

REPUBLIKA SLOVENIJA
DRŽAVNI ZBOR

Služba
za informiranje



GLOBE
SLOVENIJA



POSLANSKE
PISARNE

9



**AN OPEN
AND EFFECTIVE PARLIAMENT**

ISSN 1318-8577

November 1996

**MEMBERS OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AS ACTING MEMBERS
OF GLOBE SLOVENIA:**

Dr Leo Šešerko	Chair, The Green Alternative (Zelena Alternativa)
Dr Branka Berce Bratko	National Assembly official
Jože Lenič	Member, Liberal Democracy of Slovenia (Liberalna demokracija Slovenije - LDS)
Dr Janko Predan	Member, The Green LDS
Dr Peter Tancig	Member, The Green LDS
Dr Vladimir Topler	Member, The Green LDS
Franc Avberšek M A	Member, List of Social Democrats (Združena lista socialnih demokratov)
Dr Lev Kreft	Member, List of Social Democrats
Borut Pahor	Member, List of Social Democrats
Mihaela Logar	Member, Slovene People's Party (Slovenska ljudska stranka)
Žarko Pregelj	Member, Slovene People's Party

Pesticides can be understood as a system with many subsystems, which each can define in his own way. Therefore, each of them can be in interaction with other systems or subsystems. This is similar to a hologram, where there is entirety in each particle, and an endless number of particles in each entirety. Each beginning of an interaction is at the same time the answer, and the answer is at the same time the beginning. There comes an interesting moment when the requirement or the ideal is set. We arrive at one of the most renowned dualisms, healthy/ill. No matter what our definition of parts of the system in the interaction might be, it is essential that we see both parts connected through the loop of the return connection. We must be aware that we are the ones who define the model of differentiation. To read a book on swimming is not the same as to swim. To read about pesticides is not the same as to work, live and face them as poison.

This does not mean that we should use them for the "complete protection" of plants, and it does not mean that we should talk about "poisoning" through pesticides. We need to define this problem. In defining we are participating with all our conscious and subconscious suppositions about the world around us and about ourselves.

Allow me to conclude with a thought of Kurt Lewin: "Man in his everyday life strives to see things - phenomena as integrated, healthy, unshattered and simple. Anything that disturbs this picture, he tries to push to the side."

A discussion on the Resolution of GLOBE Slovenia followed, until an agreement was reached. The resolution is enclosed with the document. For the formulation of the document, the persons present appointed Dr Branka Berce Bratko and Ms Minka Vičar, professor of biology.

At the very end **Mr. ZORAN TAVASOVIČ**, NGO, presented the involvement of Phare-TACIS to the consultation and the role of REC Budapest and similarly the local REC office in Ljubljana.



Potonika (Paenia officinalis) endemic plant to the Karst

AN OPEN AND EFFECTIVE PARLIAMENT

GLOBE SLOVENIA contact person:

Dr Branka Berce-Bratko
Državni zbor
Šubičeva 4
1000 Ljubljana
Slovenia

Editors:
Dr Branka Berce-Bratko,
Žarko Pregelj,
Dr Leo Šešerko,
Nicolas Tavitian, Coordinator GLOBE-EU Network

Translation:
AMIDAS, Ljubljana

Preparation for publishing:
Office of Information in the National Assembly
Secretary General of the National Assembly
Bogdan Biščak

plants and animals or to some other monument or places of natural interest or of utmost importance for the Republic of Slovenia.

"All the above facts speak for a regional park around the river Mura, as the wider area around this river represents a natural and self-contained region of primary wild nature with a number of places of natural interest. This is also an integral, self-contained area which covers the territories of different municipalities. Otherwise there would be a great danger of losing this priceless natural jewel forever."

***DR JANKO PREDAN, MP**

Pesticides, heath and the preservation of diversity.

"In today's world pesticides are a negative phenomenon in environmental issues. A similar situation has evolved in the perspectives on health. An exaggerated consumption of pesticides causes the development of new forms of illnesses, which do not signify a new entity. Pesticides have turned temporary acceptance into the bad conscience of those who use them. They have harmed nature and the health of the population. However, this does not harm the manufacturers, ecologically unaware and pesticide-tied farmers and small consumers who persistently protect their "small green kingdoms" with pesticides.

My understanding of life is the self-reproduction of autopoietic systems. Luhmann says that the term autopoiesis was created for the definition of life. Autopoiesis is tied to life. It is simply the articulation of openness or closedness, for the synthesis of information, of statements of understanding. This enables communication, otherwise there would only be perception.

Society is defined as the biggest social system which arranges all communication and it autopoietically presents itself in such a way that it produces new communication within the recursive net of information. Thus, an autopoietic system is developed, yet made of nothing but communication. Communication can only produce communication. A system is formed in which the environment is the most important condition for forming a system. In the concept of a general theory of society, Luhmann offers the term "functional differentiations". The society differentiates itself into subsystems which have the following principles of self-selective formation of the system: inheritance, settling, or a combination of both. This means that the functional system and the subsystem include inequality and equality, and do not disregard the hierarchy or its peak. Unfortunately, we live in a society which cannot stress its uniformity in itself, as well as its non-uniformity; besides, it is completely without a peak (Luhmann 1991).

Some of you may wonder what prompted this introduction. There could be various answers to this question. Perhaps the one from the Bible would suit best: "let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth" (Matthew, 6:3).

partially changed its stream. The influence of the river is important also in connection with the underground stream flowing beyond a wide strip of land along the river. The people in this region have continuously lived in harmony with the river. They mowed the grass on sunny meadows which the river flooded from time to time and thus also fertilised, and exploited the richness of the accumulated wood from flooded forests. The streams springing in the vicinity of the Mura were used for growing fish, and sawmills used the power of these streams and of the river Mura. Life on the Mura was, in all, closely connected to the river. This great natural richness, an important national, regional and developmental wealth, has been frequently overlooked because of economic problems. With the possible construction of a power plant, the felling of the flooded forests and with irrigation schemes we would change the biological and hydrological balance and bring about catastrophic consequences. Without taking into consideration the points of view of environmental protection, the long-term national economy and possible consequences we will decisively interfere with the coexistence of nature and people. The Mura has already been largely bound into one channel and deprived of its flood areas, as well as having its unique flora and fauna damaged. With man's violent treatment, the flow of the river Mura has become quicker, lost the positive accompanying effects, the underground flow is shallower, and the threat of drought greater.

"Due to plans for further exploitation of the River Mura it is necessary to be extremely careful and use national and international means for support and development in a sensible way, above all environmentally supported and bearing long-term consequences in mind. Plans need to be prepared in a way that would guarantee a beneficial and long-lasting quality of living space for different organisms.

"All of the above leads us to suggest the establishing of the Mura Regional Park.

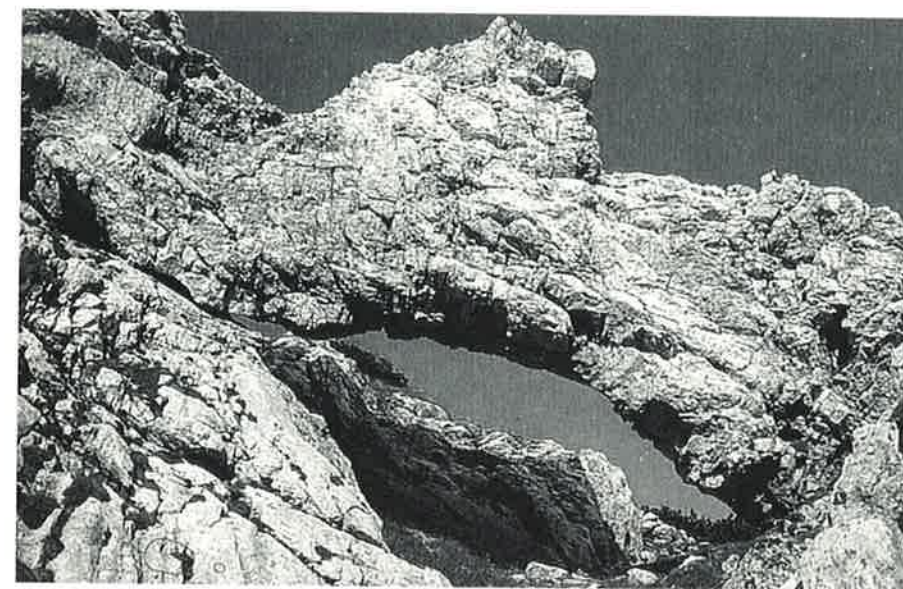
"In the Draft on the protection of cultural heritage in the region of the former municipalities of Gornja Radgona, Murska Sobota, Ljutomer and Lendava, the regional parks of Murska Šuma, Mura and Radenci are already envisaged in the long-term plan of the Republic of Slovenia.

