Michael Dower on the Symposium held in Waidhofen an der Ybbs in October 2002
- Reports from the following National Sections: Croatia by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić; Slovakia by Ľubica Pinčíková and the United Kingdom by Michael Dower
- Updates on the European AgriCultural Convention; the EU Rural Advisory Committee and PREPARE
- A paper by Olga Sevan 'ECOVAST: modern problems and possible ways of their decision'
- A paper by Oldrich Cepelka (Czech Republic) – From SAPARD to LEADER
- A report of a lecture – the Revision of the EU supporting rights by Sibylle Bachmulleron

## **2003**

*The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was officially renamed Serbia and Montenegro in 2003 and joined the Council of Europe.*

### **Green Week, Berlin, Germany in January, 2003**

ECOVAST was represented by Helmut Korzonnek and Per Årman in January 2003.

### **Council of Europe's Plenary Session of NGO's held in Strasbourg, France in January 2003**

ECOVAST represented by Per Årman (Sweden)

### **ECOVAST News update January 2003: included:**

- A further report on the Excursion and conference held at the Seifhennersdorf, Germany in October 2002

- A short update on National sections in Croatia, Slovakia and the United Kingdom
- A report on the Small Town Symposium and telematics held in Waidhofen-an der Ybbs in October 2002:
- A short update on the European AgriCultural Convention and PREPARE

#### **Council of Europe conference held in BUDAPEST, Hungary in March 2003**

ECOVAST represented by Gábor Rajnai (Hungary) and Per Årman (Sweden).

#### **ECOVAST Hungary Seminar held in BUDAPEST, Hungary, on 16/17 May 2003**

The theme of the event was 'Rural Development against the background of EU Enlargement

#### **ECOVAST Newsletter 28 published June 2003 – edited by Andrea Weigert:** included:

- A call by Arthur Speigler asking for support for the Council of Europe European Landscape Convention
- The ECOVAST Resolution on Brown Coal Mining and Alternative Energy passed at the General Assembly held in Seifhennersdorf on 6 October 2002
- Reports on the National Sections: Austria by Arthur Spiegler; and Croatia by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic'
- Reports on PREPARE and their national initiatives in Slovenia; Czech Republic and Poland
- An article on Sustaining rural Europe before and after 2006 by Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

#### **ECOVAST International Committee held in VIENNA, Austria on 23 August 2003**

Present at meeting, hosted by Arthur Spiegler, were 12 ECOVAST members from 7 countries (Austria, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Angus Fowler (Germany)

Senior Vice President – Arthur Spiegler (Austria)

Secretary General – Andrea Weigert (Germany)

Treasurer – Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom);

Other International Committee Members –Iren Kukorelli, Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Lech Michail Rosciszewski (Poland); Magdalena Banu (Romania) Josef Ušák (Slovakia);

Other ECOVAST Members –Norbert Burda (Austria); Elena Foransberger, Emilia Iancu (Romania)

Apologies were received from: Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece); Per Årman, Christina Ohman (Sweden); Olga Sevan (Russia); and Michael Dower and Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

The minutes of the International Committee held in Modra, Slovakia on 14/15 December 2002 were accepted with some minor additions and corrections.

Gábor Rajnai (Hungary) was appointed to be the new ECOVAST Development Officer.

There were reports received about the following Working Groups: a worry that the Rural Tourism Group and the Rural Development are not active anymore. The Committee decided that it would like to see a new Working Group on Energy

There were reports received from the following National Sections: Estonia (with a comment made that members of this section are key members of Kodukant – the association for Estonian villages); Macedonia; Poland; and Romania

The International Committee puts forward the following topics which future ECOVAST should concentrate on – landscape; alternative energies; small towns; heritage trails; and timber/wooden architecture

Michael Dower reported that he continues to represent ECOVAST on the European Commission Rural Advisory Group. Gabor Rajnai cannot represent ECOVAST until after 2004 and the enlargement of the EU to include Hungary.

#### **ECOVAST Events based in OTOČEC, Slovenia 2-4 October 2003**

The events were arranged by ECOVAST Slovenia and hosted by Marko Koščak and included a Study tour which involved both Slovenai and Croatia, a conference and an ECOVAST Committee meeting.

#### **ECOVAST Slovenian / Croatian Tour 2 October 2003**

There was a tour of region surrounding Otočec (led by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić Chairman of ECOVAST Croatia) and involving border crossing into Croatia and visiting heritage trails and looking at traditional farm buildings, visiting the small town of Samobor for a supper of local dishes.

#### **ECOVAST Slovenia / ENNHO Conference on Cultural Identity and Rural Development held in OTOČEC Slovenia on 3 October 2003**

This conference was hosted by Marko Koščak of ECOVAST Slovenia and the European Network of National Heritage Organisation (ENNHO). There were presentations from ECOVAST Slovakia (Lubica Pinčíková) on the cultural identity of common history; common territory; common languages; common culture of costumes, paintings and architecture and music; from ECOVAST Slovenia on building clusters in rural areas and charcoal

production; from ECOVAST Russia (Olga Sevan) on examples of cultural life in Russia – architecture, furniture, clothing, and food; and finally from ECOVAST Austria (Arthur Spiegler) on landscapes being an essential and indispensable part of Europe's common heritage.

### **Otocec Declaration 'Cultural Identity and Rural Development' 2003**

This declaration, agreed at the event on 3 October, was a formal statement that it is timely to review the growing threats to cultural heritage through the rapid changes in rural areas which are likely to follow the imminent enlargement of the European Union. Statements were included on cultural identities; rural development; landscapes; buildings; tourism; partnership and international exchange.

### **ECOVAST General Assembly held at Sporthotel, OTOČEC, Slovenia on 4 October 2003**

Present at this meeting, hosted by Marko Koscak and his colleagues from ECOVAST Slovenia, were 28 ECOVAST members and 1 guest from 10 countries (Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, United Kingdom) including:

President: Angus Fowler (Germany) – who also chaired the meeting

Senior Vice President: Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Vice President: Arthur Spiegler (Austria)

Secretary General: Andrea Weigert (Germany) who took meeting notes

Treasurer: Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom)

ECOVAST International Committee members: Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Elzbieta Raszeja (Poland); Magdalena Banu (Romania); Olga Sevan (Russia); Marko Koščak (Slovenia); Ľubica Pinčíková (Slovakia); Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

Other ECOVAST Members: Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia); Detlef Simmons (Germany); Laszlo Muszik, Vera Muszik, (Hungary); Valerie Carter, Edmund Neville-Rolfe, John Sell, Phil Turner, Jane Wade (United Kingdom)

Apologies for absence were received from: International Committee Members: Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece); Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); Iren Kukorelli (Hungary) and from other members: Marlis Lier, Bernard Maisel (Germany), Per Årman (Sweden), and from a number of other members.

The Minutes of the Biennial Assembly held in Siefhenndorf, Germany on 6 October 2002 were agreed.

ECOVAST has been invited by EU Commissioner Franz Fischler to send 2 representatives to the European Conference on Rural Development to be held in Salzburg, Austria in November 2003

There were reports received from the following National Sections: The Estonian National Section had now been absorbed by the Movement of Estonian Villages (KODUKANT) which had also become a member of PREPARE: so, they could no longer be an ECOVAST National Section but individuals could be invited to become members of ECOVAST. Slovenia have now founded the Slovenia Rural Development Network and members in Slovenia had decided that would become the ECOVAST Slovenia Section: however, the International Committee decided that they could not remain an ECOVAST National Sections, though individuals could be members of ECOVAST. These changes mean that two National Sections cease to exist. Also the Italian section appears to be inactive. The section in Macedonian is still trying to consolidate.

Angus Fowler reminded the ECOVAST National Sections that they must send in regular Annual Reports and copies of their Accounts and details of their membership.

Reports were received from the Landscape Working Group by Arthur Spiegler. The the youngest Working Group on Brown Coal mining and Alternative Energy meeting is being organised by ECOVAST Slovakia and the Rural Architecture Group is meeting the following day. But the group on Rural Development seems to have gone to sleep.

### **ECOVAST Slovenia / University of Zagreb International Symposium held at POHORJE, Slovenia on 16-18 October 2003**

The event to discuss 'the Ethnography of Protected Areas – Endangered Habitats and Endangered Cultures' involving the Public Institute for Tourism Maribor and ECOVAST Slovenia. Zvedana Kozelj (ECOVAST Slovenia) made a presentation about interlacing natural and cultural heritage

### **First PREPARE Gathering held in POCUVADIO, in Slovakia in October 2003**

This was the first international 'gathering' which was to be replicated every year. Michael Dower of both ECOVAST and PREPARE co-organised this event and took part.

### **European Commission Rural Development Conference held in SALZBURG, Austria on 12-14 November 2003**

This was a major policy conference on rural development. Michael Dower represented both ECOVAST and PREPARE. Phil Turner and Pam Moore also attended. Michael Dower prepared and submitted a statement on behalf of PREPARE

**ECOVAST Newsletter 29 published December 2003 – edited by Andrea Weigert:** included:

- A report on the Otocec conference tour and the conference and Declaration
- Reports on the following National Sections: Austria by Arthur Spiegler; and Croatia by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic; Germany by Ralf Bokermann; Hungary by Gábor Rajnai; Poland by Elzbieta Raszeja; Romania by Magdalena Banu and Călin Hoinărescu; Russia from Olga Sevan; Slovakia by Ľubica Pinčková; and the United Kingdom by Michael Dower
- A report on the Symposium – Ethnography of Protected areas held in Slovenia in October 2003

## **2004**

*Monaco joined the Council of Europe. The Council of Europe's Landscape Convention came into force in March 2004. There was a major enlargement of the European Union countries on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2004 – when 10 countries – Cyprus; Czech Republic; Estonia; Hungary; Latvia; Lithuania; Malta; Poland; Slovakia and Slovenia joined the European Community. The Council of Europe's European Landscape Convention finally came into force on 1 March 2004 and open for signatures by the Members States of the Council (including European Union Member States and non-member States). It is the first international treaty to be exclusively concerned with all dimensions of European landscapes. There was a major enlargement of the European countries on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2004 – when 10 countries – Cyprus; Czech Republic; Estonia; Hungary; Latvia; Lithuania; Malta; Poland; Slovakia and Slovenia joined the European Community. The European Union's new 7 year programme 2000-2006 to support agriculture and rural development has now been extended to the 10 countries*

### **Council of Europe's International NGO group held in STRASBOURG, France on 27-29 January 2004**

Phil Turner (United Kingdom) represented ECOVAST

### **European Landscape Convention came into force in March 2004**

It was planning to organise Implementation Workshops in the autumn. ECOVAST declared that it was keen to promote action for governments and people of Europe to ratify and implement the Convention.

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in MARBURG, Hesse, Germany on 3-4 April 2004**

Present at meeting, hosted by Angus Fowler and marks the 20<sup>th</sup> birthday of ECOVAST, were 7 ECOVAST members from 5 countries (Germany, Poland, Slovakia, Sweden and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Angus Fowler (Germany)

Senior Vice President – Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Secretary General –Andrea Weigert (Germany)

International Committee Members: Lech Rosciszewski (Poland); Josef Ušák (Slovakia); Per Årman (Sweden)

Other ECOVAST Members –Jean Chanel (Germany)

Apologies were received from the following International Committee members: Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic, Jasenka Kranjčević (Croatia); Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Elzbieta Raszeja (Poland); Magdalena Banu (Romania); Olga Sevan (Russia); and Pam Moore (United Kingdom). Other ECOVAST members were Hasso Hohmann (Austria); Gunter Kröes, Wolfgang Riedel, Detlev Simons and Hans Schwiderski (Germany)

The Graz City Forum apologised but sent cordial greetings for ECOVAST's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary

The Minutes of the International Committee held in Vienna, Austria on 23/24 August were 2003 were accepted.

It was confirmed that the Estonian National Section has been absorbed by Kodukant and is no longer an ECOVAST National Section; and the Slovenian National Section had decided to join the new PREPARE Network and not remain in the ECOVAST Network (although individual members do remain).

A report was received on the Hungarian National Section reported that the Hungarian Section had been ordered to pay back grants that had been taken by their former president Marta Marcziš when they were supposed to be for Hungary Nostra only – which means the Hungarian Section is nearly bankrupt. National Sections still exist in 11 countries; Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Sweden, Slovakia and the United Kingdom

The problems of the proposed Rosia Montana gold mine in Romania was referred to. A campaign against the destruction of landscapes and heritage is being led by EUROPA NOSTRA (ECOVAST is a member).

### **Seventh European Rural University held in OXFORD, England, United Kingdom on 1-3 June 2004**

Phil Turner and Pam Moore (United Kingdom) of ECOVAST as well as the new APURE Board were organisers of this event and Phil Turner chaired the event. Valerie Carter also took part. The conference was followed on 4 June by a study **tour** of rural projects in the Oxford countryside, which is part of South East England and meeting with many rural groups.

#### **PREPARE and LEADER Forum held in CÁCERES, Spain in June 2004**

This co-operation Forum, organised by Spanish Leader Network REDR, was designed to forge links between members of that network and the rural networks emerging in the Central European countries. REDR invited Michael Dower of ECOVAST and PREPARE to lead a delegation of 50 people from 10 Central European countries, whose costs were generously covered by the Spanish hosts. The Forum meetings were held in a former monastery in the historic town of Cáceres, and the event included field visits in the *dehesa* landscape of Extremadura, a region of cork-oak trees and grazing animals.

#### **ECOVAST Croatia International Landscape Workshop held in MAKARSKA, Croatia in summer 2004**

The purpose of the event was organised to discuss the Pilot Project on the Identification and Evaluation of the Landscape of the Makarska / Biokovo Region of Croatia. It had been financed by the Croatian government. Besides members of the project team from Croatia and Arthur Spiegler, leader from Austria (chair of ECOVAST's Landscape Working Group) there were also representatives of the Croatian Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Construction and Environmental Protection, as well as representatives of local municipalities, the town of Makarska, Nature Park Biokovo, and participants from several workshops organized by ECOVAST Croatia with intention to help local communities to understand problems, enhance and protect their own environment.

The object of the project was to try to implement ECOVAST's Guide which had been published in May 2002 and facilitate the formation of the Croatian Landscape Identification Plan. A special publication was issued (in Croatian and English), edited by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić and Manda Horvat of the Ministry. Key speakers were Arthur Spiegler and Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (ECOVAST Croatia).

After the event, a special publication was issued (in Croatian and English), edited by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić and Manda Horvat of the Ministry of Culture.

#### **Second PREPARE Gathering held in CHIFLIK, Bulgaria in September 2004**

Michael Dower of both ECOVAST and PREPARE co-organised this event and took part as did Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (ECOVAST Croatia).

#### **ECOVAST Germany International Symposium on manorial estate complexes held at the Thunen Museum in TELLOW, Germany on 24 September 2004**

This was the second meeting on these manorial estates in the Baltic region and held at the Tellow Museum in the State of Mecklenburg Vorpommern and it also marked the tenth anniversary of the presentation of the Diploma to the Tellow Museum from EUROPA NOSTRA (*that event resulted in the First Tellow Declaration of 24 September 1994*). This second event was hosted by the Thunen Museum and Rolf Peter Bartz of ECOVAST Germany. It resulted in a Second **Tellow Declaration** made on 24 September 2004 which confirmed clear intentions to continue to maintain estate complexes which are typical of Baltic regions.

#### **ECOVAST Biennial Assembly held in SZIGLIGET, Lake Balaton, Hungary on 16 October 2004**

Present at the meeting, hosted by ECOVAST Hungary, were 19 ECOVAST members from 7 countries (Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and the United Kingdom) including:

President - Angus Fowler – (Germany)

Senior Vice President – Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

Other Vice President – Arthur Spiegler (Austria)

Secretary General – Andrea Weigert (Germany)

International Committee Members – Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Lech Rosciszewski (Poland); Ľubica Pinčíková (Slovakia); Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

Other ECOVAST Members attending the meeting -Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia), Ralf Bokermann; Irmelin Küttner; Rudiger Maul, Horst Schubert (Germany), Marian Mihok; Laszlo Muszik; Vera Muszik; Eve Rajnai (Hungary); Eva Kralova (Slovakia); Pam Moore; Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Apologies were received from: Enrico Capo (Italy); Victoria Memeva-Altaparmakovska (FYROM Macedonia); Elzbieta Raszeja (Poland); Magdalena Banu, Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); Olga Sevan (Russia); Josef Ušák (Slovakia); Trevor Kearley and Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom)

Andrea Weigert announced her intention to stand down after 2 years as Secretary General

The Minutes of the General Assembly held in Otočec, Slovenia on 5 October 2003 were agreed.

Reports were also received from the Landscape Group by Arthur Spiegler & Rural Architecture by Rudiger Maul.

Reports were received from the National Sections of Austria; Croatia; Germany; Hungary; Macedonia; Poland; Romania; Slovakia; and the United Kingdom

Reports were also made on the following:

- The EC Rural Development Advisory Committee – by Michael Dower
- PREPARE – by Michael Dower
- The Rosia Montana Gold Mining Proposal in Romania – by Jane Wade and reported on by Michael Dower

The Assembly resolved to make representations on the EU Rural Policy document and a working group will look at revising the ECOVAST Strategy

This being a voting general assembly, the current International Committee was formally released from its obligations and the Committee members were thanked for their work over the last 2 years (2002-2004). An election to decide the new International Committee for 2004-2006 followed.

The following members were nominated by their National Section to serve on the International Committee

- Arthur Spiegler (Austria)
- Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia)
- Andrea Weigert (Germany)
- Gábor Rajnai (Hungary)
- Victoria Momeva-Altiparmakovska (FYROM Macedonia)
- Elzbieta Raszeja (Poland)
- Magdalena Banu (Romania)
- Olga Sevan (Russia)
- Ľubica Pinčíková (Slovakia)
- Kristina Ohman (Sweden)
- Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

The following 6 individual members were also elected to the Committee

- Ralf Bokermann (Germany)
- Dezső Kovács (Hungary)
- Lech Rosciszewski (Poland)
- Eva Kralova (Slovakia)
- Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom)
- Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

This new Committee then elected the following officers to the Bureau to serve for the next 2 years 2004-2006:

- Phil Turner (United Kingdom) as the new President
- Arthur Spiegler (Austria) as the Senior Vice President responsible for landscape and small towns

Three other members as Vice Presidents:

- Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia) with responsibility for Ethnological issues and cultural identity
- Gábor Rajnai (Hungary) responsible for Integrated Rural Development
- Andrea Weigert (Germany) responsible for Sections and co-ordination of events
- Secretary General Pam Moore (United Kingdom) as the new Secretary General
- Treasurer Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom) to continue as Treasurer

Honorary Auditors Angus Fowler and Marlis Lier (both from Germany) were elected for 2004-2006

#### **DENKMAL Trade Fair 2004 and EUREGIA event held in LEIPZIG, Germany on 27-30 October 2004**

ECOVAST has a presence at each of these leading biennial EUROPEAN Trade Fairs through an arrangement with EUROPA NOSTRA. The international presence of ECOVAST is organised and attended by ECOVAST Germany.

## **2005**

#### **PREPARE International meeting held in STOCKHOLM, Sweden in January 2005**

The event was attended by all the PREPARE partners and Michael Dower, Phil Turner and Pam Moore from ECOVAST (United Kingdom) and the new Latvian Forum and the national rural movements LEADER Networks in about 10 other European countries. A total of 40 people took part. The aim of the meeting was to discuss whether it is timely to create a wider network of the rural movements of Europe, which could express the voice of rural people and encourage their action. It was agreed that there is need, and it is timely; and a Working Group was set up, to work up proposals for the purpose and form of the future network.

*This proved to be the first step in a process which led to the creation of the European Rural Communities Alliance (ERCA), which later worked with PREPARE and ELARD as co-initiators of the European Rural Parliament.*

#### **ECOVAST International Committee held in BERLIN, Germany on 22 January 2005**

Present at the meeting were 8 ECOVAST members from 5 countries (Austria, Germany, Poland, Sweden and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Phil Turner (United Kingdom);  
Senior Vice President – Arthur Spiegler (Austria);



Other Vice Presidents – Andrea Weigert (Germany);  
Secretary General – Pam Moore (United Kingdom);  
Other International Committee Members – Ralf Bokermann (Germany); Lech Rosciszewski (Poland); Per Årman (Sweden);  
Other ECOVAST Members that attended included Irmelin Kuttner (Germany)

Apologies were received from: Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia); Dezső Kovács, Gabor Rajnai (Hungary); Victoria Momeva-Altiparmakovska (FYRM Macedonia); Magdalena Banu (Romania); Eva Kralova, Ľubica Pinčíková (Slovakia); and Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom)

The following members were co-opted onto the International Committee

- Olaf Linke (Germany)
- Călin Hoinărescu (Romania)
- Josef Usak (Slovakia)
- Per Årman (Sweden)

The Minutes of the meeting held in Szigliget, Hungary on 16 October were agreed.

Reports from the following National sections: Hungary; Russia; Slovakia and Sweden –where it was reported that the Swedish Section was likely to close

Reports were made on the following work topics: European Landscape Convention by Arthur Spiegler; Small Towns by Phil Turner and Pam Moore. Tihana Stepanic Fabijanić was asked to report next time on the theme of cultural identity and how the work at Otocec could be carried forward

Ralf Bokermann introduced a paper which set out the need to revise the ECOVAST Strategy for Rural Europe

#### **International Conference ‘Transfer of Good Practice in Rural Development in EU – Heritage Trails held in OTOČEC, Slovenia on 16/19 February 2005**

The event included a presentation by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia) on the International Centre of Anthropology Motovun (ICAM) project.

The aim of the project is help the revitalization of parts of Croatia through activating eco-tourism through the development of Heritage trails in the 2 counties of Rijeka and Karlovac in the Kupa Valley.

#### **SREN Conference on Solar and Low Energy Architecture held in FLORENCE, Italy on 2-8 April 2005**

ECOVAST Slovakia (Ľubica Pinčíková) was one of the organisers and Phil Turner and Pam Moore (United Kingdom) attended

#### **ECOVAST Newsletter 30 published April 2005 – the first to be edited by Pam Moore: included**

- Notice of a resolution to review the ECOVAST Strategy again with the work led by Ralf Bokermann
- A short report from the Russian National Section by Olga Sevan
- Reports on PREPARE; the Council of Europe INGO meeting held in Strasbourg on 27-29 January 2004; the EC Rural Development Advisory Committee by Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

#### **Conference on the Cultural Heritage of Königsberg (present day Kaliningrad) held in SLUBICA, Poland in May 2005**

The conference marked the 750<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Foundation of Königsberg. Angus Fowler spoke on the possibilities for greater integration - using organisations such as the Council of Europe or the European Commission and other NGO organisations such as ECOVAST; ENOS and ICOMOS. Angus Fowler (Germany) will report on the situation to a meeting of the sub-committee on Cultural Heritage of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Rostock in September.

#### **‘Yes to Rural Europe’ meeting held in Brussels, Belgium on 13-14 June 2005**

ECOVAST took part in this critical meeting of civil society organisations, LEADER Groups, national rural networks from 19 EU Member States. This is the first time that these 19 countries speak with one voice – demanding long term investment in people and Europe integration.

The conference resolved that participative rural development methods, perfected and tested in LEADER, have shown that they mobilise the energy, creativity and resource of the private sector as well as local people, producing more jobs and better environment for lower cost than many traditional European Programmes; and that partnerships that have been created in all European countries, including the new member states, must be open to all these stakeholders.

#### **Council of Europe 3rd Workshop for the Implementation of the European Landscape Convention held in the City Hall, CORK, Ireland on 16-17 June 2005**

Michael Dower made a presentation

### **Sixth Estonian Rural Parliament held in LEPANINA, Estonia on 21-23 July 2005**

Attending this event, organised by Kodukant (the Estonian Village Movement), were about 400 people, including foreign guests from nine countries. ECOVAST was represented by Phil Turner and Pam Moore (United Kingdom), who made a presentation on the work of ECOVAST.

### **ECOVAST Russia International conference held in KENOZERO National Park, Arkhangelsk region, Russia in August 2005**

The event was organised with the help of ECOVAST Russia and the theme was 'Culture as the Important Factor of the preservation and Development of Territory and Spiritual Life of Kenozero'. The National Park was founded in December 1991 and is recognised as an exceptional example of northern European cultural landscape with a cultural tradition, folk art and economic and environmental protection management. Arthur Spiegler made a presentation on culture and partnership – two main aspects of sustainable rural development

### **ECOVAST tour of Kenozero National Park, Russia in August 2005**

There was a tour of the National park

### **ECOVAST Newsletter 31 published August 2005 – edited by Pam Moore: included**

- An article on the International Solar Renewable Energy Conference held in Florence, Italy in April 2005 by Phil Turner (United Kingdom)
- An article on ECOVAST's work so far on Landscape Identification by Michael Dower (United Kingdom)
- An article on the Estonian Rural Parliament held in Lepanina 21-23 July by Pam Moore (United Kingdom)
- An article on the Conference in Kenozero National Park Russia in August 2005 by Arthur Spiegler (Austria)
- An article on the Conference on the Cultural Heritage of Kaliningrad held in May in Slubica in Poland by Angus Fowler (Germany)

### **ECOVAST Austria Landscape Workshop held 19-22 October 2005**

The workshop was organised by Arthur Spiegler, within the INTERREG programme, involved participants from Austria and the Czech Republic.

### **Third PREPARE Gathering held in BIRŠTONAS SPA in Lithuania in 6-8 October 2005**

Attending this Gathering, which was preceded by Travelling Workshops in Latvia and Lithuania were 78 people from 21 European countries attended (including Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic ECOVAST Vice President and Valerija Kelemen Pepeonik, both from Croatia). Michael Dower of both ECOVAST and PREPARE co-organised this event with the Lithuanian Union of Rural Communities. The focus of the Gathering was on the new generation of national and regional programmes for rural development, which governments throughout the EU are now preparing in the context of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development; and on a vision for the future of rural Europe.

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in Hotel Suza, BRATISLAVA, Slovakia on 23 October 2005**

Present at the meeting, hosted by ECOVAST Slovakia, were 10 ECOVAST members from 7 countries (Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Senior Vice President – Arthur Spiegler (Austria);

Secretary General – Pam Moore (United Kingdom);

Treasurer – Olaf Linke (Germany);

Other International Committee Members – Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic (Croatia); Deszo Kovacs, Gabor Rajnai (Hungary); Lech Roscizewski (Poland); Lubica Pincikova, Josef Usak (Slovakia)

Apologies for absence were received from: Ralf Bokermann, Andrea Weigert (Germany); Magdalena Banu, Calin Hoinarescu (Romania); Olga Sevan (Russia); Jagda Zarnow (Slovakia) and Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom)

The Minutes of the International Committee held in Berlin, Germany in January were agreed.

Reports were received from the National Sections of Austria; Croatia; Germany; Hungary; Poland; Slovakia and the United Kingdom

Reports were also made on the topic of Energy – including a presentation by Lubica Pincikova on the International Alternative Energy Conference organised by ECOVAST Slovakia and held in Florence; Landscape; and on the Working Groups on Small Towns and on Cultural Identity.

There was a discussion on what should be the key themes for ECOVAST in the future and 3 themes were put forward: and agreed:

- Landscape;
- Market Towns and
- Cultural identity.

### **ECOVAST Poland International Conference held in WYDMINY, Poland in September 2005**

The theme of the conference organised by Halina Lapinska of ECOVAST Poland - 'Characteristics of Regional Space' was about protection, preservation and development. The conference produced a 'manifesto' about the rational use of natural and landscape assets as well as the cultural heritage of regional space.

### **ECOVAST events held in RETZ, Austria 4-5 November 2005**

There were 3 events – an international conference, a tour and the General assembly.

### **ECOVAST International Conference on Small Towns was held in Hotel Althof Retz, RETZ, Austria, Upper Austria on 4 November 2005.**

The conference, co-organised by ECOVAST Austria and the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) and funded by them and ECOVAST International. Present 70 delegates from 12 countries. The conclusion from the conference was that there was no European policy on Small Towns and that ECOVAST should develop a project to gather evidence that could be used to develop ECOVAST policy which could be used to influence European policy.

### **ECOVAST Tour associated with the RETZ conference Austria on 4 November 2005**

There was a tour of Retz town and the wine caves followed by a reception in the hotel on the evening of 3 November. The main study tour involved a visit into the Czech Republic to meet the Mayor of Znojmo with a tour of the town, followed by a visit to the World Heritage small town of Slavonice. We returned to Austria to the town of Waidhofen an der Ybbs where we met people from the town and surrounding areas in their town hall and had a discussion about the rural issues in their area.

### **ECOVAST General Assembly held in Hotel Althof Retz, RETZ, Austria on 5 November 2005**

Present at this Assembly, hosted by ECOVAST Austria, were 22 ECOVAST members from 8 countries (Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Romania, Russia, and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Phil Turner (United Kingdom);

Senior Vice President – Arthur Spiegler (Austria)

Vice President – Andrea Weigert (Germany);

Secretary General – Pam Moore (United Kingdom);

Treasurer – Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom)

Other International Committee Members - Tihana Stepinac Fabijanac (Croatia), Ralf Bokermann (Germany); Gabor Rajnai (Hungary), Magdalena Banu (Romania), Olga Sevan (Russia), Victoria Momeva Altiparmakovska (Macedonia)

Other ECOVAST Members: Frank Nahrada (Austria); Heinar Henckel; Rudiger Maul; Olaf Linke; Detlef Simons (all from Germany); Eve Rajnai (Hungary); Andre Banu (Romania); David Baker; Valerie Carter; Michael Dower (United Kingdom) and Eva Vesornik

There were also other guests which included the Mayors of 7 small towns from the Former Yugoslavi Republic of Macedonia; from the Republic of Ireland and from Portugal (Camilo Mortagua who was the President of our partner organisation APURE).

Apologies were received from: Deszo Kovacs (Hungary); Lech Roscizewski (Poland); Calin Hoinarescu (Romania); Lubica Pincikova (Slovakia) and 7 other members

The Minutes of the General Assembly held on 16 October 2004 at Szigliget, Hungary were agreed.

Reports were received from the Working Groups on Landscape by Arthur Spiegler; Rural Architecture by Rudiger Maul – who wanted the group to look at energy conservation in historic buildings; and Integrated Rural Development by Gabor Rajnai

Reports were also received from the National Sections of Austria; Croatia; Germany; Hungary; Macedonia; Poland; Romania; Russia; Slovakia and the United Kingdom

It was agreed that the ECOVAST Strategy for Rural Europe needed updating and also a specific ECOVAST project to help small towns.

### **ECOVAST Project (ASSET – Action to Strengthen Small European Towns) set up during December 2005.**

This became a major project for ECOVAST that was going to last for several years. The essential first need was to establish data about small towns. The first phase involved surveys – desk studies, using the internet, of the number and size of towns across geographical Europe, ranked in various size bands; at the same time two opinion surveys of rural networks across Europe asked about what they thought about small towns in their country and how were they surviving the recession; and finally a series of survey visits to small towns across south east England looking at their economic, social and heritage assets. The ASSET team was led by Phil Turner (United Kingdom); and included Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Tihana Stepinac Fabijanac (Croatia); Ralf Bokermann, Angus Fowler, Andrea Weigert (all Germany) and Pam Moore and Valerie Carter (both United

Kingdom). The aim of this major project (in effect a new ECOVAST Working Group) was to find evidence to support the need to save and promote small towns across Europe: the 4 main aims were:

- to promote co-operation, and the exchange of good practice between Governmental and other agencies throughout Europe who offer support to small towns
- to promote contact and the exchange of good practice between individual small towns throughout Europe
- to speak on behalf of small towns to influence the European Commission; the Council of Europe and the Committee of the Regions and Governments
- to facilitate, support and encourage the delivery of research to enable evidence-based policy approaches to strengthen the well-being of small towns

## **2006**

*Montenegro became fully independent of Serbia as an independent state on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2006 and became a member of the United Nations on 28 June 2006.*

**ECOVAST Newsletter 32 published January 2006 edited by Pam Moore:** included

- An article on the Retz Conference November 2005
- An article on the Kenozero Conference in Russia in 2005 by Astrid Debold Kritter (Germany)
- Reports from the following National sections: Croatia from Tihana Stepanic Fabijanic; FYROM Macedonia from Victoria Momeva Altiparmakovska; Hungary from Gabor Rajnai; Poland from Halina Lapinska

### **ECOVAST International Committee held at the Hotel Karolinenhof, VIENNA, Austria on 4 February 2006**

Present at the meeting, hosted by Franz Nahrada, were 8 ECOVAST members from 5 countries (Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Slovakia and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Phil Turner (United Kingdom);

Senior Vice President – Arthur Spiegler (Austria);

Secretary General – Pam Moore (United Kingdom);

Treasurer – Olaf Linke (Germany);

Other International Committee Members – Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia); Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Lúbia Pinčiková (Slovakia);

Other ECOVAST Members that attended included: Franz Nahrada (Austria)

There was also a guest: Maria Fischer from the Principality of Lichtenstein

Apologies were received from: Ralf Bokermann, Andrea Weigert (Germany); Dezső Kovács (Hungary); Victoria Momeva-Altiparmakovska (FYROM Macedonia); Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); Olga Sevan (Russia); Jagoda Zarnow, Jozef Ušák (Slovakia); and Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom)

The Minutes of the International Committee held in Bratislava Slovakia on 23 October 2005 were approved

Reports were received from from the National Sections of Austria; Croatia; Germany; Hungary; Poland; Slovakia and the United Kingdom

Reports were also made on the small towns and the ASSET Project by Phil Turner who reported on the progress and proposed launch of the project

Guest speaker Maria Fischer made a presentation on her work on the Rural Elderly relating to the plight of the elderly in rural areas and their need for supportive living.

Phil Turner presented his update of the ECOVAST's Strategy for Rural Europe

### **ECOVAST Workshop on Small Towns held in MAKARSKA, County, Croatia on 31 March 2006.**

The workshop, held in Hotel Biokovo, hosted by ECOVAST Croatia, and led by Arthur Spiegler (Austria) discussed the criteria which should be used by ECOVAST to define a 'small town' which will be used to underpin future work through the ECOVAST ASSET project.

### **ECOVAST Tour of rural projects around Makarska and the BLOKOVO National Park, Croatia 1 April 2006**

There was a tour of local rural projects in the area in and around the small town of Makarska, followed by a visit to see the karst scenery of the Biokovo National Park. In the evening we visited another village outside Makarska to have our evening meal and see local traditional dancing.

### **ICOMOS Conference 'Heritage at Risk' held in MOSCOW, Russia on 17-20 April 2006**

Olga Sevan (Russia), President Phil Turner and Pam Moore (United Kingdom) took part in this event which focussed on 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture in Moscow and highlighted the risks faced by buildings of this period. There was also a study tour to look at examples of the buildings referred to.

### **EU REVITAMIN Project 2006**

Revitamin is a project to promote inter-regional cooperation between partner regions and to revitalise former mining areas – the lead partner is the county of Weissenfels, Saschen-Anhalt region around the town of Zeitz; Most in the Czech Republic, Horna Nitra in Slovakia, Velenje in Slovenia and Voitsberg in Austria. ECOVAST ECOVAST is also a partner and is represented by Olaf Linke (Germany).

### **Common Challenge Conference held in SEBERSDORF, Therman region of Austria on 23-25 April 2006**

The conference for International Co-operation in a Common Europe is an annual event which started in 2004. This event discussed the EU programme period 2007 to 2013 particularly on sustainable tourism and renewable energy. It had a presentation on the Revitamin Project. ECOVAST member Olaf Linke (Germany) took part.

### **EUROPA NOSTRA Annual Congress held in VALETTA, Malta on 16-20 May 2006**

The conference at the event discussed Culture Tourism – Benefits and Disadvantages'. Zeynap Aygen, John Gerrard, Pam Moore, Phil Turner, John Sell and Jane Wade – all from ECOVAST United Kingdom took part.

### **ECOVAST Newsletter 33 published in May 2006 – edited by Pam Moore: included**

- Reports on the following National Sections: Austria by Arthur Spiegler; Croatia by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic; Germany by Ralf Bokermann;
- An article on the Revitamin Project by Olaf Linke (Germany)
- An article on the Makarska Workshop on Small Towns by Pam Moore (United Kingdom)
- A report on ICOMOS conference, Moscow in April attended by Phil Turner & Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

### **Fourth PREPARE Gathering in VELEHRAD in the Czech Republic on 18-23 June 2006**

In June, 74 people from 22 countries attended the annual gathering in southern Bohemia, as the guests of the Czech National Rural Observatory and the Czech LEADER Network. The theme of this Gathering was 'The evolution and strengthening of Local Action Groups, and their role in Rural Development Programmes'. This reflected the process for all member countries of the European Union, to prepare national rural development programmes within the framework of the EU's Rural Development Regulation for the period 2007 to 2013. This Regulation requires that all national programmes shall make provision for LEADER-type Local Action Groups as deliverers of parts of the programme. Michael Dower of both ECOVAST and PREPARE co-organised this event and took part.

### **Euracademy Fourth Summer Academy held in ILMAJOKI, Finland on 3-11 June 2006**

The theme was 'Social Capital as a resource for Sustainable Rural Development'. The team that arranged the Academy consisted mainly of ECOVAST members – Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece); Iren Kukorelli (Hungary); Ulf Brengenfeldt (Sweden) and Michael Dower (United Kingdom).

### **Eighth European Rural University held in MEZOTUR and SOLNOK, Hungary on 29 June -1 July 2006**

Attended by Valerie Carter, Pam Moore and Phil Turner (United Kingdom) of ECOVAST as well as being members of the APURE Board. Well over 100 delegates attended the event on the Great Hungarian Plain, for two and a half days of plenary sessions and workshop visits. Participants came from across Europe and representatives were also present from Quebec and the Indian Ocean. Topics discussed at the session ranged across a wide range of rural development issues, including poverty and exclusion of rural people, the preservation of traditions and cultural aspects of rural life, the situation of women in the countryside, and sustainability concerns, such as the adoption of environmentally friendly techniques, and the use of alternative energy sources.

### **European Rural University Tour of Rural Projects around Solnok, Hungary on 30 June and 1 July 2006**

The study tour looked at a variety of rural projects in the villages that lay on either side of the Tisza river and gave the delegates a chance to see examples which complemented the spoken contributions, including projects using energy crops such as elephant grass and farm waste, and innovative village tourism ventures. The event was followed by a visit to Puszta area of Hungary and also to see the capital city of Budapest and a river trip on the Danube.

### **First International INTERREG Landscape Symposium held in the restored monastery PERNEGG, Lower Austria, Austria on 12-15 July 2006**

The event was attended by 40 delegates who exchanged experiences of implementing the Landscape Convention. ECOVAST's Landscape Identification document (first published in 2002) was updated for this event (*and published in September 2006*).

### **Tour of Waldviertel & Weinviertel landscapes in Lower Austria – part of the Pernegg event 14 July 2006**

There was also an excursion to examine the local landscapes of the Waldviertel and Weinviertel which had been used as examples to develop and update the ECOVAST Landscape Identification Guide referred to below.

### **Interreg Conference on small towns held in JYVASKYLA, Finland on 4-6 September 2006**

The Interreg partners who met at the University for this project were Scotland, United Kingdom and Finland). There were several presentations and workshop sessions. Phil Turner (United Kingdom) made a presentation on 'Small Towns and their hinterland'; Pam Moore made a presentation on the ASSET project and Valerie Carter made a presentation on the work being undertaken on small towns in South East England

### **Interreg Tour of Lake Paijanne, Finland on 5 September 2006**

The conference was followed by an evening boat tour of the Lake Paijanne and a sumptuous evening meal in a traditional lake-side restaurant.

### **ECOVAST Landscape Identification – A Guide to Good Practice was published in September 2006.**

It was prepared for an event – 'First INTERREG Landscape Conference' held in Lower Austria in the region/landscape 'Woodquarter' at Pernegg. The purpose of the guide is to help the citizens of Europe to understand, to celebrate and to protect the landscape in which they live; and to assist governments in their work to implement the European Landscape Convention.

It was produced by Arthur Spiegler (Austria) and the ECOVAST Working Group on Landscape and Michael Dower (Past President of ECOVAST United Kingdom). Its production was assisted by funds from European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Province of Lower Austria. It promotes the concept that every landscape is unique, each landscape has distinctive character and the first step in caring for the landscape is to understand or identify its character. It does not need to be done by experts but by ordinary citizens who live in it.

It recognises that there is an 'amphora of landscape' which forms a set of linked layers that combine to form landscape – starting at the underlying rocks, and climate and the landform; the land cover soil; the activity carried out (such as agriculture and forestry); and the houses and settlements on it and other man made features. It lists the 10 layers of the main landscape features which are then presented on a 'matrix form' (includes Rocks; Climate; Landform; Soil; Land cover; Agriculture and Forestry; Houses and Settlements; Historic Features and finally the feelings and associations that people have about the area they are looking at. The Guide suggests how this matrix form can be used, and includes examples to illustrate this for 3 areas: the Weinviertel in Austria; Zahorie and the Small Carpathians in Slovakia.

The Guide has been used at several events to test the approach and it was revised in September 2012. It was prepared for an event – 'First INTERREG Landscape Conference' held in Lower Austria in the region/landscape 'Woodquarter' at Pernegg. The purpose of the guide is to help the citizens of Europe to understand, to celebrate and to protect the landscape in which they live; and to assist governments in their work to implement the European Landscape Convention. It was produced by Arthur Spiegler (Austria) and the ECOVAST Working Group on Landscape and Michael Dower. – Past President of ECOVAST International and ECOVAST United Kingdom. It was assisted by funds from the European Union funding under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Province of Lower Austria.

It promotes the concept that every landscape is unique and each landscape has distinctive character and the first step in caring for the landscape is to understand, or identify its character. It does not need to be done by experts but by ordinary citizens who live in it. It recognises that there is an 'amphora of landscape' which forms a set of linked layers that combine to form landscape – starting at the underlying rocks, and climate and the landform; the land cover soil; the activity carried out (agriculture and forestry); and also the houses and settlements on it and other man made features. It lists the 10 layers of the main landscape features which are then listed on a 'matrix form' (includes Rocks; Climate; Landform; Soil; Landcover; Agriculture and forestry; Houses and Settlements; Historic Features and finally the feelings and associations that people have about the area they are looking at. The Guide suggests how this matrix form can be used and has examples to illustrate this for 3 areas: the Eastern Weinviertel in Austria; Zahorie and the Small Carpathians in Slovakia.

The Guide has been used at several events to test the approach and it was revised in September 2012.

### **ECOVAST Newsletter 34 – published September 2006 – edited by Pam Moore: included**

- The Interreg Conference in Jyväskylä, Finland in September 2006
- The PREPARE Gathering in Velehrad in the Czech Republic
- An update on a renewed threat to Rosia Montana
- A report on the APURE Oxford Rural University 2006 by Pam Moore (United Kingdom)
- Reports from the following National Sections: Croatia from Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic; Poland by Halina Lapinska; Romania from Magdalena Banu and Calin Hoinarescu
- An article on 'Young Art for Old Churches by Dr Hans Krag of FAK
- An article on New Energy submitted by Ralf Bokermann (Germany)

### **ECOVAST events held in BRATISLAVA, Slovakia 14-16 October 2006**

There were 3 events: an Interantional Committee, the Biennial Assembly and a conference on Energy.

## **ECOVAST International Committee held in Hotel Suza, BRATISLAVA, Slovakia on 14 October 2006**

*Those present at this meeting and those who apologise are listed in the Biennial Assembly meeting below.*

The Minutes of the International Committee meeting held in Vienna, Austria on 4 February 2006 were agreed.

A report was given by Phil Turner on the ASSET project

## **ECOVAST Biennial Assembly held in the Hotel Suza, BRATISLAVA, Slovakia on 15 October 2006**

Present at this Assembly, hosted in the hotel by ECOVAST Slovakia and organised by Emil Pincik and Lubica Pincikova, were 20 ECOVAST members from 6 countries (Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Slovakia, and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Senior Vice President – Arthur Spiegler (Austria)

Other Vice Presidents – Andrea Weigert (Germany)

Secretary General – Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

Other International Committee Members - Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic (Croatia); Ralf Bokermann (Germany), Gabor Rajnai (Hungary); Lubica Pincikova, Eva Kralova (Slovakia)

Other ECOVAST Members that attended included: Angus Fowler; Irmelin Küttner; Olaf Linke; Rudiger Maul; Horst Schubert; Detlef Simons (Germany); Maria Medvecká; Maria Nadová; Emil Pincik (Slovakia); Valerie Carter; David Green (United Kingdom)

Apologies were received from: Olaf Linke (Germany); Dezso Kovacs, Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Victoria Momeva-Altiparmakovska (FYROM Macedonia); Magdalena Banu, Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); Olga Sevan (Russia); and Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom)

Tributes were made to former members of ECOVAST who had died recently: András Román (Hungary) 1929-2005; Josef Ušák (Slovakia) 1937-2006 and Thea Altaras 1924-2005 (Germany)

The Minutes of the last General Assembly held in Retz, Austria on 5 November 2005 were agreed.

Reports were also received from Working Groups on Landscape by Arthur Spiegler; Rural Architecture by Rudiger Maul; and the ASSET project on small towns by Phil Turner, who also reported that APURE had become a partner in the ASSET project.

Reports were received from the National Sections of Austria; Croatia; Germany; Hungary; Macedonia, Poland, Romania; Russia, Slovakia and the United Kingdom

ECOVAST had joined the European Rural alliance (ERA) as an associate and had signed a document for the European Civic Forum on participatory democracy.

It was now ten years since the Cork 1 Declaration and it was the right time to update The Position Statement on the ECOVAST Strategy for Rural Europe. The revision had been prepared by Phil Turner, Michael Dower, Arthur Spiegler and Ralf Bokermann was formally agreed by this Biennial Assembly.

This being a voting assembly there was a formal release of the current International Committee from its obligations and the committee members were thanked for their work over the last 2 years 2004-2006. An election followed to select the new International Committee to serve for the next two years (2006-2008).

The following members were nominated by their National Section to serve on the International Committee:

- Arthur Spiegler (Austria)
- Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia)
- Olaf Linke (Germany)
- Gábor Rajnai (Hungary)
- Victoria Momeva-Altiparmakovska (FYROM Macedonia)
- Halina Łapińska (Poland)
- Magdalena Banu (Romania)
- Olga Sevan (Russia)
- Eva Kralova (Slovakia)
- Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

The following individual members were also elected onto the new committee

- Ralf Bokermann (Germany)
- Angus Fowler (Germany)
- Andrea Weigert (Germany)
- Dezso Kovacs (Hungary)
- Călin Hoinărescu (Romania)
- Ľubica Pinčíková (Slovakia)
- Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)
- Phil Turner (United Kingdom)



The new International Committee then elected the officers of the Bureau who would serve for 2006-2008:

- Phil Turner (United Kingdom) as President for a second term

Three members to serve as Vice Presidents:

- Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia)
- Ralf Bokermann (Germany)
- Ľubica Pinčíková (Slovakia)
- Pam Moore (United Kingdom) to continue as Secretary General
- Olaf Linke (Germany) as Treasurer

Two Honorary Auditors – Horst Schubert and Rudiger Maul (both of Germany) were elected for 2006-2008

### **ECOVAST Slovakia Conference on Renewable Energy held in BRATISLAVA, Slovakia on 16 October 2006**

The event was organised by Emil and Lubica Pincikova (Slovakia) and sponsored by SPECTRA and the Slovakian Technical University. Presentations were made by Phil Turner 'Energy and its relation to rural well-being' which hopefully will develop into an ECOVAST formal statement; Pam Moore on the ASSET project; Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic gave a presentation on Croatian Towns and Villages; and Eva Kralova described the impact of cultural heritage management on rural development

### **ECOVAST Tour associated with the renewable energy event in Bratislava, Slovakia on 17 October 2006**

This was a tour to the Galanta geothermal station which provides heating for local housing and a hospital.

### **The revised statement – 'A Position Statement on the Strategy for the Rural Regions of Europe – ECOVAST 2006' - published October 2006**

This is a report on progress has been prepared by Phil Turner (United Kingdom) together with Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Ralf Bokermann (Germany) and Michael Dower (United Kingdom) and is a revision of the original ECOVAST 'Strategy for Rural Europe' published first in 1991, revised in 1994 with additions in 1996 and 1997.

This revision was agreed by the ECOVAST Biennial Committee meeting held in Bratislava on 15 October 2006. It is made in the context of the decisions of the European Parliament in June 2005 and the European Council in December 2005 on a European Agricultural Fund for Rural (EARDF). ECOVAST states:

- Competitiveness, applied globally, can be seen to be damaging the unique qualities of rural places, people and their activities. The imperative for rural areas is not competition but collaboration, partnership and joint working between farmers and others in local communities. Rural areas have to compete for political support and funding with urban areas that have more votes per hectare.
- Cohesion requires recognition that the trend of rural depopulation is now seeing a reversal in some European states : this 'counter-urbanisation' can lead to disparity between the more wealthy incomers from urban areas and indigenous rural areas and requires to be addressed. These newcomers can bring in new skills and their money often repairs traditional rural buildings.
- Sustainability of rural settlements, landscapes and habitats requires recognition, whilst acknowledging that landscapes have been subject to change throughout history. Blinkered spatial policies which favour settlements with good public transport, or which cluster services in larger urban areas. can lead to a withering away of previous viable rural places. The landscape itself is a valuable spiritual and economic resource for tourism and an incentive for economic investment, but also needs local people to manage the animals and the vegetation that create it.

*This statement was updated again in 2008 and in 2013.*

### **DENKMAL Trade Fair 2006 and EUREGIA event held in LEIPZIG, Germany on 25-28 October 2006**

ECOVAST has a presence at the biennial EUROPEAN Trade Fairs through an arrangement with EUROPA NOSTRA. The international presence of ECOVAST is organised and attended by ECOVAST Germany.

### **LEADER / PREPARE Conference on 'held in TIHANY, in Hungary on 14-16 November 2006**

The event was to discuss the LEADER programme in the in the New Member States. Michael Dower (ECOVAST United Kingdom) was a co-organiser and spoke at this event.

### **ECOVAST ASSET Project: First Opinion Survey of Rural Networks in Europe carried out in 2006/2007**

Rural Networks were asked about their views on small towns in their countries, the problems they were facing and how they were coping with the economic recession. Questionnaires were sent out to 30 countries inside and outside the European Union and responses were received from 22 countries. A very complex picture emerged, particularly on the 'size of a small town'. The answers covered topics such as hinterlands, challenges faced; what support was there; interaction between small town and hinterland; do larger towns support small towns?; best practice examples and details of the research each country had carried out. The survey was carried out by Pam Moore (United Kingdom) and the results were finally published by ECOVAST in 'The Evidence Base' document in February 2015.

**ECOVAST Newsletter 35 Published December 2006 – edited by Pam Moore:** included

- Short reports from the following National Sections: Austria; Croatia; Germany; Hungary; Poland; Romania; Russia; Slovakia and the United Kingdom
- An article on the Excursion in Bratislava area after the conference on renewable energy October 2006
- An article on the Federal Congress held in Berlin 'Future of the Rural Space' by Ralf Bokermann (Germany)
- An article on Renewable Resources held in Majvik, Finland by Petri Rinne of PREPARE

**2007**

*Montenegro became a member of the Council of Europe. Bulgaria and Romania became part of the European Community on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007.*

*The European Union's new 7 year programme to support agriculture and rural development starts in 2007 and runs until the end of 2013. Bulgaria and Romania now have access to it. The funding comes through the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) which finances direct payment to farmers and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) which finances the Rural Development Programme (RDP). The LEADER Programme is available to all Member States. DG Agri still has a Rural Advisory Group with representatives from all the EU countries (farming networks) and other pan-European bodies – including ECOVAST – which will go onto the end of 2013.*

**ECOVAST Poland Conference on Regions & Tourism held at SURAZ, Poland on 5/6 January 2007**

Papers were presented by Phil Turner on 'ECOVAST Landscape and Tourism' and by Pam Moore on 'ECOVAST's ASSET Project & how small towns can play a part in protecting rural areas in Europe. The collection of papers from this event were eventually collated into a book and published in 2011

**Council of Europe NGO event, held in STRASBOURG on 24 January 2007**

*This is the annual meeting of members of the International NGO Group.*

Valerie Carter, Pam Moore and Phil Turner (United Kingdom) attended and Phil Turner made a presentation.

**ECOVAST Study Tour of the Energy Town of GUSSING, Burgenland, Austria on 23 February 2007**

This event, held before the meeting in Kirchbach, visited the small town of Gussing in Burgenland, Austria (population 27,000) is situated in one of the poorest areas of Austria with an unfavourable location – near a border, and having no major trade or industrial businesses and poor transport infrastructure with neither railway nor major highway. The Town Council decided to abandon fossil fuel energy and supply the town and district with renewable energy. They invested in energy plants using biomass gasification.

The town is a best practice example in the ECOVAST publication 'The Importance of Small Towns' in 2014.

**ECOVAST International Committee held in KIRCHBACH, Styria, Austria on 24 February 2007**

Present at the meeting, hosted by ECOVAST Austria, were 10 ECOVAST members from 4 countries (Austria, Croatia, Germany and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Phil Turner (United Kingdom);

Vice Presidents – Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia);

Secretary General – Pam Moore (United Kingdom);

Treasurer – Olaf Linke (Germany);

Other International Committee Members – Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Angus Fowler (Germany)

Other ECOVAST Members that attended included: Valerija Kelemen-Pepeonik (ECOVAST Croatia); Brigitte Macaria and Franz Nahrada (ECOVAST Austria)

Apologies were received from: Andrea Weigert (Germany); Dezső Kovács, Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Victoria Momeva-Altiparmakovska (Macedonia); Magdalena Banu, Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); Olga Sevan (Russia) and Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)

The Minutes of the International Committee meeting held in Bratislava, Slovakia on 14 October 2006 were agreed.

Reports were received from the National Sections of Austria; Croatia; Germany; Romania and the United Kingdom

A report was also made on the Working Group on small towns / the ASSET Project

Brigitte Macaria (Austria) gave a presentation on her work with the city of Czernowitz in Ukraine which had been to increase awareness of architecture and landscape and to promote local and regional identity and stimulate interest in local heritage.

Angus Fowler (Germany) also reported on his consultation work for the Russian Ministry of Culture

### **Regional Studies Association meeting in LISBON, Portugal in 5 April 2007**

At this meeting, hosted by Professor Nuno Santos Pinheiro (ECOVAST Portugal) held at the University of Lisbon, Phil Turner (United Kingdom) presented a paper (co-authored by Valerie Carter and Pam Moore) on the ECOVAST ASSET project

### **ECOVAST Newsletter 36 published April 2007 – edited by Pam Moore:** included

- A report on the Energy Town – Gussing, Austria - by Phil Turner
- A report on the ASSET project held in Lisbon University and hosted by Professor Nuno Santos Pinheiro – ECOVAST member from Portugal - by Phil Turner
- Short reports from the following National Sections: Austria; Croatia; Germany; Poland; Romania; Russia; and the United Kingdom
- An article on a meeting on 'Intergated Perspectives of Metroploitan Regions in polycentric urban systems' held in Berlin – by Olaf Linke (Germany)
- An article on 'Economic Aspects of on-farm produced Rape Seed oil as a fuel' by Ralf Bokermann (Germany)

### **ECOVAST Workshop on Rural Buildings and Tour held at Seiler Wine Farm, WEYHER, Rhineland Palatinate, Germany on 14 July 2007**

Rudiger Maul (ECOVAST Germany and Chair of the International Working Group on Rural Buildings) ran a workshop on vernacular rural buildings and energy saving. As part of this event, he took the group around the village of Weyher looking at local architecture and then his wine growing farm which is dedicated to growing vines for wine. His farm is part of a wine route which runs between Germany and France.

### **ECOVAST International Committee held at Seiler Wine Farm, WEYHER, Germany on 15 July 2007**

Present at the meeting, hosted by Rudiger Maul at his farm were 8 ECOVAST members from 3 countries (Austria, Germany and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Phil Turner (United Kingdom);

Vice President – Ralf Bokermann (Germany);

Secretary General – Pam Moore (United Kingdom);

Treasurer – Olaf Linke;

Other International Committee Members – Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Angus Fowler, Andrea Weigert (Germany); Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)

Apologies were received from: Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia); Dezső Kovács, Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Victoria Momeva-Altiparmakovska (Macedonia); Halina Łapińska (Poland); Magdalena Banu, Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); Olga Sevan (Russia)

The Minutes of the International Committee held on 24 February in Kirchbach, Austria were agreed.

Reports were also made from the Working Groups on Landscape Identification by Arthur Spiegler (Rural Development has now been agreed to merge with the Landscape Group); and Rural Architecture by Rudiger Maul; and Small Towns / ASSET by Phil Turner

Reports were received from the National Sections of Austria; Croatia; Germany; Hungary; Macedonia and the United Kingdom

A new fee structure was agreed for ECOVAST membership

### **ECOVAST Newsletter 37 – published August 2007 – edited by Pam Moore:** included

- A report on the meeting of the ECOVAST International Rural Architecture Group held in Weyher, Germany
- An article on Metropolitan Regions and Spatial Development by Olaf Linke (Germany)
- An article Upgrading the Economic Sector of Rural Regions by Ralf Bokermann
- Reports on the following National Sections: Germany by Olaf Linke; Russia from Olga Sevan; United Kingdom by Pam Moore
- A short update on PREPARE and CURE by Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

### **ECOVAST Austria Workshop held in ST VEIT an der GLAN, Carinthia, Austria on 7 September 2007**

This is the second workshop on small towns by ECOVAST Austria and it discussed the progress made on the ASSET project and the future work planned.

### **Study Tour of the local area on 7 September 2007**

The tour looked at examples of local architecture in the area around St Veit an der Glan.

### **ECOVAST events held in Samobor, Croatia 13-15 October 2007**

This 3 day event in Croatia involved an International Committee meeting; an Annual Assembly meeting, a conference on small towns and a tour and ended with a formal declaration on small towns.

**ECOVAST International Committee held in SAMOBOR, Croatia on 13 October 2007** The event took place in the Hotel Lavica in Samobor in Zagreb County. In the morning there were meetings of the International Working groups and this was followed in the evening by the International Committee meeting. Those present at this meeting and those who apologised are listed under the General Assembly meeting below.

The Minutes of the International Committee held in Weyher, Germany on 15 July 2007 were approved

Reports were received from the National Sections of Austria; Croatia; Germany; Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and the United Kingdom.

Discussion also took place on possible new National Sections or revivals of former ones: Serbian Section was a possibility with people interested; contact had been made with Montenegro; and there was possible revival of Sweden and Italian sections

Reports were also received from the Working Groups on Landscape; Rural Architecture and Small Towns/ASSET

The Strategy for Europe was now translated into Croatian. It was already available in Polish, Russian and Slovakian.

A report on the threat of Brown Coal industry on many rural sites in Germany was identified and is to be discussed by the ECOVAST German National Section.

EUROPA NOSTRA is working on the opposition to the proposed new gold mine Rosia Montana in Romania and ECOVAST will try to help them in their efforts

It was agreed that ECOVAST would join the new organisation European Rural Alliance (ERA) with a membership fee of 100 Euros

#### **ECOVAST General Assembly held at Hotel Lavica in SAMOBOR, Croatia on 14 October 2007**

Present at this Assembly meeting, hosted by ECOVAST Croatia and organised by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic, were 27 ECOVAST members from 4 countries (Austria, Croatia, Germany and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Vice Presidents – Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic (Croatia); Ralf Bokermann (Germany);

Secretary General – Pam Moore (United Kingdom);

Treasurer - Olaf Linke (Germany)

Other International Committee Members – Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Rudiger Maul, Andrea Weigert (Germany);

Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)

Other ECOVAST Members – Drazen Krbutina; Aleksander Lukić; Lela Ročenović; Majda Rubić; Branka Sirinić;

Drogico Zodimoc (all from Croatia); Rudiger Maul; Irmelin Küttner; Heinar Henckel (Germany); Michael Dower;

David Green; Edmund Neville Rolfe; Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom)

Auditor – Angus Fowler (Germany);

Apologies were received from: Deszo Kovacs, Gabor Rajnai (Hungary); Victoria Momeva-Altiparmakovska (Macedonia); Magdalena Banu, Calin Hoinarescu (Romania); Olga Sevan (Russia) and Lubica Pincikova (Slovakia)

There were also several guests including Marica Jelenic (the Deputy Mayor of Samobor); Stuart Burgess and Graham Garbutt (from the Rural Community Council of England) and a representative from Serbia

New Honorary Auditors Rudiger Maul and Heinar Henckel were elected for 2007-2008

The Minutes of the General Assembly held in Bratislava on 15 October 2006 were approved.

Reports were also received from the Working Groups on Landscape by Arthur Spiegler; Rural Architecture by Rudiger Maul; and the ASSET project by Phil Turner

Reports were received from the National Sections of Austria; Croatia; Germany; Hungary; Macedonia; Poland; Romania; Russia; Slovakia and the United Kingdom.

There was also a report given from the guest from Serbia who explained what was happening in Serbian villages and that an Education Centre which was planned to encourage young people to get to know village culture.

#### **ECOVAST conference on small towns held at Hotel Lavica, SAMOBOR, Zagreb County, Croatia, on 15 October 2007**

The event, organised by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic and the ECOVAST Croatia Section, was staged after the formal ECOVAST meetings. There were a series of ECOVAST speakers: Arthur Spiegler (Austria) spoke about the earlier small towns events held in Austria in 1998, 2002 and 2005 and the subsequent ECOVAST workshops held in Makarska in 2006, Croatia, and in St Veit an der Glan last month. Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) made a presentation on the work to support small towns in South East England, and Pam Moore (United Kingdom) made a presentation on 'How regional and national bodies assist small towns in Europe' and the opinion surveys she was involved with.

### **ECOVAST Samobor Declaration on Small Towns – resulting from the conference on 15 October 2007**

This is an ECOVAST policy statement based on the views of those attending the conference. It was the first overall policy statement on small towns (the overall definitive policy was not agreed until 2013, when it was published as a Position Paper and distributed widely). The statement was agreed by the 72 delegates from 8 countries who wished to address their thoughts to all the governments and peoples of Europe. The Statement supports the ECOVAST ASSET project. It stresses the gap in European Policy for small towns and hopes that the European Commission will remedy this. It urges European Governments to place a specific focus on small towns and their hinterlands in their plans for sustainable development, and calls for full recognition of the important role that small towns play. It welcomes the current activities being taken by several countries; encourages the creation and activity of Town Partnerships; calls for a focus on policies that are about 'sustainable development'; and stresses the decisive importance of life-long learning for the real participation of rural people in their own development process,

### **ECOVAST Tour associated with SAMOBOR event, Croatia on 16 October 2007**

The conference was followed by a tour of Croatia visiting a working watermill near Otocac, then down to the Dalmatian Coast to visit the historic small towns of Senj and ending inland at the town of Delnice at the small town of Samobor and a musical evening.

### **First Croatian Conference on Rural Tourism Conference held in HVAR, Croatia on 17/20 October 2007**

The theme of the conference is 'perspectives of Rural Tourism Development in Croatia'. Phil Turner made a presentation

### **Conference 'Competitiveness and European Integration', held in CLUJ, Romania on 26/27 October 2007**

Phil Turner (United Kingdom) made presentation on the ASSET project

### **Fifth PREPARE Gathering held in PRZEMYSL, in South East Poland in October 2007**

The Gathering was held close to the Ukrainian border, and attended by 70 people from 20 countries. The event was preceded by travelling workshops on both sides of the Polish-Ukrainian border, providing an insight into the efforts to achieve social and economic regeneration in these beautiful but remote regions, which suffered wholesale removal of population after World War 2 and are still losing young people through out-migration. Michael Dower of both ECOVAST and PREPARE co-organised this event with the Polish Rural Forum.

