

Oleg Tsaruk,
Acting Chair of the Biodiversity Issue Group,
European ECO_Forum

otsaruk@wwf.ru

Intervention at the Roundtable on Biodiversity.

His Excellency Mr. Tadich, The President of Serbia, while opening this conference noted:
“Respect to environment is respect to ourselves”.

I really don't know, if anybody can add to this. But let's look at the realities. The environmental issues are one of the very least among priorities at the state budgets of majority of the UN ECE countries, the “weight” of environmental agencies is so far, far away from the top, from the “key” players such as military, trade, industry, and so on.

Surely, there are lot of excuses, for example: The social and economical development are the immediate matters in order to achieve the better life conditions for the respective country population (doesn't matter, which end of the pan-Europe do we discuss). But is it so? The human well-being heavily depends on the ecosystem services. Could you imagine the service of ecosystem composed of the few agricultural crops and pests? Some years ago it was very popular expression: “Our planet is a small space-sheep running through Universe”, which was considered as a romantic something. Now we're very close to implementation of this nightmare into reality. The over-exploitation of the natural resources, namely the wild flora and fauna. Artificially cleaned water, artificial food, plastic flowers at the offices and apartments - and no resistance to new diseases, and allergies to more and more chemicals and medical substances. And a final stage – artificial humans?! Is it a future we are preparing for our children?

Coming back to the beginning of my intervention. We have to increase the political value of the environmental agencies within national and international institutions, and one of the possible ways is to develop the REAL partnership with the environment concerned citizen groups, what could be an important addition to their efforts. However, still in many cases the national and international environmental bodies do prefer to ignore or to avoid full involvement of such “non-governmental” stake-holders. What a heroism to remind to own taxpayers that they are “just observers”! Who is for whom – very interesting question, no?

European ECO-Forum pointed in the Statement to the Conference that the biodiversity loss in majority of cases is irreversible process, and it is definitely true. Many of us already have children, and know well enough without doctors – to prevent disease is much easier and cheaper by the way, then to cure them. We, the present here are doctors of some kind – we are responsible for the health of the planet, and our region, despite our official classification and badge color we do the same job – keep our planet healthy. Will we continue with paper work or move to **REAL** actions? The deadline for decision was the day before yesterday!