"In the inventory of the areas of most important natural heritage of Slovenia, regions which are mentioned as part of the most important natural heritage are as follows: Hotiza Lake, Mota - the reserve of the grey heron, Mura - waters (mrtvice) near Petišovci, Mura groves, Velika Kôcija - blind branch of the Mura river, Veržej - groves, and Zaton - pond.

"Under the provisions of the law on natural and cultural heritage the regional parks can be self-contained regions of primary and cultivated nature which combine the entire typical landscape and the natural characteristics into one unit. They are intended for the preservation of natural ecosystems and for recreation. The law also says that the Republic of Slovenia will adopt an act on proclamation where the issue involved a natural or regional park, possible threats to

TABLE OF CONTENTS

AGENDA	page
INTRODUCTION	7
WE ARE ALL IN TRANSITION	12
RESOLUTION GLOBE SLOVENIA	14
SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MEETING ON	19
OPEN AND EFFECTIVE PARLIAMENT	
ABRIGED VERSION OF THE CONSULTATION DISCUSSION	22



Natural arch

environmental protection must have priority. However, it is beyond dispute that we have to give priority to building those transport connections which are important especially for connecting specific parts of the country of Slovenia, its activities and its population now and in the future.

DR FRANC POTOČNIK, Civil Society, replied that the current one-track railway connection to the port of Koper is more than enough, however, plans had been drawn up for the construction of a second track, which is still missing from Koper to the coast.

Railway connections certainly enable the transfer of certain freight from road to rail, but here some seventy or eighty international and transport agreements must be observed, since they cannot be disregarded by one party without the prior agreement of the other.

**DR BOJAN KOROŠEC, MP*

The River Mura - Its Protection - The Regional Park

"The River Mura is one of the most naturally preserved rivers, although not among the cleanest in Slovenia.

"It rises in Austria, flows through the northeastern part of Slovenia and into the river Drava on the Slovene-Hungarian border.

"The river Mura culturally, historically, geomorphologically and biologically represents a unique example of coexistence between man and nature now and in the recent past. Through history, the river accumulated silt and created the fertile plain called Mursko Polje. Each year the river

nonilphenoles and so forth. He also stated that in the 50's the average sperm count fell by 50 per cent.

He suggested that, like ethnic minorities, nature should also have its representatives in the Slovene parliament, which would defend natural systems (animal, vegetable and inanimate systems).

DR DUŠA KRNEL-UMEK, NGO, Piran, Civil Society - The Meaning of Marine Protection for Slovenia

"Knowledge about the sea as a constituent part of Slovenia is of special importance for forming awareness about the country. The issue of protection of the sea must therefore be regarded in relation to the whole country of Slovenia and even in broader Central European and international criteria. The sea off the Slovene part of the Istrian peninsula was given special importance after Slovenia became independent, as it also became a maritime country. For the development of Slovenia as a state it is therefore important to ensure and lawfully regulate the protection of the Slovene sea as a whole and its connection with the open sea, which means free access to the open sea, which is now on the river Mirna. This issue has not yet been resolved, and it is of great importance for the future of our country.

The protection of the sea and of the coastal land as part of our natural and cultural heritage must be resolved through legislation in such a way that it will be accessible to all, and that characteristics of the past will be preserved and possibilities for further development guaranteed, especially for those activities which are closely linked to the sea, for example salt-works and fishing. With ownership legislation, the new owners were given rights to some parts of the coast, and thus access to the sea was limited or prevented. The state, which protects the natural heritage, and the new owners have not yet agreed on the preservation of this heritage. In some cases, such as for example the salt-works natural park, the natural heritage is connected with the cultural heritage, as it is the result of work and knowledge of past generations.

Tourism must in great part be included in the protection of the sea and of the coast. On the Slovene coast, the development of a tourism which would be orientated chiefly to new constructions on an already limited surface and to mass tourism will bring about negative consequences, and this has been pointed out for many years by the people living in that region, who are also trying to prevent the enlargement of its capacities, and trying to improve the already existing level.

In building the highway to Koper, the coastal region will be connected to central Slovenia and other regions, which is necessary for the development of the port, the economy and other activities. Otherwise, the coastal region would be cut off from all the important connections and doomed to stagnation or decline. In neighbouring countries, road connections to ports are being built and part of them will pass through Slovene territory, therefore in these areas nature and

GLOBE
SLOVENIA
AN OPEN AND EFFECTIVE PARLIAMENT
Ljubljana 8 October 1996

Venue: Parliament of Slovenia, Državni zbor, Šubičeva 4, Ljubljana

AGENDA

Tuesday, 8 October 1996

- 10.00 Welcome by Dr Vladimir Topler MP
- 10.15 Introduction: GLOBE Initiative for Open and Effective Parliament, interactive cooperation of MPs, citizens, NGOs and Government by Dr Leo Šešerko
- Coffee break
- 11.15 How to improve co-operation between parliament, NGOs and Government. Dr Peter Tancig, MP: *Civil society and open Parliament.*
- 11.30 NGO views and suggestions on cooperation between Parliament, NGOs and Government.
- 11.45 Foreign experiences of co-operation between Parliament, NGOs and Government.
- 12.00 Slovene MPs' views on cooperation between Parliament, NGOs and Government. *Dr Lev Kreft, MP: *Local self-government, National Council, National Assembly in the context of an open and effective Parliament.*
- 12.15 Government views on cooperation between Parliament, NGOs and Government.
- 12.30 Resolution on GLOBE Slovenia.
- 12.45 Discussion.
- 13 - 14 Lunch in the Parliament of Slovenia
- 14.00 Biodiversity in Slovenia and the PAN-EUROPEAN NETWORK.
- 14.15 Response by MPs to the PAN-EUROPEAN NETWORK as it concerns Biodiversity in Slovenia. Mihaela Logar, MP: *Slovenia - the importance of the environment, preservation of diversity and biodiversity during integration with the EU and adaptation of legislation to the EU.* *Dr Janko Predan, MP: *Pesticides, health and preservation of diversity and biodiversity.* *Dr Bojan Korošec, MP: *The river Mura and its protection.* Žarko Pregelj, MP: *Pan-European network for Slovenia.*

14.45	NGOs' action and reaction.
14.55	Government response.
15.00	Tea break discussion.
15.15	EU policies on the environment and nature protection and adaptation to EU legislation by Slovenia for presentation by MEP or official.
15.30	NGOs' action and reaction.
16.00	Government of Slovenia and EU policies on the environment and nature protection - the process of adaptation - representatives of Slovene Ministries. Jože Lenič, MP: <i>Environmental and economic instruments</i> . Borut Pahor, MP: <i>EU environmental policies and Slovenia</i> .
16.15	Discussion
17.00	Formal dinner hosted by the Secretary General of the Parliament of Slovenia.