### **ECOVAST Newsletter 38 published December 2007 edited by Pam Moore: included:**

- A report on the Samobor Conference on Small Towns 15 October 2007 by Phil Turner and the Excursion
- The Samobor Declaration agreed at the conference
- An article on 'Maintenance and Conservation of Landscapes by animals by Ralf Bokermann (Germany)
- Articles on 'Perspectives of Polycentric Metropolitan Regions by Olaf Linke (Germany)
- Reports from the following National Sections: Austria; Croatia; Hungary; Poland; Romania; and Slovakia
- A short article on the forthcoming launch of CURE For Sustainability by Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

### **Launch of CURE (Convention for a Sustainable Urban and Rural Network) in BRUSSELS, Belgium in December 2007**

ECOVAST has offered support to this new ambitious initiative to promote cooperation between urban and rural areas for the well-being of all Europeans. The Core Group includes Michael Dower (United Kingdom) and Pam Moore (also United Kingdom) attended the launch to represent ECOVAST. The new network planned a series of events. *NB another initiative to link rural and urban areas was set up in 2011 with a network called RURBAN operated by DG Region of the EU – where ECOVAST was also a member.*

## **2008**

*Kosovo unilaterally declared itself an independent country from February 2008. It is but it is not recognised by every country though the United States, France, Germany and the United Kingdom now (2018) have embassies in Kosovo.*

### **The Council of Europe International NGO session held in STRASBOURG, France in January 2008**

The event was attended by Pam Moore and Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

### **ECOVAST International Committee held at Hotel Karolinenhof, VIENNA, Austria on 16 February 2008**

Present at the meeting, hosted by Franz Nahrada (Austria), were 15 ECOVAST members from 6 countries (Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Slovakia and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Vice Presidents - Tihana Stepanic Fabijanić (Croatia); Ľubica Pinčíková (Slovakia);

Secretary General – Pam Moore (United Kingdom);

Treasurer – Olaf Linke (Germany);

Auditors – Angus Fowler (Germany);

Other International Committee Members – Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Eva Kralova (Slovakia); Other ECOVAST Members that attended included: Brigitte Macaria (Austria) representing Arthur Spiegler; Gerhard Fasching; Helge Loider (also Austria); Valerija Kelemen Pepeonik (Croatia); Pal Hajas (Hungary); Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)

Apologies were received from: Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Andrea Weigert (Germany); Dezső Kovács (Hungary); Victoria Momeva-Altiparmakovska (Macedonia); Magdalena Banu, Călin Hoinărescu (Romania)

The Minutes of the International Committee meeting held in Samobor, Croatia on 13 October 2007 were agreed.

A report on the ASSET Small Town project was given by Phil Turner (United Kingdom).

Reports were received from the National Sections of Austria; Croatia; Germany; Hungary; Romania; Russia; Slovakia and the United Kingdom.

### **CIVILSCAPE Formal launch of the new organisation in FLORENCE, Italy on 23 February 2008**

ECOVAST was one of the founder members of CIVILSCAPE, which is an alliance of civil society organisations committed to implementation of the European Landscape Convention. At this formal launch, Phil Turner made a presentation and Pam Moore became a member of the CIVILSCAPE Board.

### **Study Tour associated with Swedish Rural Parliament in LYCKSELE, Sweden on 6 March 2008**

The first day of the Swedish Rural Parliament was devoted to the tour to visit a series of rural projects - starting with a visit to a former bus garage, now offering accommodation for visitors. Next to a school in Åkullsjön – believed to be the first sustainable school in Sweden, where residents explained the changes which had been made to practices to improve their environmental performance. Lunch was taken at a beautiful former flour mill at Överklinten, which now serves as a hotel and restaurant, with much of the restoration work having been done by local volunteers. Finally, we went to Sikeå, which not only boasts the smallest fire station in Europe (if not in the world!) but also a pioneering community facility with meeting places, bars, restaurants and sauna.

### **Swedish Rural Parliament held in LYCKSELE, Lappland, Sweden from 7-8 March 2008**

Phil Turner and Pam Moore (United Kingdom) represented ECOVAST at the 2008 Swedish Rural Parliament. The event was held in a small town (population about 12,600) which is a centre for the area, with excellent facilities, including a noted hospital. Most of the sessions were held in Hotel Lappland, a large venue on the riverside (at that time completely frozen and shrouded in deep snow). However, the Swedish welcome was, as ever, very warm. A conference opened formally on 7 March (after the study tour on 6<sup>th</sup>) with addresses from officials from all tiers of Government. The afternoon was devoted to seminars and we attended “Networking the European Rural Voice” which offered a chance to promote ECOVAST. On the following morning, speakers at the Plenary included Maud Olofsson (a former member of our ECOVAST International Committee from ECOVAST Sweden),

### **Rural Futures Conference held in PLYMOUTH, England, United Kingdom in April 2008**

Pam Moore gave a paper on ECOVAST ASSET research

### **ECOVAST Austria participates in a project called DORFWIKI in May 2008**

The project is an on-line community centred on villages and small towns. The site is now used to store a lot of ECOVAST’s work on small towns and villages and can be accessed through our website.

### **ECOVAST Newsletter 39 published May 2008 edited by Pam Moore: included:**

- Reports from the following National Sections: Austria from Franz Nahrada; Croatia from Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić; Hungary from Gábor Rajnai; Romania; Slovakia from Eva Kralova and Ľubica Pinčíková; and the United Kingdom
- A article on the celebration of 20 years of ECOVAST Germany in Stift Quernheim on 12 April 2008
- A report from the International Working group on Landscape
- Short reports on Wales Rural Forum; University of Gloucester; RuralNet; PREPARE; European Rural Development Network; CURE and the Swedish Rural parliament
- A report on the Formal Launch of CIVILSCAPE

### **New Briefing Paper updating ECOVAST Strategy for Rural Europe prepared in June 2008**

The paper was prepared by Phil Turner (United Kingdom) and sent to the Council of Europe; the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities; the European Commission’s Advisory Group on Rural Development and the European Union Committee of the Regions. The new statement is presented in the context of the Health Check of the Common Agricultural Policy and of the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013. The

statement says "ECOVAST wishes to see rural communities involved in Integrated Rural Development within and beyond the farm gate – in active partnership with the producers; farms and food, forests, fishing, mineral workings, energy and landscape management". ECOVAST believes that Axis 3 of the RDP should seek to devote increasing resources to the following:

- measures to diversify the rural economy and improve the quality of life in rural areas
- small towns and villages and their hinterlands, which currently lack a policy focus and support in urban policy and rural development policy but which have unique economic, social, cultural and environmental characteristics of high value for all Europeans
- the variety of rural contexts (coasts; islands; landscapes; remote places; mountains) need to be recognised in Rural Development policy by a flexible approach enabling local communities to influence local policies."

#### **Ninth European Rural University held in SUCHA BESKIDSKA, Poland on 12-15 June 2008 OK**

This event, in the Beskid Mountains in Poland, involved Valerie Carter of ECOVAST (United Kingdom).

#### **Tour associated with the Sucha Beskidska, Poland event on 14 June 2008**

The study tour looked at rural projects in several villages in the Beskids including a 'skansen museum' which not only has many traditional rural buildings transferred to the site from other rural areas of Poland but exhibitions of different traditional farming practices and local crafts.

#### **ECOVAST International Committee held at the Rathaus in WITTSTOCK, Germany on 18 July 2008**

Present at the meeting, hosted by Angus Fowler of ECOVAST Germany, were 10 ECOVAST members from 4 countries (Austria, Croatia, Germany and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Other Vice Presidents – Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia); Ralf Bokermann (Germany)

Secretary General – Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

Treasurer – Olaf Linke (Germany)

Other International Committee Members –, Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Angus Fowler, Andrea Weigert Germany); Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)

Other ECOVAST Members that attended included: Brigitte Macaria (ECOVAST Austria); Sibylle Bachmüller Justus Bohl; Gunter Herring; Irmelin Küttner; and Peter Thrann (all from ECOVAST Germany)

Auditors – Heinar Henckel and Rudiger Maul

Apologies were received from: Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Victoria Momeva Altiparmakovska (Macedonia); Magdalena Banu, Călin Hoinărescu (Romania) and Olga Sevan (Russia)

The Minutes of the International Committee held in Vienna, Austria on 16 February 2008 were agreed.

Reports were also received from the following Working Groups on Landscape and the ASSET project.

Reports were received from the National Sections of Austria; Croatia; Germany; Hungary; Macedonia; Russia and the United Kingdom

#### **Council of Europe INGO Summer meeting held in STRASBOURG, France in late July 2008**

Pam Moore and Phil Turner attended

#### **ECOVAST Newsletter 40 published August 2008 edited by Pam Moore: included**

- Reports from the National Sections of Austria; Croatia; Hungary; Poland; Russia and the United Kingdom
- Report from Landscape Working group that the ECOVAST Guide on landscape, published in 2006

#### **ECOVAST events held in WITTSTOCK, Germany 18-20 September 2008**

There were 3 events held over 3 days – a conference which resulted in a formal declaration; an international committee and the biennial assembly.

#### **ECOVAST Conference on small towns held in WITTSTOCK, Germany on 18 September 2008**

The conference, hosted by ECOVAST Germany, was arranged by Angus Fowler. The conference resulted in a declaration and took place before the ECOVAST International Committee and Biennial Assembly meetings.

#### **ECOVAST Wittstock Declaration on Small Towns - resulting from the conference on 18 September 2008**

This is a second ECOVAST policy statement on small towns, based on the views of those attending the Wittstock conference. The overall definitive policy was finally agreed in 2013 and published in 2014.

#### **ECOVAST International Committee held in WITTSTOCK, Brandenburg, Germany on 19 September 2008**

*The members who attended this meeting or apologised are listed in the Biennial Assembly below.*

The Minutes of the International Committee held in Wittstock, Germany on 19 July 2008 were agreed.



## **ECOVAST Biennial Assembly held in the Chapel of the Holy Ghost, WITTSTOCK, Brandenburg, Germany on 20 September 2008**

Present at this Assembly, hosted by ECOVAST Germany, were 14 ECOVAST members from 4 countries (Austria, Croatia, Germany and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Other Vice Presidents – Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic (Croatia)

Secretary General – Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

Treasurer – Olaf Linke (Germany)

Auditors – Heinar Henckel and Rudiger Maul

Other International Committee Members –, Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Angus Fowler, Andrea Weigert (Germany); Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)

Other ECOVAST members attending: Brigitte Macaria (ECOVAST Austria); Sibylle Bachmuller; Justus Bohl; Irmelin Küttner; Peter Thran (all from ECOVAST Germany)

Apologies had been received from: Ralf Bokermann (Germany); Dezső Kovács, Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Enrico Capo (Italy); Victoria Momeva Altiparmakovska (Former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia); Halina Łapińska (Poland); Nunos Santos Pinheiro (Portugal); Magdalena Banu, Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); Olga Sevan (Russia); Eva Kralova, Lubica Pincikova (Slovakia); David Baker Michael Dower, David Green, Trevor Kearley, Crispin Moor, and Edmund Neville Rolfe (United Kingdom).

The Minutes of the Genral Assembly held in Samobor, Croatia on 14 October 2007 were agreed.

Reports were also received from 3 Working Groups; Landscape; Rural Architecture and Small Town/ASSET project.

Reports were received from all 10 National Sections: Austria; Croatia; Germany; Hungary; Macedonia; Poland; Romania; Russia; Slovakia and the United Kingdom

This being a voting general assembly there was a formal release of the current International Committee from its obligations and the committee members were thanked for their work over the last 2 years (2006-2008). An election for a new International Committee to serve for the next two years (2008-2010) followed.

The following members were nominated by their National Sections to serve on the International Committee

- Arthur Spiegler (Austria)
- Tihana Stepina Fabijanic (Croatia)
- Angus Fowler (Germany)
- Gábor Rajnai (Hungary)
- Victoria Momeva-Altiparmakovska (Macedonia)
- Halina Łapińska (Poland)
- Magdalena Banu (Magdalena)
- Olga Sevan (Russia)
- Eva Kralova (Slovakia)
- Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

The following 8 members were also elected onto the new committee

- Ralf Bokermann (Germany)
- Olaf Linke (Germany)
- Andrea Weigert (Germany)
- Dezso Kovacs (Hungary)
- Călin Hoinărescu (Romania)
- Ľubica Pinčíková (Slovakia)
- Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)
- Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

This new Committee then elected the officers (The Bureau) to serve for the next 2 years

- Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic (Croatia) as the new President

There were three members to serve as Vice Presidents

- Ralf Bokermann (Germany)
- Ľubica Pinčíková (Slovakia)
- Phil Turner (United Kingdom)
- Secretary General - Pam Moore (United Kingdom) to continue as Secretary General
- Treasurer Olaf Linke (Germany) to become Treasurer

Honorary Auditors – Heinar Henckel and Rudiger Maul (both of Germany) re-elected for 2008-2010

## **Tour of the Town of Wittstock on 20 September 2008**

This tour of the town of Wittstock followed after the committee meeting, and looked at the historic buildings and architecture, the numerous churches and the town's brick walls.

### **ECOVAST AUSTRIA International Project on 'The Green Belt' started in Spring 2008**

The European Green Belt initiative has a long history. It is a grassroots movement for nature conservation and sustainable development along the corridor of the former Iron Curtain. The term refers to both an environmental initiative as well as the area it concerns. The initiative is carried out under the patronage of the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

The aim of the initiative is to create the backbone of an ecological network that runs from the Barents to the Black and Adriatic Seas. The European Green Belt as an area follows the route of the former Iron Curtain and connects National Parks, Nature Parks, Biosphere Reserves and trans-boundary protected areas as well as non-protected valuable habitats along or across the (former) borders.

ECOVAST Austria became an associated partner of the T.E.N. project (Trans European Network) which had the University of Dresden, Germany as the lead partner. The project they were involved with had a strong focus on the central part of the European Green Belt.

### **Event in OPATIJA, Croatia 'Days of Croatian Tourism' in OPATIJA, Croatia in October 2008**

Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic gave a presentation on the work of ECOVAST

### **Launch of the National Rural Network, LIMASSOL, Cyprus on 16-17 October 2008**

Phil Turner made a presentation 'Small Towns, Their Hinterland and Landscape'; Pam Moore also made a presentation 'The Aims and Interests of ECOVAST and the Project ASSET and Tihana Stepanic Fabijanic gave a presentation on ECOVAST work in Croatia.

### **La Rioja Small Town Conference held in LOGRONO, Rioja region, Spain on 27/28 October 2008**

A conference on small towns - Pam Moore & Phil Turner gave a Paper & Presentation on ECOVAST research

### **DENKMAL Trade Fair 2008 & EUREGIA held in LEIPZIG, Germany on 18-20 November 2008**

ECOVAST has a presence by ECOVAST Germany, at each of these biennial EUROPEAN Trade Fairs through an arrangement with EUROPA NOSTRA.

### **ECOVAST Newsletter 41 published December 2008 – edited by Pam Moore: included:**

- Reports from the following National Sections: Austria from Arthur Spiegler; Croatis from Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic; and the United Kingdom from Pam Moore ; the Secretary General had also had short reports from Germany; Hungary; Macedonia; Poland; Romania; Russia; and Slovakia.
- An article on the launch of the National Rural Network - part of an EC Rural Development Conference, Cyprus in October 2008

## **2009**

### **ECOVAST Poland / University of Bialystok Conference held in BIALYSTOK, Poland in January 2009**

This is another in a series of five conferences (and publications) called 'Europe-Regions-Tourism - 'Specificity of Regional Space' where ECOVAST Poland and Halina Łapińska were co-organisers.

### **ECOVAST ASSET Project: Second Opinion Survey of Rural Networks in Europe related to Small Towns**

This second survey was carried out, as a sequel to the first survey of 2006/7, because the economic recession had continued and ECOVAST wanted to seek further opinions across Europe on the continuing impact of the recession on small towns. New questionnaires were sent out to 18 of the countries that had responded to the 2006/7 survey; and 14 of these responded, including 13 within and 1 outside the European Union). The answers referred to loss of jobs; loss of retail; noticeable impact in tourism and heritage; pressure on hinterlands; adverse effect on landscapes; problems with housing repossessions and what kind of help they were getting from national and regional governments.

The survey was carried out by Pam Moore (United Kingdom and the results were finally published by ECOVAST in 'The Evidence Base' document in February 2015.

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in Hotel Karolinenhof, VIENNA, Austria on 14 February 2009**

Present at the meeting, hosted by Franz Nahrada of ECOVAST Austria, were 10 ECOVAST members from 5 countries (Austria, Croatia, Germany, Russia and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia)

Vice President – Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Secretary General – Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

International Committee Members – Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Angus Fowler (Germany); Valerie Carter (UK)

Other ECOVAST Members that attended included: Gerhard Fasching, Franz Nahrada (Austria); and Andrius Kulikauskas (Russia)

Apologies were received from: Ralf Bokermann, Olaf Linke, Andrea Weigert (Germany); Dezső Kovács, Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Victoria Momeva-Altiparmakovska (Macedonia); Magdalena Banu, Călin Hoinărescu (Romania) and Olga Sevan (Russia)

The death was announced of Dick Oram of the United Kingdom in December 2008. He was a leading expert on historic buildings in Northern Ireland, and a keen member of ECOVAST.

The Minutes of the International Committee held in Wittstock, Germany on 19 September 2008 were agreed.

There were reports received from the following Working Groups ASSET/Small Towns

There were reports received from the following National Sections: Austria; Croatia; Germany; Russia; United Kingdom.

#### **Conference 'Heritage Care through Active Citizenship' held in MECHELEN, Belgium on 23 March 2009**

Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić made a presentation on 'Restoring Traditional Buildings in Croatia; Phil Turner made a presentation 'Citizen Engagement in Heritage and the Future for Small Towns and Landscapes; Angus Fowler spoke on Transnational Networks and Pam Moore made a presentation 'The Role of Volunteers in the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage in Europe.

#### **ECOVAST Newsletter 42 published April 2009 – edited by Pam Moore: included:**

- Obituary for Richard Oram of Northern Ireland, United Kingdom
- Reports from the following National Sections: Austria; Croatia; Germany; Russia and the United Kingdom
- An article on the Innsbruck Panorama building which is threatened with demolition and where Angus Fowler and the Austrian Section are trying to save it.
- An article on Small Towns in Rural regions of Germany by Ralf Bokermann
- A report on the Heritage Care through Active Citizenship held in Mechelen, Belgium on 23-24 March 2009
- A short update on PREPARE and CURE by Michael Dower

#### **ECOVAST Austria Fourth Small Town Symposium held in GRIESKIRCHEN, Austria on 22-24 April 2009**

Gerhard Fisher made a presentation on the Austrian survey of historic towns and its findings so far. Phil Turner made a presentation on the ECOVAST ASSET Project

#### **ECOVAST Landscape Workshop with schools held in Spring 2009**

A workshop was held to understand and identify different landscapes, using the ECOVAST Landscape Guide. It involved two schools in Austria and two schools in the Czech Republic and was organised by ECOVAST Austria and run by Arthur Spiegler.

#### **EUROPA NOSTRA Annual Conference held in TAORMINA, Sicily, Italy' on 4 June 2009**

The theme of the conference was small towns. Pam Moore made a presentation on the ASSET project.

#### **International Conference 'Agriculture and Enlargement' held in ZAGREB, Croatia on 12-13 June 2009**

Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić and Michael Dower prepared a paper 'ECOVAST views on CAP reform' which was sent to EU Agriculture Commissioner Mariann Fischer Boel

#### **Sixth PREPARE Gathering held in PTUJ, Slovenia and STUBICKE TOPLICE in Croatia on 2– 4 July 2009**

The event, focused on 'Rural Economic Recovery and EU Enlargement in South-Eastern Europe', involved two conferences, one in Ptuj, Slovenia, on Thursday, July 2 and the other in Stubicke Toplice in Croatia on 3-4 July 2009. It attracted an impressive number of participants from 17 European countries (including Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić ECOVAST President). Present also were representatives of DG Agri, European Commission (DG Agri): the governments of Slovenia and Croatia, mainly from the Ministries of Agriculture as well as those from the regions and municipalities involved. In Ptuj the main topics discussed at conferences were 'Actions and measures undertaken by the EU and member state governments on economic recovery' and in Stubicke Toplice were 'How to support involvement of civil society in the new member states, accession countries and new

#### **ECOVAST International Committee held in the Hotel Kristal, OPATIJA, Croatia on 12 July 2009**

Present at the meeting, hosted by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić, were 6 ECOVAST members from 3 countries (Austria, Croatia and the United Kingdom) and included:

President – Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia)

Vice President – Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Secretary General – Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

Other International Committee Members –Arthur Spiegler (Austria)

Other ECOVAST Members that attended included: Valerija Keleman Pepeonik (Croatia)

Apologies were received from: Ralf Bokermann, Angus Fowler, Olaf Linke, Andrea Weigert (Germany); Dezső Kovács, Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Victoria Momeva-Altiparmakovska (Macedonia); Magdalena Banu, Călin Hoinărescu (Romania) and Olga Sevan (Russia); Ľubica Pinčíková (Slovakia)

The Minutes of the International Committee held in Vienna, Austria on 14 February 2009 were agreed.

Reports were also received from two Working Groups; Landscape and Small Towns/ ASSET project.

Reports were received from the National Sections of Austria; Croatia; Germany; Russia; Slovakia, and the United Kingdom

**ECOVAST Newsletter 43 published August 2009 – edited Pam Moore:** included:

- Reports from National Sections of: Austria; Croatia; Germany; Romania; Russia; Slovakia & the United Kingdom
- A report on the Symposium held in Grieskirchen, Austria on 23 April 2009 by Phil Turner (United Kingdom)
- An article 'Can Small Towns be more Sustainable than Larger Cities' by Kate Webster of the Royal Town Planning Institute (United Kingdom)
- A short up date on CURE; SURE and PREPARE by Michael Dower
- An article on a Seminar on Urban Rural Linkages held in Brussels on 2 July 2009
- An article on the European Commission Conference on Agriculture and Enlargement held in Zagreb in June 2009 by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia)

**EUROPA NOSTRA UK Event 'The Cultural Diversity of Europe' held in BELFAST, Northern Ireland, United Kingdom in September 2009**

The conference held in Queens University discussed 'Cultural Landscape and Cultural Identity'. Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia) made a presentation 'Developing Community values which discussed the restoration of traditional buildings in Croatia; John Sell (United Kingdom) spoke on the Cultural Diversity of Europe'; and Michael Dower and Pam Moore (United Kingdom) also took part,

**First Irish Rural Studies Symposium held in GALWAY, Ireland on 1 September 2009**

Pam Moore gave a paper and made a presentation 'Small Historic Towns of Europe in the Economic crisis.

**ECOVAST events held in MOSENICE and LOVRAN, Croatia 22-24 October 2009**

The 3 day event consisted of a conference, a tour, an international committee and the annual assembly.

**ECOVAST International Conference on small towns held in MOSENICE, Croatia on 22 October 2009**

The event - a Croatian information gathering event on small towns – was staged in the very small old historic hill top town of Mosenice and was hosted by ECOVAST Croatia.

A presentation 'Revitalisation of Historical Small Towns and their Hinterlands' was given by Pam Moore, followed by one with Valerija Kelemen Pepeonik (Croatia) on the ASSET Questionnaires and Analyses.

**Tour associated with the Mosenice conference 22 October 2009**

The delegates were taken on a walking tour around the very small historic town.

**ECOVAST International Committee held in Galerija Laurus, LOVRAN, Croatia in 22 October 2009**

The meeting was held in the evening, after the conference. Those ECOVAST members attending this meeting or apologising are listed in the General Assembly below.

The Minutes of the International Committee held in Opatija, Croatia on 12 July 2009 were agreed.

**ECOVAST Small Town tour associated with the MOSENICE conference on 23 October 2009**

The tour included visits to several small towns including Mosenice itself and Lovran, Kaslav and Volosko.

**ECOVAST General Assembly held in Galerija Laurus, LOVRAN, Croatia on 24 October 2009**

The meeting marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of ECOVAST and was hosted by ECOVAST Croatia. Present at this Assembly were 20 ECOVAST members from 5 countries (Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia)

Vice President – Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Secretary General – Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

Treasurer – Olaf Linke (Germany)

Other International Committee Members – Dezső Kovács (Hungary); Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)

Other ECOVAST Members that attended included: Brigitte Macaria (Austria); Valerija Kelemen Pepeonik; Davor Salopek (Croatia); David Baker; Jane Kearley; Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom) and Christian Hoerbinger

Honorary Auditors: Heinar Henckel; Rudiger Maul (Germany)

Guests included: Nada Bakula; Ivan Jurij; Judit Selyem-Totu; Branka Sirinic

Apologies were received from: Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Angus Fowler, Andrea Weigert (Germany); Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Nunos Santos Pinheiro (Portugal); Magdalena Banu (Romania); Olga Sevan (Russia); Michael Dower, David Green, Crispin Moor, John Sell and Jane Wade (United Kingdom)

The meeting received with sorrow the news of the deaths in 2009 of three ECOVAST members - Francis Noel-Baker, Founder President of ECOVAST; Norbert Burda of ECOVAST Austria; and Dick Oram, ECOVAST United Kingdom member from Northern Ireland. Tributes were paid to their work.

The Minutes of the General Assembly held in Wittstock, Germany on 20 September 2008 were agreed.

There were reports received from the following National Sections: Austria; Croatia; Germany; Hungary; Romania; Russia; Slovakia, United Kingdom

There were reports received from the following Working Groups; Landscape; Rural Architecture; and ASSET  
Rudiger Maul and Heinar Henckel (both of Germany) were confirmed as Honorary Auditors for 2010.

#### **Conference ‘Placing Together the Towns Jigsaw’ held in GLASGOW, Scotland, on 29 October 2009**

Phil Turner made a presentation ‘A European Perspective on Whole Town Strategies’

#### **European Union DG Regio Urban Rural Seminar held in BRUSSELS, Belgium in October 2009**

The event was to discuss cohesion policy support on rural development. The event included both DG Regio and DG Agri and OECD. It looked at the different approaches used in urban and rural areas - the current ERDF Programmes, the CAP Second Pillar approach and the bottom up action groups of LEADER and discussed how things could work in the future by integrating the programmes.

#### **SURE Seminar held near GOTHENBURG, Sweden in November 2009**

The Project ‘Sustainable Rural Europe’ under the EU Programme Europe for Citizens held a meeting in Sweden, hosted by ‘All Sweden Shall Live’ to explore how citizens through their civil organisations may look at how practical action and policy change can be used for the links between urban and rural areas. The project partners include the Austrian Institute for Regional Studies and the Polish Rural Forum as well as the host partner from Sweden. The Seminar was facilitated by Micheal Dower and attended by Pam Moore and Phil Turner all from the ECOVAST United Kingdom and attracted delegates from Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and France and Belgium. The outputs from this event will be discussed in a conference to be held in 2010 in Krakow, Poland.

#### **CIVILSCAPE Conference held in FLORENCE, Italy on 27 November 2009**

Tihana Stepanic Fabijanić made a presentation on the Biokovo Makarska Landscape Identification and Evaluation project launch in Croatia in 2008

#### **ECOVAST Austria ‘The Small Town Register of Austria’ is finalised and published 2009**

ECOVAST Austria was so concerned about the impact of changes on its smaller towns that it started a series of international conferences to debate the problems, look for potential solutions and raise wide awareness across Europe of the importance of small towns. The first symposium was held in Murau in 1998; the second in Waidhofen an der Ybbs in 2002; and the third in Retz in 2005 (events organised by Arthur Spiegler). The third symposium, held in Retz led to small towns being a key topic for ECOVAST International, and the launch of the major ASSET project (Action to Strengthen Small European Towns) to develop a policy for small towns which could influence European policy makers and carry research to support any such policy. The project was carried out over a 10 years period, 2006 to 2016, by an international team led by Phil Turner of the United Kingdom. A fourth symposium was at Grieskirchen in 2009.

ECOVAST Austria recognised that both small towns and market towns are important places in rural regions. They set out to prepare a register of all these towns in Austria which have played and will continue to play a significant role for the wellbeing of rural regions and which fulfil an important task as local and regional centres of regions and the country. The Austrian General Assembly in December 2005 agreed to this work which would not only provide much-needed data for Austria but would be the Austrian contribution to ECOVAST’s international ASSET project and hopefully encourage other countries to do something similar. The study not only identified the number of small towns and market towns but recorded their assets which make them function as service centre for their local rural region, including being a centre for schooling, health and local justice and administration. Small towns are defined in Austria as those having an upper limit of 50,000 population (*reflected in the ECOVAST policy document on small towns eventually published in 2014 which includes a population band 30,000-50,000 population*). The Austrian work was led by Arthur Spiegler (Austria) and the detailed research carried out by Gerhard Fasching and Sylvia Mayer (ECOVAST Austria). The work contributed to the ECOVAST Position Paper published in September 2013 and later publications.

#### **ECOVAST Newsletter 44 published December 2009 – edited by Pam Moore: included:**

- Obituaries for Francis Noel-Baker from the United Kingdom; and Norbert Burda of ECOVAST Austria

- Reports from the following National Sections: Austria from Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler; Croatia from Tihana Stepina Fabijanić; Germany from Ralf Bokermann and Olaf Linke; Hungary from Dezső Kovács, Russia from Olga Sevan; and the United Kingdom from Pam Moore
- A report on the EUROPA NOSTRA UK Event in Northern Ireland 5-8 September by Pam Moore (UK)
- A report on the EC DG Regio Urban Rural Seminar October 2009 by Phil Turner (United Kingdom)
- Report on SURE meeting held in Gothenburg, Sweden in November by Phil Turner (United Kingdom)
- An article on 'The Role and Current Situation of Agriculture by Ralf Bokermann (Germany)

## **2010**

*The Cancun Agreements (part of an update of the Kyoto Protocol) stated that future global warming should be limited to below 2.0C (3.6F) relative to the pre-industrial level.*

### **ECOVAST International Committee meeting held in VIENNA, Austria on 24 January 2010**

Present at the meeting, in Hotel Karolinenhof, hosted by Franz Nahrada (Austria), were 12 ECOVAST members from 5 countries (Austria, Hungary, Slovakia and the United Kingdom) including:

Vice Presidents– Ľubica Pinčíková (Slovakia); Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Secretary General – Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

Other International Committee Members – Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Eva Kralova (Slovakia); Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)

Other ECOVAST Members included: Franz Nahrada; Brigitte Macaria (Austria); Alena Kristianova; Maria Hannin Strakova (Slovakia). Angus Fowler (Germany) took part by telephone.

Apologies were received from: Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia); Ralf Bokermann, Angus Fowler, Olaf Linke (Germany); Dezső Kovács Kovacs (Hungary); and Olga Sevan (Russia)

The Minutes of the International Committee held in Lovran, Croatia on 22 October 2009 were agreed.

EUROGITES became a member of ECOVAST and ECOVAST became a member of EUROGITES .

There were reports received from the following Working Groups; Landscape by Arthur Spiegler (Austria); and ASSET/Small Towns from Phil Turner.

There were reports received from the following National Sections: Austria from Arthur Spiegler and Brigitte Macaria; Croatia from Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić; Germany from Angus Fowler; Hungary from Gábor Rajnai; Russia from Olga Sevan; Slovakia from Eva Kralova and Ľubica Pinčíková and United Kingdom from Pam Moore.

### **Agricultural Rural Convention (ARC) – a debate was launched in BRUSSELS, Belgium in April 2010**

ARC was created as a platform to enable concerned citizens and their organizations to work together and offer ideas to the European Commission's CAP Reform. Michael Dower was one of the convenors of this debate and Phil Turner led a working group on heritage.

### **ECOVAST ASSET Project: Economic Survey of 160 Individual Small Towns in East England 2010**

Study of their Economic Assets carried out by Valerie Carter on behalf of South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) and ECOVAST United Kingdom. The results were finally published in February 2015.

### **ECOVAST ASSET Project: The research on all small towns in Europe – completed in 2010**

Research on the sizes and potential importance and how many there are and how many people live in them - carried out by Valerie Carter and the results published in 'The Evidence Base' document in February 2015. It reported on populations of all towns in Europe sorted into in size bands – the 2 bands which are most relevant to ECOVAST being 10,000-30,000 and 30,000-50,000.

### **SURE Conference held in KRAKOW, Poland on 20-21 May 2010**

The Sustainable Urban and Rural Europe Conference used the wide expertise of participants, and discussed good practice from around Europe, proposed how good practice may be mainstreamed, and showed what this implies for changes in the policy context. Michael Dower (of ECOVAST UK and PREPARE) played a major.

A formal declaration called the 'Krakow Declaration' on A Sustainable Future for Europe was produced. The resulting made a timely contribution to the worldwide effort to build on the discussions at the World Conference of Climate Change held last December in Copenhagen. This also fed into the mid-term review of current EU policies and the political debate on the future EU programmes from 2013 onwards.

### **Croatian Tourism Conference held on the Island of LOSINJ in May 2010**

Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić gave a presentation on the work of ECOVAST International and ECOVAST Croatia.

**ECOVAST Newsletter 45 published May 2010 – edited by Pam Moore:** included:

- Reports from the following National Sections: Austria from Brigitte Macaria; Croatia from Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić; Germany; Hungary from Gabor Rajnai; Russia from Olga Sevan; Slovakia from Eva Kralova and United Kingdom from Pam Moore
- An article on Aspects of BioEnergy in Europe by Ralf Bokermann
- An article on the Future of European Agricultural Policy (CAP) by Phil Turner (United Kingdom)
- An update on PREPARE and SURE by Michael Dower (United Kingdom)
- An article on the CENTROPE Project by Arthur Spiegler and Brigitte Macaria

**ECOVAST International Committee in the Town Hall, WITTSTOCK, Germany on 20 June 2010**

Present at the meeting, which was held in the Rathaus, in the centre of Wittstock, hosted by Angus Fowler and ECOVAST Germany, were 7 ECOVAST members from 3 countries (Croatia, Germany and the United Kingdom) including:

President: Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia)

Vice Presidents – Ralf Bokermann (Germany); Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Secretary General – Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

Treasurer: Olaf Linke (Germany)

Other International Committee Members – Angus Fowler (Germany); Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)

Apologies were received from Brigitte Macaria, Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Andrea Weigert (Germany); Dezso Kovacs (Hungary), Magdalena Banu, Călin Hoinărescu (Romania) and Ľubica Pinčíková (Slovakia)

The Minutes of the International Committee held in Vienna, Austria on 24 January 2010 were agreed.

There were reports received from the following Working Group; ASSET/Small Towns

There were reports received from the following National Sections: Austria; Croatia; Germany; Romania; Russia; United Kingdom

It was agreed that ECOVAST needed to get involved with the Danube Strategy and that Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić be the ECOVAST representative.

**Council of Europe International NGO Group held in STRASBOURG, France on 21-24 June 2010**

This summer session was attended by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić and Majda Rubić (Croatia)

**Conference ‘Voluntary Organisations Active in Heritage’ held in MECHELEN, Belgium on 6/7 July 2010**

This was the second conference on rural civil society organisations in the field of heritage following the first event in 2009. Phil Turner and Moore facilitated a workshop

**First ARC Conference held in BRUSSELS, Belgium July 2010**

The Agriculture and Rural Convention had been set up in April to influence European Policy on agriculture and rural development prior to the Commission announcing legislative proposals in October 2010 - was led by Forum Synergies and ECOVAST. This was the first conference to discuss the results of a major consultation.

**Conference on Living Landscapes held in BRUSSELS, Belgium 19-20 July 2010**

ECOVAST prepared a policy statement on Cultural heritage and their role in Living Landscapes. Michael Dower made a direct plea for landscapes to be treated as a major policy issues and for small towns to be given full recognition as focal points of in the social, cultural and economic life in rural areas.

**ECOVAST / QUALIST Project started in Summer 2010**

Eleven partners in Germany, led by Saxony, Austria and the Czech Republic and including ECOVAST Germany, developed a project to improve on the quality of life in small towns. The final conference in November 2013 is reported later.

**ECOVAST Newsletter 46 published August 2010 – edited by Pam Moore:** included:

- Reports from the following National Sections; Austria from Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler; Croatia from Valerija Kelemen Pepeonik; and United Kingdom from Pam Moore
- Reports on SURE and CAP post 2013 from Michael Dower
- A report on PREPARE from Pam Moore
- A report from the session of INGO's in Strasbourg by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić and Majda Rubić (Croatia)

**Seventh PREPARE Gathering held in OHRID, Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) on 30 August-3 September 2010**

Present at the event were 100 participants from 20 European countries, including Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia) who represented ECOVAST. There were discussions on two main topics – Networking in Rural Areas and Common Agriculture Policy Reform after 2013, and new interesting ideas were generated, new



friends and partnerships were formed and everyone in attendance gained new knowledge on sustainable development of rural areas.

**International Conference 'Culture and Wood – Wood in Culture' held in the small town of ROSTOV VELIKIJ in Yaroslav region, Russia on 20 September 2010**

This event was co-sponsored by ICOMOS; the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation and ECOVAST Russia

**Second Irish Rural Studies Symposium held in CORK, Ireland on 25 September 2010**

A presentation 'Rural Heritage and European Diversity' was made by Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

**Romania 'Landscape – Urbanism – Tourism Conference held in PLOESTI, Romania on 1 October 2010**

Organised by the European Association for Implementation of the European Landscape Convention in association with ECOVAST Romania

**ECOVAST Events on the Isle of Wight, United Kingdom 14-17 October 2010**

The ECOVAST event on the Isle of Wight involved a conference and tour as well as committee meetings.

**ECOVAST International Committee held in SHANKLIN, Isle of Wight, on 14 October 2010**

Those members who attended the events on the Isle of Wight or sent in their apologies are listed in the notes on the Biennial Assembly below (though only 8 members attended the evening International committee meeting in the Shanklin Conservative Club).

The Minutes of the International Committee held in Wittstock, Germany on 20 June 2010 were agreed.

The meeting was to confirm the details of the tour on the following day and the conference on rural development and the approval of the agenda for the Biennial Assembly

**ECOVAST International Conference on 'Challenges of Effective Rural Development and Heritage - held in VENTNOR, Isle of Wight, England, United Kingdom on 15 October 2010**

The ECOVAST conference, held in the Ventnor Botanic Gardens, was attended by more than 40 people. The keynote speech was from Stuart Burgess of the Rural Community Council of England; followed by from the LEADER organisation on the island; and the Country Landowners Association. Valerie Carter described the work of the South East England regional development agency (SEEDA) and the grants awarded to the Island.

The afternoon session was opened by Valerie Carter who made a presentation on the 'Work of the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) and grant support on the Isle of Wight; followed by a case study on Croatia from Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić and Michael Dower who made a presentation addressed the issues facing the European Union in formulating policy for the period for the period after 2013. The final session was devoted to workshops on 'Delivering Integration in Rural Development Programmes' and Specific Problems faced by Islands).

**ECOVAST Tour associated with the Isle of Wight event, England, United Kingdom on 16 October 2010**

The tour took the delegates across the island visiting a variety of projects – including Newport Farmers Market; Briddlesford Farm where a redundant building had been converted into an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) office; followed by a traditional English Roast dinner. After lunch we paid a visit to a Watermill (now a museum); and finally to the village of Chale to meet the local villagers who had developed their own Village Design Statement.

**ECOVAST Biennial Assembly held in VENTNOR, Isle of Wight, England on 17 October 2010**

Present at the meeting, hosted by ECOVAST UK and arranged by Pam Moore, were 20 ECOVAST members from 4 countries (Austria, Croatia, Germany and the United Kingdom) including:

President: Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia)

Vice Presidents: Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Secretary General: Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

International Committee Members: Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Ralf Bokermann, Angus Fowler; Andrea Weigert (Germany); Valerie Carter (United Kingdom).

Other ECOVAST Members – Biserka Dumbovic; Valerija Kelemen Pepeonik; Majda Rubic (Croatia); Irmelin Küttner; Peter Thran (Germany); Mike Breakell; Michael Dower; David Green; Edmund Neville-Rolfe, Rosalind Rutt; John Sell; Jane Wade (United Kingdom)

Honorary Auditor- Rudiger Maul (Germany)

Guest – Stuart Burgess of the Rural Community Council for England

Apologies were received from: Heinar Henckel, Ivar Henckel, Olaf Linke (Germany); Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Victoria Momeva Altiparmakovska (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia); Halina Łapińska (Poland); Nunos

Santos Pinheiro, (Portugal); Magdalena Banu, Călin Hoinărescu (Romania) and Olga Sevan (Russia); Ľubica Pinčíková (Slovakia) and David Baker, Crispin Moor, Trevor Kearley, John Sell, Jane Wade (United Kingdom)

The death was Announced of Olga Urikova of ECOVAST Russia in September 2010

The Minutes of the General Assembly held in Lovran, Croatia on 25 October 2009 were agreed.

There were reports received from the following National Sections: Austria; Croatia; Germany; Hungary; Macedonia; Romania; Russia; United Kingdom

There were reports received from the following Working Group; Landscape; Rural Architecture; ASSET

This being a voting general assembly there was a formal release of the current International Committee from its obligations and the committee members were thanked for their work over the last 2 years (2008-2010). An election for a new International Committee to serve for the next two years (2010-2012) followed, and the following members were nominated from the National Sections to serve on the International Committee:

- Arthur Spiegler (Austria)
- Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia)
- Angus Fowler (Germany)
- Gábor Rajnai (Hungary)
- Victoria Momeva-Altiparmakovska (FYROM Macedonia)
- Halina Łapińska (Poland)
- Magdalena Banu (Romania)
- Olga Sevan (Russia)
- Eva Kralova (Slovakia)
- Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

The following 6 members were also elected onto the new committee

- Ralf Bokermann (Germany)
- Andrea Weigert (Germany)
- Călin Hoinărescu (Romania)
- Ľubica Pinčíková (Slovakia)
- Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)
- Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

This new Committee then elected the officers (The Bureau) to serve for the next 2 years 2010-2012:

- Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) as the new President

Two members to serve as Vice Presidents

- Arthur Spiegler (Austria)
- Tihana Stepanic Fabijanić (Croatia)
- Pam Moore (United Kingdom) to continue as Secretary General
- Andrea Weigert (Germany) as Treasurer

Honorary Auditors – Rudiger Maul and Irmelin Küttner (both of Germany) elected for the period 2010-2012

### **Market Town Convention held in CHIPPENHAM, Wiltshire, England, on 12 October 2010**

This England-wide organisation was set up to support market towns in England. It staged an annual convention every year to discuss current issues.

ECOVAST was invited to attend as they were particularly interested on what was going on in Europe. Valerie Carter (the new President from the United Kingdom) made a presentation on 'ECOVAST's European Work on Small Towns'

### **DENKMAL Trade Fair 2010 and EUREGIA event held in LEIPZIG, Germany on 18-20 November 2010**

ECOVAST has a presence at each of these leading biennial EUROPEAN Trade Fairs through an arrangement with EUROPA NOSTRA. The international presence of ECOVAST is organised and attended by ECOVAST Germany. In 2010 ECOVAST organised a seminar on Timber Framed churches held at the Denkmal Trade Fair.

### **CIVILSCAPE Board Meeting held in Hotel Ibis, ANTWERP, Flanders, Belgium on 12 December 2010**

Valerie Carter gave short report on the work of ECOVAST

### **ECOVAST ASSET Conference on Small Towns held at the University of Applied Sciences, in POTSDAM, Brandenburg, Germany on 16 November 2010**

This was a major event to discuss all the considerable work carried out under the ECOVAST ASSET project

- Phil Turner introduced the conference and gave an overview of the programmes of work on small towns in Germany, Croatia and the United Kingdom. There were several presentations by ECOVAST members:

- There were poster displays by ECOVAST Croatia; ECOVAST Germany and ECOVAST United Kingdom
- Valerie Carter made a presentation 'Study of Smaller Towns – their size and potential importance in Europe' which is the result of her research of how many people across Europe live in small towns
- Andrea Weigert made a presentation on her work in Schleswig Holstein
- Gerhard Fischer of ECOVAST Austria reported on his research with Silvia Mayer which led to the creation of the Register of Small Towns in Austria
- Pam Moore made a presentation of her 2 Opinion Surveys carried out across Europe on small towns
- Ralf Bokermann described his published study of small towns (less than 7000 population) in Germany
- Arthur Spiegler gave a presentation on 'The Characteristics of Historic Towns in Austria'
- Phil Turner discussed the topic of urban and rural integration and cooperation
- Jorg Gehrmann – Mayor of Wittstock – spoke about the German National Programme for Small and Medium-sized Towns in Germany
- Kathleen Bierbass of the Working Group 'Towns with Historic Centres in the State of Brandenburg' spoke about the quality of development in small towns in Brandenburg
- Irmelin Küttner of ECOVAST Germany described her recent visit to a Baltic coastal town which had had some successful investment

Copies of all the presentations and the research were given to the University

## **2011**

**ECOVAST Newsletter 47 published January 2011 – edited by Pam Moore:** included:

- Reports from the following National Sections: Austria from Brigitte Macaria & Arthur Spiegler; Croatia from Tihana Stepanic Fabijanić; Germany from Angus Fowler; Macedonia (FYROM) from Victoria Momeva Altiparmakovska; Romania from Magdalena Banu; Russia from Olga Sevan and the United Kingdom from Pam Moore
- An introductory Article on the Albanian Association of Communes
- A report on the Biennial Assembly held on the Isle of Wight, United Kingdom by Pam Moore
- A report on the Small Towns Seminar held in Potsdam by Phil Turner (United Kingdom)
- An article on Rural Vitality at a Seminar in Brussels in December 2010 by Phil Turner (United Kingdom)
- A short report on CAP post 2013 and ARC by Michael Dower
- An update on PREPARE by Pam Moore (United Kingdom)
- A note on the Global Bee Emergency by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia)

### **English Heritage produced a new policy document "Knowing Your Place" in March 2011**

English Heritage, together with Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) produced a document about 'Knowing Your Place: Heritage and Community-Led Planning in the Countryside' to help rural communities that are producing, reviewing or updating their plans.

The ECOVAST logo has been included on this new document (following a consultation process with Forum Synergies). Phil Turner (United Kingdom) produced a report for ECOVAST about the importance of 'Community-Led Plans – which are grass-roots initiatives by local people who want to get involved with planning for the future of their village, parish or neighbourhood. They produce a common vision of how their community should look or develop in the future and working together to achieve this through the planning system and other means'. Community-Led Plans originated in rural areas through Village Appraisals, Village Design Statements and Parish Plans. Similar initiatives were then developed in urban areas through town and neighbourhood plans and design statements and market town health-checks.

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in BECKERICH village, Luxembourg on 19 March 2011**

Present at the meeting, held in the old mill, hosted by Arno Frising (ECOVAST Luxembourg), were 6 ECOVAST members from 4 countries (Croatia, Germany, Luxembourg and United Kingdom) and included:

President: Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)

Vice President: Tihana Stepanic Fabijanić (Croatia)

Secretary General - Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

Treasurer Andrea Weigert (Germany)

International Committee Members – Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Guests from ECOVAST Luxembourg

Apologies were received from: Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Ralf Bokermann, Angus Fowler (Germany); Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Olga Sevan (Russia); and Lubica Pincikova (Slovakia)

The Minutes of the International Committee held on the Isle of Wight, England on 14 October 2010 were agreed.

A report was received from the Working Group - ASSET/Small Towns

Reports were received from the following National Sections in Austria; Croatia; Germany; Russia; and the United Kingdom

Valerie Carter made a presentation 'ECOVAST and what we are doing in Europe'. Afterwards those present were taken on a **tour** of the mill and the energy saving projects in the village of Beckerich were explained.

### **ECOVAST tour of local energy projects around Beckerich village, Luxembourg 19 March 2011**

The tour followed the meeting and visited local energy projects in the local area, including of photo voltaics in Beckerich village and biogas production on nearby farms. We then looked at villages in the area and visited the small town of Mersch.

### **EUROPA NOSTRA European Heritage Congress held in AMSTERDAM, Netherlands in 8-11 June 2011**

Some 25 European and International networks and organisations – including ECOVAST – came together and launched a new group called the European Heritage Alliance 3.3. ECOVAST took part in the Congress.

### **The European Heritage Alliance 3.3 Network June 2011**

The European Heritage Alliance 3.3 is an informal European network of organisations active in the field of cultural heritage. It was launched at the European Heritage Congress 2011 organised by EUROPA NOSTRA (see above). The networks agreed to work more closely together to promote the untapped potential of Europe's heritage, cultural and natural, immovable and movable. The Alliance founding members bring together Europe's civil society organisations, historic cities and villages, museums, heritage professionals and volunteers, (private) owners of collections of artefacts, historic buildings and cultural landscapes, educators, town planners.

The Alliance therefore represents a very large constituency composed of tens of millions of Europe's citizens. Europa Nostra is acting as facilitator of the Alliance and is part of their network project 'Sharing Heritage – Sharing Values' funded by the EU Creative Europe Programme which runs from 2014 to 2020. The reference to 3.3 refers to the Article 3.3. of the EU Lisbon Treaty which stipulates that "The Union shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity, and shall ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced." ECOVAST became a member in 2011. Phil Turner (United Kingdom) represented ECOVAST from 2011 until 2016; followed by Angus Fowler (Germany) from 2016 until the end of 2017; followed by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) from 2018.

### **ECOVAST Newsletter 48 published June 2011 – edited by Pam Moore:** included:

- Reports from the following National Sections: Austria from Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler; Croatia from Tihana Stepanic Fabijanić; Germany from Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) who visited the German Section in May; Macedonia from Victoria Momeva Altiparmakovska; Romania from Magdalena Banu; Russia from Olga Sevan and the United Kingdom from Pam Moore
- An article on Economic Structures and Regional Use of Wind Energy by Ralf Bokermann (Germany)
- An update on PREPARE by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)
- An article on ARC 2020 and The Common Agricultural Policy by Michael Dower (United Kingdom)
- A short report on ERCA by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)
- Report on DG Agri Rural Development Advisory Group in May 2011 by Pam Moore and Phil Turner (UK)

### **Danube Strategy Forum held in EISENSTADT, Austria on 30 June 1 July 2011**

This was the Inaugural Assembly of the Danube Strategy Group. Tihana Stepanic Fabijanic, who represent ECOVAST on this European network made a presentation to the meeting. She was appointed Chairperson of the Working Group 1 Connecting the Danube Region (Transport and Mobility, Culture and Tourism, Sustainable Energy), and became a member of the Executive Committee.

### **Second ARC Conference held in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 13 July 2011**

Agriculture and Rural Convention (ARC) was set up to influence European Policy on Agriculture and rural development prior to the Commission announcing legislative proposals in October 2010. The conference was held exactly one year on from the original conference in July 2010. Michael Dower (United Kingdom) represented ECOVAST on the platform panel.

### **ECOVAST Newsletter 49 published September 2011 – edited by Pam Moore:** included:

- An obituary for Charles Christians of Belgium ECOVAST by Michael Dower
- Reports from the following National Sections: Austria by Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler; Croatia from Pam Moore on behalf of Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić; Macedonia from Victoria Momeva Altiparmakovska; United Kingdom by Pam Moore;
- An article on the German Federal Association for Regional Initiatives by Ralf Bokermann
- An article on the Second ARC Conference by Michael Dower

### **ECOVAST events held in VIENNA, Austria on 19-24 October 2011**

This set of events held over 6 days included a major Symposium on Water supply to which ECOVAST members were invited, followed by the ECOVAST General Assembly and then a tour of the local area.

### **Symposium on 'Historic Water Supply in Vienna' held in VIENNA, Austria on 19-22 October 2011**

This event was held before ECOVAST General Assembly and many members attended this conference.

### **ECOVAST General Assembly held in Hotel Karolinenhof in VIENNA, Austria on 23 October 2011**

Present at the meeting, hosted by Franz Nahrada of ECOVAST Austria, were 15 ECOVAST members from 6 countries (Austria, Germany, Italy, Russia, Slovakia and the United Kingdom) including:

President: Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)

Vice President: Arthur Spiegler (Austria)

Secretary General - Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

Treasurer Andrea Weigert (Germany)

International Committee – Ralf Bokermann; Angus Fowler (Germany); Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Auditors: Irmelin Kuttner; Rudiger Maul (Germany)

Other ECOVAST Members: Brigitte Macaria; Franz Nahrada (Austria); Enrico Capo (Italy); Alexandru Calcatinge (Romanian member of ECOVAST Austria); Vladimir Krogus (Russia) and Maria Nadova (Slovakia)

Guest: Giulia Cerri from Italy accompanying Enrico Capo

Apologies were received from: Valerija Kelemen Pepeonik (Croatia); Andrea Weigert (Germany); Dezső Kovács (Hungary); Victoria Momeva Altiparmakovska (Macedonia); Magdalena Banu (Romania); Olga Sevan (Russia); Ľubica Pinčíková (Slovakia); and David Baker, Michael Dower, Jane Kearley, Trevor Kearley, Crispin Moor, John Sell, Jane Wade (United Kingdom)

New auditors were elected for the coming year (2011-2012) Rudiger Maul and Angus Fowler (Germany)

The death of Jean Chanel (Germany) was announced. He was a founder member of ECOVAST

The Minutes of the Biennial Assembly held in Ventnor on the Isle of Wight, England on 17 October were agreed.

Reports were also received from the Working Groups on Rural Architecture and small towns.

Reports were received from the National Sections of Austria; Croatia; Germany; Hungary; Russia; Slovakia; and the United Kingdom

Vladimir Krogus of ECOVAST Russia and ICOMOS Russia presented his paper 'The Full Systemised Inventory of World Heritage Cities'.

Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic reported on the Inaugural Assembly of the Danube Civil Society Forum held in Eisenstadt, Austria.

### **ECOVAST tour associated with assembly meeting in Vienna, Austria on 24 October 2011**

As part of the event there was a tour to visit the Danube River; the Vienna Woods and the small town of Orth.

### **Publication of 'The Village' by Gerhard Henkel**

This publication is about country life in Germany. Gerhard Henkel was a founder member of ECOVAST

### **ECOVAST Croatia Small Towns Conference 'Models for Management of Historical Towns; Revitalization and Development processes held in IVANIC GRAD, Croatia on 11 November 2011**

The event was part of the work of ECOVAST Croatia on small towns. ECOVAST International was invited to take part and Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) delivered a paper and presentation on 'Encouraging Economic Success in Small Towns'. Tihana Stepanic Fabijanić (Croatia) made a presentation on 'Traditional Elements in the urban Structure of Croatian and European Small Towns'

### **Third Irish Rural Studies Symposium held in DUBLIN, Ireland in 2011 on 6 December 2011**

Valerie Carter gave a paper and presentation on the work of ECOVAST.

## **2012**

*The Doha Agreement of 2012 set the Kyoto limits for the period 2013-2020.*

### **ASSET Project: Survey of the Service Assets found in 160 Individual Small Towns in England 2012**

This is part of the series of 3 studies on the 'assets' of small towns. This second study of the services available in the 160 small towns in South East England (which originally surveyed more than 175 towns) was carried out by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) and the results were published in 2015 in the document called 'The Evidence Base'.

### **ASSET Project: Survey of the Heritage Assets found in 160 Individual Small Towns in England - 2012**

This is the third and final part of the series of 3 studies on the 'assets' of small towns. This looked at the various Heritage Assets in the 160 small towns, carried out by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom). The results were again finally published by ECOVAST in 'The Evidence Base' document in February 2015.

### **ECOVAST Newsletter 50 published February 2012 – edited by Pam Moore:** included:

- An obituary from Jean Chanel an ECOVAST Founder Member from Angus Fowler
- Reports from the following National Sections; Austria from Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler; Croatia from Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić; Germany from Angus Fowler; Romania from Magdalena Banu and Călin Hoinărescu; Russia from Olga Sevan; United Kingdom from Pam Moore (United Kingdom)
- An article on the Vienna Symposium and Excursions by Phil Turner
- An article on the Austrian Small Town Register by Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler
- An article on the newly formed European Heritage Alliance 3.3 which ECOVAST has joined by Phil Turner
- An article on a new book called the Village – Country Life in Germany by Gerhard Henkel
- A report on the DG Agri Rural Advisory Committee by Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

### **ECOVAST invited to join DG Regio RURBAN network in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 28 February 2012**

Valerie Carter (President) and Phil Turner (Vice President) were invited to meet Sabrina Lucatelli and Bruno Tulumello of DG Regio in Brussels. They discussed the current ECOVAST work on small towns and the ASSET project. They presented DG Region with a paper on "The Importance of Small Towns" and the ECOVAST policy document which was being prepared. As a result ECOVAST was invited to join the RURBAN network which looks at rural and urban policies. The network has been working on a major research project on an analysis on several rural/urban partnerships being carried out by the international Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) which was about to be published and discussed at a series of 3 planned events. The partners of the network include DG Agri, METREX, PURPLE (the peri-urban / rural pan European network) and other rural / urban networks. The network continued until 2014.

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in ACHBERG, near Lindau Germany on 22 April 2012**

Present at the meeting, held at Humboldt Haus, hosted by ECOVAST Germany - who were also holding their own National Assembly later in the day – were 9 ECOVAST members from 3 countries (Austria, Germany and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)

Vice Presidents – Arthur Spiegler (Austria)

Secretary General – Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

Treasurer – Olaf Linke, Andrea Weigert (Germany);

Honorary Auditors – Angus Fowler and Rudiger Maul (Germany)

Other International Committee Members –Ralf Bokermann (Germany) and Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Apologies had been received from Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia); Gábor Rajnai (Hungary), Magdalena Banu, Călin Hoinărescu (Romania) and Olga Sevan (Russia)

Olaf Linke has not yet formally handed over the ECOVAST Accounts to the new Treasurer Andrea Weigert.

Reports were also received from the Working Groups on Landscape; Rural Architecture and Small Towns

Reports were received from the National Sections of Austria; Croatia; Germany; Romania; and the United Kingdom

### **ECOVAST Tour of energy projects in Germany and Switzerland around ACHBERG, Germany on 22 April 2012**

After the committee there was a tour covering both Germany and Switzerland looking at energy projects

### **ECOVAST Croatia - Third Tourism Conference held in OSIJEK, Slavonia, Croatia on 24 May 2012**

Valerie Carter gave a paper and made a presentation 'Small Towns as Centres of Rural Tourism'

### **Tour associated with the OSIJEK event on 25 May 2012**

A tour of local rural projects in the villages Karanac and Khezevi Vinogradi

### **PREPARE Workshop on Rural Development held in KIZILCAHAMAM, Turkey on 16 June 2012**

Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) representing both ECOVAST and PREPARE took part in this workshop.

### **ECOVAST Newsletter 51 published July 2012 – edited by Pam Moore:** included:

- An obituary for Crispin Moore of ECOVAST United Kingdom by Pam Moore
- An obituary for Maria Meier Gresshof of ECOVAST Germany by Angus Fowler

- Reports from the following National Sections; Austria by Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler; Croatia by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić;
- A short article that ECOVAST has been invited by DG Regio to join their RURBAN Network
- A summary of ECOVAST comments on the European Commissions Common Strategic Framework
- An article on the EPSON Project on Small and Medium Sized Towns (population 5,000 - 50,000)
- An article by Goran Soster of PREPARE on 'Towards 2020 – A Shift of Rural Paradigm by Goran Soster (Slovenia)

**PREPARE Rural Development Workshop in BANJA LUKA, Bosnia and Herzegovina on 19 July 2012**

Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) representing both ECOVAST and PREPARE took part in this workshop.

**ECOVAST Macedonia / Bitola Institute and Museum conference on 'Balkan Border Towns and Regions' held in BITOLA, Macedonia on 6-7 August 2012**

The events involved participants from Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece and Macedonia.

**Ninth PREPARE Gathering in KARLSKRONA, Blekinge County, Sweden on 6-7 September 2012**

Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) of ECOVAST and PREPARE took part in this gathering. The PREPARE network members also attended the Swedish Rural Parliament held in Ronneby, Sweden. There was a tour which looked at several rural projects in this southern area of Sweden.

**Swedish Rural Parliament held in RONNEBY, Sweden on 8-9 September 2012**

Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) of ECOVAST and PREPARE attended this Swedish Rural Parliament.

**Revised Edition of ECOVAST's "Landscape Identification – A Guide to Good Practice" was published in September 2012.**

This edition was produced by Arthur Spiegler (Austria) and the ECOVAST Working Group on Landscape. The main text is similar to that of the first edition, produced by Arthur Spiegler (Austria) and Michael Dower (United Kingdom). The 2006 study had led to workshops in Austria (with participants from governments and the Austrian Academy of Science) and in various European countries (the Netherlands, Poland, Croatia). Work during 2009/2010 included a cross-border initiative with 2 Austrian and 2 Czech schools, with help from the Lower Austrian Landscape Fund. All this valuable practical experience has led to this revised and extended edition.

**ECOVAST events based in WITZENHAUSEN, Hesse, Germany on 5-7 October 2012**

The events, hosted by Ralf Bokermann of ECOVAST Germany, included a Workshop, a Tour, a meeting of the International Committee and the Biennial Assembly – see descriptions below.

**ECOVAST Workshop on Small Towns held in WITZENHAUSEN, Hesse, GERMANY on 5 October 2012**

The workshop was part of Biennial Assembly event and was arranged by Arthur Spiegler (ECOVAST Austria). Arthur introduced the workshop with a presentation on the work by ECOVAST Austria on small towns. Valerie Carter made a presentation on the work to define an ECOVAST Policy under the heading 'The Importance of Small Towns – the Role That Small Towns Can Play in the Economy and their importance to the Heritage of Europe'.

**ECOVAST International Committee held in WITZENHAUSEN, Hesse, Germany on 5 October 2012**

Present at this meeting at the Hotel Deula, were 8 ECOVAST members. The full list of members attending the events in Witzenhausen and those sending apologies are listed with the notes on the Biennial Assembly which follows. It was a short meeting in the early evening, after the tour to sort out the Agenda for the next day and discuss the nominations that had been sent in.

The Minutes of the International Committee held in Achberg, Germany on 22 April 2012 were agreed.

**ECOVAST Tour around the former border area of Hesse associated with the WITZENHAUSEN meeting on 6 October 2012**

Participants (11 ECOVAST members) visited local projects and several small towns in this part of the former Iron Curtain border between Western Germany and the former Eastern Germany. It visited the small town of Witzenhausen, the historic wooden town of Allendorf, and looked at rural projects in Kleinvach village, the Ringau Hills and Ludwigstern Castle.

**ECOVAST Biennial Assembly held at the Hotel Deula, WITZENHAUSEN, Germany on 7 October 2012**

Present at the meeting, hosted by Ralf Bokermann (Germany) were 12 ECOVAST members from 5 countries (Austria, Croatia, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)

Vice Presidents – Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia)



Secretary General – Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

Treasurer – Andrea Weigert (Germany)

Other International Committee Members – Ralf Bokermann; Angus Fowler, Peter Thran (Germany); Enrico Capo (Italy); Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Honorary Auditors – Irmelin Kuttner and Rudiger Maul (Germany)

There was a guest - Giulia Cerri of Italy accompanying Enrico Capo

Apologies for absence were received from: Brigitte Macaria (Austria); Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Nunos Pinheiro (Portugal); Magdalena Banu, Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); Olga Sevan (Russia); Ľubica Pinčíková (Slovakia); and David Baker, Mike Breakell, Michael Dower, David Green, Trevor Kearley, Edmund Neville-Rolfe (all of the United Kingdom)

The Minutes of the General Assembly held in Vienna, Austria on 23 October 2011 were agreed.

