

CountrySide

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European Landowners' Organization

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**EXPO Milano 2015:
Feeding the Planet,
Energy for Life**



Editorial

Thierry de l'ESCAILLE, *Secretary General*

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Conservation: The Private Offer

With the vast majority of the European countryside, including many rare habitats for prized and endangered species, in private hands, the time has come to profoundly reshape the European and Member State attitude towards private land conservation.

In a time of budgetary squeeze, we cannot expect the state or NGOs to continue to engage in expensive habits such as land purchases and preferential treatments. We must create a framework of positive engagement with landowners that recognises that private land managers can get the same results as the public sector, but often with a far lower price tag.

If we can implement ideas such as the US concept of conservation easements, where tax credits are given to private owners who voluntarily pursue biodiversity protection, both inside and outside Natura 2000 areas, we can provide better results for less money, and create good will that is beneficial for all of us with a stake in Europe's biodiversity and habitats.

The ELO, through its LIFE+ 3watEr and Wildlife Estates label projects, is showing the way forward; a pro-active engagement that focuses on rewarding and stimulating good behaviour, rather than setting negative boundaries through punishment and legal structures.

Together with European and national administrations, NGOs and local communities, private land managers provide a crucial piece of the puzzle that can help us reverse biodiversity and habitat losses. However, such tools must be shaped with one core thought: only a profitable countryside can be a sustainable countryside, and we must therefore accept a flowering rural economy as an integral part of the solution to Europe's declining biodiversity.



Pure nutrients for sustainable yield

European agriculture is one of the most efficient in the world. Few other regions take productivity and environmental stakes to a higher level. Further progress, however, is required to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Plant nutrition plays an important role in managing the environmental, agronomic and economic aspects of modern farming.

Willem SLOOT, YARA - Emmanuelle MIKOSZ, ELO

Mineral nitrogen fertilizers have enabled the green revolution and will remain indispensable agricultural ingredients for nourishing a growing world population. The origins of mineral nitrogen fertilizer manufacturing date back to the year 1905 when two famed Norwegians, Sam EYDE and Kristian BIRKELAND, teamed up to extract nitrogen from the air for making mineral fertilizer. Their product was soon to become known as Norwegian Saltpeter. Today, the heritage of EYDE and BIRKELAND is continued by Yara, a Norwegian company specializing in plant nutrition solutions and nitrate-based fertilizer production.

For many decades now, Yara and European farmers are convinced that nitrate-based fertilizers are the most efficient and most reliable nitrogen source available. In addition, these products have a significant-

ly lower environmental impact than urea-based products (urea, UAN) due to better control of leaching, less nitrogen volatilization losses and smaller life cycle carbon footprint. Nitrate-based fertilizers are therefore the natural choice for farmers who care for both yield and the environment.

An initiative launched by Yara aims at returning nitrate-based fertilizers - such as ammonium nitrate, calcium ammonium nitrate, calcium nitrate and nitrate-based NPK compounds - to their rightful place: "pure nutrients" providing the required precision, efficiency and reliability to meet both the agronomic and environmental imperatives of sustainable agriculture. The information materials published by Yara cover many different aspects of crop nutrition and nitrogen fertilization. Yara and ELO have decided to share this knowledge and make it available to the members of ELO.

In the forthcoming issues of CountrySide, you will find information on various nutrition-related topics such as the carbon footprint of fertilizers, control of nitrate leaching, precision farming tools, protein content of wheat, fertilizer production and market dynamics, to name but a few. A first overview brochure on nitrate fertilizers is enclosed with the present issue.

Enjoy your reading!

For further information, please also visit the Yara website www.yara.com/purenutrient or download the Yara Pure Nutrient app for mobile devices via the QR-code below. The pure nutrient app contains even more information in a handy, multi-media format.



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European Green Week: The Place to Be for Environmental Policy?

Concerning the Green Week, the answer is evident: as Europe's biggest conference on environmental policy, it's definitely the place to be. From the 3rd to the 5th of June 2015, the Egg Conference Centre in Brussels hosted 3 days of instructive debates and exhibitions around the theme "Nature – Our Health, our Wealth".