* MPs' contributions read at the meeting while MPs were attending a regular session of the National Assembly.

He then mentioned two other types of taxes, that is indirect taxes, for example for low-quality and cheaper leaded petrol, or for cars without catalytic converters, and tax relief, which in the best case can reach 3 per cent in environmental matters.

He also mentioned that Slovenia has no other environmental taxes, and promised to promote their introduction if he were given the chance. Then he stressed that we should have a tax on CO₂ and also find other products which could be taxed for harming the environment.

He separately mentioned some other projects which could help protect the environment through indirect mechanisms. He expressed the belief that the state should monitor expenditures for non-ecological products.

In the end, Mr LENIČ, MP also pointed out that in the privatisation process large sums of money had been accumulated in environmental reservations; this money is registered, however he expressed the fear that it will vanish prior to the implementation of the envisaged projects, if the Ministry does not carefully and with stimulative measures influence these companies.

BLAŽ MIHELIČ, NGO, UMANOTERA, bases his view on the point that man and environment cannot be separated. Man is nature.

He stated that the government signed a number of documents which it later on disregarded. He mentioned the Agenda 21 from 1992, which should have been respected in the process of economic development. The Alpine Convention has been broken by such measures as the Jesenice highway, and by the planned road through the Vipava Valley.

The other major problem is, in his opinion, the integral budget, into which environmental taxes are also collected and then re-routed to different sectors according to the better judgement of the Minister of Finance or of the government.

In connection with waste he mentioned two possible solutions. One possibility would be to collect it separately, and the other would be an incinerator. This second option is less appropriate, although it would create new jobs. Even bigger cities, like Ljubljana and Maribor, should have separate collection of waste material.

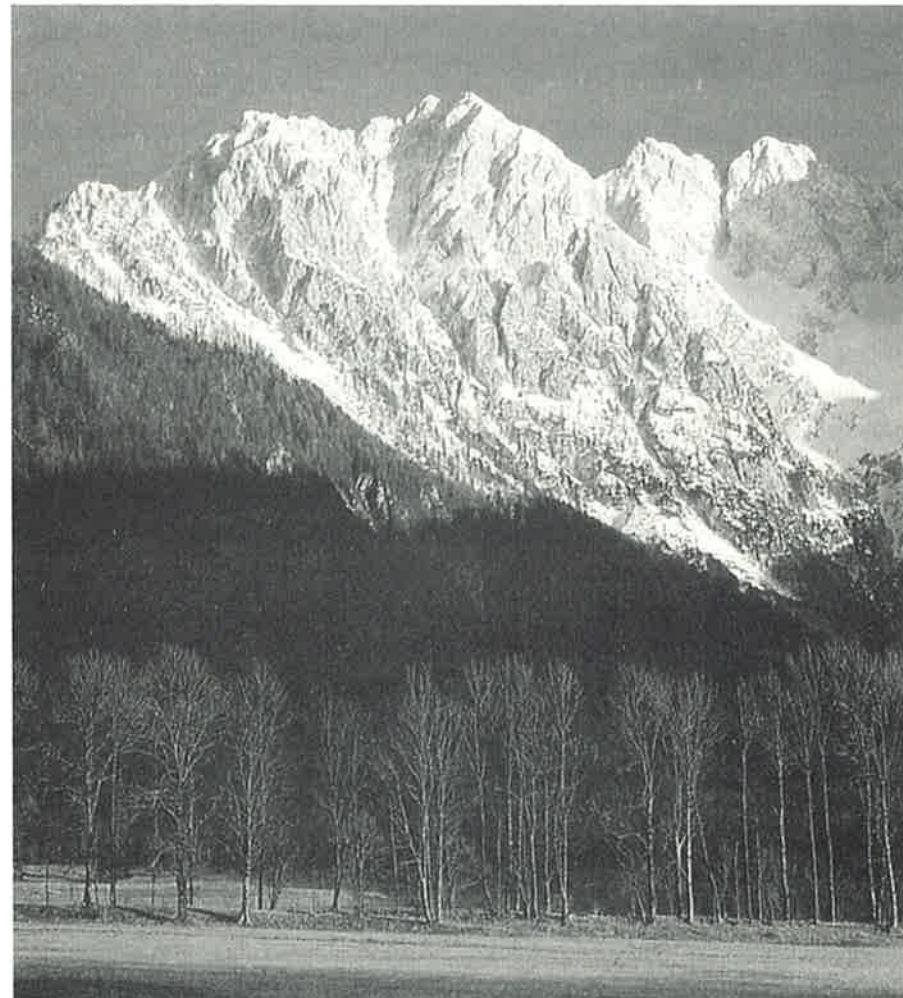
Then he mentioned tourism and stated that highways only enable the transit of tourists, but destroy natural beauties and biodiversity. Therefore he expressed the belief that Slovenia will not be able to enjoy so-called environmental tourism.

Comparatively, he stated that the Slovene average of CO₂ release per capita is 6.3 tons a year, but we have done nothing yet to reduce to 1.7 tons, which is what the percentage should be according to world standards.

Mr LENIČ, MP also mentioned the negative influence of different synthetic materials which work like the female hormone oestrogen. He mentioned detergents, pesticides, plastic products,

According to him, this story, which is more than 100 years old, began to get clearer in the second half of the 80's and is now starting to affect us directly. It became even more interesting when countries in transition replaced their systems, which had an administrative basis, with a market, social and also environmental economy. At the same time, efforts were made to find comparable measures for environmental protection. Countries in transition learnt from countries in the West, which are not always successful.

In his opinion, environmental taxes are a good idea, but he also expressed the belief that real taxes of this nature had not yet been introduced in Slovenia, and that taxes for burdening watersheds are as close as we have come to environmental taxes.



Jezersko in the Slovene Alps

INTRODUCTION

GLOBE Slovenia is an organisation of members of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia who, irrespective of their political beliefs, are concerned with protection of the environment and nature. The initiative for such an organisation in Slovenia was provided by GLOBE EU, a similar organisation of members of the European Parliament and national parliaments of European countries. Other important members of the international GLOBE organisation are GLOBE of the United States of America, GLOBE of Russia and other countries of Eastern Europe and Asia, as well as GLOBE of Japan.

The consultations under the title "An Open and Effective Parliament" represented the peak and the conclusion of the term of office of environmental members of the Slovene parliament, who were elected for the period from 1993 to 1996. At the same time, similar meetings were going on in other national parliaments of European countries, with the intention that these parliaments become permanently open to initiatives and monitoring by the population, non-governmental organisations, experts and expert institutions. As members of parliament, citizens or members of non-governmental organisations, nature protectionists are active in unveiling and solving problems of environmental protection. In doing so, we become more and more aware that these problems can be solved or at least solved much more easily if their solutions are supported by a majority in parliament as the highest legislative body.

While various lobbies are very skilful in encouraging members of parliament to prevent the adoption of legislation that might protect the environment and to pass laws which would increase their profits even more, nature protectionists are still often clumsy and unpolished in their dealings with other members of parliament, citizens and non-governmental organisations.



Cerkniško jezero - an intermittent lake in the Karst

This consultation was therefore intended primarily for the improvement of communications between members of parliament, citizens and non-governmental organisations.

A parliament can consider itself open if citizens and non-governmental organisations can at any time influence its decision-making process, not only at election time, and if they have the possibility of a thorough overview of work in the parliament and of the decisions made by members of parliament. An open parliament is also beneficial for those members of parliament who can, through the credibility of their work, ensure the continuing and even growing trust of their electors, of course under the condition that the interest of the lobbies are not more important to them than the interests of citizens, than the environment, public health, consumer protection, the protection of biodiversity and the broadening of democratic decision-making processes through referendums.

