**Mocek J. The Český ráj/Bohemian Paradise Protected Landscape Area Celebrates the 60th Anniversary of its Founding**

In March 1955, the unique Český ráj/Bohemian Paradise area had become the very first Protected Landscape Area (PLA, the IUCN protected area management category V) in the Czech Republic, the former Czechoslovakia respectively. In 2002, the PLA was enlarged by adding new areas and re-declared. The Český ráj/Bohemian Paradise international importance was confirmed by including the area into the European Geoparks Network in 2005. The Český ráj/Bohemian Paradise PLA harbours sandstone rock-pillar landscapes mixed with elements of the neovolcanic origin and with relict pine woods in valleys. The landscape is also characterised by long-term human settlements, many Middle Age castles and traditional folk architecture. Thus, the region has been attracting domestic and international visitors and often provides suitable locations for making fairy tale movies.

**Zajíček P.: Floodplain Old-growth Forests in the South of Moravia**

At the confluence of the Dyje/Thaya and Morava Rivers in the south-eastern part of the Czech Republic, a unique floodplain forest has been preserved. The area had been managed by the Princely Family of Liechtenstein. In the mid-1950s, it became a no-go zone, because of the Iron Curtain vicinity. From a point of view of nature conservation, the most important parts in the Soutok (Confluence in Czech) area are old-growth forests with virgin forest features having been protected since 1949. At present, there are the Ranšpurk and Cahnov National Nature Reserves (NNR) there. The small floodplain forest patches consisting of oaks, ashes and filed maples have been left to spontaneous development for some time. Only non-native walnut trees are step-by-step eradicated there. The old-growth forests harbour a lot of fungi species, particularly wood-decaying ones. Only in the Ranšpurk NNR, 850 fungi species have been found. Floodplain forest natural processes were threatened by building the Nové Mlýny Water Works. Moreover, since the 1990s, restoring activities has been carrying out there and the area is regularly artificially flooded. In addition to high fungi species richness, a lot of rare and threatened wild animal species occur there. The Soutok region with the remarkable Ranšpurk and Cahnov floodplain forests are among the most beautiful natural areas in Central Europe.

**Jelínková J., Plesník J. & Ucová S.: Through Hunting to Nature Conservation? Facts, Lies, Half-truths and Myths**

Hunting often polarizes views and there is debate as to whether and in which circumstances it is a suitable conservation. Legal hunting is usually categorized into (i) subsistence hunting; (ii) market/industrial/commercial hunting; (iii) trophy/sport hunting; and (iv) wildlife control.

Subsistence hunting has not always been sustainable: the Holocene megafauna mass extinction is related to humans and over-hunting, not to climate change. Bushmeat hunting, the hunting of meat from wild animals, shifted from subsistence to market one, being large-scale: thus, it also is referred as the bushmeat crisis. While positive aspects of well-managed trophy hunting can contribute to species and habitat conservation and support human livelihoods, trophy hunting can also result in negative effects if poorly managed. Sustainability has multiple dimensions, and impacts of trophy hunting can be assessed in terms of numerical offtake; demographic impacts; genetic impacts; unintended knock-on impacts on the hunted population (*e.g.* impacts of infanticide); and management impacts such as predator control.

In 2012, the IUCN Species Survival Commission published the Guiding principles on trophy hunting as a tool for creating conservation incentives. Canned hunting*, e.g.* African lions in South Africa, is heavily criticized by many people. Poaching is one of the most important biodiversity loss drivers at the global scale: recently, it has been threatening particularly African elephants and rhinos. The examples of trophy game management include, *inter alia*, game ranching in South Africa and community conservancies in Namibia. Most range countries have become a Party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered **S**pecies of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES); therefore they can authorize wildlife export trade, under certain circumstances. Thus, trade of species that are threatened with extinction (Appendix I) must have an export permit that can be issued if and only if the trade is not detrimental to the survival of that species. The CITES refers to hunting trophies under the personal and households’ effects section.

Legal hunting can contribute to nature conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity components only if (i) it really is biologically sustainable for a long time*, i.e.* far below the maximum sustainable yield; (ii) it is well-managed, applying adaptive management and effectively monitoring both the target game species and their habitats; (iii) benefits are fairly shared among local communities and other relevant stakeholders (the participatory approach); (iv) a part of the revenue is regularly invested into the target species protection and management of their preferred habitats; and (v) reasonable ethical and animal welfare principles are met.