Raphaël LEFEBVRE, ELO

It is widely acknowledged that Europe has a stunning variety of fauna, flora and landscapes that can be found nowhere else in the world. This diversity of our nature, of its ecosystem services and functions provides us with the food, energy, raw materials, air and water we need to live and drive our economy. Thus, protecting nature and maintaining Europe's competitiveness go hand in hand, and the Green Week was the perfect occasion to discuss how to do so. Through more than 30 sessions, debates or workshops, a vast exhibition hall, and many satellite events, the over-3.000 participants could see, engage, and actively contribute to the discussions about nature, biodiversity, and their central role in Europe's health and wealth. The great diversity of subjects ranged from agricultural practices, forest and water management, or sustainable urban development to the use of IT for nature, the effectiveness of EU's nature legislation or the importance of linking natural and cultural capital – among many other themes.

Opening this major event, European Environment Commissioner Karmenu VELLA shared his thoughts on several issues, notably recognizing the crucial contribution of landowners and land managers to nature conservation all over Europe: "*Many Natura 2000 sites*", he assured, "*would not have the outstanding quality they*

have if they were not managed by generations of dedicated and responsible operators and owners". He recognized the great value of the ELO's work by defining the 3watEr project (coordinated by the ELO and winner of the 2014 Natura 2000 Award) as an "*excellent and inspiring example of sustainable thinking*", which "*goes to prove that nature conservation can be integrated into economic activity on private-owned land*".

ELO Secretary General Thierry de l'ESCAILLE built upon this view during Friday's morning session on the 5th of June on the question of "Engaging and rewarding private landowners: can we find new ways?". He reminded the audience that many landowners are willing to adapt their management and practices to the Natura 2000 requirements, in order to ensure the conservation of the multiple habitats and species one can find on their estate. However, they too often are deterred by related constraints, possible loss of earnings or a lack of financial incentives.

Therefore the European Landowners' Organisation advocated for a more inclusive and positive vision of nature conservation policies; highlighting the fact that private landowners need to be viewed as full partners in biodiversity protection, alongside NGOs and the state: "*Policies*

that priorities NGOs in fact confiscate opportunities for landowners and managers to demonstrate their abilities".

In addition to providing valuable input to the debates, the ELO also actively promoted its vision of a sustainable and prosperous countryside inside the Grand Exhibition Hall, by assuring its presence on 3 different stands. Together with the RISE Foundation and the Scottish Land and Estate Association, the ELO enabled the many visitors to play through many of the challenges landowners and land managers face every day, as well as the sustainable yet economically viable practices they can adopt as a response to these challenges. A second stand presented HERCULES, a project funded by the EU Seventh Framework Program that develops, tests and demonstrates strategies for the protection and the management of European cultural landscapes. Finally, the stand of the Environmental Partnership Association introduced the participants to the Tree of the Year Award; a Europe-wide contest that this year had 200.000 people casting their votes for their favourite trees.

During the next Green Week, the ELO will once again demonstrate the contributions of private landowners, as well as the challenges they face in ensuring a prosperous and sustainable countryside.

Celebrating Europe's Trees and Communities

The Tree of the Year comes to Brussels

Ana CANOMANUEL, EPA

Trees are a focal point for our love of nature and community; we share experiences and live our lives in their shade. In this year's Tree of the Year, the contestants are extra football players, reminders of lost loves, and healers. To celebrate the connections between people and their trees, 14 national contest winners came to Brussels to compete for the Tree of the Year Award and to be showcased during the EU Green Week.

During his inspiring keynote speech, the contest's Patron, MEP Pavel POC highlighted that *"The most valuable thing about the European Tree of the Year contest is that it enables thousands of people to understand its environment as integral part of our community heritage"*.

Heiki HANSO received the prize, on behalf of the Estonian tree winner of the European Tree of the Year 2015: *"Oak-tree in a football field would never have won without strong support from all around the world"*. Last year's winner Stefan STEFANOV from Sliven, Bulgaria, handed to him a unique hand made wooden amulet, which passes from winner to winner every year.

Participants enjoyed a photo exhibition of all the finalist trees, and wines from the South Moravian Region, kindly offered by the Mendel University in Brno.