The deaths of three ECOVAST Members was reported – Maria Meier Gresshoff (Germany) and Marguerite Grafin Kottulinsky (Austria) and Crispin Moor (United Kingdom) and the Committee paid tribute to their work.

Pam Moore announced that she was stepping down from the position of Secretary General. The Committee wished her well and she was thanked sincerely for her work as Secretary General from 2002 until 2012

Arthur Spiegler reported on the potential Green Belt project and the involvement of ECOVAST Austria and the proposed CIVILSCAPE conference on energy. It was agreed that ECOVAST would get involved.

Reports were also received from the Working Groups on Rural Architecture and the ASSET/Small Towns project.

Reports were received from the National Sections of Austria; Croatia; Germany; Hungary; Romania; Russia and the United Kingdom

This being a voting general assembly there was a formal release of the current International Committee from its obligations and the committee members were thanked for their work over the last 2 years (2010-2012). An election for a new International Committee to serve for the next two years (2012-2014) followed.

The following members were nominated from the National Sections to serve on the International Committee:

- Arthur Spiegler (Austria)
- Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia)
- Angus Fowler (Germany)
- Gábor Rajnai (Hungary)
- Victoria Momeva-Altiparmakovska (FYROM Macedonia)
- Halina Łapińska (Poland)
- Magdalena Banu (Romania)
- Olga Sevan (Russia)
- Eva Kralova (Slovakia)
- Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

The following 6 members were also elected to the International Committee

- Ralf Bokermann (Germany)
- Andrea Weigert (Germany)
- Enrico Capo (Italy)
- Călin Hoinărescu (Romania)
- Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)
- Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

This new Committee then elected the officers (The Bureau) to serve for 2012-2014

- Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) as President for a second term

Four members to serve as Vice Presidents:

- Arthur Spiegler (Austria)
- Tihana Stepanic Fabijanić (Croatia)
- Angus Fowler (Germany)
- Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Secretary General - no-one wanted to fill this post. The work would have to be done by other Members of the Bureau.

- Andrea Weigert (Germany) to continue as Treasurer

Honorary Auditors Rudiger Maul and Irmelin Kuttner (both of Germany) were elected for 2012-2014

#### **Fourth European Tourism Conference held in PIATRA NEAMT, Moldavia, Romania on 8 October 2012**

This major pan-European Tourism event which is organised every 2 years by EUROGITES (ECOVAST is a member) was staged this year in eastern Romania. Valerie Carter ran the Culture and Heritage Workshop for the conference, and also gave a paper and made a presentation on 'Small Towns as Centres of Rural Tourism

and their Heritage Assets'. Magdalena Banu (Romania) and Olga Sevan (Russia) made presentations in the workshop and Olga Sevan also in the Plenary Session of the conference.

#### **European Tourism tour associated with the Piatra Neamt event in Romania on 9 October 2012**

There were visits to several of the famous painted monasteries in the area.

#### **CIVILSCAPE Conference on 'Energyscapes' held in KONIGSWINTER, Germany on 27 October 2012**

CIVILSCAPE had arranged the conference to look at examples energy and the landscapes associated with them. The event was accompanied by a tour to look at several examples of energy projects in the local area.

There were several presentations made by ECOVAST members. Valerie Carter made a presentation on 'Energy in South East England'; Arthur Spiegler made a presentation on Energy in Austria; Olaf Linke (Germany) and Victoria Momeva-Altiparmakovska and Vesna Kocankovska (both of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) also made presentations.

#### **Tour of local Energy projects in this area of Germany followed after the conference on 27 October 2012**

The tour looked at modern large scale excavation of brown coal as well as a series of local energy projects.

#### **EUROPEAN Green Belt Project – ECOVAST Austria Identifies the Landscapes on the borders with Austria and the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary and Italy in 2012**

The University of Agriculture in Vienna under Professor Weber invited ECOVAST Austria to complete a specific task on the European Green belt by to identifying the different types of landscapes surrounding the former iron Curtain which stretches from the Baltic Sea near Travemunde to the Adriatic Sea near Trieste, representing the Central European Section of the "Green Belt of Europe. This section has an extension of about 3.500 km, consists of about 50 different landscape units and hosts more than 200 Historic Small Towns.

This part of the work involves 6 project regions and each with a workshop with local people and local authorities. ECOVAST Austria are being asked to recognize and evaluate the different characters of the landscapes along the former "social" borders which involve Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, and Italy. The project work was led by the ECOVAST Austria Core Team was Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler.

The work used the ECOVAST Landscape Identification Guide – 'A Guide to Good Practice' (which was written by Arthur Spiegler, Chair of Working Group on Landscapes and Michael Dower) and involved close contact with the local stake-holders.

By 2013 ECOVAST Austria had become part of an external expert group called 'IRUB' a department of the Viennese University of Natural Resources & Applied Life Sciences; and involved many presentations in several countries including the Czech Republic & Germany and written many articles published in professional journals.

#### **DENKMAL Trade Fair 2012 and EUREGIA held in LEIPZIG, Germany on 22-24 November 2012**

ECOVAST has a presence at each of these leading biennial EUROPEAN Trade Fairs through an arrangement with EUROPA NOSTRA. The international presence of ECOVAST is organised and attended by ECOVAST Germany. In 2012 the main theme of DENKMAL was 'Wood and Conservation' and FAK of Marburg organised an international seminar on 'Wooden and Timber Framed Churches' with speakers from Russia; Czech Republic and Angus Fowler (Germany).

#### **First Conference on Rural/Urban Partnerships held METZ, Moselle, France on 14 November 2012**

There was a series of 3 conferences organised by DG Regio of the European Union - working with the RURBAN Group (ECOVAST was a member) and The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to look at examples of rural/urban partnerships. OECD had researched many different examples across the world and published a report on their findings.

This first event debated and developed these Rural/Urban ideas. Valerie Carter tabled a Paper 'The Importance of Small Rural Towns as a Link between Urban and Rural', of which copies given out at the conference.

#### **ECOVAST Newsletter 52 published in December 2012 – edited by Phil Turner: included:**

- A report on the PREPARE Workshop held in Kizilcahaman, Turkey by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)
- A report on the PREPARE Workshop held in Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina by Valerie Carter
- An article on Rural Tourism by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)
- A report on the Seminar on small historic towns organised by Arthur Spiegler (Austria) and held in Witzenhausen as part of the annual assembly meeting
- Report on the tour through the Werra-Meisner Region in October 2012 by Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic (Croatia) and Enrico Capo (Italy)
- Reports from the following National Sections: Austria by Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler; Croatia from Tihana Stepina Fabijanić; Germany by Angus Fowler; Hungary by Gábor Rajnai; Macedonia by Victoria Momeva Altiparmakovska; Romania from Magdalena Banu; Russia from Olga Sevan and UK by Phil Turner

## **2013**

*Croatia became part of the European Community on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2013 and can now benefit from the EU agriculture and rural development programme.*

### **PREPARE / Latvian Rural Forum meeting held in RIGA, Latvia on 6-8 February 2013**

Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) representing both ECOVAST and PREPARE took part in this forum, which involved a short workshop on rural development issues in Latvia.

### **ECOVAST Newsletter 53 published March 2013 - edited by Phil Turner:** included:

- An obituary for Diehart Kerbs of ECOVAST Germany by Angus Fowler (Germany)
- A report on European Agricultural Policy by Rudiger Maul (Germany) and Hannes Lorenzen of PREPARE
- Reports from the following National Sections: Austria by Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler; Croatia by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić; Germany from Angus Fowler; Russia from Phil Turner (United Kingdom) on behalf of Olga Sevan; and United Kingdom by Phil Turner
- An article on how a Tax on Mineral Extraction can fund Landscape Enhancement' by Arthur Spiegler (Austria)
- An article on the new Croatian Kazun built in the Peak National Park to celebrate Croatia joining the European Union by Michael Dower (United Kingdom)
- A short report on the booklet on Tourist trails by Magdalena Banu and Calin Hoinarescu of Romania
- A short note on the publication 'The Need for a Cultural Landscape Theory – An Architects Approach' by Dr Alexandru Calcatinge – member of ECOVAST Austria

### **DG Regio /OECD Second Conference on Rural/Urban Partnerships held in WARSAW, Poland on 23 April 2013**

This was the second of 3 conferences on rural/urban partnerships. OECD reported on the findings of its research. The discussion led to an invitation to Valerie Carter of ECOVAST to take part in the final conference to be held in Bologna, Italy and present ECOVAST work on small towns and their importance to rural/urban partnerships

### **ECOVAST tour of vernacular architecture in the cross border associated with the seminar held in Dammheim, Germany on 24 May 2013**

The Dammheim event was hosted by Rudiger Maul (Germany) who is a wine growing farmer as well as a member of ECOVAST and lead on the Working Group on Rural Buildings. The event involved 10 ECOVAST members. The tour covered two border regions – the Rhineland Palatinate in Germany and French Vosges Regional Park which is a wine growing area on both sides of the border with tourist wine trails. We looked at examples of local architecture in the villages and small towns in both countries. Visits included Trifels Castle, Pfaffenhofen and Ingwiller – a both small towns in Germany; then La Petit Pierre – a small town in France; and then the villages of Seebach and Hunspach in Germany. The seminar which was held the next day (25<sup>th</sup>) and held in the Dammheim hotel included a presentation from the visitors from France Vosges region on their local architecture and was followed by the ECOVAST committee meeting.

### **ECOVAST Cross border Seminar on Vernacular Architecture held in DAMMHEIM, Rhineland Palatinate, Germany on 25 May 2013**

The seminar on vernacular architecture was attended by visitors from the Vosges Regional Park in France.

### **ECOVAST International held in DAMMHEIM, Rhineland, Germany on 25 May 2013**

Present at the meeting, held in Hotel zum Schwannen, hosted by Rudiger Maul, were by 10 ECOVAST members from 3 countries (Austria, Germany and the United Kingdom) and included:

President – Valerie Carter

Vice Presidents: Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Angus Fowler (Germany); Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Treasurer – Andrea Weigert (Germany)

Other International Committee Members – Ralf Bokermann (Germany)

Other ECOVAST Members that attended included: Justus Bohl; Ivar Henckel and Erica and Rudiger Maul (all of Germany)

Apologies for absence were received from Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia); Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Enrico Capo (Italy); Victoria Momeva Altiparmakovska (Macedonia); Halina Łapińska (Poland); Magdalena Banu, Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); Olga Sevan (Russia) and Pam Moore (United Kingdom).

The Minutes of the International Committee held in Witzenhausen, Germany on 5 October 2012 were agreed.

The death was announced of Diethart Kerbs of ECOVAST Germany on 27 January 2013

There were reports received from the following Working Groups; Rural Architecture; ASSET/Small Towns

There were reports received from the following National Sections: Austria; Croatia; Germany; Hungary; Romania; Russia; United Kingdom

The ECOVAST 'Position Paper on Small Towns' was approved by the committee for publication.

### **ECOVAST Romania Tourist Trail– Byzantine Resonances, – The First Trail published May 2013**

ECOVAST Romania was appointed to research a tourism project to develop a new cultural tourist trail linking Byzantine monuments – both religious and civil - north of the Danube River and to link them with the more well-known Byzantine heritage south of the Danube. The intention was that in the future this heritage could be linked and integrated with the repertoire of cultural routes proposed by the Council of Europe. The project team included ECOVAST members Calin Hoinarescu and Magdalena Banu from Romania. The project trail was also one of the tourism examples used in ECOVAST's publication 'The Importance of Small Towns'. The monuments researched for this route lie generally outside the towns, but the route does pass through many small towns. The trail was presented by Magdalena Banu at the Culture and Heritage Workshop at the 4<sup>th</sup> European Tourism Conference held in Piatra Neamt, Romania in October 2012 and published May 2013.

### **Green Week Open Day – RURBAN Seminar held in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 29 May 2013**

A workshop held in the House of Dutch Provinces in Brussels, the networks PREPARE; AEIAR; CEMR; EUROCOITIES; METREX; PURPLE and ECOVAST held a workshop 'Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Growth through Territorial Linkages – using food as a key element. Michael Dower was the moderator and Valerie Carter made a very short presentation on the importance of local food production.

### **ECOVAST Paper 'A Global Strategy for Rural Europe' produced July 2013**

This was a formal update of the ECOVAST Strategy for Rural Europe, last updated in 2008. It was prepared by Phil Turner (United Kingdom) and submitted to be considered at the 2<sup>nd</sup> European Rural Parliament (ERP) to be held in Austria in November 2015. ECOVAST proposes that the ERP should make a decision on the following issue - 'Europe should take a leading role in addressing and improving responses to global processes, based on an approach that recognises the unique identity of many of the many different parts of the continent and the experiences drawn from history, culture and agriculture. A focus on localism and regionalism may mitigate effects of global markets, depletion of oil and gas resources, and consequential rising food costs'. This statement to the ERP is based on three principles – competitiveness; cohesion and sustainability.

### **ECOVAST Formal Opening of a Croatian 'Kazun' at PARSLEY HAY, England, on 5 July 2013**

This event was part of the United Kingdom's welcome to Croatia as a new member of the European Community. It was organised by the Anglo-Croatian Association, and the project was funded by the Croatian Ministry of Culture, whose Deputy Minister attended the event together with the Croatian ambassador to the UK. The construction of a Kajun, a traditional round dry-stone Croatian shepherd's hut in Derbyshire, was suggested by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanac of ECOVAST Croatia; and the location in the Peak National Park was negotiated by Michael Dower (another past president of ECOVAST), who was a former Director of the National Park. Both Croatia and the Peak Park use limestone for their traditional dry-stone buildings and walls. The Kazun was constructed, using local stone, by a team of five masons from Croatian Istria. It is sited beside the Pennine Way long distance footpath at Parsley Hay, and serves as a very useful shelter for walkers and cyclists. The formal opening was carried out by the Croatian Minister and Ambassador, and Valerie Carter of ECOVAST.

### **ECOVAST Newsletter 54 published August 2013 - edited by Phil Turner: included:**

- A short report on ECOVAST response to 'A Global Strategy for Rural Europe' which was an update of the 2008 version of the Strategy for Rural Europe with comments to send to the First European Rural Strategy
- Reports from the following National Sections: Austria from Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler; Croatia from Nikša Božić; Germany from Angus Fowler; Poland from Halina Łapińska; Russia from Olga Sevan
- A report on the Romanian Mihai Eminescu Trust by Phil Turner (United Kingdom)
- A report on UK Europa Nostra event by Phil Turner

### **Tenth PREPARE Gathering held in JAHORINA, Bosnia and Herzegovina on 4-7<sup>th</sup> September 2013**

Michael Dower of ECOVAST and PREPARE took part.

### **ECOVAST Position Statement on Small Towns was published in September 2013**

It was the first formal international policy statement by ECOVAST on small towns since it became a key area of ECOVAST work since 2005. It was the result of the work by the ECOVAST ASSET project with an international Team led by Phil Turner (United Kingdom). The statement was compiled by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) and sets out the arguments for what makes a 'small town' based on function and size; how 'small' is defined across European countries; how many small towns there are across Europe (geographical Europe not just the European Union) and how many people live in them; the challenges they face; and the many different opportunities they have to improve their situations (based on a series of best practice examples); set in the context of existing European policies. It also sets out some of the details of the research carried out. The

policy statement was used to inform the Council of Europe and European Union's DG Agri and DG Regio of the ECOVAST conclusions from their work. It also formed the basis of ECOVAST's publication on 'The Importance of Small Towns' published in September 2014 and distributed across 39 European countries and in many presentations by ECOVAST at International events.

### **ECOVAST events in Kozard, Hungary 27-29 September 2013**

The event was hosted by ECOVAST Hungary and the village of Kozard and involved a tour to visit projects, a small town and villages, a Workshop and the General Assembly meeting for 2013. The members who attended or sent apologies are listed in the Assembly notes below.

### **ECOVAST Tour of area around Kozard 27 September 2013**

The tour started with a visit to the small town of Pásztó where we met the local Mayor and the Economic Officer and given a tour of the town. It was followed by a visit to the World Heritage village of Hollőkö – recognised as one of the most beautiful traditional villages in Europe and the first village to be awarded this status – and where Dezső Kovács of ECOVAST Hungary had undertaken a development plan for the village. We met the Mayor.

After lunch we visited several other projects in the local villages including the local LEADER office, a visit to the farm of Pal Hajas on the edge of Kozard who bred traditional Hungarian grey cattle and woolly pigs, onto Ecseg village to visit a still which uses a variety of local fruit finally a walking tour of Kozard village projects.

### **ECOVAST Workshop on Rural Buildings and Small Towns held at KOZARD 28 September 2013**

The ECOVAST Workshop on 'Rural Buildings and Small Towns' had a series of presentations from local specialist architects describing villages which were gradually being restored. We also had the example of the historic town – founded as the Hungarian Royal Apostolic Stud by Emperor Emperor Joseph II in 1784 - Mezőhegyes – which is seeking UNESCO World Heritage Status. Valerie Carter made a presentation of the recently completed ECOVAST policy statement - 'The Importance of Small Towns'. After the Workshop the Mayor took the group on a tour of the projects in the village of Kozard.

### **ECOVAST General Assembly meeting held in KOZARD, Hungary on 29 September 2013**

Present at the meeting, were 10 ECOVAST members from 4 countries (Germany, Hungary, Russia and the United Kingdom) and included:

President – Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)

Vice President – Angus Fowler (Germany)

International Committee Members –Ralf Bokermann (Germany); Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Olga Sevan (Russia)

Other ECOVAST Members that attended included: Michael Strecker (Germany); Pal Hajas; Laszlo Muszik; Vera Muszik (Hungary)

Honorary Auditor – Rudiger Maul (Germany)

Guest Marta Hajas – Mayor of Kozard

Apologies were received from Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Nikša Božić, Valerija Pepeonic, Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia); Irmelin Küttner, Andrea Weigert (Germany); Enrico Capo (Italy); Magdalena Banu. Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); Phil Turner and Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

The Minutes of the General Assembly held in Witzenhausen, Germany on 7 October 2012 were agreed.

Reports were also received from the Working Groups on Landscapes; Rural Architecture; Small Towns and Rural Tourism

Reports were received from the National Sections of Austria; Croatia; Germany; Hungary; Macedonia; Poland; Romania; Russia; and the United Kingdom.

Two members who were unable to attend sent in reports - Phil Turner as Policy lead for ECOVAST reported on rural policies in the United Kingdom and Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia) reported on the continuing work on the European Union Strategy for the Danube Basin and the work that she leads on.

### **Council of Europe Landscape Convention workshop held in CETINJE, Montenegro 2-3 October 2013**

This was one of the Council of Europe's workshops on the implementation of the European Landscape Convention and titled 'Territories of the Future Landscape Identification and Assessment – an Exercise in Democracy'. Arthur Spiegler (Austria) presented the ECOVAST Method "A guide to Good Practice". This was the first time that the Council has officially acknowledged our tool and commitment to identifying landscape through assessing character.

### **South East Europe International Conference on tourism–held in HERAKLION, Crete, Greece on 17 October 2013**

The theme was 'Cultural Values and Tourism Development' in rural areas'. Valerie Carter was the keynote speaker at the event and presented a Paper and Presentation 'Sustainable Cultural Tourism in Rural Areas – the Role that Small Towns Can Play'

### **OECD Ninth Rural Development Policy Conference on 'An Integrated Approach to Economic Development' held in BOLOGNA, Italy on 23 October 2013**

This was the third and final conference on rural/urban partnerships staged by the RURBAN network of DG Regio. The conference was staged as one of OECD's series of rural conferences. Valerie Carter gave a paper and made a presentation 'ECOVAST on the Role of Small Towns' – based on ECOVAST evidence.

### **OECD tour of Emilia Romagna, associated with the Bologna conference on 24 October 2013**

The tour several rural projects and visited the small towns of Bertinoro and Forlimpopoli.

### **QUALIST Conference held in DRESDEN, Saxony, Germany on 12 November 2013**

The event was organized with the partners QUALIST Saxon State Ministry for Economic Affairs, Labour and Transport of Dresden, Germany and was attended by 80 participants. ECOVAST Germany represented ECOVAST's interest with Olaf Linke and Irmelin Küttner (Germany) taking part. This was the final meeting of the project which was part of the EU Central Europe programme which started in the summer of 2010 with 11 partners from Germany – led by Saxony –and Austria and the Czech Republic.

This international project (which started in the summer of 2010) involved 11 partners from Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic and it was about "Improving Quality of Life in Small Towns (QUALIST) to establish transferable solutions to increase the quality of life in small towns. The project looked at the development of infrastructure; improving public transport services in sparsely populated areas; increasing the quality of care (including through the establishment of public services in the residential areas) and innovative living concepts. Several examples were tried in towns in Saxony, Lower Austria and South Bohemia.

### **Eleventh European Rural University –held in PERIGUEUX, Dordogne, France on 6 November 2013**

The Association pour les Universités Rurales Européennes (APURE) has been in operation since 1988 and is a meeting of academic and practitioners involved in rural development. The event with the theme 'Rural Territories: Innovation Spaces & Future for Europe' also involved a tour. The main session was dedicated to a discussion on CAP reform. This was followed by a **tour** day of local projects and local museum associated with the Lascaux caves where there was workshop held where Valerie Carter gave a paper and a presentation 'The Role that Small Towns Can Play – A Pan-European View'.

### **First European Rural Parliament held in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 13 November 2013**

This event was initiated of Hela Sverige ska Leva (Sweden) and the Nordic group of national rural networks, and formally sponsored by PREPARE and the European Rural Communities Alliance (ERCA). It was hosted by the European Social and Economic Committee of the European Union.

It was a very well attended event with 150 people participating from 30 European countries, including several members of ECOVAST.

Michael Dower (Past President of ECOVAST) was one of the two keynote speakers, and Phil Turner (United Kingdom) ran one of the workshops.

At the end of the event the Rural Parliament agreed that this initiative should continue, under the joint leadership of PREPARE and ERCA, with Rural Parliaments being staged every two years.

### **ECOVAST Romania Tourist Trail – Byzantine Resonances, A Second Trail published at the end of 2013**

ECOVAST Romania researched a second cultural tourist trail linking Byzantine monuments – both religious and civil architecture north of the Danube River and to link them with the more well-known Byzantine heritage south of the Danube. This is the second trails to be surveyed and agreed – with the second trail lying to the west of the first trail. The project was in the same format as that of the first trail and involved ECOVAST members Calin Hoinarescu and Magdalena Banu of Romania.

### **ECOVAST Newsletter 55 published December 2013 - edited by Phil Turner: included:**

- An article on CAP reform by Michael Dower and Phil Turner (United Kingdom)
- An article on the First European Rural Parliament by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)
- Reports from the following National sections: Austria from Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler; Croatia from Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić; Germany by Angus Fowler
- An article on Qualist project on the quality of life in small towns from Irmelin Küttner (Germany)
- A paper by Ralf Bokermann (Germany) – Study on Small Towns in the Lower Oder and West Pomerania
- A report on Kozard, Hungary event (the annual assembly, the conference and the tours) by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)
- A report on the Historic Mining Landscapes of Rosia Montana, Romania by Phil Turner (United Kingdom)
- A report on the Eleventh session of the European Rural University session held in Perigueux, France by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)
- A report on 20 European Heritage Sites on the World Monuments Watch List by Phil Turner (UK)

## **2014**

*The European Union's new 7 year programme to support agriculture and rural development starts in 2014 and runs until the end of 2020. DG Agri changes its advisory group to become Civil Dialogue Groups (CDG) with representatives from all the EU countries (farming networks) and other pan-European bodies. ECOVAST lost its seat, but is represented through PREPARE, which invited Valerie Carter to represent it on the Civil Dialogue Group. This structure will go on until the end of 2020.*

### **Final meeting of the RURBAN Network held in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 28 January 2014**

After the recent three meetings in Metz, France; Warsaw, Poland and Bolgna, Italy the RURBAN group is closing down having done what it set out to do. Valerie Carter made a presentation on key lessons learned and prepared a paper on what lessons had been learned and how it could make an impact on ECOVAST.

### **ECOVAST International Committee held in GATWICK, England, United Kingdom on 10 May 2014**

Present at the meeting, held in the Premier Inn, hosted by ECOVAST United Kingdom and celebrating 30 years of ECOVAST were 6 ECOVAST 6 members from 4 countries (Austria, Croatia, Germany and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)

Vice President – Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia); Angus Fowler (Germany); Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Pam Moore former Secretary General took the Minutes

Treasurer – Andrea Weigert (Germany)

Apologies for absence were received from Ralf Bokermann and Rudiger Maul (Germany)

The Minutes of the International Committee held in Dammheim, Germany on 25/26 May 2013 and the Minutes of the General Assembly held in Kozard, Hungary on 29 September 2013 were both agreed.

Thanks were given to Brigitte Macaria (Austria) who had prepared small wooden plaques to commemorate the 30<sup>th</sup> birthday of ECOVAST. It was agreed that we would produce a new ECOVAST leaflet.

Reports were received from the following Working Groups; Landscapes; Rural Architecture; Small Towns; Rural Tourism

Reports were received from the following National Sections: Austria; Croatia; Germany; United Kingdom

It had been reported in early May 2014 of a 'Rosia Montana' gold mine in Romania – where ECOVAST is supporting EUROPA NOSTRA in a protest against the mine for its potential destruction of heritage.

### **ECOVAST tour associated with the committee meeting held in Gatwick, England on 11 May 2014**

After the meeting there was a tour to look at local vernacular architecture in the Weald of South East England – the variety of styles and building materials which reflect the underlying and varied geology of the area. We then visited the village of West Hoathly in West Sussex (where we also met with a local network which had produced its own local plan for the village); then on to visit the small town of Lindfield in West Sussex; Rye in East Sussex; then Tenterden and Edenbridge in Kent.

### **ECOVAST publicity leaflet 'ECOVAST after 30 Years' was produced and published at end May 2014**

Copies were sent out to the ECOVAST National Sections in June 2014. Copies have also been taken to all the international events attended by ECOVAST since 2014.

### **Danube Forum Participation Day held in EISENSTADT, Burgenland, Austria on 25 June 2014**

The meeting, related to the European Strategy of the Danube Region (EUSRD), was organised by the Danube Civil Society Forum (DCSF) and supported by the Foster Europe Foundation. It was held in the Esterhazy Castle in Eisenstadt, and attended by about 170 members of civil society and other organisations from 14 European countries. The event was designed to promote networking and collaboration between NGOs in the Danube region. It enabled civil society representatives to meet face-to-face and exchange their initiatives, project ideas and experiences in the course of 4 thematic workshops (civil society, local administration, youth, and culture). The conclusions were summarised in the Eisenstadt Declaration, addressed to EUSDR institutions. This was also an occasion to gather participants of the *Danube River Show*, a project with the goal to spread the idea and information about the EU Strategy in the regions and towns along the Danube. Taking part in this event were 3 delegates from Croatia - Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic (Croatia) who represents ECOVAST on the Danube Civil Society Forum and 2 others who organized an exhibition in one of the 'tent-villages' in the courtyard of the Esterhazy castle under the working title 'Danube and its Tributaries in Croatia – culture, tourism, sustainable development'. The Day was part of the third Annual Forum of the Civil Society which followed.

### **Third Danube Civil Society Forum (DCSF) held in the Town Hall, VIENNA, Austria on 26-27 June 2014**

Under the title 'We Grow Together, Together We Grow' – the Forum gathered 1,500 people from the Danube region of Europe and from public, private and civil sectors. The focus was on issues of inclusion and sustainable growth; multi-stakeholder European policies for an integrated and competitive Danube Region, as



well as smart governance as a criterion of success for the EUSDR. The programme included lively moderated expert speeches in the plenary sessions, as well as workshops and 'speaker's corners' with various presentations and exhibitions. The final sessions achieved a synthesis of thematic perspectives and proposals for further work on the EUSDR. ECOVAST was represented by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic (Croatia), who is a member of DCSF, and Arthur Speigler and Brigitte Macaria (Austria).

**International Conference on 'Wooden Architecture in the Cultural Landscape' held in PILSEN, Czech Republic on 19-21 June 2014**

Olga Sevan gave a paper 'Wooden Architecture in Russian History and Nowadays'

**ECOVAST Newsletter 56 published July 2014 - edited by Phil Turner:** included

- An obituary for Jane Wade (United Kingdom) by Pam Moore (United Kingdom)
- An article on the new DG Agri Civil Dialogue Groups by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)
- Reports from the following National Sections: Austria by Brigitte Macaria; Croatia from Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić; Germany from Angus Fowler; Russia from Olga Sevan
- An article on Rosia Montana, Romania
- An article on the final meeting of RURBAN by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)

**Eleventh PREPARE Gathering held in HELSINKI, Finland and TALLIN, Estonia on 6-7 September 2014**

Michael Dower and Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) from ECOVAST and PREPARE took part

**International conference on 'Cultural Landscapes in Natura 2000 Sites' held in ATHENS, Greece on 10 October 2014**

The theme 'Towards a New Policy for the Integrated Management of Cultural and National Heritage' was sponsored by the Piraeus Bank of Greece. A paper and presentation 'The Role that Small Towns Can Play in These Policy Debates' given by Valerie Carter to Panel Discussion 2: Integrated management of cultural and natural heritage – the case of cultural landscapes.

**Tour of projects in the Peloponnese associated with Athens event on 11 October 2014**

The tour visited several villages and landscapes on the Peloponnese peninsular and the Stymfalia museum.

**DENKMAL Trade Fair 2014 held in LEIPZIG, Germany on 6-8 November 2014**

This biennial leading EUROPEAN Trade Fair, is attended every year, with the international presence of ECOVAST organised and attended by ECOVAST Germany (through an arrangement with EUROPA NOSTRA).

**First SCOTLAND Rural Parliament held in OBAN Scotland from 6-8 November 2014**

Phil Turner (ECOVAST United Kingdom) took part in this first parliament in the United Kingdom. Over 400 delegates gathered in Oban for the three-day event, discussing a range of rural issues with local democracy and a need to bring power closer to the communities emerging as a strong theme throughout. An overwhelming majority of participants agreed in the final session that the Rural Parliament should continue.

The parliament closed on 8 November 2014 with a call for action to achieve a more empowered, connected and sustainable rural Scotland with the following message "Our message to Scottish Governments and other agencies that we want them to support rural communities and the Rural Parliament to decide and deliver more of what they aspire to, including tailored support arrangements for community-led actions. Rural communities need national and local governments to get behind their efforts to empower themselves and plan their own futures.

There was also wholehearted agreement that it is time for a national conversation on local democratic renewal as a first step towards a radical reform of local government that will bring power much closer to local communities."

**ECOVAST Newsletter 57 published November 2014 - edited by Phil Turner:** included

- There was a major article - an obituary for Rudiger Maul by Ralf Bokermann. This sudden and tragic death by accident of Rudiger Maul who was a very active member of ECOVAST. He was elected to the ECOVAST International Committee in 1992 and ran the ECOVAST Rural Architecture/Rural Buildings Group from 2004. He attended the majority of ECOVAST meetings and arranged the recent 2013 workshop and tour of the border regions Rhineland Pfalz (his home territory) and Vosges, France. ECOVAST recognised how much he would be missed and our thoughts are with his family.
- Reports from the following National Sections; Austria by Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Speigler; Croatia from Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić; Germany from Angus Fowler; Russia from Olga Sevan; and the United Kingdom from Pam Moore
- A paper by Ralf Bokermann – 'The Adaption of Existing Building Stock with Declining Population

**ECOVAST Publication 'The Importance of Small Towns' published in November 2014**

This publication was compiled by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) and forms part of the ECOVAST ASSET project which started in 2005 with a team led by Phil Turner (United Kingdom) and team members – Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia); Angus Fowler; Andrea Weigert and Ralf Bokermann (all of Germany); and Pam Moore (United Kingdom); and with other contributions from Gerhard Fasching and Sylvia Mayer (Austria) and Magdalena Banu (Romania). The study is based on the formal ECOVAST Policy Position Statement published in September 2013 but with added research on best practice examples and quotes from several Mayors of small towns and from other people involved in work on small towns.

The study sets out the policy context for ECOVAST work; a description of the work that has been carried out; a dialogue on what makes a small town; a report on research to find out just how many small towns there are in Europe and how many people live in them; and a discourse on the challenges that small towns face. The main body of the report sets out the variety of opportunities that have already been taken up by small towns and which could be replicated by others. It uses examples from 86 individual towns from 39 countries.

It highlights 9 different categories of opportunity:

- Direct Contributions to Economies
- Using New Technologies
- Marketing Local Products
- Revitalising the Economic Role of a Small Town
- Sharing Services
- Centre for Tourism – with 9 sub-headings
- Developing Renewable Energy
- Making Use of Landscape Assets
- Working Together

This is now the main publication of ECOVAST's policy on small towns. It has been distributed to over 44 countries across geographical Europe and has many examples of best practice in small towns.

The publication was distributed to ECOVAST National Sections (350 copies). A further 700 copies were sent by post to all the formal National Rural Networks of the 28 EU Member States; the Associations of Local Government in 44 European countries; and a number of pan-European organisations, including the Council of Europe, DG Agri and DG Regio of the European Union and various Regional European networks.

Copies have been taken to all the international events attended by ECOVAST – in Greece, Netherlands; Czech Republic; United Kingdom; Poland; Germany; Austria; Ireland; and Albania; and the EU Social and Economic Committee. The publication can be found on the ECOVAST website.

#### **Netherlands Environmental Assessment Workshop held in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 2 December 2014**

This Agency is researching a common ground for the next policy for a European Nature Report, and invited many bodies, including ECOVAST to make contributions. It was the first of 3 separate day-long stakeholder dialogues that were held in BRUSSELS in late 2014 to mid 2015 which provided the basis for the distinguished perspectives on nature.

The dialogues were convened as a result of the European Commission's announcement in 2014 that it would like to study the possibilities of modernising the Birds and Habitats Directive.

This led to many heated discussions across the European Union to raise public support for keeping EU nature legislation in place, particularly to halt the biodiversity loss that results from land-use change, climate change and environmental pressure.

ECOVAST's interest was about the natural environment and landscapes. CIVILSCAPE also took part. The work was completed in November 2015 and the final findings published in 2017.

*The ECOVAST Biennial Assembly was delayed until 2015*

## **2015**

*The Paris Agreement of 2015 set the emission reductions from 2020 onwards through commitments in ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions.*

**ECOVAST Newsletter 58 published February 2015 - edited by Phil Turner:** included:

- An obituary for Edmund Neville Rolfe one of our Founder members
- Reports from the following National Sections: Austria from Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler; Croatia from Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić; Germany from Angus Fowler and Irmelin Küttner; Hungary from Dezső Kovács; Russia from Andrei Ivanov; and United Kingdom

- A short report on the progress of PREPARE from its inception in 2000 until the present day of 2015 by Valerie Carter and Michael Dower (United Kingdom)

#### **ECOVAST Publication 'The Evidence Base' – published in February 2015**

This was the supporting Document to the publication 'The Importance of Small Towns '. It was compiled by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) and sets out the reports on the various research studies carried out since 2010 by the ASSET team including:

- The research of all small towns in Europe 2010 – their sizes and potential importance – how many there are and how many people live in them - carried out by Valerie Carter
- The first and second Opinion Surveys – carried out in 2006 and 2009 by Pam Moore
- Three separate studies of 160 individual towns in South East England 2010; 2012 (economic; service; heritage assets carried out by Valerie Carter
- The Austrian Register of Small Historic Towns carried out by Arthur Speigler
- The Study of Small Towns in Germany by Ralf Bokermann
- Work in Brandenburg State by Angus Fowler
- Study of Small Towns in Schleswig Holstein by Andrea Weigert
- Work in Croatia on Small Towns by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić

The publication is part of the ECOVAST ASSET project. Copies of the document were sent to the members of the ASSET team, and by post to key research bodies; and also tabled at events where ECOVAST was discussing research on small towns. It is on the ECOVAST website.

#### **Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency Workshop 2 'European Nature Report- Finding common ground for a next policy agenda' held in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 17 March 2015**

This was the second of 3 workshops. Valerie Carter took part

#### **ECOVAST events in FRANTIŠKOVY LAZNE, Czech Republic 27- 30 March 2015**

This 4 day event in the Czech Republic started with a Workshop, followed by an Extraordinary meeting, the Biennial Assembly, followed by a tour which visited spa towns in both Czech Republic and Germany.

#### **ECOVAST Workshop on Small Towns held in FRANTIŠKOVY LÁZNĚ, Czech Republic on 27 March 2015**

Held in the Three Lilies Hotel, Valerie Carter made a presentation on the 'Importance of Small Towns – the Role That Small Towns Can Play in the Economy and Heritage of Europe'. Radim Srsen, President of ELARD and mayor of a small municipality in the Czech Republic, made a presentation on his community. Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić made a presentation on small towns in Croatia and the work of ECOVAST Croatia. Other guests from the Czech Republic made presentations. The Mayor of Františkovy Lázně described his town and how they link which other Czech Spas. The workshop was followed a tour of the small spa town of Františkovy Lázně, accompanied by the Mayor.

#### **ECOVAST Extraordinary General Meeting held in Hotel Three Lilies in FRANTIŠKOVY LÁZNĚ, Czech Republic on 27 March 2015**

*This was an evening meeting after the workshop and town tour.*

Basically this meeting was arranged to vote on proposed changes to the ECOVAST Statutes so that officers of the Bureau could serve for more than 4 years in circumstances where no-one else wanted to stand. The change states: that the President and four Vice Presidents may not usually be re-elected for more than two successive periods of office. This rule may be relaxed in exceptional circumstances – Article 10(6). The agreed changes would be submitted to the Biennial Assembly meeting the next day to be ratified.

#### **ECOVAST Biennial Assembly held in FRANTIŠKOVY LÁZNĚ, Czech Republic on 28 March 2015**

*This meeting was held over from 2014 as no suitable date could be agreed for that year.*

Present at the meeting, hosted by Valerie Carter, were 10 ECOVAST members from 3 countries (Croatia, Germany and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)

Vice Presidents – Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia); Angus Fowler (Germany); Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Treasurer – Andrea Weigert (Germany)

International Committee members; Ralf Bokermann (Germany); Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

Other ECOVAST members; Valerija Kelemen Pepeonik (Croatia); Max Linke; Olaf Linke (Germany);

Several guests from the Czech Republic attended as guests.

Apologies had been received from: Vice President Arthur Spiegler (Austria); International Committee members Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Victoria Momeva-Altiparmakovska (FYROM Macedonia); Magdalena Banu, Călin Hoinărescu (Romania); and Olga Sevan (Russia); and other ECOVAST members Brigitte Macaria, Katharina Rybnicek (Austria); Nikša Božić (Croatia); Justus Bohl, Ivar Henckel, Irmelin Küttner, Horst Schubert, Peter

Thran (Germany); Enrico Capo (Italy); Arno Frising (Luxembourg); David Baker, Michael Dower, Trevor Kearley and Pam Moore (United Kingdom);.

The Minutes of the Biennial Assembly held in Witzenhausen, Germany on 7 October 2012 were agreed. The Minutes of the General Assembly held in Kozard, Hungary on 29 September (with amendments) was also agreed.

The committee remembered the five members of ECOVAST that had passed away in 2014-15 – Heinar Henckel; Rudiger Maul; Ursula Stratenwerth (Germany) Edmund Neville Rolfe and Jane Wade (United Kingdom). All were ECOVAST International Committee members over many years and Edmund was a founder member of ECOVAST.

The Members confirmed the changes agreed by the Extraordinary Meeting the day before. Once translated into French they will be sent to the Tribunal at Selestat to be noted.

There was a report received from the following Working Group on Small Towns

There were reports received from the following National Sections: Croatia; Germany; and the United Kingdom.

This being a voting general assembly there was a formal release of the current International Committee from its obligations and the committee members were thanked for their work over the last 2.5 years (2012-2015). An election for a new International Committee to serve for the next two years (2015-2017) followed.

The following 10 members were elected to represent their National Sections on the new committee

- Arthur Spiegler (Austria)
- Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia)
- Olaf Linke (Germany)
- Gábor Rajnai (Hungary)
- Victoria Momeva Altiparmakovska (FYROM Macedonia)
- Halina Łapińska (Poland)
- Magdalena Banu (Romania)
- Olga Sevan (Russia)
- Eva Kralova (Slovakia)
- Pam Moore (United Kingdom)

The following 5 members were also elected onto the new committee

- Angus Fowler (Germany)
- Andrea Weigert (Germany)
- Călin Hoinărescu (Romania)
- Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)
- Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

This new Committee then elected the officers (The Bureau) to serve for the next 2 years 2015-2017:

- Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) as President for a third term (allowed after the Extraordinary Meeting)
- Angus Fowler (Germany) as Senior Vice President

Three other members as Vice Presidents:

- Arthur Spiegler (Austria)
- Tihana Stepanic Fabijanić (Croatia)
- Magdalena Banu (Romania)
- Andrea Weigert (Germany) to continue as Treasurer

Honorary Auditors: Irmelin Küttner and Ivar Henckel (both of Germany) were elected for the period 2015-2017

### **ECOVAST Tours associated with FRANTIŠKOVY LÁZNĚ event in Germany and West Bohemia on 29/30 March 2015**

There was a tour on the day following the Biennial meeting, of the local area visiting small spa towns in Germany (Bad Brambach; Bad Elster) and the tiny town of Hohenburg Eger and then the ex-pottery town of Arzberg. We met the majors of these towns. The following day there was a tour of small historic towns in the Czech Republic including Loket (recognised as one of the best historic small towns in the Czech Republic and which featured in a James Bond movie and where we were given an escorted tour); and Sokolov and Kunspark nad Ohri. Those who did not leave to go home after lunch visited another but bigger historic town of Cheb.

### **EUROPA NOSTRA & ECOVAST Conference 'A Moment in Time and the Significance of Place' held in CAMBRIDGE, England, United Kingdom on 8 April 2015**

The conference was arranged and hosted by EUROPA NOSTRA UK but with ECOVAST as a partner with title 'Contribution of the Arts to the Understanding of the Significance of Place' and held at Clare College. The event started with an evening meeting of EUROPA NOSTRA and followed by the conference on the following day at Clare College. There were several papers from ECOVAST members including - Valerie Carter gave a paper

and made a presentation 'Small Towns are Significant Places to Live and Work as Well as Attract Visitors'; Angus Fowler spoke of Loket small town which is a 'landscape work of art' – with towers and spires in the townscape where the art and architecture of churches contribute to 'place' and reflects the quality of the soil and the region and finally Past President Tihana Fabijanic who gave a presentation 'Traditional Art and the Built Heritage of Croatia'

#### **First European Congress of Local Government held in KRAKOW, Poland on 3 May 2015**

This event was part of a series of events organised by the Economic Forum (based in Poland and referred to in 2018). Valerie Carter gave a paper and Presentation 'Europe of the Regions: Starting a New Chapter – Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 – Who Will Gain and Who Will Lose' in one of the discussion panel workshops. Local Authorities are a key partner in rural development and this is the beginning of regular events where local authorities can gather to discuss the issues that they face. (*ECOVAST has taken place in several of the Forum's events in 2016, 2017 and 2018*)

#### **ECOVAST Newsletter 59 published June 2015 - edited by Phil Turner: included:**

- An article on our event in the Czech Republic
- Reports from the following National Sections: Austria from Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler; Croatia from Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić and Niksa Bozic; Germany from Angus Fowler; Hungary from Gábor Rajnai and the United Kingdom from Phil Turner.
- A short report of the European Congress of Local Governments from Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)
- An article on the Significance of Place from Royston Edge (United Kingdom)
- An article on the Emergence & Transmission of Europe's Biocultural Heritage and Communal Livelihoods
- An article of the conference in Cambridge

#### **Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency Workshop 3 'European Nature Report- Finding common ground for a next policy agenda' held in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 17 June 2015**

This was the third and final of three workshops. Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) took part.

#### **Signed Second Amendments to ECOVAST Statutes submitted to the Tribunal at Selestat, France for Formal Registration August 2015**

These second amendments were approved by an Extraordinary Meeting held in Frantiskove Lazne, Czech Republic and agreed at the Biennial Assembly on 28 March 2015. The Statutes were then changed and signed on 15 August 2015 by Valerie Carter (President (United Kingdom and Angus Fowler – Senior Vice President (Germany). The French version was submitted to the Tribunal in Selestat, France – accompanied by a list of the new Bureau – which included Vice Presidents: Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic (Croatia); and Magdalena Banu (Romania) and Treasurer – Andrea Weigert (Germany) on 25 November 2015. They were officially registered and the Certificate confirming the registration dated 31 December 2015. Copies of the Statutes were translated into English and German.

#### **Royal Geographical Society & Institute of British Geographers Annual Conference held at Exeter University, EXETER, England, United Kingdom on 1 September 2015**

Valerie Carter gave a Paper and made a presentation 'Fairness and Social Justice for Rural Communities' at one of the workshops. The paper outlined the research carried out by ECOVAST on small towns.

#### **Booklet on 'Wooden Architecture in Russia' published by ICOMOS in September 2015**

This described research, diversity and the modern situation affecting historic wooden buildings in Russia, including work by Olga' Sevan's of ECOVAST Russia.

#### **ECOVAST Publication 'Importance of Small Towns in the Danube Valley' published September 2015.**

This companion document to the main ECOVAST publication 'The Importance of Small Towns' was researched and compiled by Valerie Carter.

It forms part of the ECOVAST ASSET project with the team being led by Phil Turner (United Kingdom) with team members – Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Tihana Fabijanic (Croatia); Ralf Bokermann; Angus Fowler; and Andrea Weigert (Germany); and Valerie Carter and Pam Moore (United Kingdom). It contains the results of new research focussed on what small towns have been doing in the 15 contries that make up the Danube Basin. It highlights 65 town examples. This document has had a more limited distribution but was first used at the Danube Forum Participation Day in October 2015.

#### **Council of Europe's Workshop held in ANDORRA LA VELLA, Andorra on 1-2 October 2015**

This was the sixteenth workshop held by the Council of Europe's implementation of the European Landscape Convention. Brigitte Macaria (Austria) was invited to speak at this event and her presentation linked several aspects of ECOVAST's work – landscapes and small towns and the Green Belt project-

## **Danube Civil Society Forum (DSCF) General Assembly and Participation Day held in Ulm, Germany on 27 October 2015**

Valerie Carter (President and United Kingdom) represented ECOVAST on the General Assembly on the 27 October which discussed reports for the period 2013 to 2015 (instead of our formal representative Tihana Stepinc Fabijanic of Croatia – a Danube country).

Forum

The Participation Day which followed on 28 October was well attended by Austria, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Serbia and the Ukraine (all Danube countries); and representatives from Italy, Latvia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Netherlands, Poland as well as the United Kingdom. ECOVAST was given a display panel at the Participation Day where we staged a small exhibition on small towns. Valerie Carter also ran a small workshop on small towns (one of 12 different sessions) where we agreed 5 key points they wanted the Forum take on board. Our 5 conclusions were: we need strategies; the towns should link together; they must be places where local farmers sell their produce and they must retain their educational institutions. It finished with a slogan – 'please take note of small towns and do not ignore us'.

## **Second European Rural Parliament held in SCHÄRDING, Austria on 3-5 November 2015**

This event, jointly sponsored by ERCA, PREPARE and ELARD, brought together nearly 300 people from 40 countries in the beautiful small town of Schärding in Austria. ECOVAST was well represented. ECOVAST International and ECOVAST Austria staged a small exhibition on current ECOVAST work in the main marquee. The ECOVAST posters were displayed in the marquee. The event was attended by Franz Nahrada and Brigitte Macaria (ECOVAST Austria) and Valerie Carter and Michael Dower (both of United Kingdom).

Valerie Carter ran a workshop (two sessions) on small towns. Michael Dower (Past President of ECOVAST) co-hosted the event in his capacity as a Joint Coordinator of the European Rural Parliament, and had the main responsibility for drafting the Manifesto which was intensively debated and adopted by the Parliament. The Manifesto includes a section on the importance of small towns.

## **Tour associated with the Second European Rural Parliament on 5 November 2015**

The tour looked at some local projects in the rural areas around the town of Scharding. In the evening there was also a river trip on the River Inn which travelled to Passau and back with for the final conference dinner with music

## **ECOVAST Newsletter 60 published December 2015 - edited by Phil Turner: included:**

- Updates from the following National Sections: Austria by Arthur Spiegler and Brigitte Macaria; Croatia by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić and Niksa Bozic; Germany by Angus Fowler; Russia by Olga Sevan and the United Kingdom by Phil Turner
- A report on the Danube Forum meeting in Ulm by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)
- An article on Ecological Living for Local Communities by Royston Edge (United Kingdom)

## **2016**

*Second Major Rural European Conference (EU Countries of Europe) held in Cork, Ireland – 20 years after the first conference in 2006*

## **The ICOMOS Quarterly Collection of articles published as a book in March 2016**

This brings together a number of experts of ECOVAST Russia and edited by Olga Sevan and it includes lot of her projects, photos and drawings

## **The Second European Congress of Local Government held in KRAKOW, POLAND on 4 April 2016**

This was the second congress staged by the Economic Forum, and attracted more than 1,000 delegates from many countries, giving a chance for many local government officers to meet colleagues from across Europe. It included a series of approximately 30 workshops. At one of these Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) presented a paper and made a presentation 'Entrepreneurship, Agro-Tourism, Public Private Partnerships – Development Opportunities for Rural Areas' and took part in the discussion panel that followed the presentations.

## **ECOVAST Newsletter 61 published April 2016 - edited by Phil Turner: included:**

- A spotlight on Romania – this was the first of a series of overviews of the countries which have a national Section. It describes various aspects of Romania and the main areas of work of the National Section – compiled by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) and Magdalena Banu and Călin Hoinărescu (Romania)
- An article by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) of the 2<sup>nd</sup> European Congress of Local Authorities in Krakov

- A report from the following National Sections: Austria by Arthur Spiegler and Brigitte Macaria; Croatia by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić; Germany by Angus Fowler; Russia by Olga Sevan
- A report on the EUROPA NOSTRA UK Annual Duncan Sandys Lecture by Phil Turner (United Kingdom)
- A report on the European heritage Alliance by Phil Turner (United Kingdom)
- A report on APURE (European Rural University) by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)

#### **Cork 2.0 Conference held at CORK, Ireland, on 5 September 2016**

This event, called by Agriculture Commissioner Paul Hogan and attended by about 300 people, was announced as 'A Review of Rural Policy 20 years after the first Cork event in 1996'. Both Valerie Carter and Michael Dower attended. Only EU member states had been invited – but Michael Dower expressed his strong concern that such events should include people from elsewhere, particularly those countries which already have 'accession status' and which are therefore expected, in due course, to implement rural development programmes modelled on those of the European Union. The Conference adopted a Cork Declaration, which the Commissioner promised take fully into account in implementing current policies and shaping future policies for rural areas.

#### **Twelfth PREPARE Gathering in VOSKOPOJE, Albania on 16 September 2016**

Michael Dower and Valerie Carter of ECOVAST and PREPARE took part.

#### **ECOVAST events held in MARBURG, Germany on 21-24 October 2016**

This 4 day event consisted of an International Committee, a General Assembly a couple of tours and a seminar/workshop with the local authority.

#### **ECOVAST International Committee held in MARBURG, Hesse, Germany on 21 October 2016**

Those present at the meeting or has sent their apologies are listed in the Assembly meeting set out below.

The last International Committee meeting was held on Saturday 10 May 2014 at the Manor Hotel, Gatwick, UK. With a few minor amendments, the minutes of that meeting were approved.

Those present at the first meeting held in St Josh Chapel, expressed strong concern about the future of ECOVAST and the lack of attendance at meetings. A paper put forward by Phil Turner on different options was discussed. The unanimous decision was that ECOVAST should continue: but it was agreed that the National Sections of Poland and Slovakia (from whom nothing had been heard for a long time) and also of Macedonia and Russia be asked to explain their situations. Ideas on what action should now be taken to strengthen the National Sections was outlined and agreed – but it would involve a lot of effort.

The results of this discussion would be reported to the General Assembly to be held the following day and would also be reported to the Biennial Assembly of 2017.

Members Pam Moore and Phil Turner wanted to stand down as active members. They were thanked for their exceptional work for ECOVAST over many years. It was proposed that they become ECOVAST Life Members and this would be put to the General Assembly the next day.

#### **ECOVAST General Assembly held in Philipshaus, MARBURG, Hesse, Germany on 22 October 2016**

Present at the meeting, hosted by Angus Fowler, were 13 ECOVAST members from 3 countries of Austria, Germany and the United Kingdom) including:

President – Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)

Senior Vice President – Angus Fowler (Germany)

Treasurer – Andrea Weigert (Germany)

Other International Committee Members – Ralf Bokermann; Olaf Linke; (Germany); Pam Moore; Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

Other ECOVAST Members that attended included: Gerhard Fischer (representing Arthur Spiegler); Sylvia Mayer (Austria); Ivar Henckel; Max Linke, Michael Strecker, Peter Thran, (Germany)

Ulrich Althaus – the Marburg Curator of the German Foundation for the Preservation of Historic Monuments, attended as a guest.

Apologies were received from Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia); Irmelin Kuttner (Germany - who had fallen ill); Enrico Capo (Italy); Magdalena Banu, Călin Hoinărescu (Romania) and Olga Sevan (Russia).

The Minutes of the General Assembly held in Frantiskove Lazne, Czech Republic on 28 March were agreed.

The ECOVAST Accounts had not been audited for two years due to death and illness.

- Honorary Auditors Ivar Henckel and Peter Thran (Germany) were elected to serve until 2017 and also complete the audit for the years 2015 and 2016.

The recent deaths were recorded of two ECOVAST members - Helmut Kozonnek (Germany), Honorary Life Member); and Royston Edge (who was from the United Kingdom but moved to live and work in France and was



part of the early National Section ECOVAST France; he moved back to the UK and joined the ECOVAST United Kingdom National Section)

Notice of resignation was given by Pam Moore and Phil Turner who no longer wanted to play an active role in ECOVAST. They were thanked for their strong and active service over many years, Pam Moore being Secretary General for 8 years and Phil Turner President and (for two periods) Vice President. The International Committee agreed that they should become Honorary Members of ECOVAST. Two other members were put forward by ECOVAST Germany - Erika Maul and Christa Korzonnek. The Assembly agreed to all these 4 members.

The German National Section also proposed that four of their members, who had given exceptional service to ECOVAST, be awarded Honorary Life Membership retrospectively. The four names were Horst Bruchmann; Detlev Simmos; Gerda Stachowitz and Ursula Stratenwerth. The General Assembly agreed.

Reports had been received from the following National Sections: Austria from Arthur Spiegler and Brigitte Macaria; Croatia from Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic; Germany from Angus Fowler; Hungary from Gábor Rajnai; Romania from Magdalena Banu and Calin Hoinarescu; Russia from Olga Sevan; and the United Kingdom from Valerie Carter.

The main item at the Assembly was the debate on the future of ECOVAST – should it be wound down or should it continue and revitalise itself. The results on the debates on the future of ECOVAST which took place at the International Committee the day before were reported. The International Committee had voted to continue and this decision was agreed by the General Assembly.

The Honorary Auditors Ivar Henckel and Peter Thrann completed the audit of the accounts for 2015 and 2016.

#### **ECOVAST Tours associated with the Marburg event, Germany on 22 and 23 October 2016**

On the afternoon of 22 October, there was an excursion visiting the village of Bergein, the Brucker Mill and the small towns of Amoneburg and Kirchain. The evening dinner after the tour was attended by the Mayor of Marburg who was presented with a copy of ECOVAST publication 'The Importance of Small Towns'. On the afternoon 23 October there was a second tour visiting the villages of Marburg-Dilsschhausen; and Bellnhausen (the birthplace of ECOVAST).

#### **Landkries-Biedenkopf Seminar at Marburg on historic buildings and conservation held MARBURG on 24 October 2016**

ECOVAST members had been invited to this seminar and Gerhard Fasching and Sylvia Mayer (Austria), Valerie Carter (United Kingdom); Angus Fowler, and Peter Thran (Germany) and our guest Ulrich Althaus were welcomed by the District Chief Executive. The event included a series of presentations on historic buildings and conservation. The local press attended.

#### **ECOVAST Austria Green Belt Project work – Cooperation with ECOVAST Germany in 2016**

In 2016 ECOVAST Austria initiated to cooperate with ECOVAST Germany – particularly Angus Fowler - who wanted his section to become seriously involved in the Green Belt, constituting the ideal result of the interaction of landscapes and Small Historic towns.

#### **DENKMAL Trade Fair 2016 held in LEIPZIG, Germany on 10-12 November 2016**

This biennial leading EUROPEAN Trade Fair, has the international presence of ECOVAST organised and attended by ECOVAST Germany (through an arrangement with EUROPA NOSTRA). Angus Fowler (Germany) gave a talk on the new developments in the preventative maintenance movement in Europe which include the foundation of inspection services at Stirling City in Scotland and of pro Monumenta in Slovakia.

#### **ECOVAST Newsletter 62 published November 2016 - edited by Phil Turner: included:**

- An update on the DG Agri Civil Dialogue Group which is now attended by PREPARE and not ECOVAST; short report on the 2<sup>nd</sup> European Parliament held in Scharding, Austria in November 2015; short note on the Cork 2 rural policy conference of September 2016
- A report on the meetings in Marburg, Germany to mark our ECOVAST 32<sup>nd</sup> anniversary in October 2016
- An obituary by Angus Fowler for Royston Edge who passed away in September aged 91 who had been part of ECOVAST France and in the last few years a member of ECOVAST UK
- An article on Malmi Airport, Finland threatened by redevelopment yet is one of the best preserved still operational pre-World War II international airport – and considered to have unique heritage of world wide significance. It has been listed among the 7 Most Endangered heritage sites in Europe by EUROPA NOSTRA.
- An article on planning in Hungary – future Hungary 2050-2100 and the threat to smaller towns and villages by the Royal Town Planning Institute by Roland Laposi.
- Report on the ECOVAST visit to Brucker Muhle, Amoneburg, Germany on the 2016 General Assembly event of October 2016 by Pam Moore

- An article on land reform & counter-urbanisation in rural Sweden by Ingela Liwang , a friend of ECOVAST
- Reports from the following National Sections: Croatia by Nikša Božić and Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić Germany from Angus Fowler and Russia from Olga Sevan.
- Article by Pam Moore (United Kingdom) on the award for Knockando Woolmill, in the Spey valley in Scotland by Europa Nostra.
- Article on the European Heritage Alliance 3.3 (ECOVAST is a member) by Phil Turner (United Kingdom)

**ECOVAST Newsletter 62a Supplement published December 2016 – edited by Phil Turner:** included:

- An article by Phil Turner on Whitchurch Silk Mill, Hampshire which has been given a substantial £1.7 million grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund
- An additional report from the German Section by Angus Fowler and from Croatia
- A report that Europa Nostra supports the nomination of Rosia Montana for UNESCO World Heritage Status
- An article from ARC 2020 –the European Commission intends to adopt – before the end of 2017 – on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The announcement was made by President Jean-Claude Juncker at the EU Agriculture Outlook event in Brussels in December 2016
- A report on National Rural Parliaments from the European Rural Parliament Newsletter published in December

## **2017**

**ECOVAST Publication ‘United Kingdom Towns & Cities by ECOVAST UK – published February 2017.**

The report, based on a survey carried out 2015-2016, was written by Valerie Carter (President ECOVAST International and Chairman of ECOVAST UK). It lists all the towns and cities through the United Kingdom – England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. It listed the findings to several different population size bands highlighting those ‘small towns’ with populations up to 30,000 (small towns are not defined by statute in the UK, unlike Austria).

Copies of the publication were distributed to the 4 Regional Government Bodies of the United Kingdom (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales) and the 4 National Rural Networks; Local Government Association, Royal Town Planning Institute and Royal Geographical Society.

This was the last part of the ECOVAST International ASSET project. The report can be found on the ECOVAST website.

**European Economic and Social Committee Workshop on the potential of rural communities held in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 15 February 2017**

One of the sub-committees working for the EESC under the Chairmanship of Tom Jones (who is the President of the Wales Council for Voluntary Action) had produced a paper about the value of rural areas to the economy in September 2015. The EESC decided to take matters further and investigate more thoroughly through a EESC Hearing and Study Group with stakeholders. The discussion was focussed around the working document ‘Villages and Small Towns as Catalysts for Rural Development, Challenges and Opportunities’ – which was an ‘Own Initiative’ opinion prepared by Tom Jones.

ECOVAST was invited to be a key partner and named as a co-convenor of the event. Valerie Carter was appointed Expert Advisor. She produced a Questionnaire to be circulated to all EU Member States by the EESC secretariat and helped in the analysis of responses; and she also provided a list of people whom ECOVAST would like to see invited to contribute to the workshop.

ECOVAST was represented at the workshop with two key presentations - Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia) spoke on the importance of small towns in Croatia and what they have been doing; and Pal Hajas (Hungary) spoke on what had been happening in the village of Kozard, in order to emphasise the importance of villages and what they can achieve. Unfortunately, Valerie Carter was unable to go to the event as she was in hospital having an operation.

**Second Croatian Rural Parliament held in SVETI MARTIN NA MURI, Croatia on 20-22 April 2017**

Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic (ECOVAST Vice President) took part in this event.

**Third European Rural Parliament held in VENHORST, Netherlands 18 to 21 October 2017**

This was the third event in the biennial series of European Rural Parliaments, held this time in a village. It was attended by more than 250 people from 40 countries. Michael Dower (United Kingdom) was a rapporteur at the meeting; Phil Turner (United Kingdom) ran a workshop on small towns with presentations made by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia) & Valerie Carter (United Kingdom). Pam Moore (United Kingdom) also attended. There were a series of **tours** during the event to look at local projects.

**ECOVAST Newsletter 63 published September 2017 - edited by Valerie Carter:** included:

- The Presidents message on the publication in January 2017 of ECOVAST UK Study on UK Towns and Cities – the last part of the ASSET project which started in 2005;
- A report on the ECOVAST work with the EU Economic and Social Committee at the end of 2016 and early 2017 with the workshop in Brussels in February
- An article 'Spotlight on Austria' – the second of a series of articles which highlight a specific country which has a National Section. This spotlight was compiled by the President (Valerie Carter) and Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler of ECOVAST Austria. It gives a 'thumb nail sketch' of different aspects of Austria and then describes the three main areas of work of the Austrian Section – namely Landscape Identification; Small Historic European Towns (SHETs) and the Green Belt project and their involvement with the European Parliament held in Scharding, Austria in 2015.
- Reports from the following National Sections; Austria by Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler; Croatia by Aleksander Lukić and Nikša Božić; Germany from Angus Fowler; Hungary from Gábor Rajnai; Russia from Olga Sevan; and the United Kingdom from Valerie Carter

**Small Historic Towns (SHETS) in Austria published in October 2017**

A new paper summarising the work of ECOVAST Austria on small towns was published by Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler. The report focusses on historic towns that have a population of 50,000 people or less.