It is only an open parliament that can be effective. This implies that it solves problems and takes decisions on the most important questions of social and economic development, of nature and environment protection, and places the interests of the population above the interests of specific social communities, regardless of how influential they might be, and above the interests of economic groups and lobbies which can decisively influence public opinion and the decisions of members of parliament and electors by financing politicians, parties and the media, to the detriment of people's welfare, their health, freedom of thinking and decision-making.

The obstacles that are connected with the work of an open and effective parliament can also be expressed by the term political clientelism. If the parties in parliament want to preserve and enlarge the support of the electors, they sometimes resort to such work and decision-making in parliament which is clearly to the benefit of specific social communities or economic groups and companies; the latter repay these services with favours, often in the form of money or media promotion. Thus a clientele alliance is established between certain members of parliament, members of the government and economic groups, which both sides often try to conceal, as the clientele relationship is never possible among all members of parliament, members of the government and the entire population, but can operate only to the advantage of some and to the disadvantage of others, many times even harming the majority of the population and the environment, biodiversity and people's health. This kind of damage is such that it cannot be limited, and although beneficial in the short term for some people, in the long run it is harmful for all.

Active work in the field of the environment and nature protection prompts the members of a parliament, as well as all other politically active citizens to strive for the most democratic decision-making processes and democratic monitoring, since the maximum (parliamentary) measures for the benefit of nature and the environment, for people's welfare and health, can be adopted only in an unbiased, open, and effective parliament. The lobbies do not only force through solutions and decisions which will be favourable for them, but also in the same extent,

He also posed the question of whether it can be expected that members of parliament will support this project. In terms of finance, too.

MIHAELA LOGAR, MP pointed out that Slovenia had signed an international paper on non-governmental organisations whereby it was now bound to provide for the activities of NGOs.

BARBARA VREČKO, NGO, linked her thoughts to the words of Andrej Lukšič, namely on the involvement of non-governmental organisations in making decisions connected with environmental issues and the financing of such activities. She suggested the establishment of an independent fund which would raise money to enable this involvement.

JOŽE LENIČ, MP criticised the representatives of non-governmental organisations for having little perseverance, and stated that these organisations should be capable of lobbying for themselves. He pointed out that it is good to know the procedures, however, ideas can also be submitted to the parliament through perseverance.

The next one to speak was DR PETER TANCIG, MP he mentioned financing and stressed out that there many ways to acquire financial help. One way is of course the direct way through the budget, but the NGOs are quite often in an inferior position in this case, as the money is unobtainable, in the sense that if you are good you get the money, and you need the money to be good. He agreed with the idea of Ms Logar on the fund, but he also mentioned the possibility that NGOs from the environmental field connect and then approach the parliament and present the potential that is available to them. If this is recognised as a position which would help the parliament work better, the door will open. A third possibility would be the above-mentioned fund, which would then also stimulate competitiveness and quality.

MIHAELA LOGAR, MP once again stressed that we have to abide by the signed international treaties. This means that the time is right to speak out on the situation of non-governmental organisations in Slovenia. According to her the government is not keen on this subject, as this would represent competition in the same field.

She also stated that it was time not only for the parliament and the government to decide on life in Slovenia, but that society be organised through non-governmental organisations. From a legal and moral point of view and from the point of view of the standardising activities of these organisations, she appealed to all the participants that the situation of the NGOs be straightened out.

IVAN JANČAR, NGO, an independent cultural worker and member of the Slovene Ecological Movement, the Red Cross of Slovenia and the AIDS foundation Robert, first of all greeted the participants, and then stressed the importance of the culture of coexistence. He mentioned some projects which are being developed by all three organisations he belongs to. He especially pointed out the connection between trade and environment within the GATT agreement.

"As far as local government is concerned, this reform has brought about such a strong centralism that neither the regions (whose establishment is made more difficult by the Constitution) nor the National Council with 22 councillors are functioning, and they are not in their full power as they were elected in direct elections prior to the reform in local government was implemented. Members of parliament have become a means for lobbying for "our own" towns and municipalities, as the latter have no other representatives to turn to. The hatred for Ljubljana as the centralistic capital and at the same time the establishment of Maribor as the opponent marginal city has become one of the most typical features of parliamentary debate and also actual relationships in the decision-making process.

"The National Assembly was open to societies and other non-governmental organisations, groups and movements, as well as to professionals and different institutions. The lack of time for preparing discussions has been most harmful to those mentioned above, as often there was no time to intensify the argumentation. The only short-cut available for influencing was direct lobbying with political parties on the basis of affiliation. This has taken us so far that in some political spheres instead of having an autonomy typical of the 80's, we have developed a specific social and professional clientelism typical of the 90's.

"If we were to compare the Slovene National Assembly to parliaments all over the world I would say that ours is as open and as effective as it can be. My critical remarks relate especially to some ineffective and closed parts, as this ineffectiveness and these barriers will lead to changes of the system if we do not rid ourselves of them. Given the role it has been left with, the National Council is not needed from the point of view of the system."

ANDREJ KLEMENC, NGO, said that in handling the strategy of energy development they were not invited to any of the key meetings, but they did influence the decision-making process through informal channels. He expressed the desire to formalise the relationship between the government and non-governmental organisations to a certain degree. He stressed the inequality of state and partly state-run institutions and his own participation in different tenders. He said that it is important that non-governmental organisations do not become support pillars for different political groups, and thus do not become caught in classical forms. This would also change the relationship between them and the national budget, as they would not be so easily cut off. Slovenia would then be able to start a discussion supported by alternative options.

ANDREJ LUKŠIČ, NGO, from the Institute of Ecology, stressed the need for knowledge and for possibilities of appearing in the public media and acquiring appropriate financial support through an institution which would succeed in overcoming this fragmented situation.

He also felt it was important to establish a computer information centre which would facilitate the connection of non-governmental organisations in Slovenia with international organisations, and legal environmental norms.



Swallow holes in Cerknjško jezero

or even more so, they try to prevent the adoption of any decision by the parliament or government, since a legislative void is more in their favour than any restriction on their operations, which most of the time are harmful. From this perspective we can understand the truth that striving to benefit nature and the environment is also striving to benefit democracy. In the legislative field, this is possible only in an open and effective parliament.

GLOBE Slovenia has been facing a number of problems. The status of this organisation of environmental members of parliament was not clearly established, even in parliament. GLOBE did not have the status of a committee or parliamentary commission, it was considered more as a non-governmental organisation of members of parliament, whereas at the same time it constantly worked with boards and commissions, with leaders of the parliament and with its technical services. Most of them were favourably disposed to the work of GLOBE Slovenia, but not all of them. Therefore, an important task facing the parliament in the future will be to settle the status of organisations of members of parliament, such as GLOBE, and to enable them to work at their full potential. Otherwise, such organisations depend on individuals, their interests or even interests of economic groups or lobbies, which runs counter to the aims and goals of these organisations. It is only the goodwill of the leaders of the parliament that has enabled its relative success, and I therefore I give them my thanks on behalf of GLOBE.