The 2015 Award Ceremony of the European Tree of the Year, organized by the Environmental Partnership Association, the



EPA stand

European Landowners' Organization and TetraPak, took place in April at the Cercle Gaulois in Brussels under the patronage of Pavel POC MEP, vice Chair of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety of the European Parliament and long time supporter of the Contest. The Ceremony was presented by Rodolphe de LOOZ-CORSWAREM, Executive President of the European Historic Houses Association, which worships a lot of majestic ancient trees, parks and gardens.

The Tree of the Year contest was also presented during the EU Green Week (3-5 June, Brussels) at the stand of the Environmental Partnership Association.

Among the Association's activities, the Tree of the Year was showcased as the most important pan-European event in the field of natural capital. Visitors were challenged to locate the finalists' trees on the map of Europe. Many were caught by the spirit, telling their own tree stories. The Green Week also expanded the scope of the contest, with Germany and Lithuania joining the contest next year - bringing the Tree of the Year closer to a fully pan-European competition.



Estonian organizers of the Tree of the Year, receiving their prize



R. de LOOZ-CORSWAREM, T. de l'ESCAILLE and P. POC

The European Tree of the Year is looking for more partners from all over Europe: if your organisation is interested and your country is still not a partner in the contest, ask us for more information!
ana.canomanuel@nap.cz

Landscape Stewardship: Integrating landscape values into rural development policies

Landscape stewardship is centered on everyday, often rural and peri-urban, landscapes that are exposed to multiple societal demands. These include infrastructure purposes, urbanization, agricultural-land uses, or outdoor recreation. Here, decision making involves many stakeholders, ranging from farmers through local residents to tourists and nature conservationists.



The second EU level workshop of the HERCULES project gathered participants to (1) explore the characteristics of landscape stewardship initiatives in Europe and their contributions to sustainable land management, (2) discuss the role of landscape stewardship in EU rural development policies, and (3) examine how Europe could contribute towards making innovative models of landscape stewardship more effective.

Tobias PLIENINGER, coordinator of HERCULES, gave us his thoughts on what he takes home from the workshop.



F. van EVERDINGEN, P. van der GOOT, V. KOVACEVIC, D. DUPEUX

Landscape in EU policies

Landscape is a late-comer among the research themes of the 7th Framework Programme of the EU. This is somehow indicative for the EU and many national policies where landscape has remained unconsidered for a long time. Fortunately, there are signs of change. For example, practical approaches to cultural heritage conservation and to ecosystem management are step-by-step moving to the landscape scale. Landscapes are also a serious concern for large parts of the public, as many prominent land-use conflicts, for example around mining or renewable energies show. Landscape is also increasingly seen as an investment opportunity and may receive higher EU funding priority in the near future.

The rise of landscape stewardship

A multitude of examples from throughout Europe demonstrate that there is something like landscape stewardship in practice. Such approaches comprise many different types of groups and initiatives, often united by an interest in maintaining and developing the cultural ecosystem services of a particular landscape. These initiatives frequently cross borders between

fields such as nature conservation, agriculture, or cultural heritage. As a result, they have difficulties in linking to established policy fields, but there are examples in the Netherlands and elsewhere where such initiatives were assigned formal responsibility in land management.

Framings, values, and management actions of landscape stewards

Who are landscape stewards as individuals? A survey among land managers in the UK showed that there are many different frames and perceptions of landscape stewardship, with some focusing more on environmental, others on production orientations. These different points of departure are accompanied by different values and management practices.

Fostering innovative models of landscape stewardship

Although motivation of land managers is crucial for achieving agro-environmental goals, existing incentive schemes have often not considered this diversity of different framings and values very well. Rural development policies could foster landscape stewardship through tailoring

of policy targets to specific land-use systems, landscape attributes or catchments. A big challenge for the future design and implementation of rural development policies will be to realign such features with the need for administrative simplification of funding schemes. To mainstream landscape stewardship in land management practice, we may have to go wider than just reinventing funding schemes. Also, we do not know well enough how for example farmers perform in terms of landscape stewardship. This calls for better social-ecological indicators that would be used for cross-farm comparisons and that might even become part of accounting systems. Finally, the EU Green Infrastructure Strategy has large potential to become a vehicle for promoting landscape stewardship.

