



Society for Conservation Biology  
Europe Section  
President

Petr Nečas  
Prime Minister of the Czech Republic  
Office of the Government of the Czech Republic  
Nábřeží E. Beneše 4  
118 01 Praha 1  
Czech Republic

27 March 2012

Dear Prime Minister Nečas,

The Society for Conservation Biology (SCB) is an international organization of conservation professionals. Its ranks include scientists, resource managers and educators. The society is dedicated to preserving biological diversity through science and education, and comprises over 5,000 members from more than 60 countries. The SCB Europe Section membership extends to almost every country in Europe, and the Section has organized thus far three European Congresses of Conservation Biology (ECCB), the second of which (Prague, 2009) received close to 1,500 conservation professionals attending it.

The SCB Europe Section has the duty to alert policy-makers when activities are likely to hinder biodiversity and ecosystems in Europe. The approach we take draws on sound scientific knowledge and understanding of the problems relating to the conservation of biodiversity. In this context, we hereby raise concern about current developments that threaten the conservation status of the Šumava NP, one of the largest well conserved transboundary areas in Central Europe. The importance of Šumava NP has been acknowledged by its designation as a Natura 2000 site, its inclusion in the list of world biosphere reserves, and the listing of its wetlands as a Ramsar site. At the Conference of Parties to the Convention of Biodiversity (CBD) in Nagoya 2010, world governments have agreed that at least 17% of the land area should be set aside as protected areas, with particular emphasis on a need to apply effective and equitable management, ecological representativeness and protection of well-connected systems of protected areas, especially when areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services are involved. This global target must translate into regional activities, and clearly, Šumava NP is an important contribution to this target for the Czech Republic.

Led by the government of the Czech Republic and under the Czech Republic EU Presidency, a conference on wilderness and large natural habitat areas was held in Prague in 2009. The meeting concluded that the remaining areas with wilderness or rewilding potential in Europe should be regarded as unique asset and benefit from the highest level of protection. Recent developments in Šumava are in strong disagreement with these conclusions. According to information obtained through Czech members of SCB Europe Section, new laws would compromise the area's biodiversity by promoting various development activities not compatible with the national park's objectives.

The SCB Europe Section is deeply concerned about these developments. A targeted resolution on this topic has been published informing European conservation professionals and the general public about recent developments.

In light of the rigorous internationally-ratified legal requirements for safeguarding natural resources from local to global, SCB Europe Section asks for affirmation from the appropriate Czech authorities that Šumava NP will receive the full protection against such harmful development or other anticipated forms of human disturbance.

We welcome your response and will be happy to engage in a dialogue on how to achieve the protection requirements of Šumava NP.

Yours sincerely,

András Báldi PhD, Dsc

President of the Europe Section of the Society for Conservation Biology

c/o Centre for Ecological Research  
Alkotmány u. 2-4.  
Vácrátót,  
Hungary  
H-2163  
E-mail: europe@conbio.org