

The pace of biodiversity decline is quickening worldwide. Habitat break-up, pollution, over-use of natural areas and the creation of artificial landscapes increase the rate of erosion, while reducing species' opportunity for migration, dispersion and exchange. How and by what means can this situation be put right?

In 1995, when the European Ministers of the Environment met in Sofia, they launched the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy, so as to strengthen environment and biodiversity conservation policies. The setting up of the Pan-European Ecological Network covering Eurasia was one of the key steps taken under the Strategy. Work has continued on this project, and it is now based on the numerous national, regional and transregional ecological networks being set up throughout Europe.

In Kiev, in 2003, the Ministers and heads of delegation noted these positive developments, expressed firm support for the creation of the Pan-European Ecological Network and asked for its constituent parts to be identified and mapped on a pan-European scale.

This book looks at the implementation of this Network in the 55 states concerned. It has been written by a team comprising, under the aegis of the Council of Europe, numerous government experts and specialists dealing with the issue of ecological networks. It is intended to reassure Ministers, policy-makers and scientists that they made the right decision in supporting the creation of the Pan-European Ecological Network with a view to (re-)creating a true green infrastructure for Europe.



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The Council of Europe has 47 member states, covering virtually the entire continent of Europe. It seeks to develop common democratic and legal principles based on the European Convention on Human Rights and other reference texts on the protection of individuals. Ever since it was founded in 1949, in the aftermath of the Second World War, the Council of Europe has symbolised reconciliation.

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