The workshop was a as a side event to the Green Week and was hosted by the European Economic and Social Committee.

For more information on the HERCULES project visit www.hercules-landscapes.eu



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T. NAVRACSICS, F. FISCHLER

Expo 2015 Milan: Feeding the Planet, Energy for life

Universal Expositions, or Expo, are international fairs held generally at five year intervals nowadays featuring a chosen theme. The earliest national Expo was the French industrial expo of 1844, and the first World Expo was The Great Exhibition of Crystal Palace in Hyde Park, London in 1851. The theme of the 2010 Expo in Shanghai was Better City – Better Life. Given the revival in the last several years of global concerns about food security, and perhaps natural in Italy with its strong food culture, the theme for the current Expo which runs from 1 May to 31 October is Feeding the Planet – energy for life. The expo involves 147 countries, it occupies 200 hectares of the north of Milan, and is hoping to welcome 20 million visitors, who will find spectacular architecture, stunning food from all over the world, and great fun!

Allan BUCKWELL, member of the EXPO Scientific Committee

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Naturally, because it is located in Europe, the European Union has given full support to Expo. The EU's contribution is being coordinated through DG JRC – the Joint Research Centre – this reflects the decision to focus the major EU contribution on research relating to the theme of the Expo. The European Parliament has also considered the Expo theme and adopted a resolution on 30th April which offered a rather wide range of thoughts on the European contribution to the Expo theme.

The EU Commission set up a Scientific Committee chaired by ex-Commissioner Franz FISCHLER to coordinate their input. The research theme is being pursued through three main activities. The first is a discussion paper produced by the Scientific Committee. The paper is entitled “The Role of Research in Global Food and

Nutrition Security”¹. It was published by Commissioner Navracsics on 13 April in Brussels. The second activity is a series of forty workshops and conferences which commenced with an event on 8 May based on the discussion paper and continues throughout the six months of Expo on a full range of issues concerning the production and consumption, sustainability, safety and nutritional quality of food. The third activity is a public consultation on the priorities for European research in these areas. This can be found at: <http://europa.eu/expo2015/online-consultation>.

The hope is that the outcome of these activities will be a strong consensus on the most constructive and enduring con-

tribution Europe can make to feeding the growing population of our planet and thus providing energy for life.

The seven themes identified by the discussion paper illustrate the complex range of issues involved. They are:

- A: Improve public health through nutrition – healthy and sustainable consumption
- B: Increase food safety and quality
- C: Reduce losses and waste – more efficient food chain
- D: Manage the land for all ecosystem services – sustainable rural development
- E: Increase agricultural outputs sustainably – sustainable intensification
- F: Understand food markets in an increasingly globalised food system
- G: Increase equity in the food system

The paper stresses the complex inter-

¹ http://europa.eu/expo2015/sites/default/files/files/FINAL_Expo-Discussion-paper_lowQ%281%29.pdf



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relations between these issues, the fact that none is pre-eminent, all have to be tackled, and that this requires a multi-disciplinary approach. It argues that the path to food security is a continuous process: we should start with foresighting and horizon scanning, which should identify necessary research and knowledge creation, followed by the transfer and use of that knowledge in the field (literally!), which in turn requires social and technical innovation, and results in social and economic change. This leads to renewed foresighting and horizon scanning and so on. For the globally interrelated theme of food and nutrition security these efforts should be coordinated internationally.

It was a conscious decision to head the list of seven themes with the challenges of improving nutrition and health, both the challenges of severe under-nutrition as well as the problems arising from obesity. This serves to emphasise that food security is not only, or even mostly, about producing more food. There is all-too-frequently, especially in agricultural circles, a tendency to equate food security with the need for more food production. Yet some of the most serious occurrences of under-nutrition are often found amongst the rural poor, would not be helped at all by more production in the developed or transition economies. Poverty alleviation, access to food, consumption patterns, reduction of waste, international trade, and the way the food is produced are equally important.