**ECOVAST events focussed on Illmitz, Burgenland, Austria 26/27 October 2017**

The events included a tour of the area around the Neusiedler See, in both Austria and Hungary, on the first day, followed by two ECOVAST Committee meetings. This Austrian event had been organised and hosted by ECOVAST Austria's Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Speigler

**ECOVAST Tour around Neusiedler See, and the Austrian and Hungaria National Park took place on 26 October 2017**

The tour started in Illmitz, Austria and visited the border area – National Parks in both countries- surrounding the Neusiedler See. The tour was arranged by Alois Lang, Director of the National Park Information Centre and he was also the tour guide. We visited a variety of sites within the two National Parks – Neusiedler See Seewinkel on the Austrian side of the See and Fertő-Hanság Nemzeti Park on the hungaria site. We first drove around the lake to visit the smallest town in Austria, Rust – famous for the storks which visit every day before going onto lunch in the lakeside fishing village of Morbisch before taking a more leisurely visit of various sites – the park which marked the very first place where the former iron curtain was opened, followed by several typical Hungarian villages, past the Esterházy Palace before passing back into Austria to visit one of the bird observatory towers.

**ECOVAST International Committee held in ILLMITZ, Burgenland, Austria on 26 October 2017**

Those ECOVAST members that attended or sent in their apologies are listed in the notes of the Assembly meeting below. The short evening meeting of the International Committee took place in the Pensione Zur Sonne (Egermann) after the tour to sort out how the Biennial Assembly would be run the following day and what the main topics on the agenda would be.

**ECOVAST Biennial Assembly held in National Park Centre, Neusiedler See, ILLMITZ, Burgenland, Austria on 27 October 2017**

Present at the meeting were 19 ECOVAST members from 6 countries attending (Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Slovakia and United Kingdom) and included:

President - Valerie Carter)

Senior Vice President – Angus Fowler (ECOVAST Germany)

Vice Presidents - Arthur Spiegler (ECOVAST Austria); Tihana Stepanic Fabijanić (ECOVAST Croatia);

Treasurer - Andrea Weigert (ECOVAST Germany).

International Committee members; Ralf Bokermann (ECOVAST Germany); Gabor Rajnai (ECOVAST Hungary); Eva Kralova (ECOVAST Slovakia)

Other International members present: Gerhard Fasching, Brigitte Macaria, Franz Nahrada; and Silvia Mayer (ECOVAST Austria); Valerija Kelemen Pepeonik (ECOVAST Croatia); Ivar Henckel, Irmelin Küttner; Michael Strecker, and Peter Thran (ECOVAST Germany); Dezső Kovács (ECOVAST Hungary); Eva Bellacova (ECOVAST Slovakia)

Apologies were received from: Vice President - Magdalena Banu (Romania); International Committee Members: Enrico Capo (Italy); Victoria Momeva Altiparmakovska (Macedonia); Calin Hoinarescu (Romania); and Olga Sevan (Russia); Other members: Aleksander Lucik (ECOVAST Croatia) Justin Bohl, Sibylle Bachmuller (ECOVAST Germany); Arno Frising (Luxembourg); Michael Dower, Pam Moore and Phil Turner (ECOVAST UK). There had been no response from ECOVAST Poland.

The Minutes of the International Committee meeting and the General Assembly of 2016 held in Marburg, Germany were agreed

The President thanked Alois Lang, Director of the National Park Centre, for his tour of the National Park in Austria and Hungary yesterday – which had been enjoyed by everyone and had led to ideas about new work

The committee then discussed the ECOVAST archives and the history document.

Archives: It was agreed that all archive material should be held in one place and be able to be accessed easily and seen by researchers and members in the future. It was agreed that Angus Fowler would try and arrange for all the archive material be deposited eventually in the Marburg State Archive and try to obtain the necessary formal permissions.

History: Valerie Carter is preparing a full record of events in the history of ECOVAST from 1984 until the present day. She wished to thank all those who have collected archive material over many years (particularly Angus Fowler and Michael Dower for the earlier years and Phil Turner, Pam Moore and Andrea Weigert who have collected material since 2000). She is to revisit Tellow and collect all the Minutes and the Newsletters from the boxes held by Rolf Peter Bartz. There is still considerable work to be done to complete the history document. The introduction section needs to be agreed between Valerie Carter, Angus Fowler and Michael Dower.

National Sections: The need to re-invigorate the National Sections had been discussed at the International Committee meeting and the General Assembly in Marburg in 2016. Newsletter 63 has listed reports from Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Russia and United Kingdom) sections, and the report received from Romania and the report given at the meeting by Slovakia would be included in the end of year Newsletter. There were no reports from either ECOVAST Macedonia or ECOVAST Poland.

This part of the meeting was to remind members of protocols in place for operating National Sections, which had not been stated formally since the protocol issued at the Biennial Assembly held in Butgenbach, Belgium in 2000.

This revised 2017 protocol was agreed:

- Although National Sections are there to serve the members of that country and organise ECOVAST activities for that country, their members are also members of ECOVAST International
- National Sections may use the ECOVAST logo, but must act in accordance of the formal aims and objectives of ECOVAST stated on the ECOVAST official website

*The role of ECOVAST International and the National Sections*

- ECOVAST International must keep National Sections informed of international activity through Committee Minutes and ECOVAST International may delegate functions to them
- Officers of ECOVAST International must report on the National Sections to all International Committee meetings and in every Newsletter

*The role of the National Sections:*

- The National Sections must be properly constituted
- They must have formal members and keep lists of these members and furnish the international committee with a list if required. These names will not be published unless they have been elected or selected to carry out an International role (formal member of the International Committee or ECOVAST Bureau or selected to lead a formal ECOVAST Working Group where people in these roles will have their name published in Newsletters or Committee minutes).
- They must collect membership fees (however small)
- They must keep accounts
- They must report their annual accounts to the Treasurer of ECOVAST International
- One third of these fees can be kept for their own local activities and two-thirds (or at least a donation) be given to ECOVAST International
- ECOVAST National Sections need to democratically nominate a member to serve on the ECOVAST International Committee
- They must report on their year's activities to ECOVAST International, preferably at the Annual General Assembly
- ECOVAST International must provide help to a National Section when required.

This new protocol will be circulated to all 10 ECOVAST National Sections.

A major discussion followed on the activities that members would like to pursue during the next few years. The following topics were agreed:

- Work with the European Heritage Alliance, and get involved with the European Year of Cultural Heritage
- Gather all our policy statements and reports on work carried out by the National Sections of Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Romania and Russia on rural buildings and form a new Rural Buildings Policy
- Report on depopulation by each National Section – what has happened already; what is expected and why
- Work on small towns

- Work on collecting local stories to highlight successful rural activity which can be used by ECOVAST and referred to at international events (such as the 'memorial field' in Hungary on the border of Austria which saw the first opening in the Iron Curtain in 1989)
- Rural Tourism – collecting all our policy statements and activities together to form a more rigorous ECOVAST Rural Tourism Policy Statement
- ECOVAST International must keep National Sections informed of international activity through Committee Minutes

A list of lead bodies for these proposed initiatives was agreed and it was suggested that they would set up a list of those who want to be involved. These groups will in effect, be the new 'ECOVAST Working Groups' who should report regularly to the official ECOVAST Committee meetings.

This being a voting general assembly there was a formal release of the current International Committee from its obligations and the committee members were thanked for their work over the last 2.5 years (2015-2017). An election for a new International Committee to serve for the next two years (2017-2019) followed.

The following were proposed and elected by the National Sections:

- Brigitte Macaria (Austria)
- Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia)
- Angus Fowler (Germany)
- Gábor Rajnai (Hungary)
- Victoria Momeva Altaparmakovska (Macedonia)
- Halina Łapińska (Poland)
- Magdalena Banu (Romania)
- Olga Sevan (Russia)
- Eva Kralova (Slovakia)
- Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)

The following members were put forward and elected to stand on the new ECOVAST International Committee

- Andrea Weigert (Germany)
- Michael Strecker (Germany)
- Călin Hoinărescu (Romania)
- Franz Nahrada (Austria)

There was a lot of enthusiasm among the new committee and everyone was looking forward to the new programme. It was agreed to have a joint President – in order to share the work of promoting the new re-invigorated organisation. The new International Committee elected the members of the new Bureau:

- Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) was elected to President
- Angus Fowler (Germany) was also elected to share the Presidency – (but, alas, he died suddenly soon after the meeting- see below)

Four members were elected to serve as Vice President

- Brigitte Macaria (Austria)
- Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia);
- Gábor Rajnai (Hungary)
- Magdalena Banu (Romania)
- Andrea Weigert (Germany) was elected to continue as Treasurer

No one proposed themselves for the position of Secretary General.

- Honorary Auditors Ivar Henkel and Peter Thran (both of Germany) agreed to continue for 2017-2019.

### **European Cultural Forum held at 'The Superstudio' in Tortona, MILAN, Italy on 7-8 December 2017**

The invitation to the event came from the network 'the European Heritage Alliance' (ECOVAST is a member). The European Culture Forum is a biennial flagship event organised by the European Commission to raise the profile of European cultural cooperation, to bring together cultural sectors' key players and to debate on EU culture policy and initiatives. It marked the official launch of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018, the thematic EU year devoted to our common cultural assets and all their aspects. The event provided discussions on 3 main questions:

- can culture help to tackle European and global challenges?
- does cultural heritage matter to Europeans?
- how can culture in cities and regions help to shape more cohesive and inclusive societies?

This event was attended by Angus Fowler (Germany) and it was the last international event where he represented ECOVAST.

Angus sadly died when he returned to Berlin, Germany. As one of ECOVAST's most active members and one of the original founder members of ECOVAST in March 1984 he will be sadly missed.

### **Third Industry Forum – held in Hotel Gołębiowski in KARPACZ, Poland 8-10 December 2017**

This was one of the events organised by the Economic Forum (referred to in 2018). The Industry Forum is a platform for exchange of views and a meeting place for – representatives of large and medium-sized companies, public administration, media and experts, both from Poland and abroad. Nearly 700 people attended.

The conference discussions were organised into 5 thematic blocks (Investments, Innovations, Society, Economy and Infrastructure) – each with a series of presentation workshops. Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) took part in the discussion panel in the Thematic Block - on Society – The Industrial Potential of Towns. She also made a short presentation – based on ECOVAST research in small towns in South East England (part of the ASSET project) - on the value of businesses – particularly in small towns - not only to the local economy, but also to regional and national economies.

## **2018**

### **Tenth Anniversary of CIVILSCAPE held in ASCHAFFENBURG, Germany on 23-26 February 2018**

ECOVAST was one of its founding members and attended the launch in Florence Italy on 23 February 2008 where civil societies involved with the landscape issues joined forces and mobilized themselves after the first international treaty entirely dedicated to the management, protection and planning of the landscape was born.

Their answer to the European Landscape Convention was the establishment of CIVILSCAPE, the common European platform representing the voice of the citizens deeply connected with their landscapes. The reason for the celebration was not only to look back and to celebrate, but rather to look forward with a vision of the civil society towards the future developments of our landscapes. The event is also organised as CIVILSCAPE's activity within the European Cultural Heritage Year 2018!

There was not only a conference, the general assembly and advisory board meeting, but also a projects fair, information for funding opportunities, meeting of the task forces, birthday party and – of course the excursion in the winter cultural landscape of Spessart, a famous upland region, as well as a guided city tour of Aschaffenburg. Michael Dower (United Kingdom) made a formal presentation at the event which was also attended by International Committee member Michael Strecker (Germany).

### **ECOVAST new informal partnership with Economic Forum Programme Council (EFPC) in April 2018**

This Institute for Eastern Studies (known as the Economic Forum) developed from quite small beginnings in 1990 with a few hundred delegates to a massive event – one of the biggest conferences in Europe – now attended by more than 4,000 delegates. It attracts many politicians, and also entrepreneurs, businesses, economists, and representatives of civil society. Although it focuses on central and eastern Europe – with a very strong contingent from Poland – it attracts delegates from most of the countries of geographic Europe. It debates current issues of world economy, policy and society and meets every September and is organised by

The Economic Forum Programme Council' (EFPC) asked ECOVAST to become an informal partner organisation. Since 2015 the Forum has also been responsible for 2 other major conferences – a European Congress for Local Governments which meets in the spring in Krakow; and an Industry Forum which meets in the winter in the mountain of Karpacz (ECOVAST has spoken at both of these events).

### **Fourth European Congress of Local Governments held in KRAKOW, Poland on 26-27 April 2018**

This annual event staged in Krakow encourages discussion on the most important challenges and problems of local authorities (ECOVAST has been represented in 2015 and 2016). There were nearly 1,900 guests from 36 countries - with the theme was 'Local government: A strategy for the future' and was carried out under the following thematic blocks: Finance, Society, Innovation, Economy, Environment, and Business and Local Government. Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) represented ECOVAST and took part in a workshop called 'Local Patriotism – Do Origins Matter' in the thematic block of Environment.

She also made a short presentation 'The Role that could be played by Small Towns'. Valerie Carter was also a member of the Plenary Panel Discussion which brought the conference discussions to a close.

### **First Balkan Rural Parliament held in VRNJAČKA BANJA, Serbia, on 26-28 June 2018**

This was the first rural parliament to be held in the Balkans and it was held within the framework of the EU-funded project 'Active Local Regions for Economic Development of Rural Areas' (ALTER). The theme was 'European perspective of rural communities of the Western Balkans and Turkey'.

The event was aimed at supporting regional and inter-sectorial cooperation, promote stakeholder involvement and develop recommendations for sustainable development of rural communities in the countries of the region. ECOVAST was represented by Michael Dower (United Kingdom).

**ECOVAST Newsletter 64 published September 2018 edited by Valerie Carter:** included

- A tribute to Angus Fowler - the memorial service held in the Sophienkirche in Berlin on 26 January 2018 and the memorial service held in the College Chapel at Trinity College, Oxford on 20 September 2018
- A list of Bureau and Committee members elected in October 2017 at Neusiedler, Austria
- A report on the Third Industry Forum, held in Karpacz, Poland held 8-10 December 2017
- A report on the European Cultural Forum meeting held in Milan, Italy on 7-8 December 2017
- A report on Tenth Anniversary of CIVILSCAPE held in Aschaffenburg, Germany on 23-26 February 2018
- A report on Fourth European Congress of Local Governments held in Krakow, Poland on 26-27 April 2019
- A report on new informal partnership between ECOVAST and The Economic Forum
- A report on First Balkan Rural Parliament
- A report on the twenty-eighth Economic Forum held in Krynica, Poland on 4-7 September 2018
- Reports from the National Sections: Austria from Brigitte Macaria; Croatia from Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić; Germany from Irmelin Kuttner; Hungary from Gabor Rajnai; Romania from Magdalena Banu and the United Kingdom from Valerie Carter
- Reports on International Working Groups on; Landscape, Rural Buildings, Rural Tourism and Small Towns

#### **Twentyeighth Economic Forum held in KRYNICA DZROJ, Poland on 4-7<sup>th</sup> September 2018**

This was the first time ECOVAST had been invited to their most prestigious event. It was held in Krynica-Zdrój is small town in, Małopolska (Lesser Poland Province) in Poland which had a population of 11,200 people. It is the biggest spa town in Poland often called the Pearl of Polish Spas - and a popular tourist and winter sports destination situated in the heart of the Beskids mountain range of the Carpathians. The event had 20 different platforms - each one having 5 or 6 separate daily debates with a panel of speakers who offer a presentation on their selected topics. Each debate was followed by questions from the audience. The panel debate ECOVAST took part in was 'The Future Role for Regions and How They Could Respond to Change'. The workshop was hosted by the region of Cantabria Spain who outlined what was expected from the new European Union programmes starting in 2020 and moderated by the Regional Development Agency Zasavje in Slovenia. Other speakers were from the Regional Agency for Spatial and Economic Development of Raska and Moravica in Serbia, and from Sejm (which is the lower house of the Polish Parliament)

#### **ECOVAST events in held in BISTRA, Croatia 12-13 October 2018**

The event in BISTRA, Croatia followed the time-honoured approach where the ECOVAST annual meeting of members was developed by the local ECOVAST National Section with a conference and study tour. The formal ECOVAST meetings (Annual Assembly preceded by a short International Committee) were fitted into this programme. The host organiser was ECOVAST Croatia who was staging their own celebration of their foundation 25 years ago in 1993.

#### **ECOVAST Croatia International conference on 'Eco-Museums' held in the Cultural Centre of the BISTRA Municipality, in Croatia on 12 October 2018**

The conference was held in the village of Bistra which lies at the foot of the Medvednica mountain which separate it from the capital city of Zagreb. The small municipality is made up of six separate villages (total population around 6,000 people) with the two of the villages that make up Bistra - Lower (Donja) Bistra and Upper (Gornja) Bistra having a population together of about 1,500 people. The issue discussed at the conference and study tour visits was that of 'eco-museums, under the title 'The Role of Eco Museums in the Development of Local Rural Communities'. The Bistra community is in the process of developing its own Eco-museum. There were around 60 attendees which included many enthusiastic ECOVAST members from Croatia (many of these being young members). The event was international with ECOVAST members from Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary (who just attended the study tour), Slovakia and the United Kingdom and a guest from Albania.

The conference was opened by the Major of Bistra, Darko Sever-Seni, followed by a short welcome by ECOVAST Croatia President Aleksandar Lukić. Valerie Carter - ECOVAST International President then gave a presentation on 'ECOVAST work on rural tourism'. The keynote speaker was Tomislav Sola – the Director of The Best in Heritage based in Zagreb. He was followed by a series of speakers giving examples of Croatian Eco- Museums: Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic on 'Early Initiatives for Creating Eco-museums in the North Adriatic and Gorski Kotar regions of Croatia. Our hot buffet lunch was in the upper village. After lunch the conference continued while the ECOVAST committee members transferred to Oršić castle to hold their formal meetings.

We all met up again for dinner in the Lower Bistra and consumed a vast amount of meat – bringing the first day to a close – a bit tired as we had worked hard but looking forward to seeing more of the countryside and examples of eco-museums the next day.

#### **ECOVAST International Committee meeting held in Oršić Castle, BISTRA, Croatia on 12 October 2018**

This short meeting, hosted by ECOVAST Croatia was focussed on preparation for the General assembly which followed. Those present are listed in the General Assembly meeting which was held after this event.



The Minutes of the International Committee meeting held in Illmitz, Austria in October 2017 was proposed and seconded and agreed as correct and signed.

A short discussion followed on the need to adhere strictly to our Statutes. The Minutes of all meetings had been approved by the next meeting (either International Committee Meeting or Annual Assembly Meeting) by being put to a vote and agreed or agreed with alterations, but they were not always formally proposed and seconded or signed the Secretary General or other person present at this next meeting and then countersigned by the Chairman of that meeting. It was now agreed that this formal process will be followed from now on. Copies of the signed version of the Minutes will be kept in the Archives (paper and scanned pdf) and a copy of the annual assembly meetings forwarded to the Tribunal in Selestat, France after have been signed. It means that it is essential to keep a formal paper record of our formal activities not just electronic records. All ECOVAST committee meetings are held in English and the notes written in English. It is also proposed that from now on copies of minutes and newsletters be translated into French and German (Google).

### **ECOVAST General Assembly held in Oršić Castle, BISTRA, Croatia on 12 October 2018**

Present at the meeting, hosted by ECOVAST Croatia, were 6 ECOVAST members from 4 countries (Austria, Croatia, Slovakia and the United Kingdom) including:

President: Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)

Vice President: Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia)

International Committee members: Franz Nahrada (Austria); Eva Kralova (Slovakia)

Other ECOVAST members: Valerija Kelemen Pepeonik (Croatia); Teresa Davidova (Slovakia)

Guests: Arieta Ceka (Albania); and Nenad Maljkovic and Ludmila Valčić (Croatia)

ECOVAST welcomed 2 new members from the Czech Republic – Pavel Konečný and Vera Berkova who attended the conference and the tour but not the committee meeting. Dezső Kovács (Hungary) also joined on the tour which meant that 7 countries were involved in the Bistra event.

Apologies for absence: Vice Presidents: Brigitte Macaria (Austria); Magdalena Banu (Romania); Gábor Rajnai (Hungary); Treasurer Andrea Weigert (Germany); International Committee Members: Ivan Henckel, Irmelin Kuttner (Germany - it is the first time that we had no members from Germany); Calin Hoinarescu (Romania); and Olga Sevan (Russia)

The Minutes of the Biennial Annual Assembly held in Neusiedler, Austria in October 2017 was proposed and seconded and agreed as correct and signed and a copy (together with a French translation) will be sent to the Tribunal at Selestat, France.

Reports from 6 National Groups (Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Russia, and the United Kingdom) had recently been reported in Newsletter 64 published in September; new reports had been received from Macedonia FYROM from Victoria Momeva Altiparmakovska and from Slovakia by Eva Kralova and a report is awaited from Russia from Olga Sevan.

The Reports from the following International Working Groups included: a Landscape report from Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler saying that the group was revived and was now concentrated on caves and karst scenery. Valerie Carter reported that she was reviving the work on Rural Tourism and hoping to have someone to lead on Rural Buildings and take part in the European Heritage Alliance 3.3 work; Small Towns is still continuing with a study on the impact of internet shopping and the loss of shops in our High Streets

The meeting ended with a brief discussion on the impact of electronic communications has had on our villages and small towns and the role of 'transition communities' and the fact that we need to add some new text to our website (to add to our formal objectives) on these issues.

### **ECOVAST Croatia Study Tour of Eco-Museums on 13 October 2018**

This event took place on the second day of the Bistra event was a tour of the rural areas of the north-west corner of Croatia organised by ECOVAST Croatia. The first stop was the small village of Radoboj in the county of Krapina-Zagorje, the site of a former sulphur mine and processing centre. The machine for refining sulphur was invented here and known as the Radoboj machine. The local community has built a new eco-museum dedicated to the memories of a sulphur mining community. Our second stop at the small town of Lepoglava (population of 4,500 people) in the County of Varazdin lying below the Ivanščica Mountain where we were joined by Dezső Kovács of ECOVAST Hungary. The town became a cradle of science, art, and culture that was formed by the Pauline order -- the white friars -- from as early as 1400. Our main visit was to the Eco-museum -- the Lepoglava Lace Museum. Lace making is believed to have been introduced in Croatia by the Pauline Order and became a tradition that was never entirely interrupted. Every September since 1997 the town has held a lace making festival and is part of intangible UNESCO heritage event. The Lepoglava Lace Museum also gave a display of a semi-precious stone mined in the area called 'Ahat' a stone with beautiful blue grey banding and the only semi-precious stone found in Croatia. We managed to take the chance to visit one of the most important monasteries of the entire Pauline Order, the Monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Church of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary founded in Lepoglava 1400 in Lepoglava.

We then left Lepoglava and continued north around the town of Varaždin; across the river Drava into the countryside of Međimurje – an area of rich farmland of fruits and vegetables and vines. Our third stop and final stop was the banks of the River Mura (a tributary of the River Drava and later the Sava very close to the Slovenian border) where the countryside around the river has been designated as an area of 'natural and traditional heritage' called the 'Mura Significant Landscape Area'. We stopped at the small village of Žabnik by St. Martin on Mura to visit a floating water mill, moored to the river bank, with an impressive wooden waterwheel – a unique example of traditional architectural heritage in Croatia (an eco-museum) and beyond. The centre of this tourism site is a large wooden building which acts as a café and on the top floor is another eco-museum dedicated to the life of the local people and their traditions which we visited.

#### **DENKMAL event October 2018**

ECOVAST Germany was unable to attend this event in 2018 but a partner took our leaflets

#### **PREPARE Gathering Tour, around the regions of PEJA, Kosovo held on 30 October 2018**

The 'Gathering' started with 3 Travelling Workshops – to meet local people and visited a range of projects.

- A tour of the western Kosovo and the countryside and farming businesses between the towns of Peja, Dečan, Gjakove and Prizren
- A tour of the south Kosovo visiting agriculture enterprises around Zhupe, Suharekë, Dragaš and Prizren
- A tour of the area known as the 'Capital of Agriculture' and visit to see businesses in the village of Krushe e Madhe, Hoča e Madhe and the town of Rahovec (chicken farming, pickling vegetables, wine growing, fish farming and barrel maker).

#### **Fourteenth PREPARE Gathering – Conference and Workshops: held in Hotel Dukagjini, PEJA, Kosovo on 29 October – 1 November 2018**

This was a joint event between NORDK (The Network for Rural Development of Kosovo); the ALTER project (Active Local Territories for Economic Development of Rural Areas – in the Western Balkans and Turkey with lead partner of Serbia) and the PREPARE Network (where ECOVAST is a member) – who used the event as their traditional 'gathering'. It was an international event, attended by about 60 delegates from 12 countries - with many members from Kosovo and organisations from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Slovenia and the United Kingdom (represented by Valerie Carter of ECOVAST). The conference was opened by the Minister of Agriculture of Kosovo, followed by presentation about the work of NORDK, the Alter Project and the PREPARE organisation. The conference then broke into 4 workshops

- The role of civic society in Rural Policy Development
- LEADER as a driving force for integrated local development
- Community development and volunteering
- Capacity building and sustainability of the PREPARE network

The afternoon of the first conference day saw most delegates going on a tour of the town of Peja, whilst the members of PREPARE held their annual assembly meeting. The day ended with a conference dinner accompanied by a local guitarist and singer. The third and final day saw a continuation of the workshops, a summary of their conclusions and a report from each of the three tours of Kosovo. It was an interesting event in a country not known by very many of the attendees. Everyone had been made very welcome and the new member of PREPARE will form a valuable part of the newly elected board.

#### **ECOVAST Newsletter 65 published December 2018 edited by Valerie Carter: included**

- A report on the Croatia event
- A report on ECOVAST International Committee held in Bistra, Croatia by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)
- A report on the ECOVAST General Assembly held in Bistra, Croatia by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)
- Reports on National Sections for Macedonia from Victoria Momeva Altiparmakovska, for Russia from Olga Sevan and for Slovakia from Eva Kralova
- A report on the PREPARE Gathering held in Kosovo October by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)
- An article on ECOVAST Archives to have both paper and digital copies of our documents

## **2019**

*The governments of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Greece agreed in June 2018 that the name of FYROM should become the Republic of North Macedonia and this came into effect in February 2019.*

#### **ASSET 2 Project 2019-2020**

A small project to look at the changes to the High Street of a small town in South East England is underway. There is a lot of concern being voiced in the United Kingdom about the loss of shops due to internet shopping

and large increases in rent. The town being surveyed is Tenterden in Kent which was used as an example of best practice in ECOVAST report 'The Importance of Small Town' published in 2014. The project will involve the Town Council, the local Chamber of trade and the local authority and is expected to be published in 2020.

### **ECOVAST Archive and History Project 2015-2019**

**Archive** material has been collected during the early years by Angus Fowler (Germany) and Michael Dower (United Kingdom). After 2000 material was collected by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic (Croatia), Andrea Weigert (Germany); and Valerie Carter, Pam Moore, Phil Turner (United Kingdom). Archive records had been kept in Marburg, Germany by Angus Fowler and Michael Dower's records had been transferred to Tellow, also in Germany and several visits by Valerie Carter to these locations in 2016 and in 2018 were undertaken to retrieve or copy material. All material was in paper format at least until the year 2000 and an exercise to digitise all the paper work was undertaken by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) during 2017-2018. Copies of the material will be available in both paper and pdf format and it is stored in simple box files. A destination for the archives still needs to be agreed – the committee had decided it would try to arrange for this in Marburg as it was where ECOVAST started. This decision still has to be confirmed.

The **history** document is based on all this material and has been written by Valerie Carter and edited by Michael Dower. The memory of the early years by Angus Fowler and Michael Dower also provided information – to add 'flesh to the bones' of facts. The document is in three parts;

- the first introductory part explains the foundation of the organisation, formal aims and objectives and links other organisations. It explains the operational principles; the membership; the National sections; work major policy events in Europe and reports on ECOVAST formal Policy Statements; and publications. The second part of the history is a factual record of all ECOVAST events (meetings), policy papers and publications in chronological order
- this is followed by two Annexes which summarise the information reported from the International Working Groups and the contributions made to ECOVAST International by the ECOVAST National Sections;
- and the final part is a series of Indexes which lists all those members who have been elected to serve on the ECOVAST International Committee and a list of all Presidents, Vice Presidents, Secretaries General, Treasurers and Auditors and all those who have led an ECOVAST Working Group: lists the committee meetings: lists of ECOVAST Tours; conferences: lists the ECOVAST projects: lists the policy work: lists the operational structures ending with a copy of the current statutes ending, a simple Glossary of Terms

This is not the end of ECOVAST work. It is only a record of the first 35 years. ECOVAST activities will still be recorded so that our history can be updated, the second Volume 2 is already underway starting April 2019.

The current International Committee salute the work of the members listed in the history report and who have made ECOVAST the organisation it is today. All the names listed in public documents (official minutes or newsletters or publications or the formal reports of the International Working Groups or the National Sections) have been included. Those members who attended formal meetings or conferences did not always get listed on attendance lists and our thanks should go to those who were active but not named.

This history report is at present only in English but during the next few months it will be translated (using Google) into both French and German)

### **A Look Forward Beyond April 2019**

*It is intended to produce a new ECOVAST leaflet in 2020 based on Part A of this report.*

*A Volume 2 Report – documenting the work of ECOVAST from April 2019 onwards is also underway.*

*A Review of the Effectiveness of ECOVAST is planned (this document is a simple reference document listing ECOVAST's work over 35 years). The review will involve a simple questionnaire survey of our pan-European partners and ECOVAST National Sections. It will explore the coverage of Europe, levels of attendance at meetings and the presentations made over the years 1984 to 2019 using graphs and diagrams.*

*The following section includes 2 Annexes – which is a summary of the work of the International Working Groups and the contribution from the ECOVAST National Sections.*

*The Annexes are followed by a series of Indexes which summarise ECOVAST activities – which can be cross-referenced with the main body of the text in Part B of the Report.*

## **ANNEX 1:**

### **ECOVAST INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUPS**

At its meeting in Strasbourg, France in November 1986, ECOVAST International Committee agreed to set up working groups to explore specific rural issues in more depth. Ideas on possible topics were further developed at a committee meeting held in Brussels, Belgium in April 1987. The first 5 groups were agreed in Blaye, France in April 1988 and held their first meetings at the conference in Lübeck Travemünde, Germany in October 1988.

The protocols controlling how these groups operate are part of the Index on Operational Guidelines set out on page xxx.

The groups select their own chairman and members, who have expertise or an interest in the topic. They stage their own meetings; report their findings to the Executive Committee together with their suggestions on ECOVAST policy and sometimes draft publications. Not all the reports have been found. A record of the reports submitted to the committees or included in newsletters and of the persons who made each report (where listed) are all included in the chronological list of Part B of this report.

Over the years there have been 14 groups covering 12 issues. Some have not lasted very long, and one became a project rather than a group. Many were created for a specific purpose – to respond to a specific threat or to newly proposed European policies which are time critical. But 6 topics - agriculture, integrated rural development, rural buildings, rural tourism, landscapes and small towns have underpinned ECOVAST development over many years, and made a significant impact on ECOVAST policies.

This Annex sets out the background to each specialist group; the work they have done through their own meetings or events; and the linkages with other events staged by partners.

The first 5 groups held meetings in Lübeck-Travemünde, Germany in October 1988. Two of these, related to Education and Sustainable Rural Communities, did not continue after that meeting. The other three – for rural development, rural architecture and rural tourism – were long lasting. The Working groups are set out in chronological order of their creation.

#### **Education 1988-1989**

This working group was agreed at the committee meeting held in **April 1988** at Blaye, France. Its first meeting was held at the ECOVAST conference in Lübeck Travemünde. It was led by Pierre du Pontavice (France) of the European Federation of National Natural Parks and the Rapporteur was Christian Neümüller from the *Centre Permanent d'Initiation à l'Environnement Régional d'Alsace* (also France).

#### **Sustainable Rural Communities 1988-1989**

This working group was agreed at the committee meeting held in **April 1988** in Blaye, France. Its first meeting was held at the ECOVAST conference in Lübeck-Travemünde, Germany in **October 1988**. Michael Dower (President) was asked to lead this group and he invited Carlos Frescata (Portugal), Anders Holm (Denmark), Jean-Paul Leclercq (France), and Tony Crofts and Nick Dean (United Kingdom) to take part in it. Anders Holm, *Landforeningen Af Landsbysamfund*, Denmark acted as Rapporteur.

#### **Integrated Rural Development 1988-1989: 1997-2001**

This working group was agreed at the committee held in **April 1988** in Blaye, France. Its first meeting was held at the ECOVAST conference in Lübeck-Travemünde, Germany in **October 1988**. It was led by Professor Leendert van der Plas of the Wageningen Agricultural University (Netherlands) and the Rapporteur was Josef Holzner of *Hans-Seidel-Stiftung*, Bavaria, Germany.

In 1994 a project developed on Integrated Rural Development led by Enrico Capo of the LABOS Foundation (Italy) and involving Gunter Kröes (Germany and University of Dortmund); Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden and University of Uppsala) and Jean Pierre Dichter of Luxembourg. (See page 187).

In **September 1997** at the ECOVAST event in Attersee, Austria, attended by 20 members from 10 countries, the Group was revived and chaired by Edmund Neville-Rolfe. The discussion was wide-ranging with themes on the quality of life; the need for an integrated approach; partnership between public and private interests; participation of local people; job creation; and the role of training and capacity-building. The Group asked Justus Bohl (Germany) to prepare a discussion paper, to be circulated to all interested members of ECOVAST in early 1998.

The revised Group held its second meeting in **September 1998** at the ECOVAST event in Marathon, Greece. A starting-point for a wide-ranging discussion was provided by two papers, from Justus Bohl (Germany) and Christine Weiss (of VOCA, based in Slovakia). Members agreed that a short policy document should be prepared, to influence the current debate about rural development policy in Europe, and should also take on board information on good practice in the rural development field. Much information is already available from different sources but it should also consider how good information can reach people in and beyond our own

network. A small group of volunteers was asked to propose a framework for this idea, for further discussion at meetings of the group.

The Group took the lead in ECOVAST's role in organising the Italian Conference on rural development held in **May 1999** in Grosseto, working with the Regional Council of Tuscany. A short meeting of the Group was held during that Conference and the decisions made at Marathon were confirmed.

In **September 1999** alongside the General Assembly held in Hemaven, Sweden, the Group's meeting was attended by over 30 members. They commented upon, a draft ECOVAST policy statement on Rural Development entitled 'All Europe Shall Live' and which was ready to be finalised by the International Committee. This statement outlined the approach that ECOVAST might take, in collaboration with other bodies, to gather information and ideas on good practice in rural development, and disseminate it throughout Europe. It was agreed that we should not aim to produce a major new system of information in this field, but rather should aim to work with other organisations and existing data bases and explore the way in which this might be done, including links to the PREPARE initiative, the training manual arising from the Carpathian Foundation project, the LEADER observatory and other sources. The approach outlined in the paper was broadly agreed, and would be pursued: members of the Working Group would be kept informed of progress on this, and on events to be held on the broad field of rural development during the following year.

The Group then had a short discussion on the SAPARD programme, which will bring European Union money into rural development work in the 10 pre-accession states of Central Europe. It was agreed that ECOVAST national sections and members in these countries should involve themselves in the national processes of consultation on the SAPARD plans; and that ECOVAST at European level should keep them informed about the proposed programme of local mobilisation.

In **September 2000** at the ECOVAST Biennial Assembly event held in Butgenbach, Belgium the Group held a meeting, attended by 20 members. It was agreed that the statement 'All Europe Shall Live' should be reflected in the redraft of the 'Strategy for Rural Europe'. The Group discussed proposals, put forward as part of the PREPARE project, for a Website-based information system related to good practice in rural development, and suggested that this should be linked to the proposals for a 'virtual ECOVAST network' put forward by Philip Noel-Baker (Greece). They had a lively initial debate about the role of women in rural development, introduced by Gabriella Kaufmann (Germany), and agreed that this should be the theme of a workshop to be organised by the Group in the spring of 2001.

In **October 2000** at the Conference on 'Participation and Partnership in Preparation and Implementation of Development Programmes' held in the small town Zvenigorod, near Moscow Arthur Spiegler and Sixtus Lanner (Austria) presented a paper on behalf of the Group. It put forward ten aspects of the strengths of rural development of a rural region (an integrated wholeness of landscapes, villages and small towns) as follows:

- **Food.** Even today our food mainly comes from rural regions and their farmers, including those committed to achieving high quality of food and sustainable maintenance of landscape.
- **Recreation.** The countryside is, at one and the same time, a place of recreation and a place of work for the rural people. The process of farming "creates" landscape. The roots of our landscape reach back into times when our ancestors began to settle down – the very beginning of agriculture.
- **Sound environment.** In the public opinion, the countryside is associated with the idea of a sound environment, sound living conditions, and the experience of free nature – which for many places in the rural region is still accurate.
- **Economy:** Rural region with their villages and small towns is an important basis of powerful and wide spread economy. The rural resources, such as minerals, water, the products of farms and forests and the processing of these resources, all upon the fund of knowledge and experience of the rural people. Moreover, rural regions offer huge resources of renewable energy which up to now are used only to a very small part.
- **Water:** Rural regions contain the greatest resource of water. Agriculture and forestry and all the users of the rural region must be fully aware of the opportunities, but also the risks offered by this asset.
- **Climate:** Rural regions, with all their forests and waters, are tremendous "climatic resource", for example in cleaning and moisturising of air.
- **Heritage:** Rural regions contribute greatly to the cultural and natural heritage of each country and of Europe as a whole. Landscape, for example, is the greatest cultural and natural heritage Europe has in common but at the same time presents Europe in all its variety. Landscape also is a mirror of society with a historical depth of view; but at the same time is a most essential asset for Europe's future. Rural regions and the well-being of their people represent one of the strongest tools of a promising counter-balance to globalisation.
- **Regional identity:** Rural regions represent the regionality of Europe. As Europe becomes more integrated, and national boundaries become less important, the identity of regions gains greater value. Europe must not become an amorphous object within its new stronger outer borderline, if we want the wealth of European ethnic groups to identify themselves with Europe as their great and common homeland. Regionality is characterized by the cultural diversity of historic, religious and secular buildings and rural

landscapes.

- **'Know-how:** Rural regions are a sort of 'Know-how Fund' in respect of the asset of knowledge and experience of its people. In addition to this "autochthonic" asset of experience today, synergies between the rural regions and the big towns and even the whole world based on the possibilities of the electronic network begin to work. This development offers one of our greatest chances to meet the requirements of the future.

In **May 2002** a special workshop on sustainable development led ECOVAST Austria and Arthur Spiegler (Austria) was held on the Island of Mljet, Croatia. The work had started in December 2001, but this workshop was designed to bring together people from Mljet and from outside together and to start a dialogue that could motivate and encourage the island of to pursue a process for integrated rural development to serve the well-being of the island and its people. Sustainable development is mainly a process of learning, of becoming aware about potentials, of being creative and of setting actions which could bring benefit to Mljet itself, its inhabitants, its visitors and friends, but also to the region and the whole country. There was strong participation of the local citizens of Mljet. Michael Dower acted as a proved presenter

In **October 2002** The Group met at the ECOVAST event in Seifhennersdorf, Germany to discuss the Mid-Term Review of the Common Agricultural Policy.

### **Rural Buildings (or Rural Architecture) 1988-2015**

The creation of this working group was agreed at the committee meeting held in **April 1988** in Blaye, France. Its first meeting was held at the ECOVAST conference in Lübeck Travemünde, Germany in **October 1988**. The leader of this group was John Sell (United Kingdom) Architect, Barns Campaign, Society, for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and the Rapporteur was Jane Wade (also of United Kingdom) Vernacular Architecture Group, Canterbury, England. This group lasted for many years and has had several successive chairman.

In **March 1989**, at a meeting in Hungary, arranged by Andras Roman (ECOVAST Vice President from Hungary), the Group decided to conduct an urgent survey of the measures which are pursued in different European countries to identify and protect their historic buildings in rural areas.

The Group met again in **November 1989**, in Chateauroux, France, with a programme organised by *Maisons Paysannes de France* and sponsored by the *Centre Europeen de Restauration du Patrimoine* and local authorities. Valuable discussions and site visits took place, with a particular focus on training of skilled craftsmen for work on traditional buildings.

In **May 1990** a symposium was held on the architectural heritage in the countryside was held in the small town of Krizevci, in Yugoslavia (now Croatia), organised by the Institute of Historical Studies at the University of Zagreb, in association with this ECOVAST Working Group and attended by 80 delegates from 9 countries under the title 'Architectural Heritage in the Countryside'. It was followed by a study tour. .

Also in **May 1990**, John Sell, Jane Wade (United Kingdom) and Angus Fowler (Germany) visited the town of Karlovac in Yugoslavia (now Croatia) to advise on the restoration of timber-framed and other historical buildings.

In **November 1990**, at the ECOVAST Committee meeting held in Georgenthal, John Sell reported to that the group had made good progress in gathering information – by means of a detailed questionnaire - on the policy and practice of different governments in Europe related to protection of historic and vernacular buildings. The results had not yet analysed because of information phase is still not completed. John suggested a practical working party focusing on one given village. András Roman (Hungary) proposed to link this work through a joint meeting with ICOMOS.

In **November 1991**, ECOVAST Newssheet No 4 reported that the results of the group's questionnaire would be published in the New Year. The survey had revealed a wide variation in the adequacy and scope of national systems; significant failure in some countries to match theory with effective practice; and a widespread shortage of necessary skills and materials.

In **May 1992** a 3 day meeting of the Group in Ustek, Bohemia, Czech Republic attracted 60 people from 11 countries. The Group reviewed the results of their survey, and started preparation of a 'Strategy for Rural Architecture based on a draft prepared by Detlev Simmons. It would be published in the autumn, will form a complement to ECOVAST's broader 'Strategy for Rural Europe', and will provide the basis for future campaigning by the Working Group. A discussion followed on a proposed new tax on buildings about to be introduced by the Czech government.

In **October 1992** the group met at the ECOVAST event in Remouchamps in Belgium. It noted that a proposed new Czech tax be imposed on buildings would have a severely detrimental impact on historic buildings and resolved to ask the Czech government to reconsider. (eventually the proposal for the tax was changed, with the effect that the cost of repairs to an historic building can be deducted from the owners tax liability for that year – very good result from our lobbying). The Group had made links have been made with the Historic Towns Committee of ICOMOS and Miljenka Fisher (Yugoslavia) represents ECOVAST on that committee. András Roman and Angus Fowler attended a symposium of firms specialising in the restoration of historic buildings organised by the Council of Europe. Angus Fowler, John Sell and Jane Wade spent a week in Romania –

mainly in Transylvania looking at the remarkable richness and diversity of the architectural heritage in the villages. They were greatly concerned by the lack of resources and the extreme poverty of the rural people.

In **October 1993** in Sinaia, Romania, the Group reported that it had completed its discussions on a 'Strategy for traditional rural architecture'; and has now turned to the design of new buildings in rural areas. Also while in Sinaia members of ECOVAST's Rural Architecture Working Group visited a town in the adjoining valley which has many traditional buildings but which is blighted by a large cement works and bisected by a major road and railway. They offered advice to the town on future development. It was reported that a Working Group for rural architecture has been set up by ECOVAST Romania which aims to identify and restore some interesting buildings in different villages (such as manor houses, peasant houses and wooden churches with valuable architectural elements and paintings which could be included in future tourist routes.

Also In **October 1993**, Gerda Stachowitz and Angus Fowler (Germany) represented ECOVAST at a conference on 'Rural Building: The Brandenburg Dwelling House', held at the manor house at Moglin, in Brandenburg, Germany. This conference was organised by two state agencies for building and rural development in Brandenburg, together with the European House for rural areas in the State of Brandenburg.

In **February 1994**, Angus Fowler (Germany) gave an illustrated talk on the preservation of threatened village churches in Europe at the DEBAL Fair in Rostock, Germany.

In **May 1994** a workshop on village revitalisation was held by the Romanian government and Calin Hoinarescu in Slon village in May 1994. It involved experts including John Sell (United Kingdom).

In **September 1994** ECOVAST Germany held a conference at Tellow, Germany on manorial estate complexes in the Baltic region.

In **October 1994** at the ECOVAST events held at the Candili Centre, in Prikopi village on the Island of Euboea, Greece, the group met again and it was reported that the 'ECOVAST Strategy – Traditional Rural Buildings' was nearing its final stages.

In **September 1996** at the ECOVAST events held in Santa Maria di Leuca, Italy the final draft of the Strategy for Traditional Rural Buildings was presented to the Working Group meeting and was approved for publication. A first draft of the Strategy for New Buildings in Rural Areas was discussed at the same meeting, and amendments were agreed. It was reported that the Group continues to function very usefully as a network. Its members have been involved in various bilateral and multilateral working arrangements and conferences over the last year, notably in Bosnia, Bulgaria, Slovenia and Ukraine. The Group elected a new Chairman - Salvatore Di Fazio of Italy – with a new Secretary, Zvezdana Kozelj of Slovenia. The group discussed the feasibility of establishing an ECOVAST rural architecture "site" on the Internet. We also discussed a possible study of rural cultural landscapes; and the setting up of a joint working group with other non-government organisations concerned with the built heritage.

In **April 1997** at the ECOVAST meeting held in Otočec, Slovenia, it was reported that the Group was now focused entirely on "New Buildings in the Countryside", and was developing an ECOVAST Strategy on this theme. Angus Fowler and Calin Hoinarescu opened discussions on building materials, and on the problem of architectural form in new buildings. The group discussed planning policies and ways to improve the quality of new buildings, with particular reference to Belgium, Germany, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Slovenia. Papers were presented by Zvezdana Kozelj (Slovenia), Elzbieta Raszeja (Poland), Charles Christians (Belgium) and Nuno Santos Pinheiro (Portugal). The meeting was followed by a study tour of sites in the region.

In **September 1997** during the ECOVAST event held in Attersee, Austria the group held an all-day seminar on both "Old and new buildings in the rural landscape", which was attended by 20 people from 10 countries. Papers were presented by Hasso Hohmann (Austria), Nuno Santos Pinheiro (Portugal), Angus Fowler (Germany), Andras Roman (Hungary) Gabor Kerner and Eva Dziekonska (Poland). The afternoon session focused mainly on cultural landscapes, with an introduction by Hans Peter Jeschke (Austria). Discussion showed the need to find ways to relate cultural landscapes to the buildings that lie within them. It was agreed that the future work of the group should include cultural landscapes and specific activities such as wine production.

In **May 1998** in Sopron, Hungary the group now re-named 'Rural Architecture and Cultural Landscape' met with 30 members from 11 European countries (Austria, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Sweden). The meeting included a study tour to places of special interest as good examples of the protection of traditional buildings and sensitive new building in the countryside. The visit included two ethnographic village museums resulting from the conservation in situ of groups of houses in the villages of Kópháza and Fertőszéplak; the centre of the National Park; mediaeval churches in Hidegség and Balf; and the Village of Fertőrákos, including the Mithraic temple and the ancient stone quarries. The draft strategy for New Buildings in the Countryside, had been circulated and the participants commented on it. Theoretical principles of architectural design were discussed and tested by reference to buildings visited during the study tour. Presentations were given by Eva Dziekonska (Poland) and Elisabeth Lillman (Sweden). The



discussion at Sopron was particularly useful thanks to the variety of contributions, which reflected not only different countries, but also different points of view (architectural, historical, social, educational, ethnographic, and technical) among the participants.

In **September 1998** at the ECOVAST event held in Marathon, Greece at a conference on wine cultivation as part of the WITRANET project, the Group discussed both buildings related to wine production. Josef Ušák (Slovakia) described the very specific organisation of buildings and landscapes for wine production in Slovakia, how this organisation was regulated by law, how the tradition developed and changed over time, and the difference between areas where wine is the primary product and areas where it is one of many products. Romanian members described how wine production on their country had been part of mixed farming until the 17th century, but had then been developed on an industrial scale by monasteries. Members suggested improvements to the draft questionnaire on new buildings in the countryside. It should relate to all buildings, not just farm buildings; should be made simpler and less open-ended; and should be framed in such a way that it would apply to all countries. Finally, the group had a general discussion about the threat to cultural landscapes from unsuitable agricultural policies. These problems are acutely felt in central Europe, where privatisation of land is causing either destruction of landscape by new investors, or neglect of landscape by owners who lack skills or resources. The group felt strongly that we are on the brink of losing a significant part of our common European culture.

In **March 1999** several members of the Group attended the International Scientific Conference on 'Vernacular Architecture', organised by the Transylvania Trust and held in Tusnad, Romania. The proceedings included an open meeting of the Working Group, which was attended by about 20 delegates, and included a useful discussion on the proposed Strategy for New Buildings in the Countryside. A very useful set of material on national approaches to new buildings in the countryside has been submitted by members of the Group. Salvatore Di Fazio would prepare a draft of the Strategy.

In **September 1999** at the ECOVAST event held in Hemaven, Sweden in the Group met under the chairmanship of John Sell. They had a full debate on the draft Strategy on 'New Buildings in the Countryside'. It still needed further work to be done on this document, prior to its approval.

In **June 2000**, in Rugen, Germany, the Group elected a new Chairman - Rudiger Maul (Germany) as new Chairman and Hans Peter Jeschke and Christine Jeschke (Austria) as Joint Secretaries. That meeting considered the future work of the Group, which may concentrate upon the location, design and maintenance of 'productive buildings' in the countryside: this term may include farm buildings and those used for food processing etc, with their links to hygiene, quality of products, landscape quality, local distinctiveness etc. The group plans to pursue a questionnaire survey related to 'wine buildings' in the countryside; and to organise a study tour related to the use of alternative technology in rural buildings.

In **September 2000** at the ECOVAST event held in Butgenbach, Belgium the Group made a report about the work of the National sections of Germany, Poland and Slovakia. Angus Fowler (Germany) reported on the preservation and use of the manor-houses and estate complexes in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern; and the work of the Förderkreis Alte Kirchen in Berlin and Brandenburg on the protection of churches, including the 'Open Churches' project based on the Swedish model of 'Wayside churches'; Horst Schubert displayed the accurate scale models of traditional buildings; Hanna Michalak (Poland) from Poznan, described her project for a register of manor-houses and castles in Poland and their use for touristic and cultural purposes for example, as hotels; Anna Badach, from Gdansk, spoke about vernacular architecture in Poland, and displayed an excellent handbook with guidelines; and Maria Medvecká (Slovakia) described the situation of historic buildings in Slovakia. It was agreed that a future meeting of the Group might focus on this theme in central and eastern Europe.

In **March 2000** there was another International Scientific Conference held in Tusnad, Romania, this time on 'Practical and Theoretical Issues of Built Heritage Conservation'.

In **March 2001** Hans Schwiderski of the German National Section reported on the work of the 'Association for the preservation and use of manor houses' and the Group made an excursion into Pomerania, a frontier region in both Germany and Poland, looking at manor houses, summer houses and historical parks in rural areas..

In **April 2001** at the ECOVAST meeting held in Skepe, Poland, it was reported that the Group is currently dealing with the subject of ecological construction and biology of buildings. It believed that the protection of environment and nature and the well-being of people in their close surrounding will be of high importance in future. This concerned not only new constructions, but also the restoration and repair of historical buildings. The Group concluded that, in Central as in Western Europe, there are many "modern construction materials" which have nothing to do with the traditional and regional construction materials and methods of construction. The modern construction materials such as steel concrete, corrugated sheet iron, plastic windows, steel and aluminium – are mainly short life and with high embedded energy. The Group agreed that regional construction culture should be encouraged. To maintain and develop this culture, a step forward should be reached via the mentality of the people. A clarification of the terms 'urbanisation' and 'ruralism' was needed. There should be a strong focus on sustainability of construction materials, under the scope of Agenda 21. There should be

process of certification, to guarantee that the construction materials are produced, transported and installed in a sustainable way.

In **October 2001** at the ECOVAST events held in Fojnica, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Group had further discussion on the use of construction materials. Bosnia is facing a similar evolution to that in Poland. The original method of construction in the Balkans was traditionally Slavic and Turkish; but the 20th century modern building materials and different architecture replaced clay, natural stone and wood. Since the 1960's multi-storey buildings, concrete-frame type of building with brick filling for buildings with many floors, has replaced traditional method of building was wood with a big shingle roof. Wood cannot compete in price with concrete. Now, people build without the use of architects, and ecological aspects such as heat insulation remain unaddressed and building regulations hardly exist. This damaging process has been aggravated by the war and many mistakes have been made. Construction materials have been used indiscriminately in rebuilding the destroyed houses, and no consideration has been given to minimum building standards, for example in heat insulation. Traditional building materials, like wood in Bosnia and stone in Herzegovina, have lost their importance. Villages are becoming urbanised, using Western models of design. Architects based in Bosnia said that these problems will not be solved if the building materials market in Bosnia is dominated by western European firms, as is happening now. For example, German firms now offer a huge quantity of plastic windows, and will arrange credits for cheap buildings of short life. There are no longer any environmentally friendly timber businesses or processors of regional stone. For a positive development, it is necessary to found local NGO's able to communicate information via the media, and to solve problems in theory as well as in practice.

In **October 2002** at the ECOVAST event held in Sieffenersdorf, Germany the Group had a successful and well-attended meeting, with a focus on ecological building, wooden buildings and related themes.

In **October 2003** at the ECOVAST event held in Otočec, Slovenia the Group met and discussed building materials and the tensions between environmental issues and the conservation of building fabric

In **October 2004** at the ECOVAST event held in Szigliget, Rudiger Maul reported that the discussion from the Group's meeting at Otocec was now on the website. The issue of building materials was of special concern. There were tensions between environmental issues and the conservation of building fabric.

In **July 2007** at the committee meeting held in Weyher, Germany a group of 8 members met at Rudiger Maul's farm. The focus was on wine cultivation, and the Group discussed Rudiger's designs for ecological buildings using wood, green roofs and passive solar heating. The afternoon visits were to several recent buildings designed by Rudiger. The clients are all wine growers, and the structures show how traditional building forms and modern materials can combine to give advantages of energy conservation and low embedded energy, whilst optimising conditions for the processing, storage and direct marketing of the wines of the Weyher locality.

In **May 2013** ECOVAST held a Cross border Seminar on Vernacular Architecture held in Dammheim, Germany, followed by a tour of local vernacular architecture in the Vosges, France and the xxxxxx, Germany.

In **July 2013** ECOVAST was represented at the opening of a Croatian style 'Kazun', a stone built shepherd's hut, in Derbyshire, England built by Croatian stone masons to welcome Croatia to the European Union. Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic (Croatia) and Michael Dower (United Kingdom) had helped to negotiate this project.

In **May 2014** ECOVAST UK hosted a meeting of the Group in Gatwick and included a study tour to see different styles of architecture across the Sussex and Kent Weald, which reflected the diverse underlying geology gives rise to many different types of stone, flint and bricks and tiles all used in local buildings. Unfortunately the Chairman of the Group (Rudiger Maul) had to cancel his visit at the last minute but the rest of the attendees from Austria, Croatia and Germany enjoyed the visit.

### **Rural Tourism 1988-2002**

The creation of this working group was agreed at the committee held in **April 1988** in Blaye, France. Its first meeting was held at the ECOVAST conference in Lübeck Travemünde, Germany in **October 1988**. The Group was led by Susanne Thibal (France) of Tourisme en Espace Rural and EUROTER and Rapporteur was Roland Tarr, Project Officer Dorset, Heritage Trust, United Kingdom.

In **November 1990**, the Group met in Georgenthal, Germany (led again by Maria Meier Gresshof of Germany) who discussed with Romanian representatives, the organisation of mutual exchanges and visits on Rural Tourism.

In **November 1991** at the ECOVAST event in Niederbronn les Bains, France November the Group noted the growing interest among official international bodies in the growth of, and potential benefits from, rural tourism. They recognised, however, the dangers which excessive or ill- managed tourism could pose for natural systems or sites. They emphasised the need for co-operation among many bodies to ensure that tourism brings benefit rather than pain.

In **April 1992** ECOVAST joined with the French National Federation of Rural Housing and Planning to organise a conference on rural tourism in Avignon, France

In **October 1993** a Joint Working Group on Rural Tourism was set up by ECOVAST and two other European organisations EUROTER (Tourism in Rural Europe) and EURO-GITES (the Federation of National Organisations whose members offer guest accommodation in farms or villages). ECOVAST was a co-founder of EUROTER and helped in the formation of EUROGITES. The aim of the joint group was to submit a proposal to the EU Director General for Tourism for a potential project aimed at training people who are involved in the tourism industry (the project was endorsed by the International Committee meeting in Euboa, Greece). The convenor of the group is Maria Meier Gresshoff (Germany), who is President of EURO-GITES and a Committee member of both ECOVAST and EUROTER.

It was reported in **May 1994** at a meeting of the the Joint Working Group, Maria Meier Gresshoff announce that she had secured a grant of 4,500 dollars for this group on 'sustainable tourism.'

In **July 1995** it was reported that the project submitted to the European Union had not been successful. However the group was invited by Ecotourism Ltd, based in England – a tourism agency and consultancy to join them in submitting a proposal to the EU for pilot projects in sustainable tourism in Slovenia and Bulgaria

Also in **1995**, a small group of members of the Group met to gather information on sustainable tourism initiatives. The new leader of the group is Fouli Papageorgiou of PRISMA Consultancy, Greece. She was concerned that it has proved difficult to make progress with this working group, because of limited attendance at meetings and the failure of an earlier attempt to secure more funding from the European Commission. She had visited the European Commission to gather information on sustainable tourism but she was disappointed by what she found, and seemed to be unable to make further progress.

In **1996** at the ECOVAST event held in Santa Maria di Leuca, Italy the group was re-formed. It decided to gather examples of good and bad practice in the field of sustainable rural tourism; to take part in two meetings next year, namely the ECOVAST International Workshop on Sustainable Tourism in Slovenia planned in April 1997, and a workshop later in the year; and then prepare a draft ECOVAST Strategy for Sustainable Tourism.

During **1996** a Heritage Trails project, put forward jointly by **ECOVAST** and the British consultancy firm Ecotourism Ltd, and PRISMA Consultancy which has attracted significant funds from the European Commission, focusses on the creation of "heritage trails" in the Dolenjska/Bela Krajina region of Slovenia, and the Kavarna region of Bulgaria Heritage. The ECOVAST Team is made up Michael Dower, John Sell and Jane Wade of the United Kingdom, Maria Meier Gresshoff (Germany), Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece); and Marko Koščak of Slovenia. Heritage trails are conceived as imaginative means of promoting sustainable tourism, in order to assist the regeneration of rural regions and the protection of their natural and cultural heritage

In **April 1997** there was an International Workshop on Heritage Trails held in Otočec, Slovenia – to mark the end of the international project, and Fouli Papegeorgiou (Greece) saw this as a good opportunity to apply and to promote ECOVASTs ideas about sustainable rural tourism, so she convened a meeting of the Rural Tourism Working Group at the event, and many of the Group members had attended. Fouli Papageorgiou presented a note based on her desk study of sustainable rural tourism. The Group agreed on a draft framework for an ECOVAST policy statement on this subject; and members agreed to gather case-study material for a further discussion at the General Assembly in the autumn.

In **December 1997** the Group had a half-day meeting, with 24 members from 12 counties. They took forward the discussion on a draft strategy for sustainable rural tourism which had been started at Otocec. Papers were presented by Fouli Papageorgiou, Rainis Cedrins (Sweden) and Michael Dower. The Group agreed a possible structure for the proposed policy document, to be illustrated by case studies. A draft of this document will now be prepared by a small group of members.

In **May 1998** the Group in Sopron at the end of May, with a stimulating half-day tour of features in and around the village of Fertörakos, near the Nüesiedler See which straddles the border between Hungary and Austria: visiting the lake shore - much used for water-borne recreation; and the nearby border post through which cyclists pass on their way round the lake upon a recently-created cycleway; the remarkable ancient stone quarries, and various enterprises which offered accommodation in old or new buildings in the village. These examples provided a very useful background to the Group's meeting on the following day, chaired by Fouli Papageorgiou, together with a paper prepared by Michael Dower which set out a series of principles to guide those who wish to promote sustainable rural tourism. It was agreed that this paper should be discussed further.

In **September 1998** the Group held a half-day ECOVAST meeting in Marathon, Greece and continued the discussion on a draft strategy for sustainable rural tourism. Many valuable points were made, and 'good practice' examples were cited. It was agreed that ECOVAST should produce a 'practical guide'. This should link the approach of the planners and the point of view of the wider public; should discuss the issues of site sustainability; and should promote the sharing of information and of experience. As to the proposed "ECOVAST Strategy for Sustainable Rural Tourism", Fouli Papageorgiou undertook to produce a first draft of an 'ECOVAST Strategy for Sustainable Tourism', and to circulate it to Group members for comment. Many valuable points were made, and 'good practice examples were cited. It was agreed that ECOVAST should provide a

'practical guide', which should link the approach of the planners and the point of view of the wider public; discuss the issues of site sustainability; and promote the sharing of information and of experience.

In **September 1999** at the ECOVAST event held in Hemavan, Sweden, the Group discussed the draft Strategy for 'Sustainable Rural Tourism', prepared by Fouli Papageorgiou. Members offered a number of practical examples, to be inserted in the text; and it was agreed that the document will be finalised by correspondence. Following the meeting in Hemavan, Fouli Papageorgiou completed the 'Strategy for Sustainable Rural Tourism'.

in **October 2000**, at the ECOVAST assembly meeting held in Butgenbach, Belgium, the Strategy was agreed. The chairmanship of the Working Group has now been resumed by Maria Meier Gresshoff.

In **August 2002** a number of ECOVAST members are attended the first Euracademy Summer School, held on the Swedish island of Gotland between. The aim of the Euracademy is to support mid-career professionals working in rural development by providing an updating of skills and a chance to exchange ideas with people working in similar positions in many European countries. The theme of this first summer school was sustainable rural tourism. The Euracademy partners included leading ECOVAST members - Ulf Brangefeldt (Sweden), Andrzej Kaleta (Poland), Iren Kukorelli (Hungary), Fouli Papageorgiou (Greece), Juha Neimela (Finland) and Michael Dower (United Kingdom). Following a Summer school, distance teaching will be offered through the Euracademy Website,

In xxxxx **2002** at the ECOVAST assembly meeting held in Seifhennersdorf, Germany a new Group on Rural Tourism had a useful discussion on small-scale tourist accommodation.

There were no more formal meetings of the Rural Tourism Working Groups but there were two important pan-European events that were about the topic and where ECOVAST members made presentations:

- In **October 2012** at the European Congress on Rural Tourism, was held in Piatra Neamt, Romania. It was organized by EUROGITES with the title "Innovative Tourism – New Life for Rural Areas" and attracted 200 delegates. The event was held in the Monastery School of the Piatra Monastery which trains both monks and priests. The ECOVAST President, Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) ran a workshops on culture and rural tourism and she and Magdalena Banu (Romania) and Olga Sevan (Russia) all made presentations..
- In **October 2013**, the President Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) was keynote speaker of an International Conference by SY-CULTour, a European supported project whose partners included Bulgaria, Italy, Slovenia, Greece, Serbia and Hungary, and was held in Heraklion, Crete, Greece.

In **October 2018** in Bistra, Croatia plans were agreed to revive the Rural Tourism Group in 2019.

