

## Project Update: November 2008

The main concept of the project is to contribute to the protection of valuable ecosystems and their biodiversity by involving local communities of both countries.

Cooperation between the two local authorities, the Cosauti Primaria (Sorooca district, Moldova) and the Yampil district administration (Vinnytsea region, Ukraine) has been initiated. Meetings with local people, groups and the local business community were focused on local development and conservation perspectives. There is a strong potential for tourism that should benefit both conservation and the economic prosperity in the area.

A seminar at Cosauti Primaria with participation of members of the local council and local farmers was organised in July 2008 in order to raise awareness and jointly plan field activities for the spring and summer of 2009. Growing interest in sightseeing and visiting the landscapes (forests, river, historical and cultural monuments) may affect valuable habitats. Two authorised recreation areas instead of uncontrolled activity throughout the protected areas will be arranged at the Landscape Reserve Cosauti (Moldova) in order to avoid overloading the ecosystems.

Habitat pollution and unauthorised waste have become a burden to the local environment, strongly affecting local people's life and country's touristic image. We strongly support the local group engaged in plastics waste collection at the municipal landfill near Sorooca town district, where household and industrial waste is gathered from the town and neighbouring villages.

A tight cooperation with the national NGO *Ave Natura* and its five in-country branches in Moldova and the scientific community has been established. Trans-boundary conservation and sustainable development needs were brought up to the local and regional audience through mass-media (radio post *Vocea Basarabiei*), round table at the Faculty of Sociology, Moldavian State University and meetings with NGO community (Handicraftsmen's Union of Moldova, NGO *King of Stone*).

Contributions have been made to the Council of Europe's periodical publication *Futuropa: For a new vision of landscape and territory*, devoted to Landscape and Trans-frontier Cooperation and to the IUCN Europe Regional Newsletter.



Left: Local authority (Primaria) Cosauti, a member of the council and a local farmer. Right: Riverbank ecosystems of the Sorooca district, bordering with Ukraine.