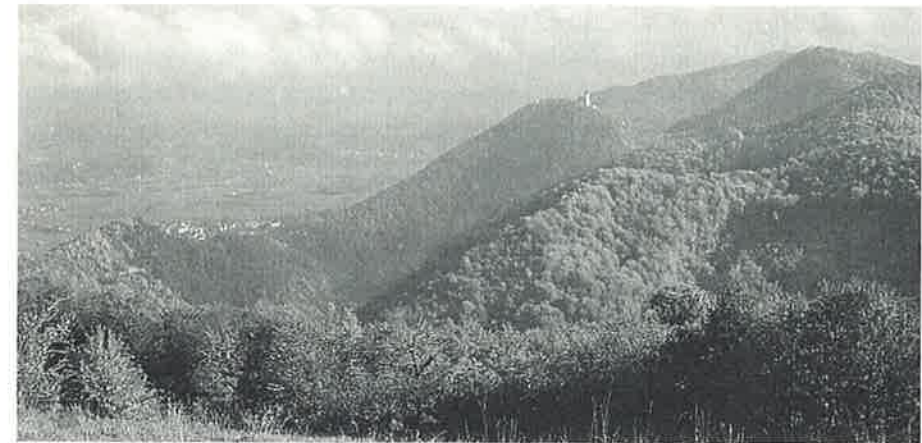
The GLOBE Slovenia consultation "An Open and Effective Parliament" of 8 October 1996 was probably the most important event of the term of office of GLOBE in Slovenia. Of the 10 members of GLOBE out of 90 members of the National Assembly the consultation was attended by 9 members, by representatives of 20 non-governmental organisations out of 129 registered environment-protection organisations in Slovenia, a representative of the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Minister of the Environment, Dr Pavel Gantar.

As this was the first such consultation of members of parliament, representatives of non-governmental organisations, representatives of the government and independent experts, there was of course a fear of interpersonal contacts. Representatives of some non-governmental organisations also expressed their opinion that the members of parliament and GLOBE had no right to organise such a consultation, as it might be possible for them to exploit the work of non-governmental organisations, create an impermissible hierarchy of these organisations, and that this consultation reminded them of the socialist times, when similar general consultations were organised by the (only) political party with experts and non-governmental organisations approved by the state.

After all of the above problems were resolved, we arrived at a fruitful discussion on what the participants understand to be an "open and effective parliament", what measures should be taken for the better cooperation of citizens and non-governmental organisations in the field of environmental protection, which legislative changes in this field are especially urgent, and what technical and communicational reorganisation of the parliament is necessary in order to achieve these improvements. In this respect, the conclusion and proposals from the consultation are of the greatest importance, whereby all public documents from parliament must be directly and promptly accessible on the Internet, this meaning not only the adopted laws but also all public discussions, proposals of laws, amendments from members of parliament and the government, professional documentation connected with them, and of course the votes of the members of parliament. The consultation put forward this conclusion as being possibly the most important initiative of GLOBE EU and of non-European GLOBE organisations in order to increase the openness of parliaments all over the world, and thereby enable a comparative study of their work.



Collapsed Karst caves (vrtača) form hollows that are often used for agriculture



Orlice hills

"The second question concerns the openness of the parliament. Discussions on one, two or one-and-a-half assemblies are not worth pursuing after four years, as the relationship between the National Assembly and the National Council, as they were dictated by the National Assembly, has levelled off. And this in such a way that the Council has only one real area of jurisdiction, which was the veto on a law as a whole, which necessitated the vote of a majority in the National Assembly as a consequence. As an extreme means there was still the referendum, however this jurisdiction was used by the Council to submit electoral legislation, which should not be considered completely normal considering its constitutional function. But it is a fact that the National Assembly, as the body with all the powers to decide chose the more restrictive of the two possible relationships. This means that there was practically no direct influence of the interests represented in the National Council, as the National Assembly was not open to them. This is also one of the causes for the growth of lobbying, also in a bad sense. Demands for dismissing members of parliament grew stronger, as well as demands for a majority system which should prevent members of parliament representing abstract general interests, and make them representatives of special interests. There was also an increasing tendency whereby instead of being represented in the National Council, the interest groups should decide to establish their own special parties, at the corporate or regional level. This also proves that the National Assembly was not open to this interest represented in the National Council, to the extent that the role of the National Council was devalued. Instead of adjusting individual controversial parts, the National Assembly accepted vetos only on an entire law (as there should not be a fourth or even more stages within the procedure of adopting laws), which also contributed to the ineffectiveness as laws were rejected on the whole and the entire procedure had to be repeated for resolving a small segment of the law, or, on the other hand, laws stayed valid which were controversial but the National Assembly and Council did not try to adjust the controversial points. In the public, the impression of a closed National Assembly was thus growing stronger.

**DR LEV KREFT, Vice-President of the National Assembly:*

Local Government, National Council, National Assembly

"If we compare the role of the National Assembly with the position in which this National Assembly performed its function in its first term of office after the adoption of the new Constitution, we must observe that there were no special conditions which would guarantee effectiveness. The Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia provides for a subdivision and a mutual balance of individual branches of state power, but in such a way that the primacy of the legislative branch is extensively preserved. In practice this means that the National Assembly practically decides on anything although it is not an assembly of all the three branches. If we consider the fact that independence, together with the Constitutionally determined transition, required completely new legislation, this meant that the National Assembly could not have been effective for it was overloaded with urgent matters from all sides, matters which arose from its jurisdiction and from the transitional situation.

"However, we fear that this temporarily enforced state of ineffectiveness of the parliament has become a rule which at this stage will outlive every circumstance that caused its coming into being. After all, the entire basic legislation, which means the establishing of the new Constitution, has already been adopted for some time, but nothing has changed - the National Assembly is still overloaded and ineffective. We may observe a sort of revolution in the tendency towards solving, through laws, social conflicts and ensuring political goals by accumulating new and not insignificant constitutional jurisdiction, which was by no means necessary. I would like to mention here especially the number of reports from different state institutions which could easily be handed over to the government, and an endless number of different councils and other monitoring and administration bodies which could also be under the jurisdiction of the executive branch of power. Considering the incredible productivity in terms of acts adopted and decisions made, the National Assembly has possibly already become an ineffective body which cannot be mended. This ineffectiveness can also be seen in certain things connected with its openness. For example it cannot be expected that an individual would obtain a correct and reliable answer to a question with the help of a member of parliament, as the information mechanism between the government and the National Assembly often (unconsciously, of course) does not follow any other logic than the mechanism between a helpless citizen and an administrative body. If the latter does not wish to answer, it will keep on sending all sorts of fairy tales as answers, which cannot satisfy a citizen who expects a member of parliament to produce some answers. We should not generalise, but experience shows that if you want answers you should not be asking the government. It is worth asking questions just for the sake of being heard in public. In the last four years the National Assembly did not succeed in asserting its role in this small sector which reflects its primacy over the executive branch of power.

This would also increase the level of dependence between environmental protection on the legislative level and the global state of the environment on planet Earth.

At the consultation, the recommendations of GLOBE Slovenia were adopted regarding its future work, the recommendations to the Slovene parliament, to the government and to political parties. The adopted resolution represents a qualified and overall view of non-governmental environmental organisations and environmental members of parliament towards the current work of the parliament and the government, the state of the environment and nature in Slovenia, as well as activities of the parliament, the government and the political parties in this area in the future.

Unfortunately, the consultation could not be attended by other members of GLOBE who are members of other national parliaments and of the European Parliament. Future consultations with their active presence will be even more productive and successful. Of decisive importance was the attendance of the Secretary of GLOBE EU, Mr Nicholas Tavitian, who contributed to greater motivation and participation in the consultation, to solving possible obstacles in the discussion, and to a productive adoption of conclusions.

The flow of the consultation and the productive conclusions surprised even the participants themselves and showed how sensible and correct was the decision of the Secretary of GLOBE EU to initiate a European campaign of such consultations. On behalf of the participants I would therefore like to thank the Chairman of GLOBE EU, Carlos Pimenta, and his colleagues and members of GLOBE EU within the European Parliament, for this initiative, and for their help and technical support.

Many thanks are due to the secretaries of the National Assembly, Mr Bogdan Biščak and Ms Jožica Velišček, as well as to the chairman of the committee for infrastructure within the National Assembly, Mr Žare Pregelj. Without their help and support this consultation would not have been possible.

My thanks also go to the representatives of non-governmental organisations and to experts who have actively taken part in the consultation, and thus provided the opportunity for us having a refined and productive dialogue, and for their care for the environment.