### **Brown Coal Mining 1990-2002**

In **November 1990**, a new working group on brown coal mining was started at the ECOVAST event held in Georgenthal, Germany. Members were gravely disturbed by the past and continuing impact of brown coal mining in Central Europe. Of particular concern was the imminent threat of extended mining in the area of Niederlausitz in Eastern Germany, which could cause destruction of landscape and the abandonment and demolition of the village of Volkenburg and of other villages including many fine buildings. The group recognised that such mining makes a major present contribution to regional and national economies and energy supplies, and to local employment, but they believed that it also posed a grave threat to the environment and the heritage. They called upon responsible authorities at European, national and local level to review urgently the whole issue of brown coal mining; and they demanded that the proposed extension of mining in the Niederlausitz area be delayed until this policy review is concluded. They asked the ECOVAST Executive and ECOVAST Germany to pursue this issue urgently with the responsible authorities, including the European Commission – the action delegated to Andras Roman (President from Hungary) and Ursula Stratenworth (Germany). Ursula Stratenwerth and Angus Fowler reported

In **March 1991** at the ECOVAST meeting held in Rackeve, Hungary that ECOVAST concerns had been drawn to the attention of the European Commission and the Council of Europe; that information had been gathered about the extent of brown-coal mining in the countries of central Europe and that a conference on the impact of such mining upon villages and monuments planned

- Miljenka Fischer (Croatia) said that brown coal mining is a very serious political and social problem in Yugoslavia, and she supported the call for a review.
- Andras Roman (Hungary) said that he knew of no proposal to open new mines in Hungary. but he warned that it would not be easy to persuade the Government to review the industry.
- Andrzej Kaleta said that Poland had 30% of its electric power coming from brown coal. However a plan of the 1980's for further brown coal mining and new power plants using it had now been dropped. Poland has no tradition in use of renewable energy sources or in energy conservation, but he hoped that a pilot scheme in the village of Lucim might begin to demonstrate these.
- Jean Chanel said that in Germany the new Federal Government was proposing to build a nuclear power station in East Germany, despite the dangers illustrated by Chernobyl.
- Angus Fowler said that public protest over pollution is beginning in Czechoslovakia.

- Sergiu Josipescu said that Romania has a major problem of open-cast mining and of air pollution from coal-fired power stations and factories. The centralised sources of energy are not adequate for the country's needs, yet new searches might devastate the country's woodlands. He saw the need for a basic study of energy sources

The meeting concluded that eastern countries could learn much from the West, but the West must also recognise the very great economic and political problems in the East. It was agreed that ECOVAST's role must be to encourage public discussion on these very difficult long-term issues. Ursula Stratenwerth was asked to initiate contact with the Institute for European Environmental Policy on this issue.

In **November 1993**, a conference organized by ECOVAST Germany and ECOVAST Poland on 'Coal-People-Environment' was held on the Polish-German-Czech border in Sweieradow Spa in Lower Silesia which stated the massive destruction caused by brown coal mining, including 78 villages completely destroyed and 62 partially destroyed and more than 25,000 people displaced. Angus Fowler also reported on more churches being pulled down in Deutsch-Ossig, Wolkenberg, although the village Prietzen was saved. Based on the proceedings at this conference the Polish and German sections of ECOVAST, together with the Silesia publishing house in Wroclaw, are preparing a book on 'People-Coal- Environment'.

In the **March 1996**, ECOVAST's Newsletter a report stated that ECOVAST is continuing its support to those local communities and national organisations in Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic who are mounting campaigns related to the social and environmental impact of brown coal mining. Notably active in these campaigns are the Mayor of Heyersdorf, in Saxony; the community of the threatened village of Homo in Brandenburg; and the Grundtvig Foundation for Political Education in Brandenburg which organised a conference on alternative energy services in brown coal in that State.

On **6 October 2002** ECOVAST members from 12 countries, assembled for the series of events held at Seifhennersdorf, Germany. The conference noted with high concern the huge scale of the continuing process of brown coal mining Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic, and the massive environmental impact of this process. They deplored in particular that many whole villages have already been destroyed in this process, and many further villages and settlements are threatened with destruction. For example:

- Heuersdorf near Borna in West Saxony, with two historic churches and many old houses and farm buildings, is under threat of demolition;
- Horno, north-east of Colbus, Brandenburg, is similarly threatened despite being designated for complete protection under the Conservation Law of the state;
- The village of Garzweiler in the Rhineland is at risk of complete clearance;
- Villages around Bogatyria, in Poland, are being progressively buried under slag and mining waste.

The conference agreed that such destruction of long-established settlements is a human tragedy for those who lose their homes and their 'roots' in a particular locality. It is a grave diminution of the heritage of Europe, in terms both of architecture and landscape and the cultural traditions of peoples. For example, the destruction of the Sorb village of Horno in Brandenburg is a place where destruction would hasten the dispersal and loss of the Sorb language and culture.

The following Resolution was passed at the Biennial Assembly meeting, which called upon all those responsible – including national, regional and local authorities, landowners and mining companies:

- to call an immediate halt to further destruction of human settlements, with their rich heritage of historic buildings, whether they are still occupied or already vacated for destruction;
- to start forthwith a progressive reduction in the mining of brown coal and lignite, while ensuring alternative employment for those made redundant through that process;
- to minimise the environmental impact of the mining and burning of brown coal; and
- to focus upon the development of alternative sources of energy, which can meet energy needs while causing less damage to the environment than is caused by the mining and burning of brown coal. Such development might make good use of the land covered by mine reclamation schemes: we suggest that 5% of all funds devoted to such land reclamation should be devoted to alternative energy development.

### **Rural Development in Central and Eastern Europe 1991-1992**

This group met in Niederbronn les Bains, France and discussed the very serious problems of exodus from the rural areas of Hungary, Czechoslovakia and neighbouring countries; the poor condition of much of the architectural heritage there; and the urgent need to develop the rural economy, and to protect the heritage, through pilot projects.

### **Rural Culture / Heritage/ Cultural Landscapes 1991**

This group was first formed in **November 1991** at the ECOVAST event held in Niederbronn les Bains, France. Its aim was to define what is special about the rural cultures of Europe, and the policies and actions which are needed in order to protect and animate those cultures. It did not really develop as an International Working Group though ECOVAST has been involved in work on culture throughout the 35 years. There are close links

with the ECOVAST International Working Group on Landscapes and the ECOVAST International Working Group on Rural Buildings as both these aspects are part of any 'cultural identity'.

In **October 1993** at the ECOVAST event in Sinaia, Romania, ECOVAST Romania proposed the setting up of a Working Group on Folk Art and Handicrafts. Romania has a rich tradition in this field and a national group is building up its own network of interested members, based on the museum of Folk Life at Dumbrava Sibului, where folk art forums are held periodically. The group did not materialize.

In **1996** ECOVAST became a member of a new European Heritage Group which was formed of non-government bodies concerned with heritage, and which has been convened by Europa Nostra in order to influence the cultural programme of the European Union. They have held meetings with the EU Commissioner for Culture; and, in particular, are seeking to influence the RAPHAEL programme so that it could bring benefit to the architectural and cultural heritage.

Also in **1996**, a new organization – the European Network of National Heritage Organisations (ENNHO) – was initiated as a network by the National Trust for England and Wales. This was a delayed sequel to the pan-European conference of heritage organisations convened by the National Trust at York, England in 1990 with the title 'Europe preserved for Europe': ECOVAST had been represented at that conference by Michael Dower (President) and Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic (Croatia). ENNHO was formally constituted in 1999 with 60 member organisations in 23 countries. These members are active at national, regional or local level in protecting the heritage and encouraging public access to and use of this heritage. ENNHO aims to encourage and support professional exchanges and partnerships among its member organisations. ECOVAST discussed areas of collaboration between ENNHO and ECOVAST, for example in the fields of landscape and of cultural heritage.

In **June 2000** EUROPA NOSTRA and ECOVAST staged a Forum on 'Cultural Heritage as an Asset for Sustainable Development' held in Prague, the Czech Republic.

In **December 2002** Arthur Spiegler (Austria and Chair of the Landscape Group) and Michael Dower and Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom) ECOVAST met the newly appointed ENNHO Secretary General of ENNHO, in Bratislava, Slovakia and agreed cooperation between the two networks..

In **October 2003** ECOVAST Slovenia and ENNHO organized a conference on 'Cultural Identity and Rural Development' in Otocec, Slovenia as part of the ECOVAST General Assembly event. This was the first ECOVAST event on 'culture'. It attracted 70 participants from 11 European countries. Several ECOVAST members spoke about components that contribute towards 'culture'.

- L'ubica Pinčíková (Slovakia) made a plea for saving of European languages and dialects (the continual use of foreign words loses typical national character); as well as folk costumes, and stressed the importance of music, sculpture and paintings.
- Lili Mahne (Slovenia) talked about her organization building clusters of companies in rural areas which will encourage and strengthen regional entrepreneurs and secure improved quality of building preservation
- Joze Prah (Slovenia) talked about charcoal production as a part of Cultural identity
- Olga Sevan (Russia) gave very colourful and lively proof of cultural life in her country using examples from the diverse cultures from Russia, including architecture in Karelia and Chud, furniture, clothing, food and festivals and the use of words to communicate.
- Eva Hody (Austria) made a presentation on how landscapes are an essential and indispensable part of Europe's common heritage (widely known and accepted and as a major message of the "European Landscape Convention"; that the landscape's character makes a "unique sense of place". She stressed that cultural identity also includes the products typical for a locality or a region.

As a result of these deliberations the delegates agreed on a policy document called the Otočec Declaration of on Cultural Identity

Between 2005 and 2017, members of ECOVAST took part in a series of international events on cultural heritage, described below.

In August **2005** ECOVAST Russia held a major conference on 'Culture as the Important Factor of the Preservation and Development of Territory and Spiritual Life of Kenozero' held in the National Park in Russia. Arthur Spiegler (Austria) made a presentation on culture and partnership.

In **September 2010**, ICOMOS staged a conference 'Culture and Wood – Wood in Culture' held in Rostov Velikij in Russia: ECOVAST Russia contributed to this event.

In **June 2011** ECOVAST became a member of The European Heritage Alliance 3.3. This is an informal European sectoral platform composed of 49 European or international networks and organisations active in the wider field of cultural heritage. The Alliance was launched at the European Heritage Congress in 2011 organised by Europa Nostra in Amsterdam, which passed a resolution that "The European Union shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity, and shall ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced." The coordination of the European Heritage Alliance 3.3 is part of Europa Nostra's network project Sharing

Heritage – Sharing Values funded by Creative Europe. Phil Turner (United Kingdom) represented ECOVAST on this network until 2016 when Angus Fowler (Germany) took over.

In **June 2014** there was an International Conference on 'Wooden Architecture in the Cultural Landscape' and held in Pilsen, in the Czech Republic where ECOVAST Russia was represented.

In **October 2014** the ECOVAST President, Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) made a presentation of a major conference 'Natura 2000 Sites – Towards a New Policy for the Integrated Management of Cultural and National Heritage' held in Athens Greece.

In **December 2017** Angus Fowler (Germany) took part in the European Cultural Forum held in Milan, Italy and which marked the official launch of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018.

### **Agriculture and the Environment 1991-1992**

In **November 1991** the first group dedicated to agriculture and was founded at the ECOVAST meeting held in Niederbronn Les Bains, France. It was time specific as it focused - on the expected impact on the farming community and the environment from the new 'McSharry' proposals for reform of the European Community's Common Agricultural Policy. The group's aim was to promote policies and practices that could secure a sound balance between agriculture and the environment. It was jointly convened by Ursula Stratenwerth (Germany) and Michael Dower (United Kingdom). ECOVAST members had strong concerns about the very difficult financial prospects faced by a million small farmers; and by mountain and hill farmers across many parts of rural Europe. The ECOVAST Strategy for Rural Europe was about to be published at the end of 1991 and this had include a demand for a broad framework for agriculture and forestry.

### **Local Authorities 1992-1993**

This group met for the first time and only time at the ECOVAST event in Remouchamps, Belgium in **October 1992** just before the General Assembly meeting. Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom) chaired the group which looked at the role played by local authorities in rural development.

### **Farmers and Rural People 1992-1993**

This group also met for the first time and only time at the ECOVAST event in Remouchamps, Belgium in **October 1992** just before the General Assembly meeting. Enrico Capo (Italy) and Claude Brette (France) shared the chair Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom) chaired the group which discussed how Farmers and rural people worked together for rural development.

### **Agriculture and Forestry 1993-1997**

This new group, set up in **February 1993**, was given the task to draft more detailed policies on the agriculture and forestry sections of the ECOVAST Strategy for Rural Europe. Ursula Stratenwerth (Germany) was asked to be chairman.

In **October 1993**, the group held its first meeting in Sinaia, Romania. It agreed that the Group's aim was to look at how agriculture and forestry would deliver ECOVAST's commitments to the wellbeing of the rural people and of the natural and cultural heritage of Europe, with 4 agreed objectives:

- To take as its starting point, the broad approach to rural policy set out in the 'Strategy for Rural Europe'
- With a first priority to produce a more detailed statement of vision, policy and practice related to agriculture and forestry, supported by rich examples: to be ready in final draft by the end of 1994
- To clarify the audiences to which this policy statement might be addressed, and
- To prepare to move, in 1995, into a programme of lobbying and dissemination of ideas, using the policy statement and supporting material

Maria Nadova and Jan Ordos (both of Slovakia) were designated to organise of the series of meetings to develop an extension to ECOVAST policy; and develop a very clear vision and principles and state them in a revised strategy. Thus:

- a second meeting - seminar in Kamenec, Slovakia followed in **April 1994**
- a third meeting followed in **June 1994** in Borgloon, Belgium.
- an **October 1994** at the Candili meeting in Greece, with detailed discussion on a draft report.
- a fifth meeting was held in **May 1995** in Torun, Poland alongside the ECOVAST International Committee to agree final changes to the report.

In **October 1995**, in Novzvaj, Hungary the group met and agreed the final shape of the report to be published under the title 'Agriculture and Forestry: Sustaining their future in Europe'. They decided that this report should then be the subject of a series of regional seminars, each relating to a major zone of rural Europe.

The first such seminar was staged in **June 1996** in Spa, Belgium during the ECOVAST event held there. The group was joined by Jacques Reginster, Director General of the Wallon Ministry of Agriculture and other Belgian experts. The discussion was useful, but too limited in length and geographic scope to form a true regional

seminar. The report had been translated into German by Adrian Mork, and would soon be translated into French. The aim is to secure its printing in all three languages in the autumn.

In **September 1996** a second opportunity to expose the ideas in the report to a wider audience was provided at the Scientific Conference on 'European Agriculture on the Way to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century' held in Przysiek, Poland in September co-organised by Andrzej Kaleta (Poland). Three members of the Group – Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden), Pavel Starosta and Andrzej Pilichowski (Poland) also took part.

Also in **September 1996** during the ECOVAST Biennial Assembly held in Santa Maria di Leuca, Italy, the Group joined with other ECOVAST Working Groups which gave rise to useful discussions and showed how they inter-linked. This took place in the.

In **June 1997**, ECOVAST Newsletter 13 reported that "Agriculture and Forestry: Sustaining their Future in Europe", was in process of being published. The intention was to distribute it widely to governments and interested parties throughout Europe. Copies would be sent to ECOVAST national sections, and to individual members on request.

In the ECOVAST Newsletter 14 published in **December 1997** the Group held a brief meeting, and decided that it had completed its work.

### **Research 1997**

At the ECOVAST committee meeting held in Attersee, Austria a number of members who were interested in multi-country research, consultancy and action projects in the broad field of rural development and heritage protection in rural Europe came together and discussed the idea of setting up a formal network or partnership between them. This might enable them to cooperate in launching such projects and to secure funding for them from the European Commission and other bodies. This led to the creation of a partnership called ECOVAST Associates which operated for a number of years with little success and then folded.

### **Baltic 21 Group – 1998-2000**

A regional Agenda 21 initiative was launched in 1996 by the Prime Ministers of the Baltic Sea region. In this context, a conference on "Agenda 21 and the Baltic" was held at Rügen, northern Germany, in **March 1998**, on the joint initiative of ECOVAST Germany, ECOVAST Sweden and the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung. The aim of the event was to influence the governments of the Baltic region in their pursuit of Agenda 21, and to support the process of local development in the Baltic countries. It was a successful event, with 110 delegates from all Baltic countries except Denmark and Russia. The conference agreed a published statement which advocates a sustainability strategy for the Baltic area, based on the principles of active participation of the public, the integration of public sectoral policies, and the integration of rural development with the development of society as a whole. The participants expressed the wish that ECOVAST should take part in the continuing discussion of this Baltic process.

In **June 1998** a new Baltic 21 Working Group of ECOVAST was set up and met for the first time in Uppsala, Sweden, as an immediate sequel to the conference led by Per Årman (Sweden). The ECOVAST Baltic Working Group includes representatives from 8 Baltic countries - Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Sweden. Its aim is to continue the work on Agenda 21, including rural development. The members in each country have committed themselves to develop a local mobilisation process in the rural areas of these countries, with a focus on democracy and civil society, jobs and enterprises, and environment and Local Agenda 21.

During **Spring 1999**, a draft proposal for the future role of the group was formulated and shared with ECOVAST Germany.

In **June 1999**, Newsletter 17 reported that the Baltic 21 had helped with contacts for the preparation for the travelling workshop 'Creating Partnership for Pre-Accession (co-organised by Forum Synergies, ECOVAST Sweden and other organisations); and had decided to await the outcome of this workshop before proceeding with its own work.

In **September 1999**, at the ECOVAST events at Hemaven, Sweden, the Working Group held a meeting attended by 15 people from 6 of the Baltic countries. They agreed that the Group's objective is to enhance sustainable rural development in the Baltic Sea Region, based on the three dimensions of economic, social and environmental development. It discussed the idea of a comprehensive adult education programme based on two pillars - the Nordic tradition of adult education, in the form of study circles and folk high schools; and the participation of universities in the region already co-operating within the Baltic University Programme. As a result, the working group was promoting a regional programme to facilitate life-long learning and active democracy, which it saw as a prerequisite for long-term sustainable development. The group had a networking function; would arrange yearly seminars and conferences; and hoped to initiate development projects. Its planned activities included :

- Exchange of experiences through yearly seminars and conferences, in order to develop a common view of the importance of integrated rural development in the Baltic Sea Region;



- Initiation of development projects, including demonstration projects and education; and
- Acting as a channel of information to organisations and authorities participating in the regional work.

In **October 2000** the group supported ECOVAST Germany in organising an exhibition and a full-day seminar on 'Sustainable Local Rural Development around the Baltic Sea' during the EUREGIA 2000 event in Leipzig, Germany. Papers were given by a number of ECOVAST members related to a broad agenda for the Baltic Sea region. They agreed to set out practical experiences set out in the handbook 'The Agenda 21 Guide to local development'; experience in Estonia of the linkage between cities and countryside.

### **Landscapes 1999-2019**

ECOVAST's 'Strategy for Rural Europe of 1991 included a call for the protection of the remarkable and diverse heritage of natural and cultural landscapes of rural Europe. One of the measures needed to secure this protection, the Council of Europe and its Parliamentary Assembly had been urged to develop a 'Convention' for the protection of the countryside and coastlines of Europe. ECOVAST's Working Group on landscapes was developed through 3 events:

- a conference on 'Landscapes in a New Europe' held in Blois, France in **October 1992** where Michael Dower (United Kingdom) and Jean Chanel (Germany) took part. During the two years prior to this ECOVAST had worked with the non-government organisations (Landscape Research Group and the European Federation of National and Nature Parks) to promote the idea of a Convention, which they hoped would have the same status as the Granada Convention on historic heritage and the Berne Convention on natural sites. At the Blois event support was secured.
- the result of Blois a meeting of experts was convened in **February 1993** by the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, France where Gesine Deserbais (France) represented ECOVAST. The focus of this gathering was on heritage sites and landscapes. The Council of Europe was preparing a formal recommendation to Member Governments on the conservation and management of heritage sites and landscapes, within the framework of landscape policies.
- this recommendation was finalised at a meeting of experts at Copenhagen in **June 1993**, prior to the submission to the Cultural and Education Committee of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly. ECOVAST and its allied bodies concluded that their immediate effort was to support the recommendation and if passed, using it to urge action on Member Governments throughout Europe.

Also, in **June 1993**, ECOVAST, the Council of Europe, UNESCO and others attended an International Conference on Cultural Landscapes, staged by ICOMOS and held in Budapest and Kesthely, Hungary, organised by Andras Roman, who is President both of that committee and ECOVAST. The keynote speech was given by Michael Dower (United Kingdom) – the ECOVAST Vice President and Director General of the English Countryside Commission) who had been appointed as adviser to the Council of Europe on the drafting of the European Landscape Convention.

In **September 1999**, a new Working Group was created at Hemaven, Sweden focussed on 'landscapes' was and convened by Arthur Spiegler (Austria). The first task was to gather material – with help from other ECOVAST members – about the approaches which are taken in different countries to the identification and evaluation of landscapes. Material had been received already from Austria, the Czech Republic, England, Italy, the Netherlands and Norway and he hoped for more. They agreed to hold two regional workshops.

At the first, in **March 2000**, at Bratislava, Slovakia, in a meeting hosted by the Austrian Institute for East and Southeast Europe, a small group discussed a proposed method of identifying landscapes through their character, based on materials mainly from England, Slovenia and Austria.

The second workshop, also in **March 2000**, was organised by ECOVAST Hungary, to try out the method in the landscape near Zalaszentgrót, Hungary. These two workshops suggest that the method is comprehensive and practicable, but we must convince countries and practitioners why they should make the effort to use it. It was agreed that further work will be undertaken during the summer, to form the basis for a draft report to be considered at the ECOVAST gathering in September in Belgium. This activity is seen as a contribution to the Council of Europe's Campaign 'Europe : a Common Heritage'; and also to the efforts which would be needed to realise the aspirations of the European Landscape Convention, which the Group hoped would be approved within this year by the Council of Europe. In preparation for the next meeting of the Group in Belgium in September, Arthur Spiegler is preparing a report on the reasons which prompted those countries, mentioned above who already have prepared maps of all their landscapes - to undertake this task. He will also prepare an Austrian sample of a map using the method; to inform members of the Working Group of the results so far.

On **3-5 May 2000**, some members of the Landscape Working Group took part in the ICOMOS UK Conference on 'Cultural Landscapes, held in Oxford, England.

In **September 2000**, at the ECOVAST events held in Butgenbach, Belgium, the working groups on **Landscape** and **Rural Architecture** held a joint meeting with members from Austria, Germany, Poland, Romania and Slovakia. On the Landscape side, Arthur Spiegler confirmed that the European Landscape Convention, which has been under preparation by the Council of Europe during the last five years, had at last been approved by the

Council of Ministers and would be opened for signature by member states at a conference on 20 October in Florence, Italy. The Groups agreed that all national sections of ECOVAST should be asked to press their own governments to sign the Convention and to move towards its implementation. Arthur Spiegler reported that ECOVAST Austria would be going ahead with an initial survey of the landscapes of Austria, on the lines that had been discussed at previous meetings of the Landscape Group. They hoped to secure financial support for this work from the Austrian Nature Parks and the Federal Commission for Spatial and Regional Planning. Elzbieta Raszeja described the work in Poland, focused on landscapes that are threatened or undergoing dynamic change.

On **9-11 October 2000** at the conference on 'Implementation of Development programmes at Zvenigorod, Russia, Arthur Spiegler gave a seminar on 'The Identification of Landscapes through their character'. He offered a methodology based on four key points:

- To gain an overlook of landscape units, identified in a holistic way – meaning that their natural as well as their cultural elements have been taken into account when carrying out their identification – is essential for the regional and spatial planning of every country with strong relations to Europe's common heritage, the ideas of the "European Landscape Convention" and the new aspects of the Agenda 2000 (rural sustainable development).
- With the exception of England and Slovenia, are the only countries in Europe which have a complete map, catalogue of landscapes identified through their character – a holistic approach – at their disposal, although dealing with landscapes under various aspects is common in most European countries.
- The best starting base to identify landscapes is their natural outfit, in particular their geology, climate and landscape geomorphology: these three are the natural and "hardest landscape elements" (the three basic layers) which offer the strongest resistance against change caused by human local activities.
- The initiative of identifying landscapes through their character and across the whole of every country's territory is launched by ECOVAST International, its International Landscape Working Group and will be disseminated by the national sections and members of ECOVAST.

Arthur Spiegler then he explained the evaluation process based on the visible landscape elements.

In **24-26 May 2001**, at an international Workshop on the subject of landscape identification organized by ECOVAST Austria, on behalf of the Landscape Working Group took place in Stupava, Slovakia. The purpose of the workshop seminar was to introduce the method recommended by ECOVAST of identifying landscapes by their most essential character, to apply this method and to improve it. This project is connected at European level with the European Landscape Convention (unfortunately still, at that time, signed only by a few countries); with the campaign of the Council of Europe, 'Europe, a common heritage'; and with Agenda 2000 of the European Union, with its emphasis on sustainable rural development

Introducing the workshop, Arthur Spiegler noted that only two European countries - England and Slovenia – appear to have a complete approach to identifying how many and which different landscapes, judged on the basis of their character, within their territory. But knowledge about this treasure is of decisive importance for regional planning and for assuring the identity of the local population, of the regions and of the whole country, and indeed of a Europe of the Regions. The event met a professional standard; and has brought us at least three new, valuable personal relationships – with Dirk Wascher, University of Wageningen, The Netherlands, who heads the new unit there, "Landscape Europe"; Richard Stiles, of the Technical University of Vienna; and Jan Kiselka, of the Technical University of Brno, Czech Republic.

The Workshop involved 3 days practical field work in Austria and Slovakia organised and inspired by Arthur Spiegler, who has himself done much to identify and publicise the richly varied landscapes of his native Austria. The small group, at most 16, was of varied experience but high enthusiasm. Each day concentrated on a particular landscape unit.

- first we visited the Austrian "Weinviertel" (Wine Quarter), a gentle landscape full of curves and colours, harmonious villages and rows of wine-houses.
- then we saw the Small Carpathians, a hog's-back of hills covered in forest and ringed by a peripheral road so strung with castles, attractive villages and avenues of trees that it felt like a jewelled necklace on the hog's neck.
- third, we travelled across the Morava Lowlands, which lie between the other two landscapes and which have a flat or low profile, with woodlands and farmlands: much of this lies on a remarkable complex of sand dunes, created by wind-blow of alluvial sands along the Morava river.

At the end of the workshop, we were able to suggest some sharpening of the technique which Arthur Spiegler had proposed, and to discuss the way forward for the Landscape Working Group. The role of the Group is potentially very important at a time when the governments of Europe are deciding whether or not to sign the European Landscape Convention, which ECOVAST strongly hopes that they will do.

The workshop concluded with a determination to produce a handbook of best practice in identifying landscapes. A draft of this handbook should be ready in time for discussion at the ECOVAST gathering in Bosnia in October. This policy Guide became a major project for ECOVAST

In **2002**, Arthur Spiegler and Michael Dower and the Group produced the FIRST ECOVAST "Guide to Good Practice in Landscape Identification" (later published in 2006 and updated in 2012). This Guide was based upon practical fieldwork by ECOVAST members during three workshops in Hungary, Slovakia and Austria. The aim of the Guide is to encourage and help ECOVAST members and other active Europeans who want to understand the landscapes in which they live, as a first step in protecting and enhancing the special qualities of these landscapes.

In **2003** the ECOVAST Vice President, Arthur Spiegler (Austria) made a formal call to support the initiative of the Council of Europe "European Landscape Convention". At that point, about 25 states had signed the Convention but only a few of them had also ratified it: the Convention would only come into force when at least 10 member states of the Council of Europe ratified it. Arthur Spiegler urged that ECOVAST should work to strengthen and speed up this process; and this could be done by the national sections, through co-operation with other associations and also individual members with influence. The importance of landscapes as the biggest, mutually shared and existing heritage of Europe and for the identity of the rural regions is also closely connected to the topic of this year's general assembly. He requested support by posing 2 questions:

- how, in your opinion, can ECOVAST support the ratification and implementation of the European Landscape Convention most effectively?
- should ECOVAST try and implement its work into a bigger, international conference? Topic would read: "Landscape-Identification - interested citizens support the European Landscape Convention in their countries". The conference could be held in Central and Eastern Europe - preferably in the region of the Carpathians.

In **2003** a very practical application of this ECOVAST Guide occurred, when ECOVAST Croatia, under the leadership of Tihana Fabijanac, was commissioned by the Croatian Ministry of Environment, to prepare an appraisal of the landscape of the Makarska Riviera, on the Dalmatian Coast. The report of this appraisal, which was based on the ECOVAST "Guide to Good Practice", was submitted to the Ministry, and is being taken into account in the spatial planning of this fine stretch of the Adriatic coastline.

In **October 2004** at the ECOVAST events held in Szigliget event held in Hungary, Arthur Spiegler convened a meeting of the Group. It proved most productive and important in establishing a way forward and future plans were outlined. Contact with the Council of Europe had been maintained by the group.

In 2004 the European Landscape Convention came into force, having been ratified by 11 governments.

In **June 2005** in the third of a series of annual Implementation Workshops organised by the Council of Europe, since the Convention came into force, and which has involved ECOVAST. This third Workshop was held in Cork and Michael Dower made a short public presentation of the ECOVAST "Guide to Good Practice"; and had useful talks with government representatives and NGOs from a number of countries which have ratified the Convention or are considering doing so.

In **August 2005**, Newsletter 31 included an update by Arthur Spiegler on the progress of the European Landscape Convention, which faced several political and methodological problems. Our ECOVAST action is to promote action by the governments and peoples of Europe to ratify and implement the Convention. Landscapes embody much of the natural and cultural heritage, and contain the evidence of how our fathers and grandfathers used the land. They form the setting for people's daily lives. If landscapes are ugly, people suffer: if the landscapes are beautiful, people's spirits are raised. Moreover, in this highly varied continent, each landscape is distinctive: people care about their particular landscape.

For all these reasons, we believe that the care for landscapes cannot be left to governments alone. The people must be involved. That is why we produced the "Guide to Good Practice", which can help citizens to take the initiative in looking at their landscapes and in proposing or launching measures to look after them. Such popular initiative is particularly needed in those countries whose governments cannot easily afford to undertake the kind of complex professional surveys of landscape that have been carried out in (for example) Norway, Slovenia or the United Kingdom.

In **19-22 October 2005**, Arthur Spiegler organised a Landscape Workshop in Austria and the Czech Republic funded under the Interreg programme.

On **12-15 July 2006** the Institute of Spatial Planning and Rural Development (IRUB) (Department of Landscape, Spatial and Infrastructure Sciences, University of Natural resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna) organized with ECOVAST Austria, the First INTERREG Landscape Symposium. It was held at the restored Monastery Pernegg, in Lower Austria. It involved ECOVAST Austria, the Regional Management of Lower Austria and the University of South Bohemia (Faculty of Agriculture) and the Czech Ministry of Environment. It attracted 40 delegates from 7 EU member States; was financed by the European Union (INTERREG), European Regional Development Fund, and the Province of Lower Austria with its theme 'the European Landscape Convention. It brought together people and crossed borders. In plenary and workshop sessions, participants exchanged experiences of the implementation of the Convention in various countries, suggested how public participation might be enhanced, and considered political strategies to encourage more widespread adoption of

the principles of the Convention. A main conclusion of the workshops was that engagement with the spatial planning process was important in all countries.

The symposium concluded with an excursion to examine the local landscapes of the Waldviertel and the Weinviertel, using the good practice guide on Landscape Identification, developed by ECOVAST, first published in 2002, which was updated for this event.

Arthur Speigler led a coach tour of the region bordering the Czech Republic field-tested the ECOVAST method of Landscape Identification had been field-tested. It was evident that the methods are readily applicable at sub-regional levels, showing the potential for engaging civil society at the local level. The representative of the Council of Europe was enthusiastic

In **August 2008**, Newsletter 40 included a report from Arthur Speigler (Austria) that the ECOVAST method of landscape identification had begun to spread in Europe, and had been improved by successfully putting it into practice. It is becoming highly thought of by the experts of the European Landscape Convention. Presentations on the ECOVAST method have recently been made in Poland, The Netherlands and in Austria recently. The document can be freely downloaded from our website.

In **April 2009**, Newsletter 42 reported that ECOVAST played an active role in the consultations that led to the production in 2000, by the Council of Europe, of the European Landscape Convention. Since then, 30 of the 46 member states of the Council of Europe have ratified the Convention. Action to implement the Convention is gradually increasing around Europe. The Council of Europe has run a series of conferences on the implementation of the ELC. Michael Dower (United Kingdom) who was a co-author of the Convention in 1998, played an active part in that conference in 2009 on behalf of ECOVAST. There are three linked networks which are focused upon that action and assisted in their creation by ECOVAST. These are:

- ENELC, a network of regional and local authorities;
- Uniscape, a network of Universities who offer training in landscape-related disciplines; and
- CIVILSCAPE which ECOVAST has joined and is pushing for it to become active.

In **September 2012** ECOVAST updated its Landscape Identification Guide to Good Practice and it was published in both in German and English. The ECOVAST Guide has been used by the General Directorate of Environmental Protection in Poland to deliver ELC: and in England Action for Communities in Rural England (ACRE); and Hampshire County Council (HCC) and Community Action Hampshire has used guidance produced by HCC to help communities produce Local Landscape Character Assessments (LLCAs). The Topic Sheet, produced in partnership with Local Landscape Character Assessments provide a useful environmental framework and evidence base for local decision making, help structure environmental issues and provide information on what local people value about their landscape. Most importantly a LLCA can be used to provide an evidence base for future planning, for example, if the community is considering writing a neighbourhood plan or can feed into a local authority's planning system.

In **March 2013**, in ECOVAST Newsletter 53, Arthur Speigler explained how a tax on Mineral Extraction funds landscape enhancement in Austria through a Lower Austrian Landscape Fund. The fund is financed by a tax on the exploitation of materials in the ground such as gravel, sand, stones, loam, clay, etc and this funding supports the implementation of projects on towards the preservation and reconstitution of an ecologically intact cultural landscape with a rich endowment of indigenous plants and animals, manifold landscape elements and environmentally sound land use. On the average, up to 300 projects per year apply for funds: of these about 100 to 150 receive funds. A fundamental objective is the close cooperation with other sponsors, so as to achieve the best possible exhaustion of other provincial, federal and EU funding. It is noted that 1 Euro from the Lower Austrian Landscape Fund triggers an average of 5 Euros from other sources.

In **August 2013**, in ECOVAST Newsletter 54, Arthur Speigler described a European project which supports cultural landscapes in Central Europe called 'Vital Landscapes'. The project had eight international partners comprising scientists and practitioners, and falls within the Central Europe Programme co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and was completed in March 2013. Regional approaches combining economic development and landscape protection, by involving local actors and regional stakeholders from different sectors were still quite rare in Central Europe. This 'Vital Landscapes' project was born out of a desire to overcome these deficits.

In **October 2018** ECOVAST Austria reported that the Landscape Working Group was still alive but was now focussing on karst scenery and caves.

### **Small Towns 2005-2017**

This was the last International Working Group to be founded. It was started in **2005** after the Committee decided to obtain evidence about small down which led the formation of a major project. The work of the project team created a specific working Group on small towns.

The background to this work was started by ECOVAST Austria. They held a Symposium in the small town of Murau in 1998 and followed it with a second event in the small town of Waidhofen an der Ybss in 2002. ECOVAST Austria joined with the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) to stage a third

international event in the small town of Retz in 2005. This event established that there was no European policy on small towns – just urban or rural policies. Yet our view was that small towns were the backbone of rural areas serving a hinterland of villages and rural communities. We set ourselves the task of promoting the creation of policies for small towns, but we realized that we must first gather evidence to support any case. A specific team was set up led by Phil Turner (United Kingdom) and included: Arthur Spiegler (Austria); Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic (Croatia); Angus Fowler, Ralf Bokermann and Andrea Weigert (Germany) and Pam Moore and Valerie Carter (United Kingdom). All these events are described in the chronological list of event in Part B of this report.

At the **end of 2005**, ECOVAST Newsletter 33 reported on the formation of the Action to Strengthen Small European Towns (ASSET) project and the ASSET team. It set about trying to raise funding. SEEDA, the South East of England Rural Development Agency, has agreed that ECOVAST should invoice them for 2,000 euros towards the work, and it was expected that the UK group of the European Rural University would offer a similar sum when agreed by APURE, the parent European organisation. Also in UK, the new Commission for Rural Communities in England has offered 5,000 Euro. The Regional Council of Niederösterreich has indicated, through Arthur Spiegler, that it would probably welcome a formal request to become a partner of ASSET. The Group asked Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom) is research European and international foundations for sources of funding, possibly including EU programmes such as INTERREG and COST (European Cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research)

The project is animated by a belief that the small towns of Europe are a massive asset for the people, the heritage and the economies of the continent, and can be a focal point of rural development programmes. However, throughout Europe, small towns face severe problems, challenges and opportunities. They have lost, or are losing, functions to the larger cities, as part of the processes of globalisation and centralisation. In the face of these forces, there is a strong and widespread concern to revive the small towns, to protect and find new life for their remarkable heritage and to strengthen their economies. The aim is to promote co-operation, and exchange of good practice, between governmental and other agencies throughout Europe who offer support to small towns.

ECOVAST set up a Steering Group for the ASSET project and sought to gain interest in small towns by talking at international events whenever possible.

In **May 2006**, Newsletter 33 recorded that Silvia Mayer, Gerhard Fasching and Hans Draxler had joined the Small Towns team of ECOVAST Austria.

On **6 September 2006** ECOVAST took part in an INTERREG project workshop held in Jyväskylä, Finland. This Northern Periphery Project called 'Small Town Networks' (SuSET) has partners in Scotland, Finland and Sweden. The objective of the project is to create the conditions for sustaining vibrant towns that play an effective role in their wider region. Their key aims are to:

- encourage and support local people to develop and implement a vision for their own community;
- foster a network of towns that routinely exchange local ideas and solutions;
- identify ways of regenerating small towns that can be utilised throughout Europe; and
- develop trans-national links and exchange experience with European partners.

Phil Turner, Pam Moore and Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) attended and made presentations on both the ASSET project and the work being undertaken by SEEDA in South East England. The exchange of ideas particularly on funding approaches, recruitment of partners and research, and our draft on our proposals for ASSET will take this on board and be revised.

On **23 September 2006** the first meeting of the ASSET Organising Group took place in Brussels, Belgium. Two main partners, ECOVAST and APURE are Europe-wide membership organisations, recognised by the European Commission. We had financial support for our start-up year from APURE and also from partners SEEDA and CRC, both based in UK.

In **October 2006** small towns were discussed at the Biennial Assembly event held in Bratislava, Slovakia. Since our Bratislava event there has been a surge in the number of potential partners for ASSET including: SPECTRA a Central European Research and Training Centre; the Slovakian municipality of Modra; Rioja in Spain; and partners in Serbia. Also joining the programme was Action in Rural Sussex (UK) which had extensive experience of managing European projects and which offered to be the accounting body for ASSET and to assist in seeking funds from other EU programmes such as URBACT2, ICT, LIFELONG LEARNING or for COST (European Cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research).

In **February 2007** members attended a committee meeting in Kirchbach, Austria and were introduced to the Global Villages Workshops and the Kirchbach KB5 Centre which offers distance learning by electronic means. Hubert Trauner of Nieder Österreich Regional Council, Austria (who was a partner of the Retz conference in 2005) has declared a strong interest in the ASSET project. As a 'near neighbour' according to COST rules we may also invite to research meetings Dr. Olga Sevan of the Russian Institute for Cultural Research, Moscow and ECOVAST Russia member.

On **30 March 2007** the second meeting of ASSET organising group was held, hosted by Professor Nuno Santos Pinheiro (ECOVAST Portugal) who provided a room at the Lisbon Universidade Lusíada. Attending for the first time was Camilo Mortagua, President of APURE, a founding partner of ASSET, together with representatives of two LEADER groups in Alentejo - MONTE and ADRACES.

After the second meeting of the Organising Group, there was a meeting of the Regional Studies Association where Phil Turner (United Kingdom) presented a joint paper on ASSET, co-authored by Valerie Carter and Pam Moore.

In **April 2007**, Newsletter 36 reported that Yorkshire Forward (a Regional Development Agency of England like SEEDA) has recently offered three years' funding to the ASSET project and had become a new partner. Also from the UK, the University of Gloucestershire was approved as a partner of ASSET. A funding application had been made to COST (European Cooperation in the Field of Scientific and technical Research) under the title 'European Small Towns: Roles and Functions for a Sustainable Future'.

It also reported that a submission had been made to COST (European Cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research) under the title: *European Small Towns: Roles and functions for a sustainable future*. The proposal is to consider the scope for research on the following topics:

- the role of small towns and rural settlement in the development of the new spatial quality in Europe - territorial cohesion
- balance between co-operation and competition in small towns as the precondition for sustainable development under the conditions of globalisation and European integration
- potential for development sustainability in rural areas in the
- information society (Lisbon strategy and rural development)
- town-hinterland relationships including economic linkages, the role of small towns as growth poles in rural development and socio-economic networks.
- local community development of small towns, including governance and bridges between different tiers of governance and community planning.
  - service provision in and around small towns and the potential role of towns as service hubs
  - the potential for developing sustainable, balanced communities, including "climate change related activities" : low energy buildings, monitoring emissions, knowledge transfer.

The 7 research partners were:

- from Austria: Franz Nahrada GIVE Forschungsgesellschaft-Labor für Globale Dörfer, Wien/Kirchbach (a research association under Austrian law)
- from Croatia: Aleksander Lukic, University of Zagreb Department of Geography
- from Germany: Professor Max Linke, Consulting Office of Prof. Dr. Linke & Partner
- from Portugal: Professor Nuno Santos Pinheiro, Universidade Lusíada LISBON
- from Romania: Ms Kinga Kerekes Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca
- from Slovakia: Professor. Maroš Finka M Arch, PhD (SPECTRA Centre of Excellence) and Professor Eva Kralova, Faculty of Architecture Slovak Technical University, Bratislava,
- from the United Kingdom- Dr Paul Courtney University of Gloucestershire; Dr Neil Powe University of Newcastle and Professor Paul Fleming De Montfort University

In **June 2007** the ASSET Organising Group has met for the third time, in Brussels. It was reported that a new partner, MONTE from central Portugal had joined the project offering contribution in kind rather than cash. The ASSET project still has to secure an accountable body for its project and then it would be put onto the DorfWiki web pages on ASSET. The application for EU COST programme money for research was rejected at the first attempt, and the Group we will be discussing with research partners whether to submit a revised bid in 2008. Greater priority is being afforded to a bid later this year to INTERREG IVC pan European Programme which is based on sustainability, energy sufficiency, competitiveness related to the heritage of towns and landscape. The proposed bid would focus on the capacity building of small town communities to assist them in engagement and visioning will be included, and toolkits based on good practice. However, it was agreed these attempts to gain EU money must not take our attention away from the main activities of ASSET, namely approaching foundations, and recruiting many small towns to become members of ECOVAST. We had begun to chart the benefits of ASSET to encourage participation in the project.

In **8 September 2007**, a one-day workshop on small towns was held in the small town of St Veit an der Glan, Austria on 8 September. Pam Moore reported the progress made on her Opinion Survey with an analysis of the questionnaires from contacts in 27 EU Member States and other countries. This will compare the regional support mechanisms for small towns and will identify the range of challenges, opportunities and threats they are facing in various nations. Valerija Kelemen-Pepeonik spoke about the Croatian findings

On **14 October 2007** in the historic town of Samobor, ECOVAST staged their annual assembly and held a conference on 'Small Towns', chaired by Phil Turner, President of ECOVAST of ASSET Project; Valerie Carter (ECOVAST UK and Rural Director of the South East England Development Agency -SEEDA) explained her work and 'How Regional & National Bodies Assist Small Towns in Europe' and Pam Moore, ECOVAST

Secretary General, reported on her work in progress on results from an ASSET Questionnaire sent to 30 countries with a near 50% response thus far – highlighting the exemplary response from Croatia. The Conference ended with the development of a formal Declaration on small towns.

On **26-27 October 2007** at the International Conference on 'Competitiveness and European Integration' in Cluj, Romania, presentations were made on Pam Moore research.

In **February 2008** a two-day meeting of the ASSET Organising Group was held in London to discuss the potential of an INTERREG Project on small towns. This proposal which attracted potential partners from the Netherlands; Portugal, Spain and also SEEDA, South East Rural Towns Partnership, Rural Community Council and North Yorkshire County Council (all from the United Kingdom). There had been additional interest from sent in from Malta, and Scotland. ECOVAST, sections in Macedonia and Croatia were actively interested, but are unfortunately outside the EU and cannot take part in INTERREG projects. A further search by Hampshire and the South East England office in Brussels attracted other potential partners from Austria, Cyprus, France, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Poland, Sweden, all from local municipalities. The call for partners has also caused Birkbeck University, London to contact us about their database of Market Towns, and the work Pam Moore has been doing in responses to her ASSET questionnaire (to date, the following countries have completed the questionnaire: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, England, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain and Sweden.

On **17-18 July 2008** at another meeting of the Organising Group, held in Hamburg and Schleswig Holstein and hosted by Olaf Linke and had further discussions on a proposed INTERREG IVB proposal with the title: "TOWNES – Territorial Opportunities, West, North East and South". We met several potential partners from these areas of Germany.

On **18 September 2008** alongside its Biennial Assembly held at Wittstock, Germany ECOVAST held a conference aimed at developing policy related to aspects of small towns.

On **9 October 2008**, the ASSET Group sponsored a meeting in Brussels, Belgium at the office of the UK South East, attended by 20 people from the Czech Republic, England, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Spain, Sweden, in order to discuss the proposed TOWNES project under INTERREG IVC. They met UNCEM (the National Union of Mountain Municipalities, Communities and Authorities in Italy), who might be a potential lead partner in an INTERREG bid. Three possible UK partners of the TOWNES project, CRC, SEEDA (with the South East Rural Towns Partnership) and Yorkshire Forward (with North Yorkshire County Council) have withdrawn from the INTERREG IVC, but remain members of the ASSET Organising Group. Other interested organisations who decided not to be INTERREG partners would be encouraged to join and to contribute funding to ASSET, and /or to join ECOVAST.

On **28 October 2008** at a conference held in Logrono, Rioja, Spain, Phil Turner, ECOVAST Vice President (United Kingdom) presented a paper on the ECOVAST ASSET project and Pam Moore shared the platform with a presentation of her research for ASSET, commenting on real examples of the challenges facing towns and villages.

In **March 2009** Pam Moore started on the new phase of research she has commenced on the impact of the economic downturn on European Small Towns. Distribution of the questionnaire on this topic to countries across Europe has commenced, and the first replies were received.

Newsletter 42 published in **April 2009** reported on the Progress of the ASSET project. Although the INTERREG IVC pan-European proposal was not completed by the Italian Lead Partner, it has been possible for ECOVAST (Croatia) and ASSET to join (as non-partners). A new project replaced it under INTERREG IVB Mediterranean area, led by Malta: this project was adopting the title of TOWNES and some of the partners we had gathered from meetings in London, Brussels and Spain. There were 16 partners in all, from Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal and Spain. Efforts to join other EU funded projects continue, with prospects in the areas of North East Europe and Central Europe.

During **2009** ECOVAST Austria developed a 'Small Town Register' of the historic small towns in all nine provinces of their country. Austria is the first European country to list all its small historic towns. The register shows that Austria has 182 Small Towns in Austria of which 129 can be called according to criteria developed by ECOVAST Austria. These criteria are:

- the (central) historic and public square, the line(s) of historic facades on multi-storied historic houses (around the square), dense network of narrow lanes and houses (around the historic court)
- castle (or ruin) and/or monastery, walls (or some perceivable remains), major place of worship (cathedral, mosque, synagogue), authenticity and "unique sense of place" (associated values).
- besides the "historic criteria" there are some functional criteria that Small Towns fulfil for their region, independent of their historic value, such as regional authorities, school centre, health centre, shopping centre, core of public traffic (trains, buses), destination for tourism (e.g. culture and sport events), greater number of "higher professions".

In Austrian terms a small town is a town up to some 50.000 inhabitants. The official body in Austria, representing towns, is the "Federal Council of Towns".

On **23-24 April 2009** the Austrian Section of ECOVAST held the Fourth International Symposium on Small Towns in Grieskirchen, Upper Austria, hosted by Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler, on the theme "Relations between Small Towns and their Hinterland". This event, attended by participants from many parts of Europe, started with an excursion i.e. a guided walk through the town of Grieskirchen and followed by a coach tour to see the landscape and projects around the town. At the Symposium on the second day Franz Grossauer (University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna) delivered a keynote lecture entitled "The town and its hinterland – a very familiar relation". Presentations were then made by:

- Alexander Ferstl, of the General Directorate of Regional Policy, Brussels on 'The Town in a European View'
- Wolfgang Danninger, Village & Town Renewal of Upper Austria on 'Vital Town Centres'
- Georg Spiegelfeld, of the Department of Culture of Upper Austria, on 'Architectural Heritage as a Factor of Economy'
- Pam Moore and Phil Turner on the ASSET project
- Gerhard Fasching and Sylvia Mayer, ECOVAST Austria, on their emerging work in the small town register of Austria.

Arthur Spiegler (ECOVAST Austria) then introduced the parallel discussions:

- Seminar 1: Town – Hinterland Relations, with special focus on the use of renewable energy, facilitated by experts of Austrian "Biomasseverband".
- Seminar 2: Public Space in Small Towns (the unplanned town; public space suffering neglect or having added value) was led by Ernst Beneder, architect.

In plenary, Sylvia Meyer and Gerhard Fasching, ECOVAST Austria, presented their emerging work on the Small Town Register of Austria.

In **June 2009** Phil Turner and Pam Moore (United Kingdom) took part in a Royal Town Planning Institute Convention in London. The question posed was 'Can Small Towns be More Sustainable than Larger Cities and Conurbations' and ECOVAST promoted the potential role for small towns and the ASSET project.

On **2 July 2009** the European Commission, organized a seminar on Urban Rural Linkages in Brussels, Belgium. Pam Moore (United Kingdom) took part and suggested that small towns as the 'middleman' – the key between urban and rural. She explained briefly the project ASSET and her research which showed good links between small towns and hinterland, except where infrastructure is lacking. She said Small Towns fall into a policy gap between Cities and Rural yet they are hubs for economic, social and cultural activity, offering markets and service facilities, and beneficial to all residents.

In **22 October 2009** there was a conference on small towns held in Mošćenice, Croatia, where Pam Moore described her research on small towns in the economic downturn.

On **16 November 2010**, eighteen people, ECOVAST members and others, from Germany, Austria, UK and Poland, attended a seminar at the Fachhochschule (University of Applied Sciences), in Potsdam, Germany on the topic of European Small Towns. This event, part of the ECOVAST Project was organised by Angus Fowler of the German ECOVAST Section and Phil Turner of the UK ECOVAST Section. The 3 purposes of the seminar were to:

- to report progress of the ASSET project of ECOVAST
- to discuss policies for small towns in Europe, member states and regions
- to arrive at recommendations for a major European Conference on Small Towns in 2011

There were poster displays on various research reports included:

- work by Professor John Shepherd of Birkbeck College, University of London, on the development of a strategic database for small towns in England
- information from Steffen Maretzke of the Federal Institute for research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development and the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development and also from the Brandenburg Ministry of Infrastructure
- Dirk Michaelis showcased the region of Altmark, Sachsen-Anhalt
- activity on small towns by the ECOVAST Croatian Section.
- copies of the New Wittstock Declaration 2008 by ECOVAST Germany, the Brandenburg Chamber of Architects and the Municipality of Wittstock/Dosse

Presentations were made on research by ECOVAST members and others including Phil Turner, Pam Moore and Valerie Carter (United Kingdom); Arthur Spiegler and Gerhard Fasching (Austria); Andrea Weigert, Irmelin Küttner and Ralf Bokerman (Germany) and Jörg Gehrmann, Mayor of Wittstock and Ms. Kathleen Bierbaß, from the Working Group "Towns with historic centres" of the State of Brandenburg and Frau Menz, of the Brandenburg Chamber of Architects

On **28 February 2012** President Valerie Carter and Phil Turner (United Kingdom) met Sabrina Lucatelli of DG Regio in Brussels, Belgium and we explained our work on ASSET and this resulted in ECOVAST being invited to join their RURBAN Group. Their role was to understand and promote Rural / Urban Partnerships where ECOVAST will promote the importance of small towns.

During **2012** President Valerie Carter carried out a number of research on small towns related to:



- Service Assets in South East England small towns carried out by Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)
- Heritage Assets in South East England small towns carried out by Valerie Carter
- Study of European Small Towns – how many are there etc carried out by Valerie Carter

On **4 October 2012** at the ECOVAST event held in Witzhausen, Germany, Arthur Spiegler (Austria) organised a workshop on historic small towns the help of the German section. Enrico Capo (Italy) described the characteristics for classifying a 'small town'.

In **December 2013**, Newsletter 55 described the involvement of ECOVAST Germany in the International QUALIST project: Since summer 2010, 11 partners from Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic worked in the joint project 'Improving Quality of Life in Small Towns – QUALIST' for transferable solutions to increase the quality of life in small towns. They gathered examples of practical experiences in this field from different European regions

In **2013** Ralf Bokermann (ECOVAST Germany) reported on a paper he had written on the subject of Small Towns in peripheral regions of the Lower Oder area and West-Pomerania. In his conclusions he states:

- that the significance of small towns for the rural area has been a topic for research, conferences and various papers.
- that small towns, shaped the structure of the rural area: their functions cover all spheres of life and fields of work and they are locations for schools, shopping, local and regional administration, medical supply, culture and offers of entertainment and not least centres of employment and creation of added value in rural spaces.
- earlier surveys gave rise to the conclusion that functions of small towns are the more important to the surrounding area, where the region is more sparsely populated. The more distant the next metropolitan region is and therefore more difficult to reach, the more important the functions of the smaller centres are for the residents.

In **May 2013** at the Dammheim committee meeting in Germany the formal ECOVAST Policy Paper on Small Towns was agreed and was later sent to the Council of Europe, DG Agri and DG Regio of the European Commission and all key partners

In **September 2013** at the ECOVAST Assembly held in Kozard, Hungary there was a further seminar on small towns which outlined our ECOVAST Policy Paper on Small Towns.

On **23 October 2013** at the OECD Rural Conference held Bologna, Italy Valerie Carter made a presentation on the role of small towns in rural urban partnerships.

In **November 2013** at the Eleventh Rural University event held in Perigueux, France Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) made a presentation on a pan-European view of small towns.

During **2014** ECOVAST carried out research on best practice in small towns across Europe and what they have been doing to help their own future.

In **November 2014** the results of all the ASSET Project work, research and policy statement were published in a document named 'The Importance of Small Towns'. More than 1,000 copies were printed and 950 distributed across Europe: to our ECOVAST National Sections; PREPARE partners; DG Agri and DG Region; the Council of Europe; OECD; other pan-European Networks; all the National Rural Networks; and the Associations of Local Authorities/Municipalities in 39 European Countries. In response, comments were received from the Council of Europe; the European Network of Spatial Planners; the Royal Town Planning Institute UK. All expressed agreement with our findings.

During **March 2015** we staged another small conference on small towns in the Spa Town of Františkovy Lázně, Czech Republic which marked the end of our ASSET project.

During **2015** we drew together all our previously reports on the Opinion and Empirical surveys we had carried out into one new document – called the 'Supporting Document' to the Importance of Small Towns. In **September 2015**, having been involved with the Danube Forum, we also produced a new publication 'The Importance of Small Towns in the Danube Basin, as a supplement to main report published in November 2014: this document contained examples of active small towns in the 16 Danube Countries.

On **28 March 2015** at the ECOVAST event held in Frantiskove Lazne, in the Czech Republic there was another workshop on small towns.

Between **2015** and **2018**, ECOVAST speakers made presentations on the work of the Small Town Working Group at a number of significant shown below. They all included in Part B of this report and include the following:

- On **8 April 2015** at a EUROPA NOSTRA UK / ECOVAST conference on the 'Significance of Place' held at Cambridge, England, Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic (Croatia); Angus Fowler (Germany) and Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) all gave presentations on the importance of small towns and their contribution to 'place'.

- On **3 May 2015** at the First European Conference on Local Governments held in Krakow, Poland, Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) used small towns as an example in her presentation on the European Rural Development Programme 2014-2020.
- On **1 September 2015** Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) explained the ECOVAST research on small towns at the Royal Geographical Society's annual conference held in Exeter, England.
- On **27-28 October 2015** ECOVAST attended the Danube Civil Society Forum Participation Day held in Ulm, Germany. ECOVAST put up a small display on small towns as part of their exhibition and also ran a workshop on small towns.
- On **4 November 2015** at the Second European Rural Parliament held in Scharding, Austria, Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) ran a workshop on small towns and she and Brigitte Macaria (Austria) laid on a display on small town work in the main marquee.
- On **4 April 2016** at the Second European Conference on Local Governments held in Krakow, Poland Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) used small towns as an example of entrepreneurship, agro-tourism and public / private partnerships.
- In **February 2017** ECOVAST United Kingdom published its research which listed all the towns in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and put them into size bands of population.
- On **20 October 2017** at Third European Rural Parliament held in Venhorst, in the Netherlands, Phil Turner ran a workshop on small towns with speakers Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic (Croatia) and Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) explaining ECOVAST work.
- On **9 December 2017** at the Industry Forum held in Karpacz, Poland Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) made a presentation on the contributions made by businesses in small towns in one of the workshops.
- On **27 April 2018** at the Fourth European Conference on Local Government held in Krakow, Poland, Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) spoke on small towns as an example of local patriotism – do origins matter'
- On **6 September 2018** at the Economic Forum held in Krynica, Poland, Valerie Carter took part in one of the Workshops and made a presentation on the role of small towns and their contributions to regional economies.

In **October 2018** it was announced that ECOVAST UK is now undertaking a project to look at the changes that have taken place in a small town High Street – particularly shop closures due to internet shopping – which responds to the campaign in the national press in England on 'Save our High Streets'. A report will be completed by the end of 2020 and circulated to ECOVAST members.

*There is a specific archive file for International Working Groups which contains – in both paper and electronic format – the reports produced by the groups at meetings and in newsletters.*

## **ANNEX 2: INTERNATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS BY ECOVAST NATIONAL SECTIONS & OTHER ECOVAST MEMBERS**

This Annex is a tribute to the National Sections and individual members to the work of ECOVAST International. It is **not** a record of the work carried out by the ECOVAST National Sections as that is the task of the National Sections themselves when they write the history of their sections; and therefore does not list the officers elected by the National Section for their own national committee meetings or the work that they have done. They will, of course, have had many meetings and events staged in their own countries but that work is **not** part of this report. The role of the National Sections is to establish regular contacts with other rural networks and associations in their own country and with their governments to seek to influence rural policy making.

But they have been significant in arranging international meetings and events which are a major part of ECOVAST International activity as well as offering members to serve on the ECOVAST International Committee.

This Annex 2 is a summary of the information already included in Part B of the contributions made by members through service on the International ECOVAST Committee or through other leading roles; or through arranging international events during the period 1984 to 2019. Each National Section is listed in turn and includes:

- people in the section who have been elected or selected to the ECOVAST International Committee
- people elected to serve on the ECOVAST Bureau or chosen to be an International Working Group lead;
- the international ECOVAST committees they have arranged
- the ECOVAST international events that they have organised or co-organised
- the ECOVAST projects or policy work that the National Section has been part of
- for completeness there is also a note of all other events staged in their country but not arranged by ECOVAST

The list includes only names of National Section members that have been included in published material (Minutes or Newsletters). It is recognised that members did not always record their names at meetings or events and apologies are made to all those who did take part but are not mentioned in this section.

The contributions set out below come from 30 European countries members. The 10 current National Section members and their events come first (Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Macedonia FYROM, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia and the United Kingdom): followed by the 7 former National Sections that are no longer active (Belgium, France, East Germany, Estonia, Italy, Slovenia and Sweden): followed by 5 countries that had staged international committee meetings or events (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic, Greece, Luxembourg and Portugal): and finally the 8 countries which provided individual members to serve on International Committees or the Bureau (Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Switzerland and Yugoslavia). This is followed by a simple note of other meetings convened by other in 11 other countries.

Each sub-section lists the contributions from people elected, committee meetings arranged; events organised and projects they have been involved with.

*The first section concerns the 10 current National Sections*

### **ECOVAST Austria**

**People:** Austria has been one of the more active ECOVAST groups attending most international meetings and contributing to most Newsletters. Several members from Austria have served on the ECOVAST International Committee. At the inaugural meeting of ECOVAST in March 1984, Heinz Pammer was elected; Hasso Hohmann was co-opted in October 1984. Both served until 1986. Hans Peter Jeschke was elected in 1986 and he served until 1990. Arthur Spiegler was elected in 1998 and served until 2000. The National Section for Austria was founded in 1998.

Since the year 2000 each National Section selects a member to put forward (unopposed) to represent their country; and Arthur Spiegler was put forward to serve as their representative in 2000 and he has served on the committee until 2017. Austria then put forward Brigitte Macaria in 2017. There can be several members from one country to serve on the International Committee as well as those selected by the National Section. Franz Nahrada was also elected and served 2017-2019

The ECOVAST International Committee elected the following to serve as members of the International **Bureau**: Heinz Pammer became the founding Vice President and served from 1984 to 1986; followed by Hans Peter Jeschke who was elected Vice President from 1986 to 1988; Arthur Spiegler was elected as Vice President and served from 2002 to 2004 and then as Senior Vice President from 2004 to 2006; and Vice President again for three further terms from 2010 to 2017. Brigitte Macaria was elected Vice President and served from 2017 to 2019.

**Leads on Working Groups:** There were also members from ECOVAST Austria who became leads of International Working groups or members of ECOVAST international projects. The International Landscape Working Group has been led by Arthur Spiegler since 2000: the work on small towns was started in Austria in 1998 and led by Arthur Spiegler, with a team which included Hans Draxler, Gerhard Fasching, Brigitte Macaria and Silvia Mayer. The Green Belt was the third international project and entirely run by ECOVAST Austria from 2008 and involving Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler.

Other members of ECOVAST Austria who have been recorded in ECOVAST minutes or newsletters and not included above are: Norburt Burda, Alexandru Calcatinge, Gerhard Fasching, Eva Hody; Christine Jeschke, Marguerite Grafen Kottulinski, Sixtus Lanne, Helge Loider, Silvia Mayer, Katherina Rybnicek

**Committee meetings:** There have been 14 international committee meetings organised by ECOVAST Austria: with 4 annual assemblies: with General Assemblies held in Attersee on 13 September 1997; in RETZ, on 5 November 2005; in Vienna on 23 October 2011 and the Biennial Assembly in Neusiedler on 27 October 2017; and 10 International committees held in Graz on 1 October 1984; in Linz on 6 December 1987; in Attersee on 12 September 1997; in Kirchbach on 24 February in 2007; and 5 meetings in Vienna on 23 August 2003; on 4 February 2006; on 16 February 2008; on 14 February in 2009; and 24 January in 2010 and in Illmitz on 26 October 2017.