All that said, of course, the pressure of demand is likely to require a sustainable increase in agricultural outputs. The critical

issue, especially in Europe where agricultural intensity is already high, is how sustainable intensification is defined and by what means it is achieved. It is stressed that it will mean quite different development paths in different situations. The discussion paper pulls no punches here: it suggests that genetic improvement (whether for yield, resistance to pests and disease, heat, drought, acidity, salinity or reduced GHG emission) “requires the use of modern biotechnology”. But it also stresses that this in turn requires “significant dialogue with society to ensure legitimacy and minimisation of risks - whether environmental, health, economic or to livelihoods.”

For each of the seven themes identified a short explanation is provided with a list of exemplar research areas which deserve further investigation. The purpose of the consultation is to test if the right themes have been identified and whether they have been characterised in the most helpful way. Similarly, the point of listing exemplar research areas is to tempt readers to offer their ideas on whether these are the most pressing research questions, and if not, what should be the focus of further research?

In dealing with such highly applied questions and food and nutrition security, research should not be seen as an end in itself. Research which leads only to academic journal articles fails to create the most social benefit. How to cross the ‘valley of death’ between research undertaken and its uptake into innovation and use is a perennial question. It is hoped that the very act of engaging millions of

citizens in Expo on the theme of feeding the planet and posing these questions will encourage the widest possible discussion of these issues.

It is intended that the results of the consultation, together with reports which are being compiled on all the scientific events taking place at Expo will shape a set of recommendations coming from this activity to be written up in a final report of the Scientific Committee. This should be a lasting European contribution to assist global food and nutrition security.

Readers are urged to participate in this consultation to help shape the European response to the global food challenge.

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Coexistence between humans and large carnivores discussed at the European level

One year after its establishment, the EU Platform on Coexistence between People and Large Carnivores met for their second annual meeting on 2nd June 2015 in Brussels. The Members' platform discussed their work over the previous year and their future plans. Amongst the items on a packed agenda, was the first version of the Platform's communication plan and the socio-economic aspects of human - large carnivore coexistence.

Delphine DUPEUX, ELO
Camille BALFROID, ELO

A number of case studies gathered from a range of EU Member States were reviewed. The Platform recognized the relevance of the Rural Development Programmes in supporting livestock protection measures and has decided to follow the process through its members. In addition, FACE asked to address some hunting related issues at a further date.

The first regional workshop which was held in Bulgaria has also been addressed. They discussed three key issues: trans-boundary cooperation, moving from conflicts to coexistence, and prioritized key issues for large carnivores in the Balkan and Carpathian regions.

The co-chairs of the Platform expressed their gratitude to Members for their contribution to an interesting meeting and continued willingness to work constructively together. Pia BUCELLA, co-chair for the Commission welcomed the constructive discussions and emphasized on the need to listen to local perspectives on the issue. Konstantin KOSTOPOULOS co-chairing for ELO said: *"Participants today have shown their willingness to make an effort to communicate with each other and their members on the range of issues involving coexistence with large carnivores. What we need now is for all Members to use their own channels of communication to reach a wider audience"*.



Hunters and veterinarians – Joint efforts against wildlife diseases

"Healthy Wildlife - Healthy People". With this motto the 62nd International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) General Assembly in Pravets, Bulgaria stated that the purpose of wildlife conservation is not only to promote biodiversity richness, but also to keep our own human existence at a healthy, balanced level.



CIC members noted that hunters are stewards of wildlife, as well as the largest group in society that voluntarily interacts with wildlife closely and frequently. They have accepted a social obligation, as a group, to detect, and assist in managing wildlife diseases as a pro bono service to society.

In his keynote speech Dr. Bernard VALLAT, Director General of the World Organization of Animal Health (OIE), called upon hunters and the CIC to make the most of the force they represent in the field: safeguarding biodiversity, and acting as sentinels for the protection of public health.

Hunters are very important partners by the European Commission, emphasized Ladislav MIKO, Acting Director General of DG Health and Food Safety of the European Commission, with wildlife diseases acting as a special eye-opener to the hunter's contribution. He welcomed the OIE-CIC initiative on hunter's awareness raising and training.

Within the framework of the CIC General Assembly, the EU Platform on Coexistence between People and Large Carnivores also held its regional workshop. Pia BUCELLA, Director in charge of Natural Capital in DG Environment of the European Commission, urged the CIC and hunters to continue the global fight on halting the loss of biodiversity and to promote sustainable use of our natural resources which in turn will protect *"our health and our wealth"*.