This booklet and the consultation itself would not have been possible without the help and support of Dr Branka Berce Bratko, who with eagerness, patience and knowledge contributed to the success of the first consultation of GLOBE Slovenia as an environmental activist and as a professional coworker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia in each stage of the preparation of the project, in its implementation, and in preparation of this booklet.

Chair of GLOBE Slovenia
Dr Leo Šešerko

Ljubljana, 13 November 1996

WE ARE ALL IN TRANSITION

When GLOBE was created, not so long ago, in 1989, it set itself just one overriding task: to multiply the effectiveness of the work of environmental parliamentarians by giving them their own international, cross-party network.

GLOBE has grown considerably since those early days, and environmentalism has acquired a new credibility. Our societies, their citizens, their leaders and their businesspeople are gradually learning to accept the limitations of the natural world, and we now seldom hear the outrageous arguments that clean air, soil and water are a luxury. Environmental policies are making progress.

The paradox is that at the same time, environmental problems are getting worse. While the EU is phasing out leaded petrol and introducing catalytic converters, the sharp increase in road traffic is more than compensating for the improved technology. Our technology enables us to use fossil fuels more efficiently than ever before, and yet we are using more of these polluting products every year. Despite the increase in recycling in many countries, the amount of waste generated is still on the increase. And as we are laboriously learning to control chemical pollution, genetic engineering is appearing on the scene as a new threat to the environment.

Change is too slow in coming. For every success earned by environmentalists, many more problems have arisen. The solution: we need a more effective political machine. We need a decision-making process which brings more ideas in contact with more people. We need to open up the decision-makers in the transport, energy, agriculture and other fields to environmental thinking. We need democracies which successfully translate the intelligence of individuals into the intelligence of the group.

There are too many problems to resolve not to involve all those with ideas and goodwill in this collective endeavour. Politics should no longer be the art of choosing: they should be the art of reconciling creatively. Reconciling economy with the environment; those who produce with those who protect.

GLOBE, among others, is working to boost the political machine. It started off by promoting parliamentary cooperation, and is now also seeking to better involve concerned citizens in the work of the parliaments and parliamentarians around Europe; not once, not on one issue, but regularly, to develop a multitude of working relationships which - as they grow, expand and deepen - will provide oxygen and power to that often choked decision-making machine.

and must set in motion a specific action. This shows the incredible flow of paper, and very little criticism that the parliament ignores or does not answer incoming documents.

"Moving on to the government, I must say that the latter had a number of problems which bigger societies solve in a more orderly and in the end more beneficial manner. The main problem is the fact that the Slovene government is classically divided into sectors. The situation is similar all over the world, however, other countries have better mechanisms for synergy or co-operation between specific sectors. This phenomenon is then also aggravated by a feudalistic attitude of parties, which start considering the sector they are running as their own. Although irrational, it is however understandable that individual ministries are food for satisfying the ambitions of political parties, and it was a big mistake to allow this in the case of state secretaries. The latter are represented by 10 individuals who are in a sense directors of individual national sectors, although politics does not concern them as such. They are not career experts, but are bound to submit their resignation upon each change of the minister."

In his personal view of the past period he stressed the extraordinary amount of the work done in the parliament. He pointed out that a new independent state had been created, and a political, economic and social revolution had de facto taken place. The Slovene legalistic approach to replacing the whole system required hundreds of laws, acts, endless agendas and sessions. As an example he gave the Committee for the Economy which had 102 sessions. The parliament was nearly asphyxiated by the amount of papers, however there were only a few criticisms that the government was ignoring or not responding to incoming documents.

He linked his thoughts on the government to its basic problem of being classically divided into sectors. The situation is similar all over the world, however, other countries have better mechanisms for synergy and co-operation between individual sectors. In Slovenia, political parties handle a sector as their own property. Although irrational, it is, however, understandable that individual ministries are food for satisfying the ambitions of political parties, but it is not admissible that the same attitude has spread to state secretaries who are in a way directors of individual national sectors. They are not career experts but are bound to submit their resignation upon each change of the minister and not only upon the change of the government. Quality is hard to expect from such a person. Therefore Dr Tancig expressed the opinion that it would have been better if these positions were considered apolitical and suitable for career-making. Consequently, the functioning of the state would be more efficient.

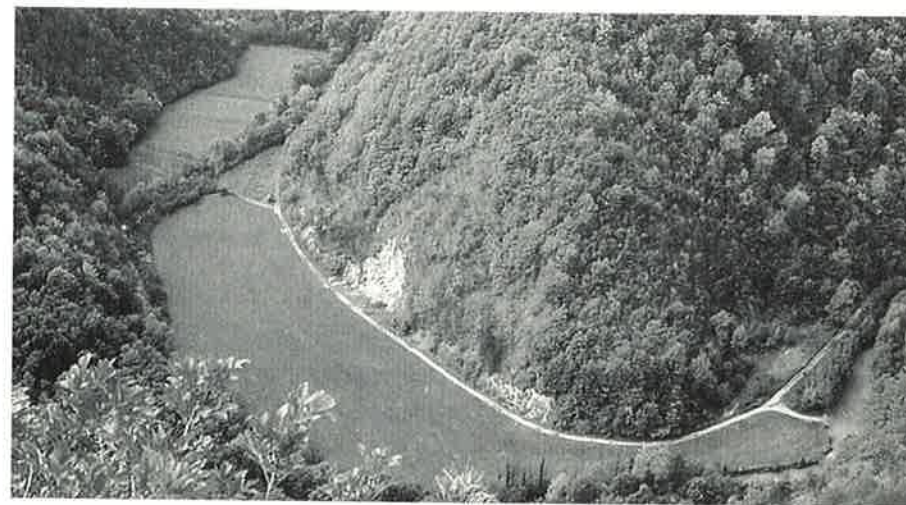
He ends his thoughts with the belief that NGOs manage those fields which the government and the parliament cannot. He pointed out that the latter two are limited in certain areas due to lack of personnel, and that there are a number of experts outside politics who can organise themselves and become equal partners to politicians through their work; all this would facilitate more appropriate development.

As a rule we react only to already developed problems instead of anticipating them and having a more long-term overview of things. It is the NGOs who should try to have this long-term overview and also strive for more reasonable thinking than the politicians are doing. It is here that the relationship on the basis of partnership and cooperation comes into consideration as being the best; in such a way, politicians enable the NGOs to do their job well (better), or limit the space for doing bad. This is possible only with good professional proposals, alternative scenarios, cost-benefit analysis, different technological and sociological instruments and so forth.

For a number of reasons, politics cannot be deprived of its basic characteristics and responsibilities like decision-making. This means that NGOs should enable politicians to make good decisions, or for that matter even better decisions than they would without their help.