**Events:** ECOVAST Austria has arranged 11 international events: a seminar on 'Aspects of Village Renewal' held in Linz in December 1987; a conference with EUROPA NOSTRA and ISG on rural development in Alpine regions held in Attersee in September 1997; a series of symposiums on small towns: in Murau in September 1998, in Waidhofen an der Ybbs in October 2002; in Retz with the South East England Development Agency in November 2005; and in Grieskirchen in April 2009; 2 workshops on small towns - with ECOVAST Croatia held in Makarska, in Croatia in March 2006 and in St Veit an der Glan in September 2007; a series of workshops on landscape identification in Slovakia in May 2001; in Austria and the Czech Republic in October 2005; in Pernegg in July 2006 and in Austria and the Czech Republic again in the Spring of 2009; and a Study Tour to look at the Energy Town of Gussing in February 2007

In addition there have been 8 international events staged in Austria but arranged by others but where ECOVAST members have taken part including. These include a European Symposium on monuments held in Durnstein in October 1998; a major rural policy conference in Salzburg in 2003; a conference on 'International Co-operation in a Common Europe' held in the Therman region in April 2006; a symposium on 'Historic Water Supply in Vienna' held in Vienna in October 2011; 3 events arranged by the Danube Forum – the inaugural Forum held in Eisenstadt in June 2011; the Danube Region Participation Day also held in Eisenstadt in June 2014 and the Danube Forum held in Vienna which followed it; and the Second European Rural Parliament held in Schärding in 2013..

There have been some significant individual contributions made by ECOVAST not mentioned above: examples include: (although the list is not exhaustive) Arthur Spiegler made a presentation at a major event in Russia – Culture as the Important Factor on the Preservation and Development of Territory in the Kenozero National Park held in 2005; Austria made a presentation at the CIVILSCAPE International Energy conference held in Königsberg, Germany in 2012 and Franz Nahrada and Brigitte Macaria took part in the Second European Rural Parliament held in Scharding and staged an exhibition in the main marquee

**Projects:** There are several major projects that have been part of ECOVAST's international work, that have had been led or had significant interventions from ECOVAST Austria:

The **ECOVAST Landscape Identification Project** followed on from early work the promotion of the importance of landscapes was pioneered by several other members of ECOVAST and several workshops held in France, Italy, and Ireland.

The development of a formal working group on landscapes and production of a policy guide was led by Austria's Arthur Spiegler, who led a series of development workshops to test identification models in Stupava, Slovakia in May 2001 and produced their first policy document in 2002. The document was refined at the Pernegg event in 2006 and formally published by Arthur Spiegler and Michael Dower (United Kingdom); the document was revised and updated by Arthur Speiger in 2012. Arthur Spiegler made a presentation in the Council of Europe's workshop on the implementation the Landscape Convention held in CETINJE, Montenegro in October 2013 and Brigitte Macaria was invited by the Council of Europe to make a presentation at an event held in Andorra on the implementation of the European Landscape Convention in 2014.

The Landscape Working Group still continues with Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler - but it now concentrates on karst scenery and caves

The **ECOVAST Small Towns Project**, started with work through a series of symposiums led by Arthur Spiegler and ECOVAST Austria: the first in 1998; a second in 2002; the third in 2005 – which led to an Austrian Project to define all their historic towns (the members of this team are listed above) and a formal international ECOVAST project called 'Action to Strengthen Small European Towns' or ASSET where the team was led for the next 11 years, from 2005 to 2016 by Phil Turner (United Kingdom). Arthur Spiegler was a member of that team.

Arthur also arranged 2 small development workshops – in Croatia in April 2006 and another Austria in September 2007. Austria also held a Fourth Symposium on small towns in Grieskirchen in 2009. Austria published its own survey results in 2009 and their work on small towns is continued today by Arthur Spiegler and Brigitte Macaria who published a policy paper on small historic towns (SHeT's) in 2017.

The **International Green Belt Project** was the third international project and entirely run by ECOVAST Austria representing ECOVAST International and dates from 2008. This project concerns the area on either side of the former Iron Curtain (which in total stretches from the Barentz Sea to the Adriatic). Austria became part of this major European project in 2008 (the work led by Brigitte Macaria and Arthur Spiegler) and was commissioned to do significant research on six landscape areas which have a border with Austria (using the ECOVAST Landscape Guide). The work involved workshops with local stakeholders and is still ongoing and has been linked into working with ECOVAST Germany. Austria contributed to a conference in Andorra in October 2015 which linked the Green Belt/Landscape Identification and small towns

#### **Project DORFWIKI in May 2008**

The project is an on-line community centred on villages and small towns. The site is now used to store a lot of ECOVAST's work on small towns and villages and can be accessed through the ECOVAST website.

### **ECOVAST Croatia**

**People:** Croatia has been one of the more active ECOVAST groups attending most international meetings and contributing to most Newsletters. Miljenka Fischer had served Yugoslavia on the ECOVAST International Committee from 1986 until 1992 and was then elected from Croatia in 1992 and served until 1998. The National Section for Croatia was founded in 1993. Ksenja Markovic was elected in 1998 and served until 2001 and Renate Husinec was co-opted in 2001 and served until 2002. Although National Sections could select a member to represent them on the International Committee in 2000, this did not happen for Croatia until 2002 when Jasenka Krancevic who was selected 2002 and who served until 2004 when Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić was selected in 2004 and has served representing Croatia on the International Committee until 2019.

The International Committee elected the following members from ECOVAST Croatia to serve on the ECOVAST Bureau: Miljenka Fischer who served as Vice President from 1990 until 1994; Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić was elected President and served from 2008 until 2010; but she has served before that as Vice President from 2004 to 2008 and then again from 2010 until 2019.

There have been some significant individual contributions made by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (not mentioned above and not exhaustive) – with presentations made in International events in other countries such as the conference on Cultural Diversity held in Belfast, United Kingdom in September 2009 and the EUROPA NOSTRA event on the 'Understanding of Place' held in Cambridge in April 2015

Other members of ECOVAST Croatia who are recorded in ECOVAST Minutes or Newsletters and not included above are: Ljerka Albus, Nada Bakula, Klementina Batina, Nikša Božić, Antonija Dejavović, Damir Demonja, Biserka Dumbović Bilušić, Manda Horvat, Jadran Kale, Valerija Kelemen Pepeonik, Miroslav Klemm, Andreja Kolić, Goranka Kovačić, Drazen Krbutina, Eduard Kušen, Stjepan Lončarić, Aleksander Lukić, Andreja Medven, Stanka Mihelić Polić, Branko Orbančić, Vida Pust Škrkulja, Darja Radović Mahečić, Ivanka Reberski, Lela Ročenočić, Majda Rubić, Davor Salopek, Branka Sirinić, Marijan Vejvoda, Jadranka Veselić Bruvo, Ives Vodanović Lukić, Ratko Vučetić, Zdravko Živković and Drogica Zodimoc

**Committee meetings:** There have been 7 committee meetings organised by ECOVAST Croatia with 3 annual assemblies including a General Assembly held in Samobor on 14 October 2007; a General Assembly held in Lovran on 24 October 2009; and a General Assembly held in Bistra on 12 October 2018: and 4 International Committee meetings: held in Samobor on 13 October 2007; in Opatija on 12 July; in Lovran on 22 October 2009 and a very brief meeting in Bistra on 12 October 2018.

**Events:** There have been 6 events organised by ECOVAST Croatia; a landscape workshop held in Makarska in the summer of 2004; 5 events on small towns held in Makarska in March 2006; Samobor in October 2007; in Mosenice in October 2009; and in Ivanic Grad in November 2011; and a conference on Eco Museums held in Bistra in October 2018.

In addition there have been 8 international events staged in Croatia yet organised by others. These include 2 workshops on rural heritage held in Križevci and in Karlovac both in May 1990; 4 tourism conferences held in Hvar in October 2007; in Opatija in October 2008; in Losinj in May 2010 and Osijek in May 2012; a conference on agriculture held in Zagreb in June 2009; and the sixth PREPARE Gathering held partly in Stubice Toplice in June 2009.

**Projects:** Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić has been involved in the development of the ECOVAST International project on Heritage Trails; the Makarska Landscape project, working with Arthur Spiegler (Austria) which tested the ECOVAST Landscape Identification Guide; and she was part of the Project Team for ASSET on small towns from 2005 until 2016.

## **ECOVAST Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) 1984-1990**

**People:** The following 4 members from West Germany were elected to serve on the first Executive Board at the founding meeting in March 1984 including Angus Fowler who was elected and served from 1984 to 1990; Detlef Simons who served from 1984 to 1986; Gerhard Henkel and Jacob Wagner who both served from 1984 to 1988. Irmgaard Bott was also co-opted for 1984. Jean Chanel who was elected and served from 1986 to 1990; Helmut Korzonnek who served from 1987 to 1990; Gunter Kroes who served from 1988 to 1990 The National Section for the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) was founded in 1988. Gunter Reusch was elected and served from 1989 to 1990 and in that year with the National Section for East Germany to become the ECOVAST Section for a combined Germany. Several of these members continued to serve as members of ECOVAST Germany after 1990.

The International Committee elected Angus Fowler of the Federal Republic of Germany to serve as Vice President on the ECOVAST Bureau from 1986 until 1990. Gunter Reusch was also elected to the post of ECOVAST and served from 1989 to 1990.

**Committee meetings:** there were 5 International Committees arranged by the Federal Republic of Germany including: the Inaugural Meeting held in Marburg on 18 March 1984; 3 meetings held in Lübeck Travemünde – a Biennial Assembly on 11 October; and 2 International Committees on 9 and 11 October in 1988; and an International Committee Meeting held in Hörter on 21 October 1989.

**Events:** There were two events organised by ECOVAST West Germany before unification - the Inaugural Conference held in Bellnhausen in March 1984; and the Conference on Rural Regions held in Lübeck Travemünde in October 1988

There were 2 other international events staged in West Germany where ECOVAST members took part, including: the Council of Europe's events held in Lübeck Travemünde – the Colloquium and the Closing Event held in Ostholstein – both in October 1988

## **ECOVAST Germany (combined) 1990 onwards**

**People:** Germany has been one of the more active ECOVAST groups attending most international meetings and contributing to most Newsletters. The combined National Section was **formed in 1990** has supplied the following members to represent Germany on the international committee, some of them following on from the early group from West Germany (see above). It includes Angus Fowler who was elected and served from 1990 to 1998, was co-opted from 1998 to 2000 and was then re-elected until 2004, and then again from 2006 to 2017; Jean Chanel was elected and served from 1990 to 1998; Gunter Kroes was elected and served from 1990 to 2000; Ralf-Folke Schwinge was elected and served from 1990 to 2002; Ursula Stratenwerth was elected and served from 1990 to 1998; Rudiger Maul was elected and served from 1992 to 1994; Hans Schwiderski was elected and served from 1992 to 1994; Maria Meier Gresshoff was elected and served from 1992 to 2000; Rolf Peter Bartz was elected and served from 1994 to 1998; Gabrielle Kaufmann was elected and served from 2000 to 2001; Andrea Weigert was elected and served 2006 to 2019; Ralf Bokermann was elected and served from 2004 to 2015; Olaf Linke was elected and served from 2005 to 2006 and then from 2008 to 2010; Heinar Henckel was elected and served from 2008 to 2010 and Michael Strecker was elected and served from 2017 to 2019.

After 2000, the National Sections selected the following members to represent ECOVAST Germany (to be added to the above list) as members of the International Committee and included Andrea Weigert to serve from 2000 to 2006; followed by Olaf Linke 2006 to 2008; Angus Fowler 2008 to 2015; Olaf Linke again 2015 to 2017; then Angus Fowler again from 2017.

The International Committee has elected the following members from Germany to serve as members of the ECOVAST Bureau, including Angus Fowler who was elected and served as President from 2000 to 2004; Angus Fowler was elected to serve as Senior Vice President from 2015 to 2017. He was also elected Vice President three times serving from 1986 to 1990; 1994 to 1998 and again from 2012 to 2015; Gunter Kroes was elected to serve as Vice President and served from 1990 to 1994. Gabrielle Kaufmann was elected Secretary General and served from 2000 to 2001, followed by Andrea Weigert from 2001 until 2004. Olaf Linke was elected Treasurer and served from 2006 to 2010 followed by Andrea Weigert who was elected Treasurer and served from 2010 until 2019.

The following members from Germany have been appointed as Honorary Auditors: Marlis Lier who served from 2002 to 2006; Angus Fowler who served 2004 to 2006; Rudiger Maul who served from 2006 until 2015; Horst Schubert who served from 2006 until 2008; Heinar Henckel who served from 2008 until 2010; Irmelin Küttner who served from 2008 until 2015; Ivar Henckel who served from 2016 until 2019 and Peter Thran who also served from 2015 to 2019. *Note: all the Treasurers and the Auditors of ECOVAST have been from Germany or the United Kingdom.*

**ECOVAST Leads:** The following members from Germany have led ECOVAST Working Groups including: Angus Fowler and Detlef Simons who led the Brown Coal Group from 1990 to 2002; Maria Meier Gresshof who

led on Rural Tourism from 1993 to 1997; Ursula Stratenwerth who led on Agriculture and the Environment from 1991 to 1992; and Rudiger Maul who led on the Rural Buildings Group from 2000 to 2015.

**ECOVAST Projects:** Several international ECOVAST projects have been led or part lead by members of ECOVAST Germany; the ASSET project members included Angus Folwer, Ralf Bokermann and Andrea Weigert; Olaf Linke was part of the REVITAMIN project in 2006 and Irmelin Kuttner part of the QUALIST project 2010-2013.

Olaf Linke also made a contribution on Germany at the CIVILSCAPE Energy event held in Königswinter, Germany in October 2012.

Several members from ECOVAST Germany have been awarded ECOCAST Honorary Life Membership. Angus Fowler and Helmut Korzonnek being awarded in 1988; Christa Korzonnek and Erica Maul in 2016; and Horst Bruchmann, Detlef Simons, Gerda Stachowitz and Ursula Stratenworth who were awarded retrospectively in 2016.

Other members of ECOVAST Germany recorded in ECOVAST minutes or newsletters not included above are: Thea Altaras, Sibylle Bachmüller; Sylvia Backmann, Justus Bohl, ? Fenske, Wieland Giebel, Gunter Herring, Josef Holzner; Ignaz-Wessel von Landsberg-Velen, Diethart Kerbs, Astrid Debold Kritter, Max Linke, Bernard Maisel, Wolfgang Riedel, Barbara Simons, Birgit Tschudi and Hany Westermarck

**Committee meetings:** There were 22 ECOVAST meetings arranged in the combined Germany with 5 annual assemblies and 17 international committees and 1 Bureau meeting, including: a 1990 Biennial Assembly held in Georgenthal on 25 November 1990; a Biennial Assembly held in Seifhennersdorf on 6 October 2002; a Biennial Assembly held in Wittstock on 20 September 2008; a Biennial Assembly held in Witzhausen on 7 October 2012; and a General Assembly held in Marburg on 22 October 2016; and International Committees held in Marburg – on 15 September 1990; on 5 February 1994; on 4 March 2004 and held on 21 October 2016. The International Committees were held in Georgenthal on 25 November 1990; in Oelde on 10 July 1993; in Marburg in February in 1994 and again in March 2004 marking the tenth and 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ECOVAST; in Landau on 18 February 1995; in Binz on 15 March 1998; in Heuersdorf on 28 October 2000; in Seifhennersdorf on 6 October 2002; in Berlin on 22 January 2005; in Weyher on 15 July 2007; in Wittstock on 19 July 2008 and 19 September 2008; in Achberg on 22 April 2012; and Wittstock again on 20 June 2012; in Witzhausen on 5 October 2012 and in Dammheim on 25 May 2013 and in Marburg again in October 2016. The meeting of the ECOVAST Bureau was also held in Marburg on 1 December in 1996.

**Events:** There have been 11 events organised or co-organised by the combined ECOVAST Germany, including: a congress 'The future of villages' held in Giessen in July 1990; a seminar 'Adult Education and Rural Development held at Fredeburg in May 1991; 2 International Symposiums on manorial estate complexes in the Baltic region – both held in Tellow in September 1994 and again in September 2004; a seminar on frontier regions held in Seifhennersdorf in October 2002, a seminar on Vernacular Architecture held in Dammheim in May 2013; a seminar on historic buildings' – together with Marburg Biedenkopf District, held in October 2016; a conference on Agenda 21 held in Binz in March 1998 and a series of conferences on small towns held in Wittstock in September 2008; in Potsdam in November 2010 and in Witzhausen in October 2012

There were 17 other international events staged in Germany where ECOVAST members took part, including: a conference on Rural Building – 'The Brandenburg House' held at Moglin in October 1993; an international Conference on Village Renewal held at the DEBAL Fair in Rostock in February 1994;; the EUROPA NOSTRA Forum on Restoration of Historic Buildings held in BERLIN, Germany in June 1994; 10 DENKMAL Trade Fairs all held in Leipzig in October 1998, October 2000; in November 2002; in September 2004; in October 2006; in November 2008; in November 2010; November 2012; November 2014 and November 2016; the CIVILSCAPE conference on 'Energyscapes' held in Königswinter in October 2012; the QUALIST conference held in Dresden in November 2013; the Danube Forum Participation Day held in Ulm in October 2015; and the tenth Anniversary of CIVILSCAPE event held in Aschaffenburg in February 2018.

## **ECOVAST Hungary**

**People:** One Hungarian member was elected to the International Committee in the early years with Andras Roman who served from 1988 to 1998. The National Section was **formed in 1990** and Csaba Csaky who was elected and served from 1990 to 1992; then Sandor Koles who served from 1992 to 2000; Marta Marczis who served from 1998 to 2000; then Gabor Rajnai who was elected and served from 2000 to 2002; Iren Kukorelli elected and served from 2002 to 2004; and Deszo Kovacs who served from 2004 to 2010

From 2000 ECOVAST Hungary selected a member to represent them on the International Committee, the first being Marianne Labbanicz who was elected and served from 2000 to 2002; followed by Gabor Rajnai who was selected in 2002 and served until 2019.

The International Committee also elected the following members from Hungary to serve on the Bureau, including: Andras Roman who was elected as President and served two terms from 1992 to 1996; Sandor Koles was elected as Vice President and served from 1996 to 2000; Marianne Labbanicz was elected and served as a

Vice President from 2000 to 2002; and Gabor Rajnai who was elected as Vice President and served from 2004 to 2006 and again from 2017 to 2019

Other members of ECOVAST Hungary who appear in Minutes or Newsletters and not included above are: Erzsebet Bene, Andras Csote, Erzsebet Custi-Schleer, Pataky Eموke, Istvan Eri, Karoly Farkas, Pal Hajas, Judit Hermann, Andras Krisan. Laszlo Kulcsar, Ferenc Makovenyi, Lazlo Muszik, Vera Muszik, Mariam Mihok, Eve Rajnai, Gyula Siklosi, Csaba Szalay, Tamas Szekelyhidi, Eva Szuros, Maria Terebes

**Committee meetings:** There have been 6 international meetings organised by ECOVAST Hungary, including 3 annual assemblies and 3 International Committees, including: a General Assembly Meeting held in Noszvaj on 8 October 1995; a Biennial Assembly Meeting held in Szigliget on 16 October 2004; and a General Assembly in Kozard on 29 September 2013. The International Committees were held in Rackeve on 23 March 1991; in Noszvaj on 7 October 1995 and Sopron on 30 May 1998.

**Events:** There have been 6 events organised or co-organised by ECOVAST Hungary, including: a symposium on the Carpathian region held in Noszvaj in October 1995; a symposium on tourism with HAVT in Balatonfoldvar in August 1989; an event with the Hungarian Rural Parliament workshop held in Budapest in February 1999; a conference on 'Tourism in Rural Europe' with HAVT and held in Kapsovar in October 1990; an event on 'Rural Development and EU Enlargement' held in Budapest in May 2003; and a workshop on Rural Buildings and Small Towns held in Kozard in September 2013;

There were 6 other international events held in Hungary where ECOVAST members took part, including: the Council of Europe event on cultural landscape held in Budapest and Keszthely in June 1993; the First Hungarian Rural Parliament held in Budapest in April 1998; another Rural Parliament held in Etyek in May 2002, a Council of Europe conference held in Budapest in March 2003; and the eighth European Rural University held in Mezotur and Solnok in June 2006; and a LEADER / PREPARE Conference held in Tihany in November 2006.

**ECOVAST Policy and Projects:** There was a European Parliamentary Conference on Rural Development in May 1997, where Sandor Koles represented ECOVAST, which resulted in the Bratislava Declaration. In April 1998 ECOVAST Hungary, (particularly Marta Marzcis) were involved with the formation of the Hungarian Rural Parliament. Also Sandor Koles was part of the Carpathian Foundation who in March 1999 asked ECOVAST to provide training in integrated rural development in Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and the Ukraine and the ECOVAST project produced a 'Manual on Training in the Carpathians' which was finally published in June 2000.

### **ECOVAST Macedonia FYROM (now NORTH MACEDONIA)**

**People:** The National Section, **formed in 1999.** Macedonia selected Victoria Momeva Altiparmakovska to represent them from 2004-2019.

**Events:** There have been no International Committee meetings arranged by ECOVAST Macedonia; but they have arranged one conference on Balkan towns held in Bitola in August 2012. Also members Victoria Momeva Altiparmakovska and Vesna Kocankovska attended and made a presentation representing Macedonia at the International Energy conference staged by CIVILSCAPE and held in Konigswinter, Germany in 2012.

However there have been other international events held Macedonia FYROM by partner organisations where ECOVAST members took part, including the Conference on Cultural Tourism held in Skopje in 1998 and a PREPARE event in Ohrid in 2010.

### **ECOVAST Poland**

**People:** The National Section, founded in 1990 has provided several members from Poland to serve on the ECOVAST International Committee. Andrzej Kaleta was elected in 1990 and served until 1996; followed by Andrzej Halasiewicz, elected in 1996 and served until 2000; Elzbieta Raszeja elected in 2002 until 2004; and Lech Michal Rosciszewski from 2004 to 2006

When National Sections selected their own members Elzbieta Raszeja was selected to represent Poland from 2000 to 2002; followed by Lech Michal Rosciszewski from 2002 to 2004; then Elzbieta Raszeja from 2004 to 2006. Halina Lapinska was selected in 2006 and has served until 2019.

Other members of ECOVAST Poland who have been recorded in ECOVAST minutes or newsletters and not included above include Anna Badach, Radoslaw Barek, Bogdanowski, Eva Cichy, Krystina Dziubacka, Eva Dziekowska, Anna Jerkiewicz, Marian Kornecki, Danuta Kovolczuk, Jan Kurek, Hanna Michalak, Wladyslaw Misiak, Andrzej Pilichowski, Jon Raczka, Adam Raszeja, Tadeusz Sedzikowski, Pavel Starosta, Barbara Weber

**Committee meetings:** There have been 2 International Committee Meetings arranged by ECOVAST Poland including: the committee held in Torun on 6 May 1995; and the other in Skepe on 22 April 2001.

**Events:** There have been 6 events organised or co-organised by ECOVAST Poland, including: a symposium on 'Coal, People and Environment' held in Swieradow Zdroj in November 1993; and an event on 'European



Agriculture' held in Przysiek in September 1996; a seminar on 'Problems of development of rural Poland' held in Skepe in April 2001; and a series of conferences on the 'Characteristics of Regional Space' held first in Wydmyny in September 2005; then in Suraz in January 2007, and then in Bialystok in January 2009 and in September 2013.

There were 12 international events held in Poland where ECOVAST members took part including: a rural sociologists event on 'Agricultural Change & Rural Households' held Gdansk in March 1994, a EUROPA NOSTRA Forum on Wooden Architecture' held in Krakow in May 1995; the 750<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Foundation of Konigsberg Conference held in Slubica in May 2005; the fifth PREPARE Gathering held in Przemysl in October 2007; the ninth European Rural University held in Sucha Beskidska in June 2008; the SURE Conference held in Krakow in May 2010; the second Conference on Rural/Urban Partnerships staged by DG Regio and held in Warsaw in April 2013; 3 European Congresses of Local Government – all held in Krakow in May 2015, April 2016 and April 2018; an Industry Forum held in Karpacz in December 2017 and the twenty-eighth Economic Forum (the first one attended by ECOVAST) held in Krynica in September 2018.

## **ECOVAST Romania**

**People:** The National Section for Romania, founded in 1991 has provided the two members who have been elected to serve on the International Committee: Calin Hoinarescu who was elected in 1992 and served until 2019 and Magdalena Banu who was elected in 1996 and served until 2019.

When National Sections were able to select a member to represent Romania and either Calin Hoinarescu or Magdalena Banu have fulfilled that role from 2000 until 2019.

The International Committee has also elected the following member from Romania to serve on the Bureau; Magdalena Banu was elected as Vice President and served from 1998 until 2000; for the period 2002 until 2002 she was a Senior Vice President and became Vice President again from 2015 until 2019.

Other members of ECOVAST Romania who have been recorded in ECOVAST minutes or newsletters and not included above are: Andre Banu, Sandor Benczedi, Maria Boaru, Marmand Daia, Monica Danesa, Elena Foransberger, Hannalore Gelhausen, Mihaela Georgescu, Manuela Hoinarescu, Emilia Iancu, Sergui Josipescu, Irina Pavelet, Benzedy Sandov, Georgeta Stoica, Balint Szabo, Lazlo Szabo, Stefan Talamba and Sandor Zoltan

**Committee meetings:** There has only been one formal international committee meeting arranged by ECOVAST Romania: the General Assembly held in Sinaia, Romania on 23 October 1993.

**Events:** There were 2 events held in Romania which were co-organised by ECOVAST Romania members with 2 Scientific Conferences on heritage and heritage, both held in Tusnad in March 1999 and March 2000.

There were 3 other international events held in Romania where ECOVAST members took part, including a conference on 'Competitiveness and European Integration' held in Cluj in October 2007; a conference on Landscape-Urbanism-Tourism held in Ploesti in October 2010; and the fourth European Tourism Conference held in Piatra Neamt in October 2012.

**ECOVAST Publications:** ECOVAST Romania has produced several documents publishing their work on the restoration of historic buildings in Romania – many of them traditional churches; and a manor house which was restored and became a community centre. There researched and produced two Heritage Trails highlighting examples of byzantine architecture in Romania (Volumes I and II). Magdalena Banu of Romania made contribution on these heritage trails in the ECOVAST policy document and publication 'The Importance of Small Towns'.

## **ECOVAST Russia**

**People:** The National Section for Russia, formed in 1996 has selected Olga Sevan to represent them and serve on the ECOVAST International Committee from 1996 to 2019.

Other members of ECOVAST Russia who have been recorded in ECOVAST minutes or newsletters and not included above are: E Akimkin, Natalie Denisova, S.Ilvitakaya, Andrei Ivanov, Vladimir Krogus, Andrius Kulikauskas, Ivan Mitjashin, Viktor Sadkov, Boris Sazonov, Yuri Spiridonovoy, Aleksey Tabakov and Olga Urikova

Olga Sevan of has made presentations in many countries on Russian wooden architecture and monastery towns including the Retz conference on small towns held 2005 the European Tourism Conference held in Piatra Neamt in Romania in 2012.and she has also contributed many articles in ICOMOS and other publications.

**Committee meetings:** There have not been any ECOVAST International Committee meetings in Russia.

**Events:** There were 2 international conferences arranged or co-organised by ECOVAST Russia; the first being with the Russian Federation Ministry of Culture event on 'Partnership in Development Programmes held in Zvenigorad in October 2000 and a conference on 'Culture as the Important Factor of the Preservation and Development of Territory and Spiritual Life of Kenozero' held in the Kenozero National Park in August in 2005.

There were 4 other international events staged in Russia which involved ECOVAST including: a conference on 'Modernisation Processes in Russia and Socio-cultural issues' held in Moscow in July 1994; and a Conference on 'culture' as an important factor in the preservation of territory and spiritual life held in Moscow in September 1996; and 2 ICOMOS conferences - 'Heritage at Risk' held in Moscow in April 2006 and on 'Culture and Wood' held in Rostov Velikij in September 2010.

### **ECOVAST Slovakia**

**People:** The National Section for Slovakia, **formed in 1993** has supplied several members have been elected onto the ECOVAST international committee including: Josef Usak who was elected and served from 1994 to 1998 and again 2000-2006; Maria Nadova who was elected and served 1996 to 2000; Eva Kralova was elected from 2004 to 2006; and Lubica Pincikova from 2008 to 2012.

When National Sections selected their own members, Eva Kralova was selected to represent Slovakia on the committee from 2000 to 2002; and Lubica Pincikova selected for 2002 to 2006; followed by Eva Kralova again from 2006 until 2019.

The International Committee also elected Lubica Pincikova to serve on the Bureau as a Vice President between 2006 and 2010.

Other members of ECOVAST Slovakia who have been recorded in ECOVAST minutes or newsletters and not included above are: Eva Bellacova, Tereza Davidova, R Kenera, Viera Kollarova, Alena Kristianova, Ana Krsakova, Maria Medvecka, Jan Ordos, Emil Pincik, Maria Hannin Strakova, Eva Vesornik, and Jagda Zarnow.

**Committee meetings:** There have been 6 ECOVAST Committees organised by ECOVAST Slovakia with 1 annual assembly and 5 International Committee including: the Biennial Assembly held in Bratislava on 15 October 2006; and the 5 International Committees held in Malacky on 3 February 1996; in Roznava on 5 December 1998; in Modra on 14 December 2002; and 2 meetings held in Bratislava on 23 October 2005 and 14 October 2006.

**Events:** There were 3 international conferences arranged or co-organised by ECOVAST Slovakia including: an conference on Heritage Trails held in Roznava in December 1998; an International Landscape Workshop with ECOVAST Austria held in Stupava in May 2001 and a conference on Renewable Energy held in Bratislava in October 2006

There were 4 other international events staged in Slovakia where ECOVAST members took part, including: a EUROPA NOSTRA Awards event in Brhlovce in April 1994; a conference on 'Tradition and Cultural Monuments' held at Dunajsk Streda in November 1996; a European Parliamentary Conference on Rural Development held in Bratislava in May 1997 and the First PREPARE Gathering held in Pocuvadlo in October 2003.

### **ECOVAST United Kingdom**

**People:** The United Kingdom has been one of the more active ECOVAST groups since it was founded – attending most international meetings and contributing to most Newsletters. Three people from the United Kingdom were among the founder members of ECOVAST at the inaugural meeting in 1984 and became part of the original ECOVAST Board. These first elected members were Frances Noel-Baker who served 1984-1986, Joakim Skovgaard who served from 1984 to 1988 and Edmund Neville Rolfe who was elected and served a long term 1984 until 2002. Alan Leavett, Barbara Noel-Baker and Christopher Terry were all co-opted and served at one meeting in 1984; Tony Croft and John Williams who were elected and served from 1986 to 1988; Nick Dean who was also elected in 1986 and served until 1990; and Michael Dower who was elected in 1986 and served a long time until 2004.

The United Kingdom National Section was **formed in 1989** and several other members were elected to serve on the International Committee, including Peter Hood 1992 until 1995; Nigel Curry from 1996 until 1998; Roy Brigden from 1996 to 2004. After the decision to allow National Sections other members were also elected to serve from the United Kingdom including Trevor Kearley from 2002 until 2006; Phil Turner from 2004 until 2016 and Valerie Carter from 2006 until 2016.

When National Sections started to select their own members to represent them in 2000, Michael Dower was selected to be the representative for the United Kingdom on the International Committee and served from 2000 to 2002; followed by Pam Moore who served from 2002 to 2016; followed by Valerie Carter from 2016 to 2019.

The International Committee elected several United Kingdom members to serve on the ECOVAST Bureau including four members who served as ECOVAST Presidents - Frances Noel-Baker from 1984 until 1986; Michael Dower from 1986 until 1990; Phil Turner from 2004 until 2008; and Valerie Carter from 2010 until 2019; Michael Dower also served as an ECOVAST Senior Vice President who served from 1990 until 1992 and again from 2002 until 2004. There have been two Vice Presidents - Michael Dower who served from 1992 until 1994 and Phil Turner from 2008 until 2015. There have been four Secretary Generals from the United Kingdom including Edmund Neville-Rolfe who served from 1984 until 1987; Peter Hood from 1992 until 1995; Michael Dower from 1995 until 2000 and Pam Moore from 2004 until 2016. All the Treasurers for ECOVAST have

come from either Germany or the United Kingdom – with Edmund Neville-Rolfe serving from 1984 until 1989 and again from 1990 to 1996; Roy Brigden from 1996 until 2002; and Trevor Kearley from 2002 until 2006

Although they are not part of the Bureau, there have been five Honorary Auditors supplied by the United Kingdom which included Alan Leavett who served from 1987 until 1990; John Sell from 1986 until 2002; Peter Hood from 1990 until 1996; Richard Oram from 1996 until 1998; and Roy Brigden 2002-2004

**Leads on Working Groups:** Michael Dower led the group on Sustainable Rural Communities between 1988 and 1989, and on Agriculture and Forestry from 1993 to 1997; Edmund Neville Rolfe led the Group on Local Authorities in 1992 and on Rural Development with Michael Dower from 1997 to 2002; and John Sell on Rural Buildings between 1988 and 1996.

**ECOVAST Projects:** There have also been several United Kingdom members who have served on ECOVAST projects including: Joan Ashby, Valerie Carter, Michael Dower, Pam Moore, Phil Turner, John Sell and Jane Wade (see below).

There have been significant contributions made at international events inside and outside United Kingdoms: Michael Dower; Phil Turner; Pam Moore and Valerie Carter have made presentations on a wide range of topics at many countries about landscapes, rural tourism, energy and small towns.

Other members of ECOVAST United Kingdom who have been recorded in ECOVAST minutes or newsletters and not included above are: Zeynep Aygen, David Baker, Simon Berry, Jane Brantom, Mike Breakell, Susan Denyer, James Derounian, Richard Dickinson, Nan Dower, Royston Edge, Linda Gawler, David Green, John Gerrard, Charlotte Hursey, Jane Kearley, Crispin Moor, Malcolm Moseley, John Prizeman, Paul Richardson, Rozalind Rutt, Mrs Wilkins, Stephen Whitwell and Polly Woolley.

**Committee meetings:** There have been 6 meetings arranged by ECOVAST United Kingdom and held in England with 1 annual assembly and 5 international committees and also 2 Bureau meetings, including: the Biennial Assembly Meeting held in Ventnor on 12 October 2010; and the International Committees held in London on 8 April 1986, in Fontwell Magna on 23 January 1993; in Reading on 15 November 1997; in Shanklin in October 2010, and in Gatwick on 10 May 2014; and the Bureau meetings held in London on 8 February 1997 and in Cheltenham on 5 July also in 1997.

**Events:** There were 3 international conferences arranged or co-organised by ECOVAST United Kingdom including: a conference on 'Rural Development' held in Ventnor, England in October 2010; the Formal Opening of the Kazun, at Parlsey Hay, in the Peak District National Park, England in 5 July 2013 and the conference with EUROPA NOSTRA UK on 'Understanding the Significance of Place' held in Cambridge in April 2015.

There were 11 other international events staged in the United Kingdom, although ECOVAST had not arranged them but where several ECOVAST members took part, including: a Rural Life Conference held at Keele England in July 1990; a European Community event on Rural Development held in Inverness, Scotland in July 1992; an Ulster Architectural Heritage Society 'Future of Rural Buildings' event held in Northern Ireland in March 1998; an ICOMOS UK Conference on Cultural Landscapes held in Oxford, England in 3 May 2000; the seventh European Rural University held in Oxford in June 2004; a Rural Futures Conference held in Plymouth, England in April 2008; a EUROPA NOSTRA Conference on Cultural Landscape and Cultural Identity held in Belfast, Northern Ireland in September 2009; a conference 'Placing Together the Towns Jigsaw' held in Glasgow, Scotland in October 2009; a Market Town Convention held in Chippenham in October 2010; the first Scottish Rural Parliament held in Oban, Scotland in November 2014 and the Royal Geographical Society Annual Conference held in Exeter, England in September 2015

**ECOVAST Projects and Policy:** United Kingdom members who have been part of ECOVAST projects including ICAM, Integrated Rural Development, Heritage Trails, WITRANET, TWIG, Carpathian Training Project, Euracademy, and Landscape Identification which all involved Michael Dower; the Heritage Trails project which also involved John Sell and Jane Wade; the Carpathian Training Project also involved Joan Ashby; and the ASSET project on small towns which involved Valerie Carter, Pam Moore and Phil Turner.

Members of ECOVAST United Kingdom members have led on the development of several major international policy documents such as the Strategy for Rural Europe, Landscape Identification and on Small Towns.

*Below are the former 7 National Sections which are no longer active.*

## **ECOVAST Belgium**

**Members:** The Belgian National Section was founded in 1988 and it lasted until 1992 and provided the following members to serve on the International Committee: Bernard Mignon who was elected and served from 1987 to 1991 and from 1994 to 1996; and Charles Christians who was elected and served from 1992 to 2000

The International Committee also elected the following member from Belgium to serve on the Bureau with Bernard Mignon elected Secretary General and served from 1987 to 1991. Bernard Mignon edited the Newsletters in 1989 and 1990 and he was awarded Honorary Life Membership status in November 1990.

Other ECOVAST members from Belgium who have attended international events and are recorded in Minutes of meetings or Newsletters include: Luk Robyns, Karel Bollen, Madeleine Christians, Adrian Mork

**Committee meetings:** There have been 2 annual assemblies and 5 International committee meetings organised by ECOVAST members from Belgium or by the Belgian National Section, including: the Biennial Assembly Meeting held in Remouchamps Belgium on 24 October 1992; and the Biennial Assembly Meeting held in Butgenbach on 24 September 2000. The 5 International Committees were held in Brussels on 27 April 1984; again in Brussels on 4 April 1987; in Remouchamps on 24 October 1992; in Liege on 11 June 1994; and in Spa on 15 June 1996.

**Events:** There have been 3 events arranged by ECOVAST or co-organised with others, in Belgium, including: the Conference on Sustainable Development held in Butgenbach in September 2000; and the 2 events on the Agriculture and Rural Convention the First launched in Brussels in April 2010 and the Second also held in Brussels in July 2011

There have been 18 events held in Belgium where international ECOVAST member have been involved, including: the Council of Europe's meeting on redundant buildings held in Brussels in May 1989, the COPA Conference on 'Rural World' held in Brussels in November 1990; the First LEADER Gathering held in Brussels in May 1992; the University Liege Forum, and the Leader Programme event which followed both held in Remouchamps in October 1992; the European AgriCultural Convention (EAC) held in Brussels in June 2002, the 'Yes to Rural Europe' meeting held in Brussels in June 2005; the Launch of CURE in December 2007; 2 conferences held in Mechelen – on 'Heritage Care through Active Citizenship' in March 2009; and on 'Voluntary Organisations in Heritage'. In July 2010; the European Union DG Regio Urban-Rural Seminar held in Brussels in October 2009; the conference on Living Landscapes held in Brussels in July 2010; the CIVILSCAPE meeting in Antwerp in December 2010; the DG Regio meeting inviting ECOVAST to join RURBAN, held in Brussels in 2011 and their final meeting of the RURBAN network held in Brussels in January 2014; Green Week Open Day Workshop (RURBAN Seminar) held in Brussels in May 2013; the First European Rural Parliament held in Brussels in November 2013, and the European Social and Economic Committee Workshop on rural communities held in February 2017.

#### **Contribution to ECOVAST policy**

The Worriken Declaration on the value of rural development and rural heritage resulting from the conference held in Butgenbach, Belgium in September 2000.

#### **ECOVAST East Germany (DDR) 1989-1990**

**People:** There was a National Section formed in 1998 for East Germany and in 1990 it joined with West Germany and became a unified ECOVAST Germany. There were no members from East Germany elected to serve on the ECOVAST International Committee (although Ralf Peter Bartz was elected when it was unified). Ralf Peter Bartz – a founder member of the East German Section was honoured with Diploma by EUROPA NOSTRA for his restoration work on the Manor House estate in Tellow in Mecklenburg

Other ECOVAST members from East Germany who have attended international events and are recorded in Minutes of meetings or Newsletters include: Ursula Bohnke, Josef Holzner, Peter Lange, and Armin Niemeyer.

**Committee meetings:** There were no ECOVAST committee meetings held in Germany before unification, although many meetings have been held in what was East Germany since (including Hoxter; Seifhennersdorf and Berlin). The DENKMAL Trade Fair held every 2 years and attended by ECOVAST Germany from 1998-2016 has been held in Leipzig, formerly East Germany represented – all these events are listed in the ECOVAST Germany National Section (*see Page 160*).

**Policy Statements:** There were also 2 Declarations made about Northern German / Baltic manor house estates from the 2 Symposiums held in Tellow in 1994 and 2004

#### **ECOVAST Estonia 1998-2000**

**People:** The National Section was **founded in 1998** and only lasted for 3 years when its members – who were part of the Estonian Village Movement called Kodukant - decided to join the new PREPARE network and leave ECOVAST. Only one member, Tonu Otsason, was elected to the International Committee and served from 1998 until 2000

Other members of ECOVAST Estonia who have been recorded in ECOVAST minutes or newsletters and not included above are: Endel Ervin, Kaja Kaur, Aivar Ruukel, Mikk Sarv, and Urmas Selirand

**Events:** There have been no ECOVAST meetings or conferences held in Estonia but there were 5 international events staged in Estonia which involved international ECOVAST members, including: an International Conference on Rural Development held in Tallin in February 1995; a 'Travelling Workshop' which visited both Estonia and Sweden which led to the new PREPARE Network held in June 1999; the Sixth Estonian Rural Parliament held in Lëpänina in July 2005; a conference on small towns held in Jyväskylä in September 2006 and the Eleventh PREPARE Gathering which was held in Tallin (and in Finland) in September 2014.

### **ECOVAST France 1987-1988**

**People:** The French National Section was the first to be **founded in 1987** but it only lasted for 1987 and 1988 but it has made significant contributions to the development of ECOVAST as an International Organisation. It has had 10 members who have served as members of the International Committee and the Bureau in the early years – 1986 to 1994, including Joy Lecore who was co-opted in 1984; Gerard Baloup who was elected and served 1986 to 1990; Dominique Nanty elected and served from 1986 to 1988; Rene Schnepf elected and served from 1986 to 1988; Jean Paul Leclercq elected and served from 1986 to 1990; Suzanne Thibal elected and served from 1986 to 1990; Michael Marechal elected and served from 1987 to 1988; Christian Neumuller elected and served from 1987 to 1990; Pierre Coulmin elected and served from 1991 to 1994; and Gesine Deserbais who was elected and served from 1992 to 1994. The French Section had folded before members could be selected to represent them.

The International Committee also elected the following members from France to serve on the Bureau; Gerard Baloup who was elected as Vice President and served from 1986 to 1990; and Pierre Coulmin who was elected Secretary General and served from 1991 to 1992. Pierre Coulmin also edited ECOVAST News No 4 in 1991

Other members of ECOVAST France who have been recorded in ECOVAST minutes or newsletters and not included above are: Michelle Boitard, Calteux, Georges Christophe, Francoise Coulmin, Phillippe Richert, and Charles Touzan.

**Leads on Working Groups:** There have been several French members who have acted as Leads on ECOVAST Working Groups: Pierre du Pontavice who led the Education Group in 1988; Rural Tourism led by Susan Thibal from 1988 to 1993; and Claude Brette who worked with Enrico Capo (Italy) on Farmers and Rural People in 1992.

**ECOVAST Projects:** Gesine Deserbais was part of the group of members who were lobbying for a 'Landscape Convention' in Strasbourg 1994.

**Committee meetings:** There have been 2 ECOVAST annual assemblies and 7 international committees meetings arranged by members from France or the French National Section, with the assemblies including: the First Biennial Assembly held in Strasbourg, France on 14 November 1986; and the General Assembly held in Niederbronn les Bains, France on 9 November 1988. The 7 International Committees have been held in Strasbourg on 11 January 1985; in Strasbourg in November 1986; in Blaye on 16 April 1988; in Strasbourg on 4 September 1988; in Mittersholtz on 26 November 1988; in Niederbronn les Bains on 8 November 1988 and held in Paris on 4 October 1992.

**Events:** There were only 2 events organised or co-organised by ECOVAST France: the conference 'Saving the Rural World' held in Strasbourg on 14 November 1986; and the event co-organised with xxxxxECOVAST European Conference on Rural Tourism held in Avignon France in April 1992

There were 16 other events staged in France which involved ECOVAST International members, including the Council of Europe's International NGO Group which met in Strasbourg in January 2002, January 2003, January 2004, January 2007; January 2008, July 2008, June 2010; a VIRGILE Seminar on agriculture and environment held in Fouras in October 1991; a European Conference on landscapes held in Blois, France in October 1992; the Council of Europe's meeting of experts on cultural landscapes held in Strasbourg in February 1993 and again in 1994; The Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE) Strasbourg in November 1995; three meetings of the European Rural University – the First held in Viuz en Sallaz in August 1989; the Sixth held in Montagne Saint Emilion in August 2002 and the Eleventh held in Perigueux in November 2013; and the First Conference on Rural / Urban Partnerships held in Metz in November 2012

**Formal seat and registration:** France also provided the formal seat of ECOVAST with the help of ECOVAST member from ARIENA. ECOVAST has also been registered in the Tribunal of Selestat in Alsace, France since April 1989.

### **ECOVAST Italy 1996-2001**

**People:** A National Section for Italy developed during 1995 and was **founded in 1996** and lasted for 5 years and ceased during 2003. Italy provided a member for the first ECOVAST Board - Luigi Zia who was elected in 1984 and served until 1986. Two other members have served on the International Committee - Enrico Capo was elected and served 1992 to 2000 and much later from 2012 to 2015; and Salvatore Di Fazio who was elected and served from 1996 to 2000. When National Sections were able to choose a member to represent them on the Committee they selected Enrico Capo who served from 2000 until 2004.

The International Committee elected the following to be a member of the ECOVAST Bureau: Enrico Capo was elected as Vice President and served: from 1994 until 1998.

Two members from Italy served as leads of ECOVAST International Working Groups: Enrico Capo was a co-lead for the International Working Group on Farmers and Rural People from 1992 to 1993 and Salvatore Di Fazio was the lead of the International Working Group on Rural Buildings from 1996 to 2000.

Other members of ECOVAST Italy who have been recorded in ECOVAST minutes or newsletters and not included above are: Elke Cavazza, Saskia Cavazza, A. Petroncelli, and Anna Trono.

**ECOVAST projects:** There were 2 members from Italy who were part of an ECOVAST project team: Donatella Murtas was part of the Witranet project from 1996 to 1999; and Enrico Capo led the ECOVAST Associates project which started in 1997.

**Committee meetings:** There have been 3 ECOVAST meetings (1 annual assembly and 2 international committee meetings) arranged by ECOVAST Italy, including: the Biennial Assembly held in Santa Maria Di Leuca on 29 September 1996; and the 2 International Committees held in Santa Maria Di Leuca on September on 29 September 1996; and the committee held in Grosseto on 16 May 1999.

**Events:** members from ECOVAST Italy or the Italian National Section staged 2 events, including: a seminar on 'Development & Culture' and held in Santa Maria di Leuca in September 1996; and a conference on agriculture held in Grosseto in May 1999.

There were 11 other international events on a variety of topics that were held in Italy which involved international ECOVAST members: including: the Council of Europe Colloquy event held in Palermo, Sicily in June 1992; the Council of Europe Third European Agricultural Forum held in Verona in March 1995; the Inter-Government Conference on European Landscape Convention held in Florence in April 1998; the World Tourism Seminar on Sustainable Rural Development held in Florence in September 1998; Fifth European Rural University held in Campiglia Soana in September 1998; the SREN Conference on Solar Energy and Low Energy Architecture held in Florence in April 2005; the EUROPA NOSTRA Small Towns Annual Conference held in Taormina, Sicily in June 2009; the launch of CIVILSCAPE in Florence in February 2008 and their conference also in Florence in 27 November 2009; the OECD Rural-Urban Partnerships conference held in Bologna in October 2013; and the European Cultural Forum held in Tortona, Milan in December 2017.

### **ECOVAST Slovenia 2000-2003**

**People:** The Slovenian National Section was developed over 1998 and 1999 and was **founded in 2000** and lasted for only a few years until at the end of 2003 it joined the new Slovenian National network and became a member of PREPARE and left ECOVAST. It had two members who served on the international committee: Zvedana Kozelj who was elected and served from 1996 to 2000; and Marko Koščak who was selected to represent Slovenia and served from 2000 to 2004.

Other members of ECOVAST Slovenia who have been recorded in ECOVAST minutes or newsletters and not included above are: Hergan, Alenka Henigman, G Kovacic, Marija Markes, and Marija Zupanic-Vicar

**Committee meetings:** There have been 2 committee meetings arranged by Slovenian members – the General Assembly held in Otocec on 4 October 2003 and an international committee held on 13 October 1997.

**Events:** There have been 3 ECOVAST events arranged by members from Slovenia and the Slovenian National Section, including: a workshop on Heritage Trails held in Otočec in April 1997; an event staged with ENNHO on 'Cultural Identity and Heritage Trails' also held in Otočec in October 2003; and another conference on the Transfer of Good Practice in Rural Development and Heritage Trails and also held in Otočec in February 2005

There were 3 other events which were staged in Slovenia and involved international ECOVAST members, including: the Council of Europe's 'Prospects for Rural Areas' held in Ljubljana in September 1998; a conference on 'Problems in Marginal Rural Areas' also held in Ljubljana in June 2000 and an international Symposium on 'Protected Areas' held at Pohorje in October 2003

**ECOVAST Project:** The ECOVAST International project on Heritage Trails (1995-1997 involved Slovenia

### **ECOVAST Sweden 1994-2005**

**People:** Sweden was developing a National Section during 1992 and was finally **founded in 1994** and lasted 8 years when, in 2005 it announced that it was closing. Sweden has provided several for the the International Committee including including Ake Samberg who served from 1986 to 1988; Ralf Eric Lundgren who served from 1990 to 1992; Ulf Brangefeldt who was elected in 1992 and served until 2000; Maud Olofsson who served from 1996 to 1998; Kjell Roger Karlsson who served from 1998 to 2000; and Per Årman was elected from 2000 to 2006.

When, after 2000, Sweden was able to choose its own member to represent them on the International Committee, they selected Rigmor Sylven who served from 2000 to 2002: and then Kristina Ohman who served from 2002 until 2006.

The International Committee also elected the following to serve on the ECOVAST Bureau: Ulf Brangefeldt was elected President and served from 1996 to 1990; he was also elected to be Senior Vice President and served

from 1994 to 1996. Ulf Brangefeldt was awarded Honorary Life Membership Status in 2000.

**ECOVAST Leads:** Per Arman led the ECOVAST International Working Group on Baltic 21 from 1998 to 2000.

**ECOVAST Projects;** Staffan Bond and Birgitta Wibert formed part of the ECOVAST project on Carpathian Training in 1999.

Other members of Sweden who have been recorded in ECOVAST minutes or newsletters and not included above are: Gert Carlstedt, Rainis Cedrins, Elizabeth Lillmain, Leopold Sjöström, and Hans Olof Stalgren.

**Committee meetings:** There has only been 1 ECOVAST committee held in Sweden (and the only meeting to be held in northern Europe): the General Assembly meeting held in Hemaven on 18 September 1999.

**Events:** There were 2 events arranged by members from Sweden or the Swedish National Section, including: a seminar held at the Agricultural University, Uppsala in April 1993; and the Conference 'on Sparsely Populated Areas held in Hemaven in September 1999.

There were 7 other events staged in Sweden which involved intentional members of ECOVAST; there were 4 Swedish Rural Parliaments staged in Linköping in February 1998; in Piteå in March 2002; in Lycksele in March 2008; and in Ronneby in September 2012; 2 PREPARE events – an International meeting held in Stockholm in January 2005 and the Ninth PREPARE Gathering held in Karlskrona in September 2012; and a SURE Seminar on 'Sustainable Urban Rural Europe' held in Göteborg in November 2009

**ECOVAST policy and projects:** A policy statement 'All Europe shall Live – an opportunity of a new era for rural areas' policy statement published in 2000 and resulted from the Hemaven conference. The ECOVAST Euracademy project was formed and lead by Ulf Brangefeldt.

*The 5 countries who contributed with people and or staging events for ECOVAST International*

### **Bosnia and Herzegovina**

**People:** There has been no-one from Bosnia & Herzegovina elected onto the ECOVAST Executive Committee

**Committee meetings:** There have been two ECOVAST Committee meetings held in Bosnia. There was a General Assembly held on 14 October 2001, preceded by an International Committee held on 13 October.

**Events:** ECOVAST staged a conference on regeneration in the Balkans held on 11-13 October 2001 which led to a formal Declaration about the regeneration of heritage in Kosovo 2001 and policy report 'Regeneration in the Balkans' written by John Sell (United Kingdom), and published in 2002. There was also a PREPARE workshop on rural development in Bosnia and Herzegovina held in Banja Luka in July 2012 and the tenth PREPARE Gathering in Jahorina in September 2013

### **Czech Republic**

**People:** There have been several members from the Czech Republic but none have been elected onto the ECOVAST International.

ECOVAST members who have been noted in committee meetings or newsletters include Vera Berkova, Olda Cepelka, Jurgen Cieslak, Pavel Konecny, Jiri Syrov, Zuzana Syrova and Vera Voderova.

**Committee meetings:** There have been 2 international committee meetings held in the Czech Republic both in Františkovy Lázně; an Extraordinary Meeting on 27 March 2015 to agree changes to the ECOVAST Statutes; followed by a Biennial Assembly meeting held on 28 March 2015

**Events:** There have been 3 events arranged or co-organised by ECOVAST members in the Czech Republic, including: the International Workshop held in Ústěk in May 1992; the Forum event with EUROPA NOSTRA on Cultural Heritage held in Prague in June 2000; and the Workshop on Small Towns held in Františkovy Lázně in March 2015.

There have been 4 other international events staged in the Czech Republic that have involved international ECOVAST members, including: a conference on Clay and Earthen Architecture held in Prikazy in May 1994; a conference on Village Churches held at Tabor in June 1994; the Fourth PREPARE Gathering held in Velehrad in June 2006; and an international conference on 'Wooden Architecture' held in Pilsen in June 2014.

### **Greece**

**People:** There have been two members from Greece who were elected to serve on the International Committee; Fouli Papageorgiou who served from 1991 to 2004 and Philp Noel Baker who served from 2000 until 2002.

The International Committee also elected Fouli Papageorgiou to serve on the Bureau as Vice President from 1996 until 2000

**Committee meetings:** There have been ECOVAST Committee meetings held in Greece: with 2 Biennial Assemblies held in Euboea on 12 October 1994 and Marathon on 12 in September 1998; and three

International Committees – in Euboea on 14 October 1994; and 2 International Committees held in Marathon on 11 and 12 September 1998

**Events:** There were 2 events arranged or co-organised by members from Greece, including: the Arcadia Conference on agriculture held in Vytina in May 1990 and the WITRANET Conference on Wine Cultivation held in Marathon in September 1998

There were 3 other major international conference arranged in Greece including a Local Enterprise Development event in Crete in June 1989; an event where ECOVAST provided the key speaker - a conference on 'Cultural Values and Tourism Development in Rural Areas' held in Heraklion, Crete in October 2013 and the Piraeus Bank international conference on 'Cultural Landscapes in Natura 2000 Sites' held in Athens in October 2014.

**ECOVAST Projects:** PRISMA Consultants and Fouli Papageorgiou from Greece have been involved in several ECOVAST projects

## **Luxembourg**

**People:** There has only been one member from Luxembourg – Jean Pierre Dichter, who was elected to the International Committee and served from 1986 to 1994.

The International Committee also elected Jean Pierre Dichter to serve on the ECOVAST Bureau as President and served from 1990 to 1992; and he was also elected to be Vice President for 2 terms from 1988 to 1990 and from 1992 to 1994. The Luxembourg Department of Agriculture and Arno Frising have been members of ECOVAST Luxembourg for many years.

Jean Pierre Dichter also led the International Working Group on Local Authorities between 1992 and 1993.

**Committee meetings** ECOVAST has had 5 international meetings organized by Luxembourg members, including: a General Assembly meeting held in Wiltz on 15 April 1989; and 4 International Committee; held in Wiltz on 5 May 1985; 2 meetings also in Wiltz on 14 and 15 April 1989; and in Beckerich in 19 March 2011.

## **Portugal**

**People:** There has only been one member from Portugal - Carlos Miguel de Olivera Frescata who was elected to the ECOVAST International Committee and served from 1986 to 1988.

**Committee meeting:** There has been one ECOVAST committee event held in Portugal: the International Committee held in Setubal on 13 June 1987

**Events:** There were no events organised by ECOVAST, but the Council of Europe launched the Campaign for the Countryside in Lisboa in June 1987; The third European Rural University was staged in Evora in May 1993; and Professor Nunos Santos Pinheiro acted as host to a Regional Studies Association in April 2007 held at Lisbon University;

*The following 8 countries supplied a member to serve on the International Committee.*

## **Cyprus**

**People:** There has been one member from Cyprus who was elected onto the ECOVAST International - Lellos Demetriades who was co-opted onto the International Committee in 1984

**Events:** There have been no ECOVAST meetings or events held in Cyprus, although Michael Dower attended and spoke at the launch of the Cyprus European Rural Network launched in Limassol in October 2008.

## **Denmark**

**People:** There have only been two members from Denmark who have served on the ECOVAST International Committee, Steen Achton who became a board member at the inaugural event in 1984 and served until 1986 and Anders Holm who was elected in 1987 and served until 1992.

**Events:** There have been no ECOVAST meetings or events held in Denmark although some members attended the European Rural University event in Vejle in May 1996.

## **Finland**

**People:** There has only been one member from Finland who has served on the ECOVAST International Committee - Juha Niemelä was elected and served from 2000 until 2002

**Events:** There was 1 event which involved an ECOVAST project and ECOVAST members – the Fourth Euracademy on 'Social Capital as a resource' and held in Ilmajoki in June 2006.

There were also 3 other international events staged in Finland which involved ECOVAST members including: the Finnish Village Action Movement Travelling Workshop held in Finland on September 25 2002; an Interegg



conference on small towns held in Jyväskylä in September 2006 and the Eleventh PREPARE Gathering which was held in Helsinki (and also in Estonia) in September 2014.

### **Netherlands**

**People:** There has only been one member from the Netherlands who has served on the ECOVAST International Committee - Leendert Van Der Plas who served 1988-1990

**Events:** There have been no ECOVAST meetings or events held in the Netherlands although Leendert van der Plas chaired one of the workshops at the ECOVAST conference held at the Lübeck-Travemünde event in 1988. ECOVAST members also attended the EUROPA NOSTRA in Amsterdam in June 2011. The Netherlands also held 3 workshops in Brussels on Environment Assessments and Landscape implications in 2014-2015 and the third European Rural Parliament was held in Venhorst in 2017.

### **Norway**

**People:** There has only been one member from Norway who has served on the ECOVAST International Committee - Anne Siri Skamscar who served from 1998 until 2000.

**Events:** There have been no ECOVAST meetings or events held in Norway although one of the study tours at the Hemaven event held in Sweden did visit places in Norway.

### **Spain**

**People:** There has only been one member from Spain who has served on the ECOVAST International Committee - Santiago Navarro, who served 1988-1990

**Events:** There have been no ECOVAST meetings or events held in Spain although some members attend the Leader event held in Cáceres in June 2004; and ECOVAST took part in the small town event held in Logroño in October 2008.

### **Switzerland**

**People:** There has only been one member from Switzerland who has served on the ECOVAST International Committee - Max Schneider who served from 1986 to 1988

**Events:** There have been no ECOVAST meetings or events held in Switzerland.

### **Yugoslavia**

**People:** There have been two members from Yugoslavia: Brano Krstic who became a member of the first ECOVAST Board elected in 1984 and served until 1986; and Miljenka Fischer who served on the International Committee in 1986 and served until 1993

Miljenka Fisher was also elected by the International Committee to serve on the ECOVAST Bureau to serve as Vice President from 1990 until 1992 for Yugoslavia and then from 1993 representing in Croatia (Miljenka was instrumental in setting up a new National Section for Croatia in 1993).

**Events:** There have been no ECOVAST meetings or events held in Yugoslavia but many have been held in the successor Section of Croatia (see above).

There have been other international events staged in 11 other countries where ECOVAST members have taken part, but with no involvement of the ECOVAST Committees nor co-organisation of with the organisation of ECOVAST:

- Albania, Andorra, Bulgaria, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Kosovo, Malta, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey

All the above lists demonstrate the wide geographic coverage of ECOVAST work

areas. ECOVAST recognises all the contributions made by all its members and thanks them for their work on international issues. This Annex is a tribute to their collective efforts. ECOVAST wishes to acknowledge that not all their members have been recorded but they too have added greatly to the knowledge and experience of ECOVAST.

ECOVAST thanks all the individual members mentioned above. It also recognises that there are many others who have not been mentioned in Minutes or Newsletter. It is **all** these members that have made significant contributions to ECOVAST work over the 35 years from 1984 to 2019.