This year's CIC General Assembly was held under the Patronage of the Prime Minister of Bulgaria, H.E. Boyko BORISSOV.

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European Natura 2000 Award Winners

The six winners of the 2015 Natura 2000 Awards were announced at a prestigious ceremony Brussels on 21 May 2015. They include projects from Denmark, Germany, Spain, France and a trans-boundary project that involves nine Danube countries.

Winners have been selected for each of the five categories: Conservation, Communication, Socio-Economic Benefits, Reconciling Interests/Perceptions, and Cross-border cooperation and Networking. In addition, the first ever winner of the Citizens' Award was announced. All six winners received trophies from the European Commissioner for the Environment, Karmenu VELLA and members of the high level jury.

"Sincere congratulations to the winners and the finalists in this second edition of the Natura 2000 Award!" said Commissioner VELLA. "These deserving winners are leading lights for thousands of Europeans working every day to make the Natura 2000 network one of the EU's outstanding achievements. It's clear that citizens understand the value of these efforts for our precious protected areas – I was delighted to see that almost 25.000 people voted for the inaugural Citizens' Award this year!"

The European Commission launched the Natura 2000 Award to celebrate and promote best practices for nature conservation in Europe. The Award brings the success of the Natura 2000 network to the public's attention and demonstrates its importance for protecting biodiversity across Europe. The initiative rewards excellence in the management and promotion of the network and its objectives.

Source: idem

ELO, winner of the 2014 Natura 2000 Award for 'Reconciling Interests/Perceptions' congratulates all candidates, and especially the winners!.

If you want to apply for the 2016 edition, please visit the site:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/awards/index_en.htm

Competition rules and agriculture: debate with Commissioners VESTAGER and HOGAN

Commissioners responsible for competition, Margrethe VESTAGER, and agriculture, Phil HOGAN debated draft Commission competition guidelines for the agriculture sector with AGRI Members in an extraordinary Committee meeting in Strasbourg on 8 June. As part of the CAP reform the Parliament had asked the Commission to establish such guidelines for the implementation of competition rules to agriculture with a view to ensuring a uniform application of these rules across Member States. The AGRI Committee has contributed in written to the public consultation on these guidelines.

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/agri/home.html>

7th round of talks for the Environmental Goods Agreement

The 7th round of negotiations took place from 15 to 22 June in Geneva.

The negotiators continue the discussion on around 650 pre-selected (or, in the negotiation jargon, 'nominated') products divided in ten categories:

- solid and hazardous waste management
- water waste management and water treatment
- air pollution control
- renewable energy generation
- energy efficiency
- environmental remediation and clean-up
- noise and vibration abatement
- environmental monitoring and analysis
- environmentally preferable products
- resource efficiency.

The objective is to agree on a list of environmental products, on which the duties should eventually be ended. The negotiators' views are increasingly converging in some areas, e.g. in the renewable energy sector, while some other still require further discussions.

The negotiations are guided by the general principle of so-called 'environmental credibility'. Products are selected taking into account the end to which they are used rather than their production methods. The negotiators want also to ensure that the list of products enjoying duty free access is easy to implement by customs officials and the industry.

The EU is committed to achieve substantial outcome in the negotiations by the end of 2015 in order to contribute to the UN climate negotiations in Paris and 10th WTO Ministerial in Nairobi.

Source: <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/policy-making/sustainable-development/>



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Next Generation Group's first Annual Conference

Conscious of the important role the young generation will play in the maintenance and the recognition of private built heritage, the European Historic Houses Association gave a real impulse in 2010 to this ambition when it chose to allow the participation of young delegates in its General Assembly and decided in 2014 to create a Next Generation group, led by the dynamic Coordinator William CARTWRIGHT-HIGNETT.



Juliette POLIZZI, EHHA

The question of "transmission" is the cornerstone of the European Historic Houses' existence and deserves a durable and strong engagement.

The first European Historic Houses' Next Gen Annual Conference took place on March 20-22, 2015, in the historic house of Aynhoe Park, near Oxford, UK. These three productive busy days were a chance to bring together young entrepreneurs from across Europe for cultural visits, a day of Conference sessions and social gatherings.