**Jelínková J.: Issuing Permitting Felling Woody Plants in Relation to Other Laws, namely those on the Road Network, on Rail Systems and on Water**

Pursuant to the current legislation in force, for felling woody plants on railroad land plots along railway routes, permission from the State Nature Conservancy authority is needed. The author deals with practice of the courts in reaching a consensus between a State Nature Conservancy authority and a road administrative authority, a railroad administrative authority respectively, if the permission is to be issued.

In extraordinary cases, felling woody plants was ordered to remove a threat to a road, a railroad respectively and to traffic there. According to the author, the State Nature Conservancy authority has to be at least the respective authority in the procedure carried out by a road administrative authority, a railroad administrative authority to impose the legal measure. Ordering the felling woody plants to remove a threat to a road, a railroad respectively should not be considered as the felling pursuant to Act No. 114/1992 Gazette on Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection, Article 8, paragraph 4, as amended later. Applying that approach, the precondition for explicitness and casualness is not met.

In addition, the author summarizes the Water Act provisions on woody plant felling and planting on water work dikes and dams, as amended later. She supports interpretation of the respective provisions allowing restoration of historical alleys on dikes and dams as an important landscape phenomenon.

**Dostálová K.: Shipping of Vessels with a Combustion Engine on the Mácha´s Lake Fishpond**

The article analyses the legal regime on shipping of vessels with a combustion engine on the Mácha´s Lake Fishpond (northern Bohemia) in relation to recently issued Ministry of Transport of the Czech Republic Decree No. 46/2015 Gazette on Setting Water Reservoirs and Watercourses Where Shipping of Vessels Powered by a Combustion Engine is Prohibited and on Preconditions for Shipping on Surface Water which came into force April 15, 2015. Particularly due to misleading mass media information, issuing the decree gave to the general public an impression that on the Mácha´s Lake Fishpond, it is permitted to use ships powered by a combustion engine provided that the Decree´s provisions on a such vessel are met (it is a small vessel with a maximum motor rating of 10 kW, sailing so that it is pushing water under and along both sides of the vessel). In the fact, the exact opposite of that is true. Despite coming of the new decree into force, on the Mácha´s Lake Fishpond, shipping of all vessels with a combustion engine has been continuing to be prohibited pursuant to Act No. 254/2001 Gazette on Water and Amendments to Some Acts (The Water Act), Article 7, paragraph 5, as amended later. The reason is that for the Mácha´s Lake Fishpond, permission for water management for fish farming has been issued.

**Plesník J.: Have We Been Living in the Anthropocene?**

Time is divided by geologists according to marked shifts in Earth’s state. Recent global environmental changes suggest that the Earth may have entered a new human-dominated geological epoch, the Anthropocene. Since the 1950s the influence of human activity on the Earth system has increased markedly, known as the Great Acceleration. In the mid-19th century, several geologists sought to recognize the growing power of humankind by referring to the present as the ‘anthropozoic era’, and others have since made similar propos­als, sometimes with different names. The idea has gained traction only in the past few years, however, in part because of rapid changes in the environment, as well as the influence of Paul Crutzen, a chemist and the Nobel Prize Laureate in Chemistry in 1995, and of Eugene Stoermer, a palaeontologist and an ecologist.

Defining the beginning of the Anthropocene as a formal geologic unit of time requires the location of a global marker of an event in stratigraphic material, such as rock, sediment, or glacier ice, indicating changes to the Earth system. The evidence suggests that of the various proposed dates two do appear to conform to the criteria to mark the beginning of the Anthropocene: 1610 (the arrival of Europeans in the Americas also led to a large decline in human numbers there) and 1964 (the Partial Test Ban Treaty, a treaty prohibiting all test detonations of nuclear weapons except underground, ratified in 1963). The formal establishment of an Anthropocene Epoch would mark a fundamental change in the relationship between humans and the Earth system. If a proposal does not pass, researchers could continue to use the name Anthropocene on an informal basis, in much the same way as archaeo­logical terms such as the Neolithic era and the Bronze Age are used today.