*All these events are chronicled in detail in Part B of this report and can be cross checked.*

*There is a specific archive file for the Reports from the National Section as reported in Committee meetings or in Newsletters. They are in both paper and electronic format.*

## THE INDEXES

*This Section of the report consists of a series of Indexes which can be cross-checked to the main body of the text of the chronological record of Part B pages 12-134.*

Index 1: List of members formally elected members to serve ECOVAST

- Basic List of Elected Members, Honorary Auditors, Leads of Groups and projects
- List of members elected to serve on the ECOVAST Bureau
- Honorary Auditors
- Honorary Members
- Longest serving members

Index 2: Chairmen who lead on International Working Groups or lead specific areas of work

Index 3: List of all ECOVAST Committee meetings

Index 4: List of Study Tours

Index 5: List of conferences, seminars, symposiums or workshops:

Index 6: List of projects that ECOVAST has been involved with

Index 7: ECOVAST involvement in major European policy development and ECOVASY Policy Statements

Index 8: ECOVAST Publicity and Publications: History and Archives

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GLOSSARY of Organisations and ACRONYMS

## INDEX 1: LIST OF MEMBERS ELECTED TO FORMAL POSITIONS WITHIN ECOVAST

### 1(a) List of Members elected to serve on International Committee

*It is the International Committee and the Annual Assemblies that are responsible for all decisions on the work undertaken by ECOVAST. The list below records (in normal text) the names of all those members elected or co-opted onto the committee or lead the work of the International Working Groups or projects and Honorary Auditors which are in shown in Italics.*

#### AUSTRIA

Hans Draxler	2006-2009
Hasso Hohmann	1984
Gerhard Fasching	2006-2009
Hans Peter Jeschke	1986-1988; 1988-1990
Brigitte Macaria	2006-2008; 2008-2019; 2017-2019
Silvia Mayer	2006-2009
Franz Nahrada	2017-2019
Heinz Pammer	1984-1986
Arthur Spiegler	1998-2000; 2000-2002; 2002-2004; 2004-2006; 2006-2008; 2008-2010; 2010-2012; 2012-2015; 2015-2017

#### BELGIUM

Charles Christians	1992-1994; 1994-1996; 1996-1998; 1998-2000
Bernard Mignon	1987-1988; 1988-1990; 1990-1991; 1994-1996

#### CROATIA (part of Yugoslavia that became an independent state in 1991)

Tihana Fabijanić	2004-2006; 2006-2008; 2008-2010; 2010-2012; 2012-2015; 2015-2017; 2017-2019
Miljenka Fischer	1992-1994; 1994-1996; 1996-1998
Renate Husinec	2001-2002
Jasenska Krancevic	2002-2004
Ksenja Markovic	1998-2000; 2000-2001

#### CYPRUS

Lellos Demetriades	1984
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#### DENMARK

Steen Achton	1984-1986
Anders Holm	1987-1988; 1988-1990; 1990-1992

#### ESTONIA

Tõnu Otsason	1998-2000
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#### FINLAND

Juha Niemelä	2000-2002
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**FRANCE**

Gérard Baloup	1986-1988; 1988-1990
Claude Brette	1992
Georges Christophe	1885
Pierre Coulmin	1990-1992; 1992-1994
Gésine Deserbais	1992-1994
Jean Paul Leclercq	1986-1988; 1988-1990
Joy Lecore	1984
Michael Marechal	1988-1990
Dominique Nanty	1986-1988
Christian Neumüller	1987-1988; 1988-1990
Pierre du Pontavice	1988
Rene Schnepf	1986-1988; 1988-1990
Suzanne Thibal	1986-1988; 1988-1990; 1990-1992; 1994-1996

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**GERMANY** (was the Federal Republic – WEST GERMANY before 1990 and then became a combined GERMANY after 1990)

Ralf Bokermann	2004-2006; 2006-2008; 2008-2010; 2010-2012; 2012-2015
Rolf Peter Bartz	1994-1996; 1996-1998
Irmgaard Bott	1984
Jean Chanel	1986-1988; 1988-1990; 1992-1994; 1994-1996; 1996-1998
Angus Fowler	1984-1986; 1986-1988; 1988-1990; 1990-1992; 1992-1994; 1994-1996; 1996-1998; 1998-2000; 2000-2002; 2002-2004; 2004-2006; 2006-2008; 2008-2010; 2010-2012; 2012-2015; 2015-2017; 2017-2019
Maria Meier Gresshoff	1990-1992; 1992-1994; 1994-1996; 1996-1998; 1998-2000
Gerhard Henkel	1984-1986; 1986-1988
Heinar Henckel	2008-2010
Ivar Henckel	2016-2017; 2017-2019
Marlis Lier	2002-2004; 2004-2006
Olaf Linke	2005-2006; 2006-2008; 2008-2010; 2015-2017
Gabrielle Kaufmann	2000-2001
Helmut Korzennek	1987-1988; 1988-1990
Gunter Kroes	1988-1990; 1990-1992; 1992-1994; 1994-1996; 1996-1998; 1998-2000
Irmelin Küttner	2008-2010; 2010-2012; 2012-2015
Rudiger Maul	1992-1994; 1994-1996; 2004-2006; 2006-2008; 2008-2010; 2010-2012; 2012-2015
Gunter Reusch	1989-1990
Horst Schubert	2006-2008; 2008-2010
Detlef Simons	1984-1986
Ursula Stratenwerth	1990-1992; 1992-1994; 1994-1996; 1996-1998
Michael Strecker	2017-2019
Hans Schwiderski	1992-1994
Ralf-Folke Schwinge	1986-1988; 1988-1990; 1990-1992
Peter Thran	2016-2017; 2017-2019
Jacob Wagner	1984-1986; 1987-1988
Andrea Weigert	2001-2002; 2002-2004; 2004-2006; 2006-2008; 2008-2010; 2010-2012; 2012-2015; 2015-2017; 2017-2019

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**GREECE**

Philip Noel Baker	2000-2002
Fouli Papageorgiou	1991-1992; 1994-1996; 1996-1998; 1998-2000; 2002-2004

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**HUNGARY**

Csaba Csaky	1990-1992
Sandor Köles s	1992-1994; 1994-1996; 1996-1998; 1998-2000
Dezső Kovács	2004-2006; 2006-2008; 2008-2010
Iren Kukorelli	2002-2004
Marianne Labbancz	2000-2002
Márta Márczis	1998-2000
Gábor Rajnai	2000-2002; 2002-2004; 2004-2006; 2006-2008; 2008-2010; 2010-2012; 2012-2015; 2015-2017; 2017-2019
András Román	1998-1990; 1990-1992; 1992-1994; 1994-1996; 1996-1998

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**ITALY**

Enrico Capo	1991-1992; 1992-1994; 1994-1996; 1996-1998; 1998-2000; 2000-2002; 2002-2004; 2012-2015
Salvatore Di Fazio	1996-1998; 1998-2000
Donatella Murtas	1996
Luigi Zia	1984-1986

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**LUXEMBOURG**

Jean Pierre Dichter 1985; 1986-1988; 1988-1990; 1990-1992; 1992-1994

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**MACEDONIA (FYROM)**

Victoria Altiparmakovska 2004-2006; 2006-2008; 2008-2010; 2010-2012; 2012-2015; 2015-2017; 2017-2019

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**NETHERLANDS**

Leendert Van Der Plas 1988-1990

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**NORWAY**

Anne Siri Skamscar 1998-2000

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**POLAND**

Andrzej Hałasiewicz 1996-1998; 1998-2000

Andrzej Kaleta 1988-1990; 1990-1992; 1992-1994; 1994-1996

Halina Łapińska 2006-2008; 2008-2010; 2010-2012; 2012-2015; 2015-2017; 2017-2019

Elzbieta Raszeja 2000-2002; 2002-2004; 2004-2006

Lech Rosciszewski 2002-2004; 2004-2006

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**PORTUGAL**

Carlos Frescata 1986-1988

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**ROMANIA**

Magdalena Banu 1996-1998; 1998-2000; 2000-2002; 2002-2004; 2004-2006; 2006-2008; 2008-2010; 2010-2012; 2012-2015; 2015-2017; 2017-2019

Călin Hoinărescu 1992-1994; 1994-1996; 1996-1998; 1998-2000; 2000-2002; 2002-2004; 2005-2006; 2006-2008; 2008-2010; 2010-2012; 2012-2015; 2015-2017; 2017-2019

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**RUSSIA**

Olga Sevan 1996-1998; 1998-2000; 2000-2002; 2002-2004; 2004-2006; 2006-2008; 2009-2010; 2010-2012; 2012-2015; 2015-2017; 2017-2019

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**SLOVAKIA**

Eva Kralova 2000-2002; 2004-2006; 2006-2008; 2008-2010; 2010-2012; 2012-2015; 2015-2017; 2017-2019

Mária Nadová 1996-1998; 1998-2000

Ľubica Pinčíková 2002-2004; 2004-2006; 2006-2008; 2008-2010; 2010-2012

Josef Ušák 1993-1994; 1994-1996; 1996-1998; 2000-2002; 2002-2004; 2005-2006

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**SLOVENIA**

Marko Koščak 2000-2002; 2002-2004

Zvedana Kozelj 1996-1998; 1998-2000

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**SPAIN**

Santiago Navarro 1988-1990

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**SWEDEN**

Per Årman 2000-2002; 2002-2004;

Staffan Bond 1999-2000

Gert Carlstedt 1985

Ulf Brangefeldt 1992-1994; 1994-1996; 1996-1998; 1998-2000; 2000-2002

Kjell Roger Karlsson 1998-2000

Ralf Eric Lundgren 1990-1992

Kristina Ohman 2002-2004; 2004-2006

Maud Olofsson 1996-1998

Ake Samberg 1986-1988

Rigmor Sylven 2000-2002

Birgitta Wiberg 1999-2000

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**SWITZERLAND**

Max Schneider 1986-1988

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**UNITED KINGDOM**

Joan Ashby 1999-2000

Roy Brigden 1996-1998; 1998-2000; 2000-2002; 2002-2004

Valerie Carter 2006-2008; 2008-2010; 2010-2012; 2012-2015; 2015-2017; 2017-2019

Tony Croft 1986-1988

Nigel Curry 1996-1998

Nick Dean 1986-1988; 1988-1990

Michael Dower 1984-1986; 1986-1988; 1988-1990; 1990-1992; 1992-1994; 1995-1996; 1996-1998; 1998-2000; 2000-2002; 2002-2004

Robert Emmet 1985-1986

Peter Hood 1992-1994; 1994-1995

Trevor Kearley 2002-2004; 2004-2006

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Alan Leavett	1984: 1987-1988; 1988-1990
Pam Moore	2002-2004; 2004-2006; 2006-2008; 2008-2010; 2010-2012; 2012-2015; 2015-2016
Edmund Neville-Rolfe	1984-1985; 1986-1988; 1988-1990; 1990-1992; 1992-1994; 1994-1996; 1998-2000; 2000-2002
Barbara Noel-Baker	1984
Frances Noel-Baker	1984-1986
Richard Oram	1996-1998
John Sell	1986-1988; 1988-1990; 1990-1992; 1992-1994; 1994-1996; 1996-1998; 1998-2000; 2000-2002
Joakim Skovgaard	1984-1986;
Christopher Terry	1984
Phil Turner	2004-2006; 2006-2008; 2008-2010; 2010-2012; 2012-2015; 2015-216
Jane Wade	1995-1997
John Williams	1986-1988

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**YUGOSLAVIA** (*Broke into several separate States in 1991*)

Miljenka Fischer	1986-1988; 1988-1990; 1990-1992
Brano Krstic	1984-1986

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**1 (b): List of members elected to serve on the Bureau**

*The Bureau is made up of a President, up to 4 Vice Presidents, Secretary General and Treasurer*

**(i) List of Presidents:** (usually voted in for a two year period)

- Francis Noel-Baker (United Kingdom) 1984-1986 – The Founder President
- Michael Dower (United Kingdom) 1986-1988; 1988-1990
- Jean Pierre Dichter (Luxembourg) 1990-1992
- András Román (Hungary) 1992-1994; 1994-1996
- Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden) 1996-1998; 1998-2000
- Angus Fowler (Germany) 2000-2002; 2002-2004
- Phil Turner (United Kingdom) 2004-2006; 2006-2008
- Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia) 2008-2010
- Valerie Carter (United Kingdom) 2010-2012; 2012-2015; 2015-217; 2017-2019

**(ii) List of Senior Vice Presidents** (usually voted in for a two year period)

- Michael Dower (United Kingdom) 1990-1992; 2002-2004
- Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden) 1994-1996
- Magdalena Banu (Romania) 2000-2002
- Arthur Spiegler (Austria) 2004-2006
- Angus Fowler (Germany) 2015-2017

**(iii) List of Other Vice Presidents:** (usually voted in for a two year period)

- Heinz Pammer (Austria) 1984-1986
- Angus Fowler (Germany) 1986-1988; 1998-1990; 1994-1996; 1996-1998; 2012-2015
- Peter Jeschke (Austria) 1986-1988
- Gérard Baloup (France) 1986-1988; 1988-1990
- Aka Samburgs (Sweden) 1986-1988
- Jean-Paul Dichter (Luxembourg) 1988-1990; 1992-1994
- András Román (Hungary) 1988-1990; 1990-1992
- Gunter Kröes (Germany) 1990-1992; 1992-1994
- Miljenka Fischer (Yugoslavia) 1990-1992; 1992-1994
- Michael Dower (United Kingdom) 1992-1994
- Enrico Capo (Italy) 1994-1996; 1996-1998; 1998-2000
- Andrzej Kaleta (Poland) 1994-1996
- Fouli Papageogiou (Greece) 1996-1998; 1998-2000
- Sandor Köles (Hungary) 1996-1998; 1998-2000
- Magdalena Banu (Romania) 1998-2000; 2015-2017; 2017-2019
- Marianne Labbancz (Hungary) 2000-2002
- Arthur Spiegler (Austria) 2002-2004; 2010-2012; 2012-2015; 2015-2017
- Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia) 2004-2006; 2006-2008; 2010-2012; 2012-2015; 2015-2017; 2017-2019
- Gabor Rajnai (Hungary) 2004-2006; 2017-2019
- Andrea Weigert (Germany) 2004-2006;

- Ralf Bokermann (Germany) 2006-2008; 2008-2010;
- Ľubica Pinčíková (Slovakia) 2006-2008; 2008-2010
- Phil Turner (United Kingdom) 2008-2010; 2012-2015
- Brigitte Macaria (Austria) 2017-2019

**(iv) List of Secretary Generals:** (usually voted in for a two year period)

- Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom) 1984-1986; 1986-1987
- Bernard Mignon (Belgium) 1987-1988; 1988-1990; 1990-1991
- Peter Coulmin (France) 1991-1992
- Peter Hood (United Kingdom) 1992-1994; 1994-1995
- Michael Dower (United Kingdom) 1995-1996; 1996-1998; 1998-2000
- Gabriella Kaufmann (Germany) 2000-2001
- Andrea Weigert (Germany) 2001-2002; 2002-2004;
- Pam Moore (United Kingdom) 2004-2006; 2006-2008; 2008-2010; 2010-2012

*No further elections of a Secretary General after 2012 – the work has been carried out by the other officers*

**(v) List of Treasurers:** (usually voted in for a two year period)

- Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom) 1984-1985; 1986-1988; 1988-1989; 1990-1992; 1992-1994; 1994-1996
- Robert Emmett (United Kingdom) 1985-1986
- Gunter Reusche (Germany) 1989-1990
- Roy Brigden (United Kingdom) 1996-1998; 1998-2000; 2000-2002
- Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom) 2002-2004; 2004-2006
- Olaf Linke (Germany) 2006-2008; 2008-2010
- Andrea Weigert (Germany) 2010-2012; 2012-2015; 2015-2017; 2017-2019

*All Treasurers have been from either Germany or the United Kingdom.*

**(vi) List of Honorary Auditors:** (Auditors are not members of the Bureau)

- Bernard Mignon (Belgium) 1986-1988
- Alan Leavett (United Kingdom) 1987-1988; 1988-1990
- John Sell (United Kingdom) 1986-1988; 1988-1990; 1990-1992; 1992-1994; 1994-1996; 1996-1998; 1998-2000; 2000-2002
- Peter Hood (United Kingdom) 1990-1992; 1992-1994; 1994-1996
- Richard Oram 1996-1998
- Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom) 1998-2000; 2000-2002
- Roy Bridgen (United Kingdom) 2002-2004
- Marlis Lier (Germany) 2002-2004; 2004-2006
- Angus Fowler (Germany) 2004-2006
- Rudiger Maul (Germany) 2006-2008; 2010-2012; 2012-2015
- Horst Schubert (Germany) 2006-2008
- Heinar Henckel (Germany) 2008-2010
- Irmelin Küttner (Germany) 2008-2010; 2010-2012; 2012-2015
- Ivar Henckel (Germany) 2016-2017; 2017-2019
- Peter Thran (Germany) 2016-2017; 2017-2019

*Apart from Bernard Mignon of Belgium all Auditors have come from either Germany or the United Kingdom.*

**1 (c) List of those selected to leads the ECOVAST International Working Groups:**

*International Working Groups were set up 1988) to look into specific areas of interest and develop ECOVAST policies. They report to the ECOVAST Committees. Each Working group elects a chair who is approved by these committees. Some have been active for only a short time but others have had a long life. They include:*

- Education led by Pierre du Pontavice (France) (1988)
- Rural Architecture / Buildings led by John Sell (United Kingdom) (1988 - 1996); Salvatore di Fazio (Italy) (1996-2000); Rudiger Maul (Germany) (2000- 2015)
- Sustainable Rural Communities led by Michael Dower (United Kingdom) (1988)
- Rural Tourism led by Suzanne Thibal (France) (1988-1993); Maria Meier Gresshof (Germany) (1993-1997); Fouli Papegorgiou (Greece) (1997-2002)
- Farmers and Rural People led by Enrico Capo (Italy) and Claude Brette (France) (1992)
- Agriculture and the Environment led by Ursula Sratenwerth (Germany) (1991)
- Agriculture and Forestry led by Michael Dower (United Kingdom) (1993-1997)
- Baltic 21 led by Per Årman (Sweden) (1998-2000)
- Landscape Working Group led by Arthur Spiegler (Austria) (2000-2019)

- Rural Development led by Leendert Van der Plas (Netherlands) (1988); Michael Dower and Edmund Neville Rolfe (United Kingdom) (1997-2002)
- Brown Coal and Alternative Energy led by Detlef Simons and Angus Fowler (Germany)(1990-2002)
- Small Towns led by Phil Turner (United Kingdom) (2005-2016) then Valerie Carter (2016-2019)

#### **1 (d) List of Other Members who have been asked to lead specific areas of work**

- The post of Development Officer was assigned to Michael Dower (United Kingdom) in October 1994;
- Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom) was appointed Development Officer in xxxxxx1997;
- Michael Dower (United Kingdom) was appointed to lead International Projects and International Relations in December 2002
- Arthur Spiegler (Austria) was appointed to manage National Sections and Membership in December 2002
- Gabor Rajnai (Hungary) and Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom) were appointed to manage the ECOVAST Website and Communications in December 2002
- Trevor Kearley (United Kingdom) was appointed to develop an overview of future ECOVAST work in December 2002
- Gabor Rajnai (Hungary) was appointed Development Officer in August 2003

#### **1 (e) List of Members awarded Honorary Membership Status between 1984 and 2019**

*Members who have made significant contributions to the work of ECOVAST have been awarded Honorary Life Member ship Status. They are put forward usually by the National Sections and then approved by the ECOVAST committees. The names are put forward by the National Sections but then voted on at an International Committee meeting.*

- Angus Fowler (Germany) awarded in 1988
- Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom) awarded in 1988
- Helmut Korzonnek (Germany) awarded in 1988
- Bernard Mignon (Belgium) was awarded in 1990
- András Román (Hungary) awarded in 1996
- Michael Dower (United Kingdom) awarded in 1998
- Stephen Whitwell (United Kingdom) awarded in 1998
- Ulf Brangenfeldt (Sweden) awarded in 2000
- Horst Bruchman (Germany) awarded retrospectively 2016
- Detlev Simmons (Germany) awarded retrospectively 2016
- Gerda Stachowitz (Germany) awarded retrospectively 2016
- Ursula Stratenwerth (Germany) awarded retrospectively 2016
- Christa Korzonnek (Germany) awarded in 2016
- Erica Maul (Germany) awarded in 2016
- Phil Turner (United Kingdom) awarded in 2016
- Pam Moore (United Kingdom) awarded in 2016
- Arthur Spiegler (Austria) awarded in 2017

#### **1 (f) List of longest standing members elected (from 1984-2019) to the International Committee**

*Many members have served for a very long time on the International Committee*

*The term of election is usually 2 years but there was a 3 year period from 2012-2015*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • Angus Fowler (Germany)                | was elected 15 times and served 31 years (Founder Member) |
| • Călin Hoinărescu (Romania)            | was elected 13 times and served 27 years                  |
| • Magdalena Banu (Romania)              | was elected 11 times and served 23 years                  |
| • Olga Sevan (Russia)                   | was elected 11 times and served 23 years                  |
| • Arthur Spiegler (Austria)             | was elected 9 times and served 19 years                   |
| • Andrea Weigert (Germany)              | was elected 9 times and served 19 years                   |
| • Gabor Rajnai (Hungary)                | was elected 9 times and served 19 years                   |
| • Michael Dower (United Kingdom)        | was elected 9 times and served 19 years                   |
| • Enrico Capo (Italy)                   | was elected 8 times and served 17 years                   |
| • Eva Kralova (Slovakia)                | was elected 8 times and served 17 years                   |
| • Edmund Neville-Rolfe (United Kingdom) | was elected 8 times and served 16 years                   |
| • John Sell (United Kingdom)            | was elected 8 times and served 16 years                   |
| • Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Croatia)   | was elected 7 times and served 15 years                   |
| • Pam Moore (United Kingdom)            | was elected 7 times and served 14 years                   |
| • Valerie Carter (United Kingdom)       | was elected 6 times and served 13 years                   |
| • Phil Turner (United Kingdom)          | was elected 6 times and served 12 years                   |
| • Gunter Kröes (Germany)                | was elected 6 times and served 12 years                   |

## INDEX 2: LIST OF ALL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

*A report on each committee meeting is included in PART B of this report (a note is added if the actual paper copies are missing – although most have reports in the Newsletters). Each meeting records members who attended or gave formal apologies. The minutes of previous meetings are formally approved at each meeting. Most meetings involved a tour visiting local areas around the meeting venue to look at projects and meet local rural actors.*

- 1984 Inaugural Meeting held in MARBURG, Germany on March 18
- 1984 International Committee Meeting held in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 27 April
- 1984 International Committee Meeting GRAZ, Austria 1 October
- 1985 International Committee Meeting held in STRASBOURG, France on 11 January
- 1985 International Committee Meeting held in WILTZ, Duchy of Luxembourg on 4 May

*There was no annual assembly meeting held in 1985*

- 1986 International Committee Meeting held LONDON, England, United Kingdom on 8 April
- 1986 International Committee Meeting held in STRASBOURG France on 13 November
- 1986 First Biennial Assembly Meeting held in STRASBOURG, France 14 November
- 1987 International Committee Meeting held in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 4 April
- 1987 International Committee Meeting held in SETUBAL Portugal on 13 June
- 1987 International Committee Meeting held in LINZ, Austria on 6 December

*There was no assembly meeting held in 1987*

- 1988 International Committee Meeting held in BLAYE, France on 16 April
- 1988 International Committee Meeting held in STRASBOURG, France on 4 Sep
- 1988 International Committee held LÜBECK TRAVEMUNDE, Germany on 9 October
- 1988 Biennial Assembly Meeting held in LÜBECK-TRAVEMUNDE, Germany on 11 October
- 1988 Second International Committee held in LÜBECK TRAVEMUNDE, Germany on 11 October
- 1988 International Committee Meeting held in MUTTERSHOLTZ, France on 26 November
- 1989 International Committee Meeting held in WILTZ, Duchy of Luxembourg on 14 April
- 1989 General Assembly Meeting held in WILTZ, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg on 15 April
- 1989 Second International Committee Meeting held in WILTZ, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg on 15 April
- 1989 International Committee Meeting held in HÖXTER, Germany on 21 October
- 1990 International Committee Meeting held in MARBURG, Germany on 15 September
- 1990 Biennial Assembly Meeting held in GEORGENTHAL, Germany on 25 November
- 1990 International Committee Meeting held in GEORGENTHAL, Germany on 25 November
- 1991 International Committee Meeting held in RACKEVE, Hungary on 23 March
- 1991 International Committee Meeting held in NIEDERBRONN LES BAINS, France on 8 November
- 1991 General Assembly Meeting held in NEIDERBRONN-LES-BAINS, France on 9 November
- 1992 International Committee Meeting held in PARIS, France on 4 October
- 1992 Biennial Assembly Meeting held in REMOUCHAMPS, Belgium on 24 October
- 1992 International Committee Meeting held in REMOUCHAMPS, Belgium on 24 October
- 1993 International Committee Meeting held in FONTWELL MAGNA, United Kingdom on 23 January
- 1993 International Committee Meeting held in OELDE, Germany on 10 July
- 1993 General Assembly Meeting held in SINAIA, Romania on 23 October
- 1994 International Committee Meeting held in MARBURG, Germany on 5 February - 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- 1994 International Committee Meeting held in LIÈGE, Belgium on 11 June
- 1994 International Committee Meeting held in EUBOEA, Greece on 14 October
- 1994 Biennial Assembly Meeting held in EUBOEA, Greece on 15 October
- 1995 International Committee Meeting held in LANDAU, Germany on 18 February
- 1995 International Committee Meeting held in TORUN, Poland on 6 May
- 1995 International Committee Meeting held in NOSZVAJ, Hungary on 7 October
- 1995 General Assembly Meeting held in NOSZVAJ Hungary on 8 October
- 1996 International Committee Meeting held in MALACKY, Slovakia on 3 February
- 1996 International Committee Meeting held in SPA, Belgium on 15 June
- 1996 Biennial Assembly Meeting held in SANTA MARIA DI LEUCA. Italy on 29 September
- 1996 International Committee Meeting held in SANTA MARIA DI LEUCA. Italy on 29 September
- 1996 Meeting of the ECOVAST Bureau held in MARBURG, Germany on 1 December



- 1997 Meeting of the ECOVAST Bureau held in LONDON, England, United Kingdom on 8-9 February
- 1997 International Committee Meeting held in OTOČEC, Slovenia on 13 April
- 1997 Meeting of ECOVAST Bureau held in CHELTENHAM, England, United Kingdom on 5-6 July
- 1997 International Committee Meeting held in ATTERSEE, Austria on 12 September
- 1997 General Assembly Meeting held in ATTERSEE, Austria on 13 September
- 1997 International Committee Meeting held in READING, England, United Kingdom on 15 November
- 1998 International Committee Meeting held in BINZ, Germany on 15 March
- 1998 International Committee Meeting held in SOPRON, Hungary on 30 May
- 1998 International Committee Meeting held in MARATHON, Greece on 11 September
- 1998 Biennial Assembly Meeting held in MARATHON, Greece on 12 September
- 1998 International Committee Meeting held in MARATHON, Greece on 12 September
- 1998 International Committee Meeting held in ROZNAVA, Slovakia on 5 December
- 1999 International Committee Meeting held in GROSSETO, Italy on 16 May
- 1999 General Assembly Meeting held in HEMAVEN, Sweden on 18 September
- 2000 Biennial Assembly Meeting held in BÜTGENBACH, Belgium on 24 September
- 2000 International Committee Meeting held in HEUERSDORF, Germany on 28 October
- 2001 International Committee Meeting held in SKEPE, Poland on 22 April
- 2001 International Committee Meeting held in FOJNICA, Bosnia and Herzegovina on 13 October
- 2001 General Assembly Meeting held in FOJNICA, Bosnia and Herzegovina on 14 October
- 2002 International Committee Meeting held in SEIFHENNERSDORF, Germany on 6 October
- 2002 Biennial Assembly Meeting held in SEIFHENNERSDORF, Germany on 6 October
- 2002 International Committee Meeting held in MODRA, Slovakia on 14 December
- 2003 International Committee Meeting held in VIENNA, Austria on 23 August
- 2003 General Assembly Meeting held in OTOČEC, Slovenia on 4 October
- 2004 International Committee Meeting held in MARBURG, Germany on 4 March – 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- 2004 Biennial Assembly Meeting held in SZIGLIGET, Hungary on 16 October
- 2005 International Committee Meeting held in BERLIN, Germany on 22 January
- 2005 International Committee Meeting held in BRATISLAVA, Slovakia on 23 October
- 2005 General Assembly Meeting held in RETZ, Austria on 5 November
- 2006 International Committee Meeting held in VIENNA, Austria on 4 February
- 2006 International Committee Meeting held in BRATISLAVA, Slovakia on 14 October
- 2006 Biennial Assembly Meeting held in BRATISLAVA, Slovakia on 15 October
- 2007 International Committee Meeting held in KIRCHBACH, Austria on 24 February
- 2007 International Committee Meeting held in WEYHER, Germany on 15 July
- 2007 International Committee Meeting held in SAMOBOR, Croatia on 13 October
- 2007 General Assembly Meeting held in SAMOBOR, Croatia on 14 October
- 2008 International Committee Meeting held in VIENNA, Austria on 16 February
- 2008 International Committee Meeting held in WITTSTOCK, Germany on 19 July
- 2008 International Committee Meeting held in WITTSTOCK, Germany on 19 September
- 2008 Biennial Assembly Meeting held in WITTSTOCK, Germany on 20 September
- 2009 International Committee Meeting held in VIENNA, Austria on 14 February
- 2009 International Committee Meeting held in OPATIJA, Croatia on 12 July
- 2009 International Committee Meeting held in LOVRAN, Croatia on 22 October
- 2009 General Assembly Meeting held in LOVRAN, Croatia on 24 October
- 2010 International Committee Meeting held in VIENNA, Austria on 24 January
- 2010 International Committee Meeting held in WITTSTOCK, Germany on 20 June
- 2010 International Committee Meeting held in SHANKLIN, United Kingdom on 14 October
- 2010 Biennial Assembly Meeting held in VENTNOR, United Kingdom on 17 October
- 2011 International Committee Meeting held in BECKERICH, Duchy of Luxembourg on 19 March
- 2011 General Assembly Meeting held in VIENNA, Austria on 23 October
- 2012 International Committee Meeting held in ACHBERG, Germany on 22 April
- 2012 International Committee Meeting held in WITZENHAUSEN, Germany on 5 October
- 2012 Biennial Assembly Meeting held in WITZENHAUSEN, Germany on 7 October
- 2013 International Committee Meeting held in DAMMHEIM, Germany on 25/26 May

- 2013 General Assembly Meeting held in KOZARD, Hungary on 29 September
- 2014 International Committee Meeting held in GATWICK, England, United Kingdom on 10 May  
*No Annual Assembly held in 2014 – the meeting was held over until 2015*
- 2015 Extraordinary General Meeting held in FRANTIŠKOVY LÁZNĚ, Czech Republic on 27 March
- 2015 Biennial Assembly Meeting held in FRANTIŠKOVY LÁZNĚ, Czech Republic on 28 March
- 2016 International Committee Meeting held in MARBURG, Germany on 21 October
- 2016 General Assembly Meeting held in MARBURG, Germany on 22 October
- 2017 Brief International Committee Meeting held in ILLMITZ, Austria on 26 October
- 2017 Biennial Assembly Meeting held in NEUSIEDLER, Austria on 27 October
- 2018 Brief International Committee meeting held in BISTRA, Croatia on 12 October
- 2018 General Assembly held in BISTRA, Croatia on 12 October

There were 110 committee meetings with an Inaugural meeting; 1 Extraordinary Committee meeting; 74 Executive or International Committees; 31 Annual Assembly meetings (16 Biennial or voting committees and 15 General Assemblies); and 3 meetings of the Bureau.

**The 75 Executive or International Committee meeting have been held in 15 countries:**

**(a) In Eastern Europe (7 countries – 17 meetings):**

Bosnia and Herzegovina (1); Croatia (4); Czech Republic (1); Hungary (3); Poland (2); Slovakia (5); and Slovenia (1)

**(b) In Western Europe (9 countries – 58 meetings):**

Austria (10); Belgium (5); France (7); Germany (21); Greece (3); Luxembourg (4); Italy (2); Portugal (1); and the United Kingdom (5)

**The 32 annual assemblies (General and and voting Biennial Assemblies) which have been held in 16 countries: *There were no Annual Assemblies held in 1985, 1987 or 2014.***

**(c) In Eastern Europe (7 countries – 11 assemblies):**

Bosnia and Herzegovina (1); Croatia (3); Czech Republic (1) Hungary (3); Romania (1); Slovakia (1); and Slovenia (1)

**(d) In Western Europe (9 countries – 21 assemblies):**

Austria (4); Belgium (2); France (2); Germany (7); Greece (2); Italy (1); Luxembourg (1); Sweden (1); and the United Kingdom (1)

## INDEX 3

### List of Tours associated with ECOVAST Committee Meetings and Conferences

- ECOVAST Inaugural excursion to visit Bellnhausen and nearby villages, Germany on 17 March 1984
- ECOVAST tour of villages and small town in Alsace, as part of the Strasbourg event on 14 November 1986
- ECOVAST tour of Setubal area and Palmela, part of with the Setubal meeting, Portugal on 13 June 1987
- ECOVAST tour of Lubeck area associated with conference in Lubeck, Germany on 10 October 1988
- Council of Europe Tour of towns and villages in Schleswig Holstein on 12 October 1988
- ECOVAST tour associated with the Križevci meeting, Croatia on 23 May 1990
- ECOVAST tour of the area around Kapsovar, Hungary on 17 October 1990
- ECOVAST tour associated with Karlovac event May 1990
- ECOVAST tour connected to the Ustek workshop in the Czech Republic in May 1992
- ECOVAST tour of the Ardennes region of Belgium on 23 October 1992
- ECOVAST tour associated with the Remouchamps assembly on 25 October 1992
- ECOVAST tour of the Sinaia area Romania, associated with the assembly, Romania on 24 October 1993
- ECOVAST Tour associated with the Marburg event held on 6 February 1994
- Tour associated with the Moscow Conference in July 1994
- ECOVAST tour of Euboa and town of Limni associated with conference in Greece held 16 October 1994
- EUROPA NOSTRA tour to visit churches as part of the Krakow Forum on 14 May 1995
- ECOVAST tour associated with the Noszvaj, Hungary event on 9 November 1995
- ECOVAST tour of the local area around Santa Maria di Leuca, Italy on 29 September 1996.
- ECOVAST tour of the Salzkammergut, Austria on 11 September 1997.
- ECOVAST tour of Attica area, Greece on 14 September 1998

- ECOVAST tour associated with the Grosseto conference, Italy on 13 May 1999
- ECOVAST Travelling Workshop of Sweden and Estonia in June 1999
- ECOVAST tour Lapland in Sweden and Norway, part of the Hemaven event, Sweden 15 September 1999
- ECOVAST tour connected to Rural Development event in Butgenbach, Belgium on 21 September 2000
- ECOVAST tour associated with the Zvenigerod event, Russia on 11 October 2000
- ECOVAST tour of village of Heuersdorf, Liepzigland, Germany on 28 October 2000
- ECOVAST tour associated with the Skępe event in Poland on 21 April 2001
- ECOVAST tour of Bosnia and Herzegovina 14-17 October 2001
- Swedish Rural Parliament tour around Pitea, Sweden on 14 March 2002
- ECOVAST tour of coal mining areas around Seifhenndorf area held on 4 October 2002
- Finnish Village Action Travelling Workshop 25 November 2002
- ECOVAST tour to Croatia associated with the Otocec event in Slovenia on 2 October 2003
- European Rural University tour of Oxfordshire rural projects, England on 2 June 2004
- ECOVAST tour of Kenozero National park, Russia in August 2005
- ECOVAST tour associated with the Retz conference Austria on 4 November 2005
- ECOVAST tour around Makarska and to the Biokovo National Park, Croatia 1 April 2006
- INTERREG tour of Waldviertal and Weinviertal Landscapes Pernegg event, Austria 14 July 2006
- Interreg tour of Lake Paijanne, Finland on 5 September 2006
- Tour to the Galanta Geothermal station associated with event in Bratislava, Slovakia on 17 October 2006
- European Rural University Tour of Rural Projects around Solnok, Hungary on 30 June 2006
- ECOVAST Study Tour to look at the Energy Town of Güssing, Burgenland, Austria on 23 February 2007
- ECOVAST tour of rural buildings – part of the meeting at Weyher, Germany on 14 July 2007
- ECOVAST tour of the countryside associated with the St Veit an der Glan, Austria on 7 September 2007
- ECOVAST tour associated with Samobor event, Croatia on 16 October 2007
- Study Tour associated with Swedish Rural Parliament in Lycksle, Sweden on 6 March 2008
- European Rural University tour associated with the Sucha Beskidska, Poland event on 14 June 2008
- ECOVAST tour around Wittstock, Brandenburg, Germany held on 20 September 2008
- ECOVAST small town tour associated with the Mosenice conference on 23 October 2009
- ECOVAST tour of the Isle of Wight, England associated with the Ventnor conference on 16 October 2010
- ECOVAST tour of energy projects associated with the Beckerich event in Luxembourg 19 March 2011
- ECOVAST tour associated with assembly meeting in Vienna, Austria on 24 October 2011
- ECOVAST tour of energy projects in Germany & Switzerland around Achberg, Germany on 22 April 2012
- Study Tour associated with the Croatian Tourism Conference on 25 May 2012
- PREPARE tour associated with the Gathering in Karlskrona, Sweden 7 September 2012
- ECOVAST tour of former border area of Hesse, part of the Witzenhausen event on 6 October 2012
- European Tourism tour associated with the conference in Piatra Neamt, Romania on 9 October 2012
- ECOVAST tour of vernacular architecture associated with the event in Dammheim on 24 May 2013
- ECOVAST tour of Holloko, and town of Paszto, as part of Kozard event Hungary on 27 September 2013
- OECD tour of small towns and villages around Bologna area Italy on 24 October 2013
- European Rural University tour as part of the event in Perigueux, France on 12 November 2013
- ECOVAST tour of vernacular architecture as part of meeting held in Gatwick, England on 11 May 2014
- Tour of projects in the Peloponnese as part of the Cultural Landscapes event Athens on 11 October 2014
- ECOVAST tour associated with the event in Františkovy Lázně, Czech Republic on 29-30 March 2015
- European Rural Parliament Tour of the area around Schärding, Austria on 5 November 2015
- ECOVAST tours of churches, villages and local mill as part of Marburg event on 22-23 September 2016,
- European Rural Parliament series of tours to local rural projects in the Netherlands 20 October 2017
- ECOVAST tour of the Neusiedler See area as part of meetings in Illmitz, Austria on 26 October 2017
- ECOVAST tour of eco-museums in villages and small towns in north east Croatia on 13 October 2018
- PREPARE tour of western Kosovo as part of the gathering in Peja on 30 October 2018

There have been 69 Study Tours with 47 of them being organised by ECOVAST.

## INDEX 4: LIST OF CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, SYMPOSIUMS, WORKSHOPS

*The list includes international events (conferences, symposiums, workshops, seminars, colloquies) organised by ECOVAST International or National Sections or other organisations but where ECOVAST has played a significant role. They are subdivided into pan-European events and other major topics.*

### **Pan European Rural Policy (37 major events)**

- Inaugural Conference for ECOVAST held in Bellnhausen, MARBURG, Germany on 16 March 1984
- ECOVAST conference 'Saving the Rural World' held in STRASBOURG, France, on 14 November 1986
- Council of Europe launch 'Campaign for the Countryside held in LISBON, Portugal on 12 June 1987
- ECOVAST Conference on Rural Regions held in LÜBECK TRAVEMUNDE, Germany on 10 October 1988
- Council of Europe's Colloquium held in LÜBECK TRAVEMUNDE, Germany on 11-13 October 1988
- Council of Europe's Closing event held in OSTHOLSTEIN, Germany on 14 October 1988.
- The First<sup>t</sup> LEADER Gathering held in BRUSSELS, Belgium held on 14-16 May 1992
- Cork 1 Rural Development Conference was held in CORK, Ireland on 7-9 November 1996
- European Parliamentary Conference on Rural Development – held in BRATISLAVA, Slovakia in May 1997
- Council of Europe's 'The Prospects for Rural Areas' held in LJUBLJANA, Slovenia in September 1998
- Travelling Workshop to Estonia and Sweden – re the new PREPARE Network June 1999
- ECOVAST Conference 'Sustainable Development' held in BUTENBACH, Belgium 22 September 2000
- Council of Europe International NGO Group meeting held in STRASBOURG, France in January 2002
- Council of Europe's Plenary Session of NGO's held in STRASBOURG, France in January 2003
- Council of Europe conference held in BUDAPEST in March 2003
- The Salzburg Conference held in SALZBURG, Austria on 12-14 November 2003
- The Council of Europe International NGO group held in STRASBOURG, France on 27-29 January 2004
- 'Yes to Rural Europe' meeting held in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 13-14 June 2005
- Council of Europe NGO event, held in STRASBOURG, France on January 24 2007
- Council of Europe INGO meeting held in STRASBOURG, France in July 2008
- Council of Europe INGO Summer meeting held in STRASBOURG, France in January 2008
- Council of Europe meeting in STRASBOURG, France in June 2010
- DG Regio invites ECOVAST to join RURBAN, held in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 28 February 2011
- Inaugural Assembly the Danube Forum held in EISENSTADT, Austria on 30 June - 1 July 2011
- First European Rural Parliament held in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 13 November 2013
- Danube Region Participation Day held in EISENSTADT, Burgenland, Austria on 25 June 2014
- Danube Forum held in VIENNA, Austria on 26-27 June 2014
- First European Congress of Local Government held in KRAKOW, Poland on 3 May 2015
- Danube Forum – Participation Day held in ULM, Germany on 27 October 2015
- Second European Rural Parliament held in SCHÄRDING, Austria on 3 November 2015
- Second European Congress of Local Government held in KRAKOW, Poland on 4 April 2016
- Cork 2 - Rural Policy conference event (20 year review) held at CORK, Ireland, on 5 September 2016
- European Social and Economic Committee's workshop held BRUSSELS, Belgium on 15 February 2017
- Third European Rural Parliament held in VENHORST, Netherlands 18-21 October 2017
- Third Industry Forum held in KARPACZ, Poland 8-10 December 2017
- Fourth European Congress of Local Government held in KRAKOW, Poland on 26-27 April 2018
- Twenty-eighth Economic Forum held in KRYNICA-ZDRÓJ, Poland on 4-7 September 2018

### **Rural Development – 74 events**

- ECOVAST Seminar 'Aspects of Village Renewal' held in LINZ, Austria on 5 December 1987
- Local Enterprise Development (LEDA) Workshop held in CRETE, Greece in June 1989
- First European Rural University held in VIUZ en SALLAS, Savoy, France in 26-30 August 1989
- ECOVAST Arcadia Conference on agriculture held in VYTINA Greece 24-27 May 1990
- Rural Life Conference held at KEELE University, Staffordshire, England, United Kingdom in July 1990
- ECOVAST Congress 'The future of villages' held in GIESSEN, Hesse, Germany in July 1990
- ECOVAST Seminar 'Adult Education and Rural Development held at FREDEBURG, Germany in May 1991
- Second European Rural University held in SCHULL, Ireland in June 1991
- European Community event on Rural Development held in INVERNESS United Kingdom on 2 July 1992
- University Liege Forum held in REMOUCHAMPS, Belgium 22 October 1992
- Leader Programme event held in REMOUCHAMPS, Belgium 24 October 1992
- Third European Rural University held in EVORA, Portugal in 20-23 May 1993
- International Conference on Village Renewal, DEBAL Fair in ROSTOCK, Germany in February 1994
- International Conference on Rural Development held in TALLIN, Estonia in 25-26 February 1995

- ECOVAST Symposium on Carpathian region held in NOSZVAJ, Hungary on 7 November 1995
- Fourth European Rural University held in VEJLE, Denmark on 23-27 May 1996
- ECOVAST event 'Development & Culture' held in SANTA MARIA DI LEUCA, Italy on 24 September 1996
- ECOVAST/ISG/EUROPA NOSTRA Austria event held at ATTERSEE, Austria on 11 September 1997
- Swedish Rural Parliament held in LINKOPING, Sweden on 27 February on 1 March 1998
- ECOVAST International Conference on Agenda 21 held in BINZ, Germany on 14 March 1998
- First Hungarian Rural Parliament held in BUDAPEST, Hungary in April 1998
- Fifth European Rural University held in CAMPIGLIA SOANA, Italy on 16-20 September 1998
- ECOVAST Hungary/Rural Parliament Workshop held in BUDAPEST, Hungary in February 1999
- ECOVAST Conference 'on Sparsely Populated Areas held in HEMAVEN, Sweden on 15 September 1999
- Hungarian Rural Parliament and International Workshop held in ETYEK in Hungary on 15-20 May 2000
- ECOVAST Slovenia event on Marginal Rural Areas – held in LJUBLJANA, Slovenia on 27 June- 2 July 2000
- ECOVAST Russia event Development Programmes held in ZVENIGORAD, Russia on 9-11 October 2000
- ECOVAST Seminar - 'Problems of development of rural Poland held in SKEPE, Poland on 21 April 2001
- ECOVAST Conference on 'Regeneration of the Balkans held in FOJNICA, Bosnia on 11-13 October 2001
- Swedish Rural Parliament held in PITEÅ, Sweden on 14-17 March 2002
- Sixth European Rural University held in MONTAGNE SAINT EMILION, France from 29 August 2002
- Finnish Village Action Movement Travelling Workshop held in Finland on September 25 2002
- ECOVAST Conference on 'Frontier Region' held in SEIFHENNERSDORF Germany on 4 October 2002
- ECOVAST 'Rural Development/EU Enlargement' event held in BUDAPEST, Hungary, on 16/17 May 2003
- First PREPARE Gathering held in POČŮVADLO, in Slovakia in October 2003
- Seventh European Rural University held in OXFORD, England, United Kingdom on 1-3 June 2004
- PREPARE and LEADER Forum held in CACERES, Spain in June 2004
- Second PREPARE Gathering held in CHIFLIK, Bulgaria in September 2004
- PREPARE International meeting held in STOCKHOLM, Sweden in January 2005
- ECOVAST Poland 'Characteristics of Regional Space held in WYDMINY, Poland in September 2005
- Sixth Estonian Rural Parliament held in LEPANINA, Estonia on 21-23 July 2005
- Third PREPARE Gathering held in BIRŠTONAS SPA in Lithuania in 6-8 October 2005
- ECOVAST Fourth Euracademy on 'Social Capital' held in ILMAJOKI, Finland on 3-11 June 2006
- Fourth PREPARE Gathering in VELEHRAD in the Czech Republic on 18-23 June 2006
- Eighth European Rural University held in MEZOTUR and SOLNOK, Hungary on 29 June -1 July 2006
- LEADER / PREPARE Conference on 'held in TIHANY, in Hungary on 14-16 November 2006
- ECOVAST Poland conference 'Regions & Tourism' held at SURAZ, Poland on 5-6 January in 2007
- Regional Studies Association meeting in LISBON, Portugal in 5 April 2007
- Fifth PREPARE Gathering held in PRZEMYSŁ, in South East Poland on October 2007
- Conference 'Competitiveness and European Integration' held in CLUJ, Romania on 26/27 October 2007
- Swedish Rural Parliament held in LYCKSELE, Lapland, Sweden from 6-9 March 2008
- Rural Futures Conference held in PLYMOUTH, England, United Kingdom in April 2008
- Ninth European Rural University held in SUCHA BESKIDSKA, Poland on 12-15 June 2008
- Launch of European Rural Network, LIMASSOL, Cyprus on 16-17 October 2008
- ECOVAST Poland 'Specification of Regional Space held in BIALYSTOCK, Poland January 2009
- Sixth PREPARE Gathering in PTUJ, Slovenia & STUBICKE TOPLICE, Croatia on 30 June/4 July 2009
- Seventh PREPARE Gathering held in OHRID, Macedonia (FYROM) on 30 August -3 September 2010
- ECOVAST Conference 'Rural Development' held in VENTNOR, United Kingdom on 16 October 2010
- Third Irish Rural Studies Symposium held in DUBLIN, Ireland in 2011 on 6 December 2011
- PREPARE Workshop on Rural Development held in KIZILCAHAMAM, Turkey on 16 June 2012
- PREPARE Workshop on Rural Development held in BANJA LUKA, Bosnia & Herzegovina on 19 July 2012
- ECOVAST Macedonia / Bitola Institute 'Balkan Border Towns' held in BITOLA, on 6-7 August 2012
- Ninth PREPARE Gathering in KARLSKRONA Sweden on 6-7 September 2012
- Swedish Rural Parliament held in RONNEBY, Sweden on 8-9 September 2012
- PREPARE/Latvian Rural Forum meeting held in RIGA, Latvia on February 2013
- Tenth PREPARE Gathering in JAHORINA, Bosnia and Herzegovina on 4-7 September 2013
- ECOVAST Poland 'Specification of Regional Space' held in BIALYSTOK, Poland in September 2013
- Eleventh European Rural University held in PERIGUEUX, France on 6 November 2013
- Eleventh PREPARE Gathering held in HELSINKI Finland and TALLIN, Estonia on 6-7 September 2014
- First Scottish Rural Parliament held in OBAN, United Kingdom on 6-8 November 2014
- Twelfth PREPARE Gathering held in VOSKOPOJĚ, Albania on 16 September 2016
- First Balkan Rural Parliament held in VRNJAČKA BANJA, Serbia on 26-28 June 2018

- ECOVAST Croatia Conference on Eco Museums held in BISTRA, Croatia on 13 October 2018
- Fourteenth PREPARE Gathering held in PEJA Kosovo on 29 October-1 November 2018

#### **Agriculture – 12 events**

- COPA Conference on 'Rural World' held in BRUSSELS, Belgium in November 1990
- VIRGILE Seminar 'Agriculture & Environment' held in FOURAS, France on 10 October 1991
- ECOVAST Seminar held at the Agricultural University, UPPSALA, Sweden on April 1993
- Rural Sociologists event 'Agricultural Change & Rural Households' held GDANSK, Poland in March 1994
- Council of Europe Third European Agricultural Forum held in VERONA, Italy on 8-9 March 1995
- ECOVAST Poland event 'European Agriculture' held in PRZYSIEK, Poland in September 1996
- ECOVAST / WITRANET Conference on Wine Cultivation in MARATHON, Greece on 10 September 1998
- ECOVAST Conference on Agriculture held in GROSSETO, Tuscany, Italy on 14/15 May 1999
- European AgriCultural Convention (EAC) held in BRUSSELS, Belgium 6-7 June 2002.
- International Conference on Agriculture and Enlargement held in ZAGREB, Croatia on 12-13 June 2009
- Agriculture and Rural Convention 1 launched in BRUSSELS, Belgium in April 2010
- Agriculture and Rural Convention 2 held in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 13 July 2011

#### **Landscape – 26 events**

- European Conference on landscapes held in BLOIS, France in October 1992
- Council of Europe meeting of experts held in STRASBOURG, France in February 1993
- Council of Europe 'Cultural Landscape' held in BUDAPEST & KESZTHELY, Hungary on 7-13 June 1993
- Council of Europe Cultural Landscapes held in STRASBOURG, France in June 1994
- Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE) STRASBOURG in November 1995
- Inter-Government Conference on European Landscape Convention held in FLORENCE, Italy in April 1998
- ICOMOS UK Conference on Cultural Landscapes held in OXFORD, United Kingdom on 3 May 2000
- ECOVAST Austria International Landscape Workshop held in STUPAVA, Slovakia on 24-26 May 2001
- International Symposium on 'Protected Areas' held at POHORJE, Slovenia on 16-18 October 2003
- ECOVAST Croatia International Landscape Workshop held in MAKARSKA, Croatia in summer 2004
- Council of Europe Third Workshop on the Implementation of the ELC, CORK, Ireland on 16-17 June 2005
- ECOVAST Austria / Interreg Landscape Workshop held in Austria & Czech Republic on 19 October 2005
- Interreg Landscape Symposium held in PERNEGG, Lower Austria, Austria on 12-15 July 2006
- Launch of CIVILSCAPE held in FLORENCE, Italy on 23 February 2008
- ECOVAST Landscape Workshop in Austria and Czech Republic schools held in Spring 2009
- EUROPA NOSTRA Conference on Cultural Identity held in BELFAST, Northern Ireland, in September 2009
- CIVILSCAPE Conference held in FLORENCE, Italy on 27 November 2009
- Conference on Living Landscapes held in BRUSSELS, Belgium 19-20 July 2010
- Conference Landscape-Urbanism-Tourism held in PLOIEȘTI, Romania on 1 October 2010
- CIVILSCAPE Event held in ANTWERP, Flanders, Belgium on 12 December 2010
- Council of Europe Landscape Convention workshop held in CETINJE, Montenegro 2-3 October 2013
- Netherlands Environmental Agency Workshop 1 held in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 2 December 2014
- Netherlands Environmental Agency Workshop 2 held in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 17 March 2015
- Netherlands Environmental Agency Workshop 3 held in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 17 June 2015
- Council of Europe Workshop on ELC Implementation held in ANDORRA la VELLA on 1 October 2015
- Tenth Anniversary of CIVILSCAPE event held in ASCHAFFENBURG, Germany on 23-25 February 2018

#### **Rural Buildings, Heritage and Culture – 44 events**

- Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly event on redundant buildings held in BRUSSELS, in May 1989
- ECOVAST Workshop on Rural Heritage in the Countryside held in KRIŽEVCI, Croatia on 20 May 1990
- ECOVAST Workshop held in KARLOVAC, Croatia in May 1990
- ECOVAST International Workshop held in ÚSTĚK, Bohemia, Czech Republic in May 1992
- Conference on Rural Building: The Brandenburg House held at MOGLIN, Germany in October 1993
- EUROPA NOSTRA Awards Ceremony held in BRHLOVCE, Slovakia in April 1994
- Conference on Clay and Earthen Architecture held in PRIKAZY, in Moravia, Czech Republic in May 1994
- Conference on Village Churches held at TABOR, southern Bohemia in Czech Republic in June 1994
- Conference on 'Modernisation Processes in Russia / Socio-cultural issues' held in MOSCOW in July 1994
- ECOVAST Germany Symposium on manorial estates held in TELLOW, Germany on 24 September 1994
- EUROPA NOSTRA Forum on Restoration of Historic Buildings held in BERLIN, Germany in June 1994
- EUROPA NOSTRA Forum on Wooden Architecture in Europe' held in KRAKOW, Poland on 13 May 1995
- Scientific Conferences 'Cultural & Spiritual Centres' held in MOSCOW, Russia on 20-25 September 1996

- Conference 'Tradition & Cultural Monuments held at DUNAJSK STREDA, Slovakia on 14 November 1996
- Ulster Architectural Heritage Society 'Future of Rural Buildings' held in United Kingdom March 1998.
- European Symposium 'Monument Ensembles' held in DURNSTEIN, Austria in October 1998
- DENKMAL Trade Fair held in LEIPZIG, Germany October 1998
- ECOVAST Romania conference 'Vernacular Architecture' held in TUSNAD, Romania in March 1999
- ECOVAST Romania conference "Practical Built Heritage" held in TUSNAD, Romania on 19-25 March 2000
- EUROPA NOSTRA / ECOVAST Forum on Cultural Heritage in PRAGUE, Czech Republic 10 June 2000
- DENKMAL and EUREGIA 2000 held in LEIPZIG, Germany on 25-28 October 2000
- DENKMAL and EUREGIA event in LEIPZIG, November 2002
- DENKMAL Trade Fair held in LEIPZIG, Germany September 2004
- ECOVAST Germany Second Symposium held in TELLER, Germany in September 2004
- 750<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Foundation of Königsberg Conference held in ŚLUBICA, Poland on May 2005
- ECOVAST Russia conference on 'Culture and Development' held in KENOSERO, Russia in August 2005
- ICOMOS conference 'Heritage at Risk' held in MOSCOW, Russia on 17-20 April 2006
- DENKMAL Trade Fair held in LEIPZIG, Germany October 2006
- DENKMAL Trade Fair held in LEIPZIG, Germany November 2008
- Conference 'Heritage Care through Active Citizenship' held in MECHELEN, Belgium on 23-24 March 2009
- Conference 'Voluntary Organisations in Heritage', held in MECHELEN, Belgium on 6-7 July 2010
- ICOMOS Conference 'Culture and Wood' held in ROSTOV VELIKIJ, Russia on 20 September 2010
- Second Irish Rural Studies Symposium held in CORK, Ireland on 25 September 2010
- DENKMAL Trade Fair held in LEIPZIG, Germany November 2010
- EUROPA NOSTRA Heritage Congress held in AMSTERDAM, The Netherlands in June 2011
- DENKMAL Trade Fair held in LEIPZIG, Germany November 2012
- ECOVAST border Seminar on Vernacular Architecture held in DAMMHEIM, Germany on 25 May 2013
- ECOVAST Formal Opening of the Kazun, at PARSLEY HAY, England, United Kingdom on 5 July to 2013
- International Conference on 'Wooden Architecture' held in PILSEN, Czech Republic on 19-21 June 2014
- Cultural Landscapes in Natura 2000 Sites held in ATHENS, Greece on 10 October 2014
- DENKMAL Trade Fair held in LEIPZIG, Germany November 2014
- ECOVAST/Marburg District Seminar 'Historic Buildings' held in BIEDENKOPF, Germany 24 October 2016
- DENKMAL Trade Fair held in LEIPZIG, Germany November 2016
- European Cultural Forum held in Tortona, MILAN, Italy on 7/8 December 2017

#### **Rural Tourism – 17 events**

- ECOVAST / HAVT 'Symposium on Tourism' held in BALATONFOLDVAR, Hungary end of August 1989
- ECOVAST / HAVT conference 'Tourism in Rural Europe' held in KAPSOVAR, Hungary in October 1990
- ECOVAST / French Federation of Housing event on Rural Tourism held in AVIGNON, France in April 1992
- Council of Europe Colloquy event held in PALERMO, Sicily, Italy in June 1992
- ECOVAST Workshop on Heritage Trails held in OTOČEC, Slovenia in April 1997
- Conference on Cultural Tourism held in SKOPJE, Macedonia in July 1998
- World Tourism Seminar on Sustainable Rural Development held in FLORENCE, Italy – September 1998
- ECOVAST Slovakia Conference on Heritage Trails held in ROZNAVA, Slovakia on 3-6 December 1998
- ECOVAST Slovenia/ENNHO 'Cultural Identity/Heritage Trails' held in OTOČEC, Slovenia 3 October 2003
- ECOVAST International Conference 'Heritage Trails' held in OTOČEC, Slovenia on 16/19 February 2005
- EUROPA NOSTRA Annual Congress event on Culture Tourism held in VALETTA, Malta May 2006
- Croatian Tourism Conference held on island of HVAR, Croatia on 17-20 October 2007
- Croatian Tourism 'Days of Croatian Tourism' event held in OPATIJA, Croatia in October 2008
- Croatian Tourism Conference held on the Island of LOŠINJ, Croatia in May 2010
- Croatian Tourism Conference held in OSIJEK, Slavonia, Croatia on 24 May 2012
- Fourth European Tourism Conference held in PIATRA NEAMȚ, Romania on 8 October 2012
- Conference on Cultural Values in Rural Areas' held in HERAKLION, Crete, Greece on 17 October 2013

#### **Rural Communities – Small Town and Villages – 23 events**

- ECOVAST Austria First Symposium on small towns held in MURAU, Austria on 26-27 September 1998
- ECOVAST Austria Second Symposium held in Waidhofen an der Ybbs, Austria on October 17-20 2002
- ECOVAST Austria /SEEDA Third Symposium on small towns held in RETZ, Austria on 4 November 2005.
- First ECOVAST International Workshop on small towns held in, MAKARSKA, Croatia on 31 March 2006.
- Interegg conference on small towns held in JYVASKYLA, Finland on 4 September 2006
- Second ECOVAST Workshop on small towns held in ST VEIT an der GLAN, Austria on 7 September 2007
- ECOVAST International conference on small towns held in SAMOBOR, Croatia, on 12 October 2007

- ECOVAST International conference on small towns held in WITTSTOCK, Germany on 18 September 2008
- La Rioja Small Town Conference held in LOGRONO, Rioja region, Spain on 27/28 October 2008
- ECOVAST Austria Fourth Symposium on small towns held in GRIESKIRCHEN, Austria on 22 April 2009
- EUROPA NOSTRA Small Towns Annual Conference held in TAORMINA, Sicily, Italy on 4 June 2009
- First Irish Rural Studies Symposium held in GALWAY, Ireland on 1 September 2009
- ECOVAST Croatia conference on small towns held in MOSENICE, CROATIA on 22 October 2009
- Conference 'Placing Together the Towns Jigsaw' held in GLASGOW, Scotland, on 29 October 2009
- Market Town Convention held in CHIPPENHAM, England, United Kingdom on 12 October 2010
- ECOVAST International ASSET Conference held in POTSDAM, Germany on 16 November 2010
- ECOVAST Croatia 'Management of Historical Towns' held in IVANIC GRAD, Croatia on 11 November 2011
- ECOVAST Workshop on Small Towns held in WITZENHAUSEN, Germany on 5 October 2012
- ECOVAST Workshop on Rural Buildings and Small Towns held at KOZARD, Hungary 28 September 2013
- QUALIST Conference held in DRESDEN, Saxony, Germany on 12 November 2013
- ECOVAST Workshop on Small Towns held in FRANTIŠKOVY LÁZNĚ, Czech Republic on 27 March 2015
- EUROPA NOSTRA / ECOVAST 'Understanding Significance of Place' held in CAMBRIDGE, in 8 April 2015.
- Royal Geographical Society Conference held in EXETER, England, United Kingdom on 1 September 2015

#### **Rural Urban Partnerships – 9 events**

- Launch of CURE (Convention for a Sustainable Urban & Rural Network) in BRUSSELS in December 2007
- European Union DG Regio Urban-Rural Seminar held in BRUSSELS in October 2009
- SURE Seminar on 'Sustainable Urban Rural Europe' held in GOTHENBURG, Sweden in November 2009
- SURE Conference held in KRAKOW, Poland on 20-21 May 2010
- First Conference on Rural/Urban Partnerships held in METZ, Moselle, France on 14 November 2012
- Second Conference on Rural/Urban Partnerships held in WARSAW, Poland on 23 April 2013
- Green Week Open Day Workshop (RURBAN Seminar) held in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 29 May 2013
- Third Conference on Rural/Urban Partnerships held in BOLOGNA, Italy on 23 October 2013
- Final meeting of the RURBAN Network held in BRUSSELS, Belgium on 28 January 2014

#### **Energy – 7 events**

- ECOVAST 'Coal-People-Environment' event held in ŚWIERADÓW-ZDRÓJ, Poland in November 1993
- SREN Conference on Solar Energy & Low Energy Architecture held in FLORENCE, Italy on 2-8 April 2005
- Common Challenge 'International Co-operation' event held in SEBESDORF, Austria in April 2006
- ECOVAST Conference on Renewable Energy held in BRATISLAVA, Slovakia on 16 October 2006
- ECOVAST Study Tour to look at the Energy Town of GÜSSING, Burgenland, Austria in 23 February 2007
- Symposium on 'Historic Water Supply in Vienna' held in VIENNA, Austria on 19-22 October 2011
- CIVILSCAPE Conference on 'Energyscapes' held in KONIGSWINTER, Germany on 27 October 2012

#### **These 249 events have been held in 36 countries**

##### **(a) In Eastern Europe (94 events in 20 countries):**

Held in Albania (1); Bosnia & Herzegovina (3); Bulgaria (1); Croatia (14); Czech Republic (7); Cyprus (1); Estonia (3); Hungary (12); Latvia (1); Lithuania (1); Kosovo (1); Macedonia FYROM (3); Montenegro (1); Poland (19); Romania (5); Russia (6); Serbia (1); Slovakia (7); Slovenia (6) and Turkey (1)

##### **(b) In Western Europe (155 events in 16 countries):**

Held in Andorra (1); Austria (19); Belgium (24); Denmark (1); Finland (4); France (18); Germany (32); Greece (5); Ireland (7); Italy (13); Malta (1); the Netherlands (2); Portugal (3); Spain (2); Sweden (9) and the United Kingdom (England, Northern Ireland and Scotland) (14).