In his opening speech, the Comte Rodolphe de LOOZ-CORSWAREM, Executive President of the European Historic Houses Association, reminded the audience that Cultural Heritage is of major importance to Europe, as it is an industry that brings in €355 billion in revenue for the EU Member-States and creates as much as 9 million direct or indirect jobs.

William CARTWRIGHT-HIGNETT, Coordinator of the Next Gen Group, underlined that it is a privilege as well as an enormous responsibility to own and live in our historic properties. The next generation has the additional pressure of managing inheritance, especially if one does not live on the property. Succession can undoubtedly create complex family dynamics. He suggested learning the lessons from the past, innovating, and creating positive incentives to support heritage into the future, in order to keep it relevant with the modern days without destroying its unique historic –and often fragile– essence. He explained that this is where the Next Gen Group Coordinator can provide its assistance: by supporting and facilitating the organisation of national groups and creating a common platform for learning.

The Conference's first session was dedicated to the development of Next Generation Groups in each country, with the aim of creating a useful network, which could best assist national and international lobbying efforts by National groups and the European Historic Houses Association. We learnt that several groups were already constituted in Italy, UK, Spain, Por-



tugal and Catalonia, with several others were on their way.

The second session aimed at identifying what should be the research focus for 2015-2016. Chaired by James HERVEY-BATHURST, Vice-President of the European Association, the session discussed several issues relating to management of succession planning. Speakers, including Clarissa VALLAT (Director of Tax & Heritage at Sotheby's) and Patricia SYKES (Hunters Solicitors), underlined the unique requirements of the solutions offered to each family, but also the importance of communication and planning ahead to ensure a stress-free inter-generational transition.

The second Panel –"Making it Pay: diversification for the 'modern' historic house" –dealt with practical stories of mixing the running of an estate with working in the outside world. Viscount RAYNHAM, Chairman of the UK HHA Next Generation, and Annie GONDRA, a French writer and expert in heritage development, showed examples of both active (e.g. weddings) and passive projects (e.g. renewable energy), insisting on the necessity of finding a balance between opening the house to the public and the risks lying behind –including a loss of privacy, openness to thefts, etc. The key to remaining ahead of the game, the panel agreed, was adaptation to the competitive changing market.

James PERKINS, businessman, collector and owner of Aynhoe Park, added that owners should not be afraid to show their personality in their house and to find innovative ways to market the property through a long-term vision. "It won't happen overnight," he explained, "so have a plan for the long term".

Finally, the keynote speaker Michael FARRANT, Partner and Head of Private Clients at Project Associates, spoke about "Reputation and Privacy in an online world". He warned the audience about the risks of public exposure –nowadays, more than ever before, a person's social footprint quickly spreads internationally. He stated that the ideal is to find a good balance between transparency and privacy, because creative fiction can quickly rush in to fill a vacuum of information online, so to say nothing may be worse than saying something.

Eleven countries were represented at this first conference. This showed and assessed both the desire and also the need for greater representation by the young actors in the national associations as well as for a better promotion of what young representatives can do for their associations. The European Historic Houses Association and its coordinator seek to meet these needs. The next step is the building of the groups ahead of the 2016 Conference, which will take place near Paris, France.



Creating the Countryside of the 21st Century - The Forum for Countryside Entrepreneurship (FCE)

"How to combine estate management with a professional career" was this year's central theme as almost 70 Young Friends of the Countryside descended on the Bois St. Jean in the Belgian Ardennes. In an era of globalization and instant communication, the jobs of the 21st century require both more travelling as well as the opportunity to work anywhere. With rural businesses still very often fixed in one place, the balance between the modern career and successful estate management can be difficult to achieve. For the next generation of rural entrepreneurs, such balancing is not often easy.

Geoffroy de CANNIÈRE, YFCS



in order to benefit most from the different perspectives and experiences, the conference was divided into three panels.

First, two entrepreneurial projects were demonstrated by members of the Young Friends. TIMBRACK, a forest manage-

ment tool, showed interesting solutions to help ease the life of the forest owner by bringing 21st century IT woodland management. Farabeo, the second project, demonstrated the multifunctionality of the rural enterprise, with the creation of bespoke ties for the country gentleman. Through these projects, conference attendants could link their own experiences and discuss both new approaches and a healthy work-life balance.