**Vojkovská R. & Krupa M.: Rare Plant Species of Carpathian Watercourses in the Czech Republic and Threats to them**

In the course of the Programme on Threatened Plant Species Management on Carpathian Watercourses, more than 250 kilometres of the Olše, Morávka, Ostravice, Lubina, Rožňovská Bečva Rivers and their tributaries (north-eastern Moravia) were in detail mapped. In total, 3,000 records of six threatened species were collected there. The rarest species reported was the False tamarisk (*Myricaria germanica*), of which 72 specimens were found in the Skalická Morávka National Nature Monument. In addition, 26 more individuals were found on the Kněhyňka Stream, a tributary of the Bečva River. More than 60% of the Bluejoint (*Calamagrostis pseudophragmites*) records are from the Olše River. At the Ostravice River Site of European Importance (SEI, pursuant to Act No. 114/1992 Gazette on Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection, as amended later, the term for Site of Community Importance, SCI under the European Union’s Habitats Directive), the species has alarmingly been declining: in 2009, 115 populations on 234 square metres were found, while in 2015, only 51 populations on 80 square metres have been reported. On the Carpathian rivers in the Czech Republic, 99 % of sediment loads, covering in total 3,600 hectares have been lost during the last 170 years. Consequently, the sediment loads shift themselves by penetrating deeper while those located higher are being overgrown by vegetation.

**Zajiček P.: Exhibitions in the Moravský kras/Moravian Karst Show Caves Have Been Finished**

For many years, exhibitions aimed at history, archaeology and palaeontology have been built in the Moravský kras/Moravian Karst show caves. At the beginning, they had been developed in the Kůlna and Výpustek sites. In the Balcarka Cave, during the visitor path restoration, an exhibition was also built. Recently, funds have been raised for the project entitled as The Moravský kras/Moravian Karst Integrated Exhibitions which included four caves. In addition to the above three show caves, the project was also implemented in the Kateřina´s Cave. At present, the project has been finished. In the caves, visitors can see ancient animal and human models. On the Výpustek Cave service building second floor, an extensive exhibition presenting audio-visual shows, a man-made cave and lot of displays was developed. Attractive audio-visual shows on life of Neanderthals and of horse and reindeer hunters are available in the Kůlna Cave. In the Kateřina´s Cave, visitors can see a model showing a Cave bear (*Ursus* *spelaeus*) female with cubs as well as a mounted cave bear skeleton. Thus, presenting the Moravský kras/Moravian Karst show caves to the public has again reached the higher level.

**Štefka L. & Šoltysová L.: The Moravský kras/Moravian Karst House of Nature – already the Sixth Visitor Centre within the House of Nature Network**

In August 2015, the Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic (NCA CR) launched the Moravský kras/Moravian Karst House of Nature in the Moravský kras/Moravian Karst Protected Landscape Area. The facility has already been the sixth House of Nature within the NCA CR´s visitor centre network of the same name. Due to remarkable b iota and abiotic nature, remarkable history and interesting monuments, the Moravský kras/Moravian Karst region is among the places most often visited by tourists in the Czech Republic.

In 2009, the NCA CR started preparatory activities for building a visitor centre there. According to the project designed by P.P. Architects, Ltd., SYNER Morava Ltd., INTEREXPO Association Brno and Studio Ulma built both an information centre near the world famous Macocha/Step Mother Abyss and a main visitor centre with a permanent exhibition at the Skalní Mlýn/Rock Mill site. The project also included making the 3D movie entitled as The Empire of Petrified and Fossilized Time. The whole project costs in total CZK 86 million (EUR 3.2 million), of them CZK 72.1 million (EUR 2.7 million) were provided by the European Union.

**Běláčková A.: Sea Turtle Conservation in Costa Rica**

Costa Rica is well-known for its high biological diversity, progressive environmental policies and high-quality nature conservation. In addition, the Central American country, bordered by two oceans, is an important breeding site for five sea turtle species, threatened currently with extinction. In Costa Rica, sea turtle hunting and egg collection and harvesting has traditionally been a part of local people means of substance and the belief in sea turtle egg aphrodisiac effects has been continuing there. Although turtle and their egg conservation is clearly set within the Costa Rica´s legislation, unfortunately, illegal egg harvesting is only exceptionally punished and has been relatively common. Because the government does not provide protection of sea turtle clutches in the field, the activity is carried out by some national and local non-profit organisations. The article describes the sea turtle conservation project implemented on a Pacific coast beach named Buena Vista by the ASVO (*Asociación de Voluntarios para el Servicio en Áreas Protegidas de Costa Rica*).