From his personal point of view, Dr Tancig stressed the extraordinary extent of the work done and said:

"A new independent state has been created, and a political, economic and social revolution has de facto taken place. This means that the whole system has been entirely replaced, something which in the past used to be done in a more chaotic, destructive and bloody manner. The Slovene evolutionary and legal approach meant adopting hundreds of laws, acts, going through endless agendas and sessions. The Committee for the Economy at the National Assembly for example had 102 sessions. To give a feeling of what the members of parliament had to go through: in February 1996 each parliamentary group was given 444 documents, in March almost 700; in February, this meant 2,500 pages, and 3,600 pages in March. This means that each such document must be identified, labelled, classified, sent to the correct address, studied, answered,



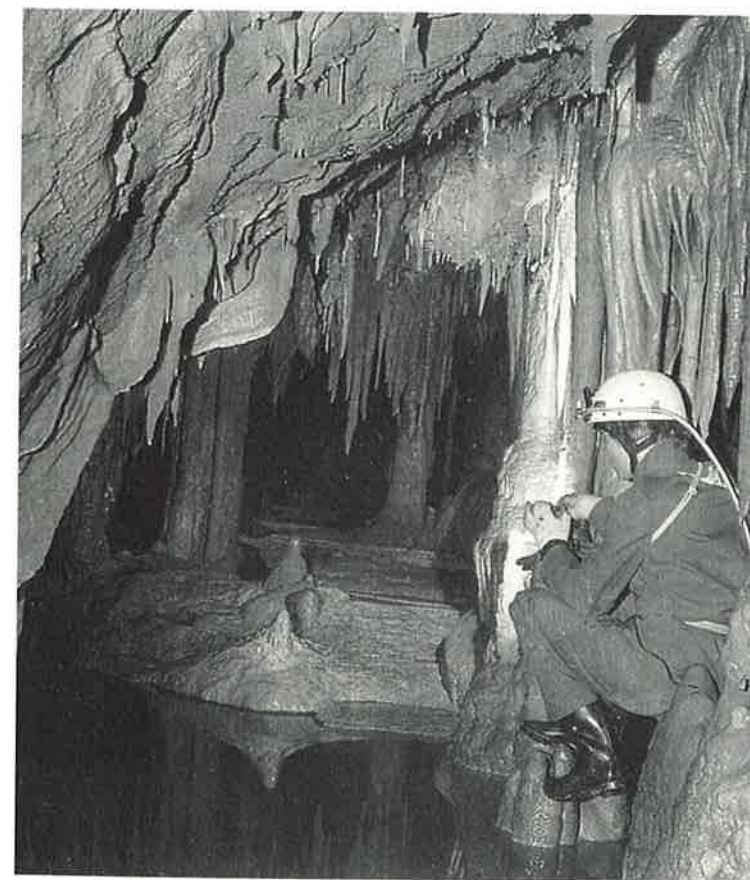
Bistrice gorge

We are all in transition: the transition towards more sustainable societies and towards more effective democracies will go hand in hand.

The GLOBE Open Parliament conference in the Parliament of Slovenia was an important contribution to helping us through this historical transition. It was followed by similar event in 10 other countries, and will be followed by more. It will be followed by a similar event in Slovenia next year. And close observation should soon reveal early signs of the germination of ideas and commitments recounted in the proceedings which follow.

Co-ordinator of GLOBE-Europe Network
Nicolas Tavitian

Brussels, 22 November 1996



Janča jama (jama - Slovene is used internationally for scientific description of Karst phenomena)

Ljubljana 8 October 1996

RESOLUTION OF GLOBE SLOVENIA



Starting points and objectives:

Slovenia is a country with a young parliamentary democracy, and the following features of the country are typical of such systems:

- instruments and forms of society are still in the process of development,
- a number of new laws and executive acts must be adopted, including those in the field of the environment and conservation,
- economic development must take into account Agenda 21 and the principles of working with the environment,
- legislation is being adapted to EU legislation, but the peculiarities of Slovenia must also be emphasised and respected, especially the richness of its biodiversity and the variety of its landscape,
- the government and the ministries work in sectors, but conditions in the field of the environment and conservation are very complex and thus require an interdisciplinary approach,
- the implementation of this legislation is absolutely necessary, and is not yet standard practice in the field of the environment and conservation,
- filling in blank areas when researching the protection of nature and the environment is a pressing matter, and in this case the international programmes of the EU relating to this field could be used more extensively.

When it comes to biodiversity and variety of landscape, Slovenia is one of the foremost countries in Europe, and as such requires the preservation of its richness. To achieve this, a basic mapping of habitats is to be carried out, the degree of threat established, and protective measures developed in order to monitor the situation and prevent the destruction of this natural wealth. This also relates to unfinished legislation on molecular genetics, the possibilities of chemical, biological, viral pollution etc.

of view, their previous orientation was incorrect, although this is of course not the right term. One cannot argue with different phenomena but can only be more or less satisfied with them. It is specifically on the example of the Chamber of Commerce that I am developing my own model of relationships between non-governmental organisations and the government, for example. The least productive relationship is the relationship of opponents, which runs along such lines: the government is wrong, it has no idea of what it is doing, it is full of influential and financial powers, it is our natural enemy etc. The second is a relationship based on competitiveness, where a non-governmental organisation tries to surpass the government or replace some of its functions or responsibilities. This is how the previous Chamber of Commerce acted, when debates on macroeconomic policy rippled through the public.

"The third possibility of the relationships between non-governmental organisations and state institutions is, in my opinion, the one with most harmony and therefore in the end also most productive. This is a relation of partners or of bilateral complementation, when the politicians offer to non-governmental organisation things which the latter cannot give inherently."

In Dr Tancig's opinion, the previous orientation of the Chamber of Commerce was incorrect, as one cannot argue with specific phenomena, but can only be more or less satisfied with them. The least productive is the relationship of opponents. The second is the relationship of competitiveness, when a non-governmental organisation tries to surpass the government or replace some of its functions or responsibilities. This is how the previous Chamber of Commerce acted regarding macroeconomic policy. The third possibility in the relationships between non-governmental organisations and state institutions is the one with most harmony and therefore also most productive. This is a relationship of partnership or bilateral complementation, where the politicians offer to non-governmental organisation things which the latter cannot give inherently.

Politics is also very limited in its potentials or possibilities (capabilities); it is limited in terms of persons involved in politics, and it is limited in time. The time limit of a policy or a politician is four years, or even less if we take into account the preparatory period at the beginning and the period at the end. The basic task, goal and mission of an individual is to survive (stay) in politics. The politician may have noble goals, but he or she will never be able to implement them if he or she is not going to be elected for another term of office. However, most of the time the situation is more down to earth.

Very few politicians in the world are proactive or forward-looking, that is, looking further than their own term of office. After all, this also holds true for the world as a whole, or for the way it is being run. The population and environmental problems, the issues of natural resources, global warming etc does not start with the report of the Rome Club, but has been present all along, although denied and unrecognised. The war in Bosnia is also a typical example of short-term thinking of a reactive nature.

Dr Potočnik was also convinced that the meeting was beneficial as initiatives will reach the parliament on an official level, which is very important. Any other level would have required much more energy. He stressed the enormous power of 10 per cent of the Slovene population, which, however, does not know how to act in a unified way through their non-governmental organisations and their representatives. It also happens that they are sabotaged even with the best of intentions, and thus do not work for the benefit of the environment.

As a public official he stated that when non-governmental organisations and the government are summoned to a meeting the first sometimes do not attend these meetings in a large enough number, are not prepared enough or not sufficiently assertive.

In transferring norms and standards to Slovene legislation, our environment and the protection of our interests must be the principal guidelines. In his opinion, with the proposal of the law on protecting underground caves we have done exceptional work in comparison with the proposal of the IUCN on protecting the karst.

The next to speak was **DR PETER TANCIG**, MP chair of the Committee for Science and Technology, who returned to the relationship between politics and the civil society, and from the point of view of a politician observed dissatisfaction on both sides.

As far as Slovenia is concerned he stated that it finds itself in a special situation because of its inherent characteristics and the so frequently mentioned transition period.

Dr Tancig also said the following:

"All the inherent characteristics which we have been given, arise from our (relatively) small territory. If we take a look at the Netherlands, which is also a small country, we see that with the entire 15 million of the Dutch population (seven times more than in Slovenia) there is a completely different level of critical masses. In the present situation in Slovenia, practically no non-governmental organisation has the possibility of employing fully paid experts who would arrange things in the non-governmental sector. Therefore it is hard to cope with all the experts in the government or in the parliament, even though their position is not an easy one either.