**Some 73 of these events were organised or part-organised by ECOVAST, in 18 countries** (Austria, Belgium, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Macedonia FYROM, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden and the United Kingdom)

#### **ECOVAST members were also involved with and took part in:**

- 22 events organized by the Council of Europe
- 12 events arranged by the European Union (DG Agri, DG Region and others)
- 19 events with partner PREPARE
- 11 events of Rural Parliaments (European or National)
- 10 events of the European Rural University
- 10 events of EUROPA NOSTRA

*All the events above are referred to in the main body of this report and can be cross-reference using the date*



## INDEX 6: LIST OF MAJOR PROJECTS THAT ECOVAST HAS BEEN INVOLVED WITH

*ECOVAST has been involved in several projects either by itself or in partnership with others. The list of the projects below gives details, partners and ECOVAST Team members.*

- **Telecottages Project (1989):** A joint project with Telecottages International, and ECOVAST to create a network of Telecottages in the villages and small towns of Europe and to set up a European databank concerned with rural policy and action.
- **House of Rural Europe (1989 to 1991):** This was followed by a project to create a 'House of Rural Europe' within the disused monastery in West Germany, to become a centre for information, education and research about rural Europe. Finance failed and the project came to an end in 1991.
- **ECOVAST / ICAM Project (1991):** Following a fact finding mission in 1990, ECOVAST put forward a proposal to form a limited Company with the ICAM, Croatia to help the development of a Regional Park to support the development needs of the Istrian peninsular in Croatia. A change in government meant the support to this project would not be forthcoming and it would not go ahead – although ICAM got involved with many local projects and later with projects to develop Heritage Trails in Croatia.
- **Integrated Rural Development Project (1994 to 1997)** An ECOVAST research project – originally designed to look at the participation of local people in 'integrated rural development'. This project failed and a new project developed related to the effects which changes in local services in rural areas can have upon the lives and work of women and was submitted in 1996.
- **Heritage Trails Project (1995 to 1997 and 1989-2003):** ECOVAST, Ecotourism Ltd and PRISMA were given EU funding to develop 2 Heritage Trails in Slovenia and Bulgaria. A second project to develop 2 trails in Croatia was funded by the Government of Croatia.
- **ECOVAST Small Homelands Project (1996):** ECOVAST members from 9 countries led by ECOVAST Poland and Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Sweden and the United Kingdom to develop a programme of action to strengthen the socio-cultural vitality of local communities. Funding for the first bid failed but a revised bid was submitted to the RAPHAEL programme
- **ECOVAST Associates (1997):** was a project developed by ECOVAST members to co-operate on research and consultancy projects.
- **WITRANET Project (February 1997 to 1999):** where ECOVAST was a sub-contractor to PRISMA Consultants. The project was to add value to wine and wine-related culture in regions of Greece, Portugal, Austria and Italy.
- **TWIG Transnational Woodland Industries Group (1997 to 1999)** a project with 5 pilot regions in Germany, Greece, Sweden and England (United Kingdom) supported by an EU programme RECITE II to improve woodland management, with ECOVAST being responsible for networking and dissemination as a sub-contractor of PRISMA, the Greek partner.
- **BARN Project (1997)** Buildings Adapted for Rural Innovation involved research units in Italy, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom and a bid to the EU FAIR programme to assemble experience of good policy and practice and the public benefits secured through the use of redundant farm buildings.
- **Carpathian Training Project (1999 to 2000):** Capacity building for Rural Innovation in Central Europe was a project of the Carpathian Foundation who invited ECOVAST to develop proposals for expert training to people involved in integrated rural development in Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine.
- **PRIDE project (1999):** Partnerships for Rural Development in Europe – ECOVAST is one of 7 partners of a research project to investigate the nature, dynamics and effects of partnerships involved in rural development in different EU countries.
- **Euracadamy (2001):** ECOVAST was invited to join a project under the EU Leonardo da Vinci programme which will offer training and skills to rural actors such as entrepreneurs and the staff of rural development agencies and use summer schools to deliver this training.
- **ECOVAST Landscape Identification Project (2001 to 2012):** It was a purely ECOVAST project set up in 2001 and led by Arthur Spiegler (Austria) to look at how to define different landscapes
- **ECOVAST ASSET Project (2005 to 2017):** ECOVAST project was set up in 2005 to look at small towns across Europe. It was a very long project producing several pieces of research and publications. In 2009 ECOVAST Austria published its Register of Towns and in 2017 ECOVAST United Kingdom published a list of all UK towns. An ASSET 2 Project is underway to look at shop closures in one small town.
- **REVITAMIN Project 2006:** A project to revitalise former mining areas through its settlements and local or regional development. ECOVAST Germany is one of the partners.
- **GREEN BELT Project (Spring 2008 onwards):** The international project by ECOVAST Austria who had a specific task on the major international European Green Belt project (the Central European section). Their task was to identify and evaluate the different characters of the landscapes surrounding the former Iron Curtain which involve Austrian borders with the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, and Italy.
- **QUALIST Project (2010 to 2013):** A project where ECOVAST Germany was part of an EU Central Europe Programme with 11 partners, led by Saxony, Germany to on the Quality of Life in small towns.
- **ECOVAST Archive & History Project (2015-2019).** A formal archive was developed of all ECOVAST material (in paper & electronic versions) and a report on all activities – the History 1984 to 2019 written.

## INDEX 6: LIST OF INVOLVEMENT IN MAJOR EUROPEAN POLICY

### A: Major European Policy Events where ECOVAST has played a part:

*There have been several major rural policy events where ECOVAST has played a part – helping to influence rural policy in Europe and also develop its own rural policy ideas.*

**(i) Council of Europe Countryside Campaign:** The Founder President in January 1985 sent a letter of support to the Council of Europe for their proposed Campaign for the Countryside; the Biennial Assembly (Strasbourg, France in 1986) agreed a resolution to take part in the campaign; and in October 1988. ECOVAST joined with the Council in an event staged in Lübeck Travemünde, Germany.

**(ii) Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE):** ECOVAST has been involved with this forum of local and regional elected authorities which advises the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. The CLRAE set up a formal Working Group which led to the development of an International Landscape Convention.

**(iii) Council of Europe Landscape Convention:** ECOVAST had been lobbying this concept for some time, Jean Chanel (Germany) lobbied at Blois, France in 1992; Gesine Desrbais (France) lobbied a meeting of experts in Strasbourg, France in February 1993; Andras Roman of Hungary lobbied the Scientific Conference on Cultural Landscapes in Kesthely, Hungary in June 1993. Michael Dower (United Kingdom) was one of the experts appointed to advise the CLRAE Working Group with the first text discussed at Strasbourg, France in November 1995. The European landscape Convention was not finally approved until 2004. Council of Europe held many Implementation workshops which involved ECOVAST in Cork, Ireland in 2005; Cetinje, Montenegro in October 2013; and Andorra La Vella, Andorra in October 2015

**(iv) Development of the Council of Europe's International Network of Non Government Organisations Group:** ECOVAST was granted consultative status as an International Non-Government Organisation's who could be represented at all meetings of the Parliamentary Assembly involving NGO'. ECOVAST has tried to attend as many of their meetings as possible although there has been no financial support available.

**(v) European Commission Rural Policy conferences:** Two major events took place in Cork, Ireland in 1996 and 2006 attended by all the member states of the European Union, and major pan European (including ECOVAST).

**(vi) European Commission Rural Policy Group (under DG Agri):** An international rural policy group was set up by GG Agri. ECOVAST became a member of this group in 1998 and remained a member until it changed its structure in 2014

**(vii) European Commission Rural Conference:** held in Salzburg, Austria in 2003 was attended by ECOVAST.

**(viii) European Commission Rural Urban Network (RURBAN):** The group was led by DG Regio and including DG Agri, OECD, and several urban partnerships. ECOVAST was invited to become a member in February 2012. The group pioneered research into different rural / urban partnership in Europe, the United States and Australia and staged 3 major conferences to discuss the issues raised; in Metz, France in 2012; in Warsaw, Poland and in Bologna, Italy in 2013. ECOVAST was a major speaker in Bologna. ECOVAST was also part of the closing event in Brussels, Belgium in January 2014.

**(ix) Development of an Agriculture and Rural Convention:** The initiative was launched in April 2010 in response to the reforms of the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP). The Convention was led by Forum Synergies but also involved ECOVAST. It involved many consultations. This first conference of 2010 was followed by a second in 2011.

**(x) European Rural Parliaments:** The first event was sponsored by EESC and held in November 2013 in Brussels, Belgium. The organisers were PREPARE; ERCA and Hela Sveriga ska Leva (Sweden). ECOVAST as a partner of PREPARE played a role in this and subsequent events. The second event took place in Scharding, Austria in 2015; the third event took place in Venhorst in the Netherlands in 2017.

### B: ECOVAST Policy Documents:

*ECOVAST has developed a series of rural policy documents based on its experiences and research.*

**(xi) The ECOVAST Rural Strategy:** The ECOVAST Strategy for Rural Europe, compiled by Michael Dower (United Kingdom), debated at several committee meetings until it was finally approved at the General Assembly at Niederbronn les Bains, France in November 1991 and published in December 1991 (a summary appears on

page 34). It was updated in 1994. A policy statement on Agriculture and Forestry – Their Future in Europe was produced at the end of 1997. A revised statement – A Position Statement on the Strategy for the Rural Regions of Europe was approved at the Biennial Assembly in Bratislava, Slovakia in October 2006. A further update on the ECOVAST Strategy for Rural Europe was prepared in June 2008. A Global Strategy for Rural Europe' (another update of the Strategy) was produced in July 2013.

**(xii) ECOVAST Traditional Rural Buildings Policy 1996:** A Statement on Traditional Rural Buildings, was produced by the ECOVAST Rural Buildings Group in 1996

**(xiii) ECOVAST Statement on the Regeneration of the Balkans 2001-2002:** The Fojnica Declaration and the report on 'Regeneration in the Balkans' resulted from the conference held in Fojnica on 13 October 2001.

**(xiv) ECOVAST Landscape Policy Development:** First landscape policy document was developed by the ECOVAST International Working Group in 2002.

**(xv) ECOVAST Small Town Policy Development:** The first ECOVAST policy on small towns was developed by the ASSET project - which started in 2005; followed by a programme of research followed and many workshops and two formal declarations (see below). The first formal policy statement was approved by the Dammheim meeting in May 2013 and formally distributed in the same year.

**(xvi) Other Specific Policy Declarations or Resolutions:**

- ECOVAST Statement on the threat to villages in Romania published by Michael Dower in October 1988
- The Arcadian Resolution on the assets of the countryside resulting from the conference held in Greece on 24-27 May 1990
- The Kaposvar Resolution on rural tourism 18 October 1990
- Brown Coal Mining Resolution made at Georgenthal, Germany 25 November 1990
- The First Tellow Declaration on Landed Estates Complexes in the Baltic produced 9 October 1994
- The Bratislava Declaration on Rural Development produced in May 1997
- Heritage Trails Manual by Ecotourism Ltd, ECOVAST and PRISMA was produced in September 1997
- Training Manual for the Carpathian Foundation in Integrated Rural Community Development jointly produced by ECOVAST and the Foundation in June 2000
- All Europe Shall Live – statement on rural development discussed at the committee at Butgenbach, Belgium in September 2000
- The Worriken Declaration on sustainable rural development produced after the conference held in Butgenbach, Belgium in September 2000
- Declaration on the protection of Kosovo's cultural heritage made on 13 October 2001
- Report on Sustainable and Practical Regeneration in the Balkans published in April 2002
- The First Tellow Declaration on landed Estate Complexes 24 September 1994
- The Otocec Declaration on Cultural Identity was produced in October 2003
- Declaration on small towns produced in Croatia after the Samobor conference in 2007
- Declaration on small towns produced in Germany after the Wittstock conference in 2008

*All these items are reported in the main body of the report and can be cross-referenced using the dates.*

## INDEX 7: ECOVAST PUBLICITY AND PUBLICATIONS

*ECOVAST publicizes its work through Newsletters, information leaflets, formal reports and publications.*

*The first ECOVAST Newsletter was created in 1988, printed in a magazine format in the 3 languages of English, French and German, with financial support which continued for Newsletters 2 and 3 and 4 in the same format. No copies of these have been found. After this Newsletters or News Updates (in A4 format) were prepared in English with French and German versions translated by ECOVAST members.*

### **(i) Newsletters**

- ECOVAST Newssheet No 1 published May 1989 – edited by Bernard Mignon (Belgium)
- ECOVAST News No 2 published December 1989 – edited by Bernard Mignon (Belgium)
- ECOVAST News No 3 published August 1990 – edited by Bernard Mignon (Belgium)
- ECOVAST News No 4 published November 1991 – edited by Pierre Coulmain (France)
- ECOVAST News No 5 published August 1992
- ECOVAST News No 6 published December 1992 – edited by Peter Hood (United Kingdom)
- ECOVAST News No 7 published April 1993 – edited by Peter Hood (United Kingdom)
- ECOVAST News No 8 published May 1994 – edited by Michael Dower (United Kingdom)
- ECOVAST News No 9 published December 1994 – edited by Michael Dower (United Kingdom)
- ECOVAST News No 10 published August 1995 – edited by Michael Dower (United Kingdom)
- ECOVAST News No 11 published March 1996 – edited by Michael Dower (United Kingdom)
- ECOVAST News No 12 published November 1996 – edited by Michael Dower (United Kingdom)
- ECOVAST News No 13 published June 1997 – edited by Michael Dower
- ECOVAST News No 14 published December 1997 – edited by Michael Dower
- ECOVAST News No 15 published June 1998 – edited by Michael Dower
- ECOVAST News update 1 August 1998
- ECOVAST News No 16 published November 1998 – edited by Michael Dower
- ECOVAST News update 2 December 1998
- ECOVAST News update 3 March 1999
- ECOVAST News No 17 published June 1999– edited by Michael Dower
- ECOVAST News update 4 June 1999
- ECOVAST News No 18 published October 1999 – edited by Michael Dower
- ECOVAST News update 5 December 1999 – no copy found
- ECOVAST News No 19 published January 2000 – edited by Michael Dower
- ECOVAST News update 6 February 2000 – no copy found
- ECOVAST News No 20 published June 2000 – edited by Michael Dower
- ECOVAST News update 7 June 2000
- ECOVAST News No 21 published October 2000 – edited by Michael Dower
- ECOVAST News update 8 November 2000
- ECOVAST News No 22 April 2001 – edited by Andrea Weigert
- ECOVAST News No 23 July 2001 – edited by Andrea Weigert
- ECOVAST News update 9 July 2001
- ECOVAST News No 24 published December 2001– edited by Andrea Weigert
- ECOVAST News update 10 early 2002
- ECOVAST News No 25 published April 2002 – edited by Andrea Weigert
- ECOVAST News No 26 published August 2002 – edited by Andrea Weigert
- ECOVAST News No 27 published December 2002 – edited by Andrea Weigert
- ECOVAST News update 11 January 2003
- ECOVAST News No 28 published June 2003 – edited by Andrea Weigert
- ECOVAST Report No 29 published December 2003 – edited by Andrea Weigert

*No newsletter was produced in 2004*

- ECOVAST Report No 30 published April 2005 – the first to be edited by Pam Moore
- ECOVAST Report No 31 published August 2005 – edited by Pam Moore
- ECOVAST Report No 32 published January 2006 edited by Pam Moore
- ECOVAST Report No 33 published in May 2006 – edited by Pam Moore

- ECOVAST Report No 34 published September 2006 – edited by Pam Moore
- ECOVAST Report No 35 published December 2006 – edited by Pam Moore
- ECOVAST Report No 36 published April 2007 – edited by Pam Moore
- ECOVAST Report No 37 published August 2007 – edited by Pam Moore
- ECOVAST Report No 38 published December 2007 edited by Pam Moore
- ECOVAST Report No 39 published May 2008 edited by Pam Moore
- ECOVAST Report No 40 published August 2008 edited by Pam Moore
- ECOVAST Report No 41 published December 2008 – edited by Pam Moore
- ECOVAST Report No 42 published April 2009 – edited by Pam Moore
- ECOVAST Report No 43 published August 2009 – edited Pam Moore
- ECOVAST Report No 44 published December 2009 – edited by Pam Moore
- ECOVAST Report No 45 published May 2010 – edited by Pam Moore
- ECOVAST Report No 46 published August 2010 – edited by Pam Moore
- ECOVAST Report No 47 published January 2011 – edited by Pam Moore
- ECOVAST Report No 48 published June 2011 – edited by Pam Moore
- ECOVAST Report No 49 published September 2011 – edited by Pam Moore
- ECOVAST Report No 50 published February 2012 – edited by Pam Moore
- ECOVAST Report No 51 published July 2012 – edited by Pam Moore
- ECOVAST Report No 52 published in December 2012 – edited by Phil Turner
- ECOVAST Report No 53 published March 2013 - edited by Phil Turner
- ECOVAST Report No 54 published August 2013 - edited by Phil Turner
- ECOVAST Report No 55 published December 2013 - edited by Phil Turner
- ECOVAST Report No 56 published July 2014 - edited by Phil Turner
- ECOVAST Report No 57 published November 2014 - edited by Phil Turner
- ECOVAST Report No 58 published February 2015 - edited by Phil Turner
- ECOVAST Report No 59 published June 2015 - edited by Phil Turner
- ECOVAST Report No 60 published December 2015 - edited by Phil Turner
- ECOVAST Report No 61 published April 2016 - edited by Phil Turner
- ECOVAST Report No 62 published November 2016 - edited by Phil Turner
- ECOVAST Report No 62a Supplement published December 2016 – edited by Phil Turner
- ECOVAST Newsletter 63 published September 2017 - edited by Valerie Carter
- ECOVAST Newsletter 64 published September 2018 edited by Valerie Carter
- ECOVAST Newsletter 65 published December 2018 edited by Valerie Carter

## **(ii) ECOVAST Leaflet**

The first ECOVAST leaflet was produced in 1986 (*no copy has been found*). The second, to celebrate ECOVAST's 30<sup>th</sup> birthday, was produced in 2014 and was widely circulated.

## **ECOVAST Formal Publications**

**(iii) Landscape Publications:** The first Landscape Identification policy document was produced in 2002 by the Landscape Working Group. A formal guide, based on practical workshops held in Austria and Slovakia was produced in 2006 by Arthur Spiegler (Austria) and Michael Dower (United Kingdom) with the aim to help the citizens of Europe to understand, to celebrate and to protect the landscape in which they live; and to assist governments in their work to implement the European Landscape Convention. It was updated in 2012.

**(iv) Small Towns Publications:** reporting on the work of the ASSET Project Team started at the end of 2005. The first policy document on small towns was agreed in Dammheim in 2013, and distributed to key European partners. This was updated with examples of best practice research and formally published (3 volumes). The main policy volume **'The Importance of Small Towns'** our key ECOVAST Policy Statement on small towns and examples of what small towns across Europe have been doing to improve their well being published in 2014 and more than 1,000 copies distributed – to all National Rural Networks, all National Associations of Municipalities or Local Governments

This was followed by **'The Evidence Base'** in 2015– a record of the pan European research on small towns – how many there are in Europe, how many people live in them; two opinion surveys seeking the opinions of small towns; and detailed research of the economic, social and historic assets of small towns in South East England.

In the same year a companion document **'The Importance of Small Towns in the Danube Basin'** also

published in 2015 – giving examples of what small towns in the Danube Basin country have been doing. This co-incided with our attendance of the Danube Forum Participation Day held in Ulm, Germany in xxxxx

Two National Sections also carried out a study of their towns and published the results: ECOVAST Austria produced a list of its surveys of historic towns in Austria in 2009 and ECOVAST United Kingdom published a database of United Kingdom Towns and Cities in 2017. Since 2014 these policy documents have been used to illustrate ECOVAST presentations at international events all over Europe and further copies distributed.

#### **(v) Specific Articles or publications written by ECOVAST members**

*This list is not exhaustive but articles have been reported in ECOVAST Newsletters and have contributed to members understanding of rural issues.*

ECOVAST Austria: In Newsletter 45 in 2010 Brigitte Macaria & Arthur Spiegler reported on the Centrope Project which brought together provinces, regions and counties that make up the Central European Region (which covers Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia with two capital cities of Bratislava and Vienna and the cities of Brno and Gyor) - an economically and culturally expanding with growing prosperity. In Newsletter 53 in 2013 Arthur Spiegler reported on the tax on mineral extraction which helps fund Landscape Enhancement

ECOVAST Croatia: in Newsletter 47 in 2011 Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić reported on the Global Bee Emergency and the vital role they play in the pollination of crops. In November 2011 ECOVAST Croatia published a booklet on their event in Ivanic Grad

ECOVAST Germany – several members have produced articles including: Ralf Bokermann who wrote in 2006 about New Energy in Newsletter 34; the future of Rural Space discussed in Berlin Newsletter 35; the Economy of On-Farm Produced Rape Seed Oil as a Fuel in Newsletter 36; in 2007 on Upgrading the Economic Sector of Rural Regions in Newsletter 37; on Maintenance and Conservation of Landscapes by Grazing Animals and Wild Animals in Newsletter 38; in 2008; in 2009 on Small Towns in Rural Regions of Germany in Newsletter 42; on the Role and Current Situation of Agriculture in Newsletter in 44; in 2010 on Aspects of Bio-Energy in Europe in Newsletter 45; in 2011 on Economic Structures and Regional Use of Wind Energy in Newsletter 48; on the German Federal Association for Regional Initiatives in Newsletter 49; in 2013 a Study on Small Towns in the Lower Oder and West Pomerania in Newsletter 55; and in 2018 papers on the 'Excursion into the early history of a rural region – about the military occupation of Germania by the Roman Empire of the areas east of the River Rhine; and another on 'The Interventions on the architectural heritage of the city wall of Witzhausen in Hesse: Olaf Linke reported on Metropolitan Regions in Polycentric Urban Systems in Newsletter 36 in 2006 and on Metropolitan Regions and Spatial Development in Newsletter 37 in 2007. In 2011 Gerhard Henkel produced 'The Village a book about country life in Germany'.

ECOVAST Poland produced a series of books on research on regions, regional space and tourism – all produced by the Bialystok Polytechnic and all edited by Halina Lapinska.

ECOVAST Romania has produced two publications based on their research into byzantine sites - 'Byzantine Resonances in Romania I and II' defining circular tourist trails linking examples of byzantine religious and civil architecture in an area north of the Danube River. The hope is that they will be linked with the more well-known Byzantine heritage south of the Danube and can be integrated with the cultural routes being developed by the Council of Europe. The work was carried out by Magdalena Banu; Calin Hoinărescu and Elena Costache and published May 2013. In 2015 they also published a booklet on the restoration of the 'Emblazoned House' in the village of Chiojd written by Călin Hoinărescu. The National Union of Romanian Historic Buildings (UNRMI) published a book in 2013 on the traditional villages of Prahova County around the capital of Ploiești describing projects of restoration led by Calin and Manuela Hoinărescu; they also regularly publish articles for a journal of the restoration of individual buildings where some buildings where the architect was Călin Hoinărescu.

ECOVAST Russia there have been articles published about Olga Sevan's including ICOMOS publication 'Wooden Architecture in Russia in September 2015 and their Quarterly Collection of articles on actual problems of study and preservation of urban architectural heritage of historic settlements published as book in March 2016 bringing together a number of experts of ECOVAST Russia and edited and illustrated by Olga Sevan

ECOVAST United Kingdom: Phil Turner has produced articles on the EPSON Project on Small and Medium Sized Towns in Newsletter 51 in 2012; on the 20 European Heritage Sites on the World Monuments Watch List in Newsletter 55 in 2013 and the Whitchurch Silk Mill in Newsletter 62a in 2016. Royston Edge produced an article on the Significance of Place in Newsletter 59 in 2015 and on Ecological Living for Local Communities Newsletter 60 in 2015. Pam Moore wrote an article on the Knockando Windmill in Scotland in Newsletter 62 in 2016.

#### **(vi) ECOVAST History Report**

This document setting out the history of ECOVAST from March 1984 was completed to mark ECOVAST's 35<sup>th</sup> birthday – at the end of March 2019.

*There is a specific file of Newsletters in the Archive. They are in English but have been copied electronically. The electronic format can be translated into French and German and any other language.*

## INDEX 7: OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

*This is a simple summary of the statutory background of ECOVAST's work, including formal Statutes and registration; agreed protocols; our formal relationships with other bodies.*

### (i) Statutes and Registration

- The original draft Constitution was prepared by Alan Leavett of the Development Commission (a founder member) and submitted to the ECOVAST Executive meeting held in Brussels, Belgium on 27 April 1984
- The original idea had been to register in Austria and the Statutes were adapted for this country. However the laws in Austria for organisations like ECOVAST were proving difficult and other countries were then considered – including Switzerland and France
- At the General Assembly held 14 November 1986 it was agreed that France was a suitable place for an INGO to register.
- The Executive Committee held in Linz, Austria on December 1987 finally agreed to registration in Alsace, France
- The first ECOVAST Statutes (to meet French law) were finally approved and adopted by the ECOVAST General Assembly held at Wiltz, in Luxembourg, on 15 April 1989.
- These Statutes in French were submitted to the Tribunal at Selestat, France were registered by them as Volume 17; Folio Number 58 and included on their 'Registre des Associations' and a formal Certificate issued to ECOVAST on 24 September 1990. The Statutes were translated into both English and German.
- Amendments were agreed at the General Assembly held in Attersee, Austria on 13 September 1997.
- Further amendments were agreed by the General Assembly held in Hemaven, Sweden on 18 September 1999.
- Other amendments were made and agreed by the Biennial Assembly held at Bütgenbach, Belgium on 24 September 2000.
- These formal amendments to the Statutes were submitted in French to the Tribunal of SELESTAT, France on 6 April 2001; and accepted by them on 2 July 2001: the formal Certificate was issued on 13 November 2003. The amended Statutes were also produced in English and German.
- The Statutes were further modified at an Extraordinary Meeting held on 27 March 2015 and the changes agreed by the Biennial Assembly held at Frantiskovy Lazne, Czech Republic, on 28 March 2015
- The amended Statutes were sent to and approved by Selestat Tribunal and they issued a formal Certificate dated 31 December 2015. The amended Statutes were also produced in English and German. These are the current Statutes.

### (ii) Formal Seat

- ECOVAST recognized that it would need a formal seat of ECOVAST
- Originally it was planned to register in Austria and in 1986 the Mayor of the small town of Frohnleiten, Austria offered ECOVAST a site in the town to be the seat
- In 1989 it was agreed (on 15 April at the General Assembly held in Wiltz, Luxembourg) to register ECOVAST in Alsace, France and the official Legal Seat for ECOVAST was established at 36 Rue de Selestat, Einwihr, Muttersholtz F67600, France.

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### (iii) Bank Account

- The original bank account for ECOVAST was at Banque de Bruxelles Lambert in Brussels, Belgium
- It was reported at the Executive Committee held in Wiltz, Luxembourg on 15 April 1989 that the ECOVAST Bank account had been moved to Bank Populaire de Stasbourg in Alsace, France where it has remained.

### (iv) Protocols for ECOVAST committee meetings

- From 1988 onwards the format of each committee meeting should follow the same pattern: a record of the host of the meeting and list of those ECOVAST members who attended and where they were from; a welcome and general report from the President; the Secretary General and the Treasurer; reports from each National Section and reports from each Working Group.
- The International Committee held in Rackeve, Hungary in March 1991 agreed a protocol for frequency of meetings - that International Meetings should take place twice a year with one of them to coincide with the General Assembly

### (v) Protocols about the operation of National Sections

- the principle of having National Sections was agreed at the International Committee held in Brussels, Belgium in April 1987 and set out the relationship between National Sections and the International Committee
- the first National Sections (France, Federal Republic of Germany) reported to the International Committee held in Setubal, Portugal in June 1987
- the International Committee held in Marburg, Germany in April 1990 further developed the relations between

the International Committee and the ECOVAST National Sections

- the International Committee meeting held in Fontwell Magna, Dorset, England on 23 January 1993 agreed a protocol for the National Sections in Eastern Europe
- an updated Protocol for the Creation and Work of National Sections was published in July 1999
- the Protocol was reviewed and reconfirmed in the Biennial Assembly held in Illmitz, Austria in October 2017.

**(v) Protocols about the operation of International Working Groups**

- in 1986 the Executive Committee held in Strasbourg, France agreed to the setting up of International Working groups in 1988 the Executive Committee held in Blaye, France agreed to 5 groups: Agricultural Change and Integrated Rural Development; Rural Tourism; Protection and Re-use of Vernacular Buildings; Revival of Rural Communities and Environmental Education and Training. These 5 groups were used at the ECOVAST conference held in Lubeck-Travemunde, Germany
- in Mittersholtz the International Committee in November 1988 agreed that any policy reports produced by these groups should be subject to the approval by the Executive Committee: the groups must reflect the broad purposes of ECOVAST; and all members should be able to express their views to the groups: and new groups can be at any Executive meetings; and each Group elects their own Chairman; and they must report to the Executive Committee or Annual Assemblies

**(vi) Formal Links to the Council of Europe**

- ECOVAST in June 1985 requested to become a Statutory Consultee of the Council of Europe
- It was reported at the International Committee held in Strasbourg, France on 13 November 1986 that Consultee Status was formally accepted by the Council of Europe and we were part of their network of International Non-Government Organizations
- ECOVAST has contributed to the Council of Europe campaigns: their Campaign for the Countryside in 1987 and 1988 and the development of the European Landscape Convention from 1996-2004

**(vii) Recognition by the EU and Membership of European Policy Union Groups**

- The Executive Committee meeting held in Lubeck-Travemunde, Germany of 9 October 1988 reported by ECOVAST is now recognized by the European Parliament
- From 1998 to 2014 ECOVAST was a member of the Director General of Agriculture's Agri Rural Policy Group. There were meetings usually met two times a year – spring and autumn.
- From 2011 to 2014 ECOVAST was a members of the Director General of Regions RURBAN Network and involved in their work on rural / urban partnerships until it concluded in 2014
- In 2016-2017 ECOVAST worked with a group of the European Economic and Social Committee on the potential role of rural communities to improve the rural economy.

**(viii) Membership of other pan-European Networks**

- ECOVAST is a member of EUROPA NOSTRA (who supported the founding of ECOVAST in March 1984).
- ECOVAST was a founder member of EUROTER
- ECOVAST was a founder member of the PREPARE network launched in 2000
- ECOVAST was a founder member of the CIVILSCAPE network launched February 2008
- ECOVAST has been a member of EUROGITES (which organizes the European Rural Tourism events) since 2010)
- ECOVAST has been a member of network of heritage bodies since 1996 and has also been a member of the European Heritage Alliance 3.3 since 2011
- ECOVAST and the European Economic Forum became informal partners in April 2018.
- ECOVAST has had a working relationship with APURE which stages a European Rural University (ERU) every few years.

**(ix) Yearbook of International Organizations**

ECOVAST is also registered on the Yearbook of International Organizations – a publication of the Union of International Associations (UIA – in Associate Status with UNESCO). This is an independent, not-for-profit research institute founded in 1907 to promote and facilitate the work of international associations.

**(x) Transparency Register**

Organisations who work in the European Union are expected to comply with the European Unions' decision-making process to be as transparent and open as possible, in order to ensure balanced representation and avoid undue pressure and illegitimate or privileged access to information or to decision-makers. Transparency is also a key part of encouraging European citizens to participate more actively in the democratic life of the EU. A formal Transparency Register was set up to answer core questions such as what interests are being pursued, by whom and with what budgets. The system is operated jointly by the European Parliament and the European Commission ECOVAST completes this Transparency Register annually every February.



## THE ECOVAST CURRENT STATUTES

*These are the current ECOVAST Statutes – agreed by the General Assembly held in Frantiskove Lazne, Czech Republic in March, submitted to the Tribunal at Selestat, Alsace, France in French and a Formal Certificate of approval issued by dated 31 December 2015 – listed as Volume 17, Folio Number 58.*

### EUROPEAN COUNCIL FOR THE VILLAGE AND SMALL TOWN (ECOVAST) STATUTES

#### Article 1

##### NAME AND LEGAL SEAT

- 1) The association shall be known as the European Council for the Village and Small Town, abbreviated to ECOVAST and carrying the subtitle: European Association for conservation and revitalisation of the countryside.
- 2) The association is an international non-governmental federation of organisations and individuals.
- 3) The association has its legal seat at Maison de la Nature, 36 Ehnwihr, 67600 Muttersholtz, France. It is inscribed in the Register of Associations of the *Tribunal d'Instance de Selestat (Bas-Rhin)* and governed by articles 21 to 79 of the Local Civil Code, by force of the law of introduction of 1 June 1924, and by the present statutes.

#### Article 2

##### OBJECTIVES

The association is a non-profit organisation and has the following objectives:

- 1) to foster the economic, social and cultural vitality and the administrative identity of rural communities in Europe and, at the same time
- 2) to safeguard and to promote a renewal of these areas which is both innovative and adapted to the heritage of the architectural and natural environment (for example, the protection of sites and of landscapes).

#### Article 3

##### ASSETS

- 1) The funds required to realise the objectives of the association will be raised by means of subscriptions from ordinary and supporting members, subsidies, donations, etc. (see articles 7 and 11).
- 2) The association can also use the following methods: cultural events, seminars, periodical publications, documentation centre, research and action projects, international working groups etc.

#### Article 4

##### MEMBERS

- 1) Ordinary members shall be admitted after submission of a written application addressed to the Executive Committee through the Secretary General, or to an approved National Section.
- 2) Membership is open to individuals or organisations : they can be ordinary, supporting or honorary members.
- 3) Ordinary membership is open to all individuals and organisations based in Europe whose activities correspond to the two objectives of the association or to one of those objectives, and who declare that they support these two objectives

Members will be placed in one of the following categories:

Group I	Non-government organisations at national or international level
Group II	Governmental or official organisations at national or international level
Group III	Non-government organisations at regional or local level
Group IV	Governmental or official organisations at regional or local level
Group V	Individuals living in Europe and pursuing the two objectives of the association
Group VI	Students.

- 4) Supporting membership is open, on the proposal of the Executive Committee and by resolution of the General Assembly, to individuals or organisations who support the objectives of the association by means of occasional or regular contributions of a financial or material kind or whose activities may be expected to promote the objectives of the association.

Supporting members can attend the General Assemblies of the association (only one representative per member) but shall not be entitled to vote.

- 5) Individuals or organisations who have rendered exceptional service to the association can be designated as honorary members by the General Assembly on the proposal of the Executive Committee. They can attend the General Assemblies of the association (only one representative per member) and shall be entitled to vote.

## NATIONAL SECTIONS

- 6) a) If the members of the association in a given country wish to create a National Section of the association, they may do so. The Executive Committee of the association will prepare internal rules to guide the creation and the activity of such a National Section and the relations between it and the Executive Committee.
- b) If the National Sections have been created in total conformity to these internal rules, they can receive the official recognition of the General Assembly of the association. They can then benefit from the name and logo of the association, and organise activities in their own country in the name of the association, as well as activities which may be delegated to them by the Executive Committee of the association.

## Article 5

### RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERS

- 1) Members may take part in all events organised by the association and may make use of premises and institutions managed by the association. Only ordinary and honorary members shall have the right to vote at the General Assembly or to be elected to office.
- 2) Members are expected to use their best efforts to promote the interests of the association and to undertake nothing that would damage the good reputation and objectives of the association. They will respect the statutes of the association and the resolutions of its organs.
- Ordinary members shall be bound to pay their subscriptions punctually before the date stated and at the levels determined by the General Assembly or by an approved National Section.

## Article 6

### ENDING OF MEMBERSHIP

- 1) Membership of the association may cease through death (or loss of legal status in the case of an organisation), by voluntary resignation or by exclusion (or removal of the status of honorary member).
- 2) Resignation of a member will take effect as soon as a written statement to that effect has reached the Executive Committee, through the Secretary General, or an approved National Section.
- 3) Members whose behaviour is harmful to the interests of the association, whether or not in the form of unpaid subscriptions, can be excluded by resolution of the General Assembly on the proposal of the Executive Committee. The member who is proposed for exclusion has the right to be heard by the General Assembly before a resolution is adopted. The obligation to pay all due subscriptions is not affected by exclusion. The reasons stated above can equally justify the removal of the status of honorary member, by decision of the General Assembly on the proposal of the Executive Committee.

## Article 7

### SUBSCRIPTIONS OF MEMBERS

- 1) All members of the association belonging to Groups I to IV must pay an annual subscription.
- 2) All members of the association belonging to Groups V and VI must pay either an annual subscription or a single life membership.
- 3) a) Membership subscriptions shall be submitted to the account of the association, or of an approved National Section, at latest on 31 March of each calendar year.
- b) The General Assembly can decide that members from countries with convertible currency problems may pay their subscriptions into an account opened for that purpose in their own country. The sums thus paid may be used only in conformity with the objectives of the association stated in article 2 of the present statutes.
- 4) The subscriptions of ordinary members in Groups I to VI will be fixed periodically by the General Assembly on the proposal of the Executive Committee.
- 5) The Executive Committee may in exceptional circumstances exempt a member from part of his/her annual subscription.
- 6) Unless the Executive Committee decides otherwise, members being in arrears for two years in payment of their subscriptions, after a sufficient number of reminders, will be treated as having resigned. The following General Assembly must be informed of these assumed resignations.
- 7) Resolutions of the General Assembly which carry financial obligations for members beyond their simple subscriptions cannot be adopted without the agreement of the persons concerned.

## Article 8

### ORGANS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The organs of the association are:

- The General Assembly.
- The Executive Committee.

Article 9  
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- 1) The General Assembly is the supreme decision-making body of the association.
- 2) a) An ordinary General Assembly will be convened every year by the Executive Committee in writing, with an indication of the agenda and giving at least 4 weeks notice.  
Such an Assembly will be held not later than 18 months after the preceding General Assembly.  
b) The place and date of the Biennial General Assembly at which the Executive Committee and the auditors will be elected for a two-year period will be fixed by the preceding General Assembly.  
This decision can be entrusted to the Executive Committee.  
Written summons to a Biennial General Assembly will be sent out by the Executive Committee at least 8 weeks in advance, with an indication of the agenda. If this agenda includes the proposed dissolution of the Association, the summons must be sent 3 months in advance.
- 3) The powers of the General Assembly include, among others :
  - a) Election of members of the Executive Committee and of auditors. These elections take place every 2 years;
  - b) To receive and approve the report of activities by the Executive Committee, the financial report and the auditors' report for the preceding financial year; and to release from their obligations the Executive Committee, its individual members and the auditors;
  - c) Decision on the programme and general direction of the activities of the association, and discussion and approval of the proposed budget;
  - d) Adoption of resolutions on motions which are proposed to the Assembly;
  - e) Adoption of resolutions relating to the choice of honorary members;
  - f) Adoption of resolutions related to the subscriptions of ordinary members, on the proposal of the Executive Committee;
  - g) Adoption of resolutions related to the exclusion of members or the removal of the status of honorary member;
  - h) Approval of the election of by co-option, or of the dismissal, of Executive Committee members;
  - i) Approval of the agenda for the General Assembly, and of internal rules for the conduct of the Assembly;
  - j) Adoption of resolutions to amend the Statutes of the association;
  - k) Adoption of a resolution to dissolve the association.
- 4) Motions addressed to the General Assembly must be deposited with the Secretary General at least two weeks before the date of the General Assembly.
- 5) Motions for amendment of the Statutes of the association must be deposited with the Secretary General at least six weeks before the General Assembly at which they will be put to the vote, and must be sent to all members at least four weeks before this Assembly.
- 6) a) An extraordinary General Assembly may be convened by the Executive Committee if the business of the association demands this.  
b) An extraordinary General Assembly must be held if at least one tenth of the total members of the association request this in writing to the Secretary General. The Assembly must be convened within 4 months following receipt of the motion by the Executive Committee.  
c) The Secretary General must give members at least 2 months written notice of an extraordinary General Assembly.  
d) The agenda of an extraordinary General Assembly will be limited to the points specified in the demand stated at clause 6) b) above, or to the question presented by the Executive Committee in conformity with clause 6) a) above.
- 7) Each member in Groups I to IV may send up to five representatives to each General Assembly (but only two representatives to an extraordinary General Assembly). Members belonging to Groups V and VI may either participate in person or be represented.
- 8) Each ordinary member has a right to one vote. Organisations belonging to Groups I to IV may exercise their right to vote through a representative authorised to vote in their name. The right to vote can be transferred from one member to another member or representative, by proxy sent to the Secretary General at least two weeks before the date of the meeting.
- 9) All decisions taken by the General Assembly (elections, resolutions etc) are valid if adopted by a simple majority (that is over half) of votes cast by those members present who are entitled to vote.  
In case of a split vote, the chairman of the meeting has a casting vote.  
Resolutions to change the Statutes of the association or to dissolve it require a qualified majority of two thirds of votes cast by those members present or their representatives who are entitled to vote.
- 10) The President shall chair the General Assembly. In the event of his incapacity, the First Vice-President will assume this task. Should he too be incapacitated, another Vice-President or another person elected by those members present shall chair the Assembly.
- 11) A minute of each General Assembly must be prepared. It will be signed by the Secretary General or ad hoc secretary chosen by the General Assembly, and counter-signed by the chairman of the session.

Article 10  
THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1) The Executive Committee consists of up to ten members elected by the Biennial General Assembly, one member nominated by each approved National Section, and up to six co-opted members. All these members have equal rights to vote at meetings of the Executive Committee

2) a) Up to ten ordinary members of the Executive Committee are elected by the Biennial General Assembly. All members, whatever their Group or country, have the right to stand for election and to vote for the candidates.

2)b) Each approved National Section can nominate a member to represent that section on the Executive Committee; these nominated members must be elected, without opposition, by the Biennial General Assembly of the association.

3) During the election of members of the Committee in accordance with clause 2) a) above, all the Groups of members should be represented, and a balanced geographical distribution must be ensured among the members of the Executive Committee.

4) a) The Executive Committee may co-opt up to 6 further members for an initial term of one year. This term may be renewed.

b) The Executive Committee elected by the Biennial General Assembly has the right, if an elected member resigns, to co-opt another eligible member.

c) The nomination of co-opted members shall be submitted to the next General Assembly for confirmation.

5) a) The Executive Committee is elected for 2 years, but shall continue in office until a new Committee has been elected.

b) Members of the Executive Committee may be re-elected.

Before elections are held, the General Assembly must receive a declaration stating the number of meetings of the Executive Committee held since the previous election and the number of these meetings which have been attended by those members of the Executive Committee who wish to be re-elected.

6) a) The Biennial General Assembly elects, from among the members of the Executive Committee, a President and two Vice-Presidents, one of whom carries the title of First Vice-President.

b) In addition, the Executive Committee elects among its members two Vice-Presidents, a Secretary General and a Treasurer. The biennial General Assembly confirms them in their offices

c) The President and the four Vice-Presidents holding office at the same time shall not reside in or represent the same country.

d) The President and the Vice-Presidents may not usually be re-elected for more than two successive periods of office. This rule may be relaxed in exceptional circumstances.

7 Invitations to meetings of the Executive Committee shall be issued by the President or by the Secretary General, in writing.

8 The Executive Committee decides on the frequency and the location of its meetings. It will ensure that the distances and the costs of travel are fairly distributed among its members during the term of office of the Executive Committee.

9) The Committee is quorate if all of its members have been invited to attend and at least a quarter of them are present.

10) The Committee takes its decisions by a simple majority vote. Should the vote be split, a new vote is taken. If, following that discussion, the vote is still split, the chairman of the meeting has a casting vote.

11) Meetings of the Committee are chaired by the President or in default by the First Vice-President. Should the President and the First Vice-President be incapacitated, the Executive Committee may elect from its ranks a Chairman for the session.

12) Apart from death or expiry of the period of office, the mandate of a member of the Executive Committee may cease through resignation. A statement of resignation must be addressed to the Executive Committee or, in the case of collective resignation, to the General Assembly. The resignation will take effect only on the election or co-option of a successor.

13) The General Assembly may at any time release the entire Executive Committee or individual members of the Executive Committee from their mandate (see article 10, clause 25 below).

14) The Executive Committee is responsible for directing the activities of the association, on the basis of the resolutions taken by the General Assembly.

It takes all necessary decisions between two General Assemblies. The Executive Committee is charged, among other duties, with :

a) Assuring the representation of the association by the President, a Vice-President, the Secretary General or another member of the Committee;

b) Managing the assets of the association;

c) Preparation of the annual report, the financial report and the proposed budget;

- d) Preparation and convening of ordinary and extraordinary General Assemblies;
- e) Submission to the General Assembly of proposals for programmes of activity;
- f) Conduct of all business which is not expressly reserved to the General Assembly;
- g) Examination of any demand for use of the name or the logo of the association;
- h) Preparation of internal rules to guide the creation and the activity of National Sections and the relations between them and the Executive Committee;
- i) Approval for the creation of, and terms of reference for, International Working Groups.

15) The Committee may establish its own internal rules.

16) The Committee may appoint Sub-committees of its members and may delegate to them part of its responsibilities.

17) The President, the four Vice-Presidents, the Secretary General and the Treasurer form the bureau of the association. The Executive Committee can delegate functions or decisions to this bureau.

18) The President is the chief representative of the association. He chairs sessions of the General Assembly and of the Executive Committee. In case of urgency, he may take decisions on his own authority even in matters which are the responsibility of the General Assembly, on condition that he first consults the Secretary General and the First Vice-President and that such decisions are subsequently submitted for approval by the appropriate organ of the Council.

19) In the event of the incapacity or the resignation of the President, the First Vice-President will assume his powers until the election of a successor.

20) The President and the four Vice-Presidents must each for their part assume responsibilities to oversee specific aspects of the international activity of the association, on a basis agreed between them and the Executive Committee after their election.

21) The Secretary General exercises his functions on an honorary basis. He shares responsibility for the conduct of current business, prepares the minutes of sessions of the General Assembly and the Executive Committee, and receives the correspondence of the association, whether or not registered, including postal orders.

22) The Treasurer exercises his functions on an honorary basis. He is responsible for the correct management of the association's finances.

23) In the event of the incapacity of these officers, the Executive Committee may elect deputies for the Secretary General and the Treasurer.

24) Written documents and publications of the association, and especially those aimed at the general public, must be signed jointly by the President or the First Vice-President and the Secretary General or, in relation to financial matters, by a member of the Executive Committee and the Treasurer.

25) If the President, any of the four Vice-Presidents, Secretary General or Treasurer commit a flagrant abuse of their mandate or fail to carry out their obligations, they may be dismissed from their function by a resolution of the Executive Committee, provided that members of the Committee have been informed in writing at least one month before the date of the meeting with this point on the agenda.

Such action must be submitted for confirmation to the next General Assembly.

26) Minutes of the meetings of the Executive Committee are kept. These minutes are approved as a correct record by the following meeting of the Executive Committee, and are signed by the person chairing that meeting. A minute book is maintained.

## Article 11 FINANCE

1) The Executive Committee can seek, and receive in the association's accounts, money in the form of subscriptions, legacies, grants and loans.

It can also acquire property in the name of the association.

2) The Executive Committee can decide the use of moveable or immovable property of the association.

3) The property of the association must be exclusively used in support of its statutory objectives as stated in article 2.

Members shall receive no remuneration from the funds of the association.

4) No person may benefit from payments which fall outside the statutory objectives or are unreasonably high. (This does not exclude adequate remuneration of employees or members of the association in return for services rendered, or the reimbursement of expenses incurred on behalf of the association).

5) a) The total amount of debts of the association may in no case exceed the total amount of subscriptions due for the current year.

The Executive Committee is the guardian of this balance.

- b) Responsibility in matters of finance rests collectively with members of the Executive Committee, to the exclusion of other members of the association.
- c) No member of the Executive Committee shall receive financial reward by reason of the functions which have been entrusted to him.
- 6) The Executive Committee opens, in the name of the association, one or more bank accounts, and delegates signature to the Treasurer and the Secretary General or to other designated persons. Two signatures are necessary for all transactions.
- 7) The association takes the calendar year as its accounting year. A daily journal of accounts is maintained, and where necessary an inventory of property.
- 8) The Executive Committee will ensure that the account books are kept in the offices of the association or at another suitable location, and that these documents are always available for examination by members of the Executive Committee by prior appointment.  
The Executive Committee will periodically decide whether members of the association may examine the account books, and the conditions under which this examination shall take place.
- 9) Each year, the Executive Committee will present to members of the association a report outlining income and expenditure since the previous report. This report will contain a statement of balance and the auditors' report.  
A copy of the financial report, the balance and the auditors' report will be sent by the Secretary General to all members of the association and to the auditors at least one month before the date of the General Assembly.

## Article 12 AUDITORS

- 1) Two auditors are elected by the General Assembly for a mandate of two years.  
They must be duly qualified and are eligible for re-election.  
They are chosen from outside the members of the Executive Committee.
- 2) The auditors are responsible for the supervision of current financial business and for verification of accounts.  
Each year, they submit a report to the General Assembly on the result of their audit.

## Article 13 WORKING LANGUAGES

English, German, French and Russian are the working languages which may be used by the association.

## Article 14 DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION

- 1) A resolution relating to the voluntary dissolution of the association can only be adopted by an extraordinary General Assembly convened for that purpose on condition that two-thirds of members present are in agreement.
- 2) The extraordinary General Assembly will proceed to liquidate the assets of the association. The Assembly must designate a liquidator and can decide the allocation of the assets after all debts of the association have been met.  
The remaining assets must as far as possible be devoted to an association which pursues objectives similar to those stated in article 2 of the present statutes.

*Copies of the first Statutes agreed at Wiltz, Luxembourg in 1989, and the amended Statutes agreed in Butgenbach, Belgium in 2000 in French, English and German are included in the ECOVAST Archives.*

## GLOSSARY of Organisations and ACRONYMS

**AEIDL:** European Association for Information in Local Development, a social enterprise founded in 1988 to support the establishment of a Europe made by citizens for citizens.

**AEOLOS** A European research project funded by the EU for Information and Communication Technology, ICT.

**APURE:** *Association pour les Universités Européennes*. An international non-government organisation which enables rural policy makers and academics to meet and discuss key issues with local rural actors and the rural voluntary sector. Every few years it stages a European Rural University (**ERU**). Several members of ECOVAST have been key members of APURE.

**AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL CONVENTION (ARC).** A group of organisations and individuals set up in 2010 to campaign for a sustainable European policy for agriculture and rural development in the period 2013 to 2020. It is now focused on generating debate in that policy field through the Website [www.arc2020.eu](http://www.arc2020.eu)

**ARIENA** Regional Association for Initiation to the Environment and Nature in Alsace

**ASSET** Action to Strengthen Small European Towns - an ECOVAST project on small towns started in 2005

**BARN** Buildings Adapted for Rural Innovation. A research project from Italy, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom and ECOVAST submitted a research project to the EU FAIR programme funded by DG VI in 1997.

**CARPATHIAN MEMORIAL** Polish project on identification, protection and promotion of Carpathian Heritage

**CCRU** Countryside and Community Research Unit of the Cheltenham and Gloucester College which is the body that has carried out much of the ECOVAST research

**CIVILSCAPE.** An international nongovernment federation of voluntary organisations and individuals, which acts as a common European platform representing the voice of the citizens deeply connected with their landscapes. It seeks to assist the implementation of the European Landscape Convention, which was originated by the Council of Europe and came into force in 2004

**CORK 1 and CORK 2:** European Union Rural Policy conferences held first 1994 with a 10 review in 2004

**COUNCIL OF EUROPE:** The Council of Europe was founded in 1949 with the aim to uphold human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Europe and to promote European Culture. It can prepare multi-national charters and conventions through which member states may commit themselves to take action, such as:

**The Berne Convention** on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats in 1979

**The Granada Convention** for the protection of architectural heritage in 1985

**The European Landscape Convention** of 2000.

**CLRAE** A Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe – an organisation - the voice of Europe's Regions and Municipalities to advise the Council of Europe

**European Rural Charter** of 1994 - A charter prepared under the auspices of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe by the Rural Interest Group of NGO's with consultative status

**INGO's** The Council has a consultative Forum of international non-government organizations, on which ECOVAST is represented

**CURE** Convention for Urban and Rural Europe to offer recommendations on policy frameworks and measures which will assist a sustainable approach to the future of urban and rural areas in Europe at the time of the Mid-Term Review of EU programmes in 2008-09.

**DANUBE FORUM:** The 16 countries that have the Danube river flowing through them have been working together to agree a formal Danube Strategy called the **European Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR)**. They meet every year in an annual **Danube Forum**, an event organised by the European Commission. ECOVAST has been involved in their working groups and has attended several of the Forums.

**DEBAL** A fair event held in Rostock Germany in 1994

**DENKMAL** This is a leading European Trade Fair, dedicated to the conservation, restoration and renovation of old buildings and is held in Leipzig, Germany every 2 years. It started in 1994 and ECOVAST's participation at the fair is through an arrangement with EUROPA NOSTRA.

**DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION** A Department of the United Kingdom government (it later became known as the Rural Development Commission) and it was responsible for rural policy and support to rural projects until 1999 when the United Kingdom was divided into regions and regions delivered most of the support to rural areas. The Development Commission was one of the founded members of ECOVAST.

**ECOVAST:** European Council for the Village and Small Town: *Conseil Européen pour le Village et la Petite Ville* ; *Europäischer Verband für das Dorf und für die Kleinstadt*. Founded in March 1984, it is an international non-government voluntary organisation run by its members.

**ECOVAST ASSOCIATES** a group of ECOVAST members, based in universities or consultancies, who – in the 1990s – worked together on research and consultancy projects outside the main frame of ECOVAST's activity.

**ENNHO** European Network of National Heritage Organisations

**ERA** The European Rural Alliance (ERA) was founded in September 2005 by 16 rural movements

**ERCA** ERCA began as an informal network in 2004, and was established as an organisation in 2009. In 2013 the two networks European Rural Community Association and European Rural Alliance (above) merged under the new name European Rural Community Alliance. European Rural Communities Association

**EUROGITES** EUROGITES has been responsible for staging pan European Rural Tourism Events.

**EUREGIA** - is held alongside DENKMAL which is dedicated to local and regional development in Europe.

**EUROPEAN COUNTRYSIDE MOVEMENT** an alliance of European NGO's representing farmers, landowners and hunters which ECOVAST joined in 1998

**EUROPEAN COUNTRYSIDE FOUNDATION** a grant giving body

**EUROPEAN HERITAGE ALLIANCE 3.3** The European Heritage Alliance 3.3 is an informal European sectoral platform composed of more than 40 European or international networks and organisations active in the wider field of cultural heritage. Europa Nostra is acting as facilitator of the alliance. .

**ENESD** European Network for Experiences in Sustainable Development

**EURACADEMY** - an international non-government association which organises Summer Academies focused on different aspects of rural development. Leading members of ECOVAST have been major contributors

**EUROPA NOSTRA:** the European federation of non-government organisations focused on the protection of the natural, historic and architectural heritage of Europe. ECOVAST was formed in 1984 as an offshoot of Europa Nostra, and the two organisations have worked together on many issues.

**EUROPEAN AGRICULTURAL CONVENTION (EAC)** A group of organisations and individuals which was set up in 2003 to campaign for a sustainable European policy for agriculture and rural development in the period 2006 to 2013. It may be seen as the predecessor to ARC .

**EUROTER:** Tourism in Rural Europe, an international non-government Association, founded in 1987 with help from, ECOVAST. It acts to promote tourism in the European countryside in conjunction with agencies involved at all levels, and to represent European rural tourism interests, particularly before European institutions. It organises annual conferences and other events.

**EUROPEAN RURAL PARLIAMENTS** The first pan-European rural parliaments was supported by the Social and Economic Committee of the European Union and held in Brussels in 2013. The current organisers of these events are ELARD, ERCA and PREPARE.

#### **EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS**

**EC:** The European Commission is the **Executive of the European Union** and promotes its interests

**ECSC:** The European Coal and Steel Community established by the treaty of Paris in 1951

**EEC:** The European Economic Community which replaced it under the Treaty of Rome in 1957

**EU:** The European Union which replaced this under the Treaty of Maastricht in 1993

**DG Agri :** the Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development

**DG Regio :** the Directorate General for Regional Development and Urban Affairs

**EESC :** the European Economic and Social Committee

**ELARD** European LEADER Association for Rural Development

**ENRD** European Network for Rural Development

**NATIONAL RURAL NETWORKS** All EU Member States have a formal National Rural Network. They are the bodies that normally stage the National Rural Parliaments.

#### **EUROPEAN UNION POLICY BODIES AND PROGRAMMES**

**CAP** the European Union Common Agricultural Policy

**CEPFAR** European organisation for agricultural training

**CLLD** Community Led Local Development – a European Union programme which can be used in both rural and urban areas. It is based on the rural LEADER approach.

**COPA** European Agriculture Organisation for agriculture and rural training

**CORK 1** The first Rural Development Conference on rural policies in 1996 for the countries of the EU

**CORK 2** The 20 year review of this policy event

**EAFRD** European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development – an EU Fund

**ERDF** European Regional Development Fund – an EU Programme

**ESF** European Social Fund – an EU Programme

**FAIR** An EU Research programme under DG VI

**INTERREG** A European Union cross border programme

**IPARD** an EU Instrument for Pre-Accession for Agriculture and Rural Development

**LABOS FOUNDATION** a research and training body in the field of social policies

**LAG** Local Action Group – responsible for operating a LEADER Group

**LEADER** The Acronym in French means 'Links between Actions for the Development of the Rural Economy. It is a locally organised and locally delivered rural support programme operated by a LAG.

**LEDA** Local Employment Development Action an EEC programme

**PHARE** Poland and Hungary Aid for Restructuring of the Economies

**RECITE II** An EU programme (part of ERDF) to fund projects (such as TWIG projects)

**REVITAMIN** A programme to revitalise former coal mining areas

**SAPARD** An EU Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development

**SHINE** An EU programme for vocational education and training

**VIRGILE** A European Programme

**EURURAL:** a network with 25 parties was created to lobby the EU on rural issues. ECOVAST joined in 1992

**FAK** Förderkreis Alte Kirchen (started in Marburg in 1973) is the organisation in Germany which has been actively involved in the rescue of village churches in Hesse. It was a founder member of ECOVAST in 1984



**FNFR** Federation Nationale des Foyers Ruraux a national organisation that represents rural people across France. It has been a major part of the European Rural University events.

**FORUM SYNERGIES** A pan-European organisation with individual and organisational members, based on the achievements of the former European Network of Experiences in Sustainable Development (ENESD). They hold workshops on themes such as renewable energy, farmer's ecology, access to land, rural health and many other areas of sustainable development. They were a founder member of PREPARE.

**FOUNDATION INSTITUTE FOR EASTERN STUDIES** – an independent non-government organisation based in Poland, committed to improving cooperation between the countries of central and eastern Europe. It stages an annual **Economic Forum**, a platform on the whole scope of political, economic and social issues held every autumn. Since 2015, it has also staged an annual **European Congress for Local Governments** in the spring and an annual **Industry Forum** in the winter.

**GREEN BELT** a major pan European Programme which is dedicated to the environment of the landscapes on either side of the former Iron Curtain from the Barentz Sea to the Mediterranean Sea.

**HELA SVERIGE SKA LEVA! (All Sweden Shall Live)** This Swedish popular movement started in the 1980's to address the de-population of rural areas in the north of Sweden. It is responsible for staging the Swedish Rural Parliaments.

**HAVT** Hungarian Association for Village Tourism

**ICAM** - International Centre for Anthropology Motovun, set up in the 1980s by Tihana Stepinac Fabijanic to undertake research and activities related to the architectural and cultural heritage of Istria in Croatia.

**ICOMOS** The International Council on Monuments and Sites is a non-governmental international organisation dedicated to the conservation of the world's monuments and sites

**KODUKANT** The Estonian Village Movement set up in 1997 responsible for the Estonian Rural Parliaments

**METREX** European Metropolitan Regions and Areas

**NATIONAL RURAL PARLIAMENTS** Several countries have held events which gather all representatives of rural people in their countries to an annual event called a 'National Rural Parliament' where they can talk to members of their government.

**NATO** North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

**OECD** Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is an intergovernmental (not just Europe) economic organisation (36 member countries) founded 1961 to stimulate economic progress and world trade.

**PREPARE** : founded in 2000 as the Pre-accession Partnership for Rural Europe, with the aim to strengthen civil society and rural areas, particularly in the then pre-accession countries of Central Europe, and to promote multi-national exchange in the field of rural development : ECOVAST was among the founding partners. PREPARE was registered in 2017 as an AISBL (international non-profit association) under Belgian law.

**PRIDE** Partnerships for Rural Development in Europe – a research project to investigate the nature, dynamics and effects of partnerships involved in rural development in different EU countries.

**PRISMA**: consultancy based in Athens, Greece, run by Fouli Papageorgiou who originated the Euracademy and also several pan-European projects in which ECOVAST has played a part, including **Heritage Trails**,

**PURPLE** Peri Urban Regions Platform Europe : the rural regions around the edge of major conurbations

**RED** (*Ruralité, Environnement, Développement*) A Rural Movement based in France

**QUALIST** a pan European project on towns led by Saxony, Germany

**SALZBURG CONFERENCE** a major pan European conference on rural development held in 2003

**SMALL HOMELANDS** a programme of action to strengthen the socio-cultural vitality of local communities in Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia

**SURE** 'Sustainable Urban and Rural Europe came about after a grant was awarded under the EU Europe for Citizens Programme in order to stage events such as the conference.

**TELECOTTAGES INTERNATIONAL**: an international NGO Association set up in 1985 by Henning Albrechtsen to promote teleworking and the creation of telecottages. ECOVAST worked closely with that Association to promote the creation of telecolleges in rural areas of Europe

**TWIG** (Transnational Woodland Industries Group) – a project where ECOVAST was a member.

**WITRANET** (Wine Tradition Network) – a project where ECOVAST was a member

#### **Personal thanks and disclaimer**

*I want to thank all those people who have given me encouragement and help in writing this document. I hope that it will be seen as a tribute to the efforts of all ECOVAST international members and members of the ECOVAST National Sections who have given so many years supporting the organisation. I want to thank particularly the prodigious memory of two ECOVAST members who have been so valuable in providing information on the early years of ECOVAST – Angus Fowler of Germany, one of the founder members who sadly died before this report was completed and Michael Dower (United Kingdom) who also edited the many iterations of the report. Any errors or omissions of names or events are solely my responsibility and I apologise for them*

*Valerie Carter: President of ECOVAST*



## **The European Council for the Village and Small Town (ECOVAST)**

ECOVAST was founded in March 1984 in Bellnhausen, near Marburg, in Germany, to foster the economic, social and cultural vitality and the administrative identity of rural communities throughout Europe and to safeguard the sensitive and imaginative renewal of the built and natural environments of such communities.

ECOVAST has members from many countries across Europe, both individuals and networks. We have two formal aims:

- to foster the economic, social and cultural vitality and administrative identity of rural communities throughout Europe: and
- to safeguard and to promote the sensitive and imaginative renewal of the built and natural environments of such communities.

We are a volunteer-based organisation that seeks to influence policy and action by citizen involvement. Our network supports its members, and encourages cooperation between them, as they pursue their activities in rural areas.

ECOVAST is a member of the Council of Europe's International Non-Government Organisation Group. It was a member of the European Commission's DG Agri Rural Development Advisory Group from 1998 to 2014; and of DG Regio's RURBAN group from 2011 to 2014 and a member of the European Heritage Group since 1996 and the European Heritage Alliance 3.3 since 2011.

ECOVAST works in partnership with several other pan-European organisations. We were a founder member of the networks of PREPARE and CIVILSCAPE and still work with them, as well as a member of EUROPA NOSTRA, the European Heritage Alliance and EUROGITES. In 2018, we gained a new international partner in 2018 - The Foundation Institute for Eastern Studies – which stages a major annual Economic Forum every autumn and since 2015 has staged an annual European Congress for Local Governments. We develop rural policies and rural strategies and meet rural actors and rural projects from many countries through our conferences and study tours.

Our members come from a variety of backgrounds (including academics, anthropologists, archaeologists, architects, economists, ethnologists, geographers, historians, industrial archaeologists, researchers, sociologists, town planners, and rural practitioners) who work in the public, private and voluntary sectors. On our study tours and surveys we visit many varied rural projects and meet people from rural communities in many European countries and in rural areas where political situations vary considerably. These have given us a wealth of experience which we use in our work.

ECOVAST is managed by an International Committee that meets at least once a year and we stage an Annual Assembly. We have 10 National Sections – in Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia and the United Kingdom which focus on local rural issues in those countries; and individual members from the Czech Republic, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal and Spain.

The current International Working Groups focus on landscapes, rural buildings and heritage, rural tourism and small towns. Our two most substantial long-term projects are the Landscape Identification Project started in 2002 and the project to support small towns 'Action to Strengthen Small European Towns' (ASSET) started in 2005.