Choosing the right experts to help in estate management was the topic of the second panel, where Sylvestre COUDERT, President of Cabinet COUDERT, an important chartered forest expert office, explained the story of this successful family business. He stressed the potential and the future opportunities of green assets and the possibility for new estate managers to be assisted but still hands on in their properties. Last but not least, we ended the day with a debate between the assembly and 6 estate owners of the Friends' generation.

Finally, the assembly ended with a lively debate among six young estate owners and the audience, which ranged from the

development of land assets, the energy needed to innovate a business, as well as taking into account its multi-generational nature and the importance of well-organized transfer to the next generation. This debate was also the ideal time for the presentation of Mr de BURLET, from the Groupe Edmond de ROTHCHILD, who presented innovative ways to manage family assets.

This coming generation faces a new era in their lands and businesses, and evolution is critical. Not just for the management of the estate, but also in balancing this with other careers.

The Young Friends wish to extend their warmest gratitude to the LAMARCHE family for their warm welcome. In such inspired scenery, the Bois St. Jean was the perfect fit for the conference theme.

Lastly, it was a real pleasure to see so many Young Friends with real passion and enthusiasm, and this annual conference remains the best showcase for our experiences and projects.

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Diary dates

1 May – 31 October, Expo Milano

Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life
Following the Universal exposition the EU opened an online consultation to contribute to a report to be published on 15 October, ahead of World Food Day

<http://www.expo2015.org/en/learn-more>

28 May- 20 August, EU

Public Consultation: Closing the Loop- Circular Economy: boosting business, reducing waste
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/consultations/closing_the_loop_en.htm

6th July, EXPO Milan

Best practices in improving the sustainability of agriculture - the Joint Research Centre (JRC) will present the Best Environmental Management Practices for the agricultural sector at EXPO Milano

<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/event/conference/best-practices-improving-sustainability-agriculture?search>

9th July, Brussels

Workshop on renewable carbon sources processing to fuels and chemicals

<http://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/events/workshop-renewable-carbon-sources-processing-fuels-and-chemicals>

10th July, EXPO Milan

Sustainable Food Production and Air Pollution – organised by the JRC, in collaboration with scientists and policy makers from the UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP) and other key international organizations

<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/event/conference/sustainable-food-production-and-air-pollution?search>

17th July, EXPO Milano

Conference on Food Safety and Nutrition in 2050, organised by EC DG Health and Food Safety

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_food-safety/information_sources/events/20150717_safety_nutrition_en.htm

7 - 9 August, EXPO Milan

Soil- where food begins! – three- day exhibition organised by the JRC, in collaboration with Regione Lombardia, Piemonte, the FAO and ENSA

<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/event/exhibition/soil-where-food-begins?search>

22 - 30 August, Tartu (Estonia)

Sustaining ecosystem services in forest landscapes

<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/event/workshop/sustaining-ecosystem-services-forest-landscapes?search>



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Jacques ATTALI

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« What is played out today is a matter of life or death. For democracy. For France.

The crisis is here, and may be for a while. Confronted with the merciless competition of the other nations, France can still survive and thrive, although a further decline may also lead to collapse. Just as much as it can decline until the collapse.

What to do? Act now. In this book, the author presents a full 12 month program of precise reforms. Above all else, it is a question of willpower: Is France ready to face the world as it is, by giving itself the means and the confidence to do so?

This book is an action program, an incentive to challenge the housing and rental situation. It is a call to arms to think about the interests of future generations.

The author's ambition is to help the whole of the French people not just the rulers, to become aware of this emergency, of their assets as much as their shortcomings. It is imperative to now take action before other, alas much darker, forces take the French people in the same direction, but under an altogether more malevolent banner.

École polytechnique student, ENA graduate, former special councillor of the President of the French Republic for eleven years, creator and first president of the BIRD, president of Planet Finance, Jacques ATTALI shined as an author in numerous different literary genres. He recently successfully published from Fayard *Tous ruinés dans dix ans?*, *Phares*, *24 destins* and *Diderot ou le Bonheur de penser*.

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