"All the sectors which we could refer to as "real sectors" (economy, banking, insurance etc.) are in transition. Therefore they deal with other issues and play a different role in society than they would in a country with a stable system where issues are more or less traditional and social relationships are well-defined or even codified. Due to the fact that they are small and in transition, these "real sectors" have no appropriate representative or intermediary functions, or rather institutions which would have enough authority to approach the government and the parliament (professionally and representatively).

"The argument of the most strongly represented institutions, albeit with more specific interests, is the Chamber of Commerce. As I had the opportunity to observe from the governmental point

Role:

GLOBE Slovenia will be active within GLOBE - the European and world organisation of members of parliament for the protection of nature and the environment. Members of GLOBE Slovenia are elected members of parliament who wish to work in this field and have been elected from different political parties. The deputies of GLOBE Slovenia actively seek monitoring, stimulating, coordinating and cooperative activities in pursuit of the protection of nature and the environment; the adoption of suitable legislation, and the implementation and monitoring of this legislation. These deputies will establish a connection between expert and scientific institutions, civil society, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) within this field.

Suggestions:

1. FOR THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA:

1.1. The national assembly should ensure the free flow of information and access to all public material, which includes use of the INTERNET. The members of GLOBE Slovenia will enable communication between civil society, the NGOs and scientific and educational institutions, with the objective of:

- activating the required level of cooperation for the shaping of legislation,
- enabling them to access the proposals of laws and other necessary information,
- giving them the opportunity to discuss or receive advice on these issues.

1.2. The members of GLOBE Slovenia organise regular annual meetings in order to enhance cooperation and the exchange of opinions between the NGOs, civil society, the government, and parliament (under the slogan AN OPEN AND EFFECTIVE PARLIAMENT).

1.3. The national assembly should appoint a team of experts in order to guarantee that the financial, expert and technical help of the European Union (EU), which Slovenia is entitled to, will actually be used in a sensible way, and not remain unexploited.

1.4. The national assembly should implement proposals and modifications which will be advantageous to Slovenia in its accession to the EU:

- protecting the biodiversity and variety of our landscape,
- protecting rural settlements in demographically endangered areas,
- implementing ecological modifications in agricultural production,
- limiting cargo traffic - road transit, and rerouting it by rail.

1.5. The national assembly should support ecological awareness and education, as well as studies on the protection of nature and the environment at all levels of education.

1.6. The national assembly should guarantee that it will not pass any laws which would contribute to the degradation of the environment or the health of the population, and introduce a new tax system which will:

- encourage a rational use of natural resources, and the recycling of waste material,
- prevent the degradation of the environment.

1.7. The national assembly should:

- accelerate the adoption of conventions: BONN, CITES, BERN,
- ensure that the government names the person responsible for monitoring the implementation of conventions on the protection of nature and the environment.

1.8. In the next mandatory period, the national assembly should:

- speed up the process of ensuring at least 20 per cent of the territory of the Republic of Slovenia as national and regional parks, and protect the frontier regions,
- adopt measures for a universal protection of the sea,
- guarantee the necessary financial means for their activity.

1.9. The national assembly should:

- ensure the protection and rational use of natural resources,
- establish an independent agency for chemical and biological safety,
- define the starting conditions,
- elaborate the necessary standards for chemical and biological safety,
- formulate a national programme for biological and chemical safety (NPKBV),
- restrict and monitor all genetic engineering experiments until the adoption of the national programme (NPKVB) and appropriate legislation,
- establish a national gene bank.

1.10. The national assembly should:

- speed up the process of reducing the wastage of natural resources,
- encourage separate litter collection,



Canyon formed by the river Kolpa

As far as the environment in Slovenia is concerned she stated that it is relatively well preserved and that they had managed to avoid quite a number of mistakes, since they had been able to spot them in time in other countries.

The work of those members of parliament who receive information from non-governmental organisations is, in her opinion, much easier.

As far as legislation is concerned, she expressed the belief that certain experiences made in Slovenia in the past must be taken into account, as well as experiences of other countries.

DR FRANC POTOČNIK, Civil Society, first stressed that although he is an ecologist by profession and employed at the Ministry of the Environment, he was representing himself at the meeting. He said that the project GLOBE Slovenia had been going for some time and had been successful for Slovenia in more than one sector. He expressed admiration for Dr Leo Šešerko, Dr Branka Berce-Bratko and Mr Tavitian, as he believed that through this project and the seminar in Gozd Martuljek Slovenia had also got to know itself. The second important thing for him was the binding approach in line with the signed convention on protecting biodiversity, and the third thing was connected with the privatisation process, within which a special law and a special regulation had been passed which made the Karst caves become state property.

He also stressed that members of parliament and non-governmental organisations should work together if they were to achieve the same goals.

The benefits of such conventions are, according to him, that they force international treaties to amend national legislative standards and that they do not allow constraints. In this way they go beyond temporary political power.

However, he was of the opinion that it is not only members of parliament who are connected with lobbies, but also non-governmental organisations. Some of the latter exist only because some of the lobbies find it useful.

The next to speak was **BARBARA VREČKO**, NGO, from the legal advisory centre for environmental protection ECO, the Council at the Labekom institution. She stressed that the activities of non-governmental organisations should be legally assessed, in order to prevent the whole process from starting again after the elections, which would result in loss of energy and time.

The chair DR LEO ŠEŠERKO explained the functioning of GLOBE and pointed out that 10 members of the Slovene National Assembly, who are members of GLOBE, will continue with their work even after the elections, which means the situation is not so dramatic.

DR FRANC POTOČNIK, Civil Society, denied some of the claims made by Mr Komat, especially the one connected with the highways. He continued with the explanation of how plans for building roads are adopted.

ANTON KOMAT, NGO, replied to Dr Potočnik and said that he had not spoken of procedures but had meant the environmental aspect and the involvement of the public.

MR NICHOLAS TAVITIAN, GLOBE-EU once again thanked Mr Šešerko for organising this meeting before the elections in Slovenia. The constructivity of the meeting could, in his opinion, be clearly observed through the adoption of certain conclusions within GLOBE Slovenia. These will be passed on to GLOBE Europe which is obliged to carry them out.

JANKO ROŽIČ, NGO, pointed out the fact that the co-operation between the government and non-governmental organisations was in a way only formal, as three months ago the application with expert argumentation was submitted to the Constitutional Court, and the non-governmental organisation is still waiting for a reply. At one section of the highway building site, the contractor, who is also the investor, exploited two types of natural resources - drinking water and underground water and layers of minerals which were used as construction material.

He also stressed the absence of logic withing the non-governmental organisations themselves, as they are not what their definitions imply, and they should be named according to their true characteristics, therefore according to their striving for environmental order and protection.

After the break, DR LEO ŠEŠERKO introduced the chair of the Committe for International Relations at the National Assembly and gave her the floor.

MS MIHAELA LOGAR, MP who first of all stressed the diversity of plants and animals in Slovene territory, and then mentioned our obligations towards international agreements. She especially stressed that the work must be done professionally, as this is the basis for an appropriate political decision in the parliament, here ascribing great importance to the parliamentarians themselves.

- encourage the compulsory recycling of waste material and, in extreme cases, its incineration or burial,

- ban the import and storage of all dangerous waste material on the territory of the Republic of Slovenia.

2. FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA:

2.1. The government should ensure the drawing up and implementation of all national strategies, and especially those for:

- cooperation with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society,

- conservation,

- environmental protection,

- treatment of waste material,

- the protection and rational use of natural resources,

- chemical and biological safety,

- working with natural resources in all fields, and especially in agriculture and forestry, physical planning, industry and tourism.

2.2. The government should establish:

- an independent agency for biological and chemical safety,

- establish a national gene bank,

- prepare urgent expert guidelines and present them to the national assembly for confirmation.

2.3. The government should provide the additional financial means for the implementation of the national strategies under 2.1.

2.4. The government should consistently implement the programme under 1.1. through 1.10.

3. FOR POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA:

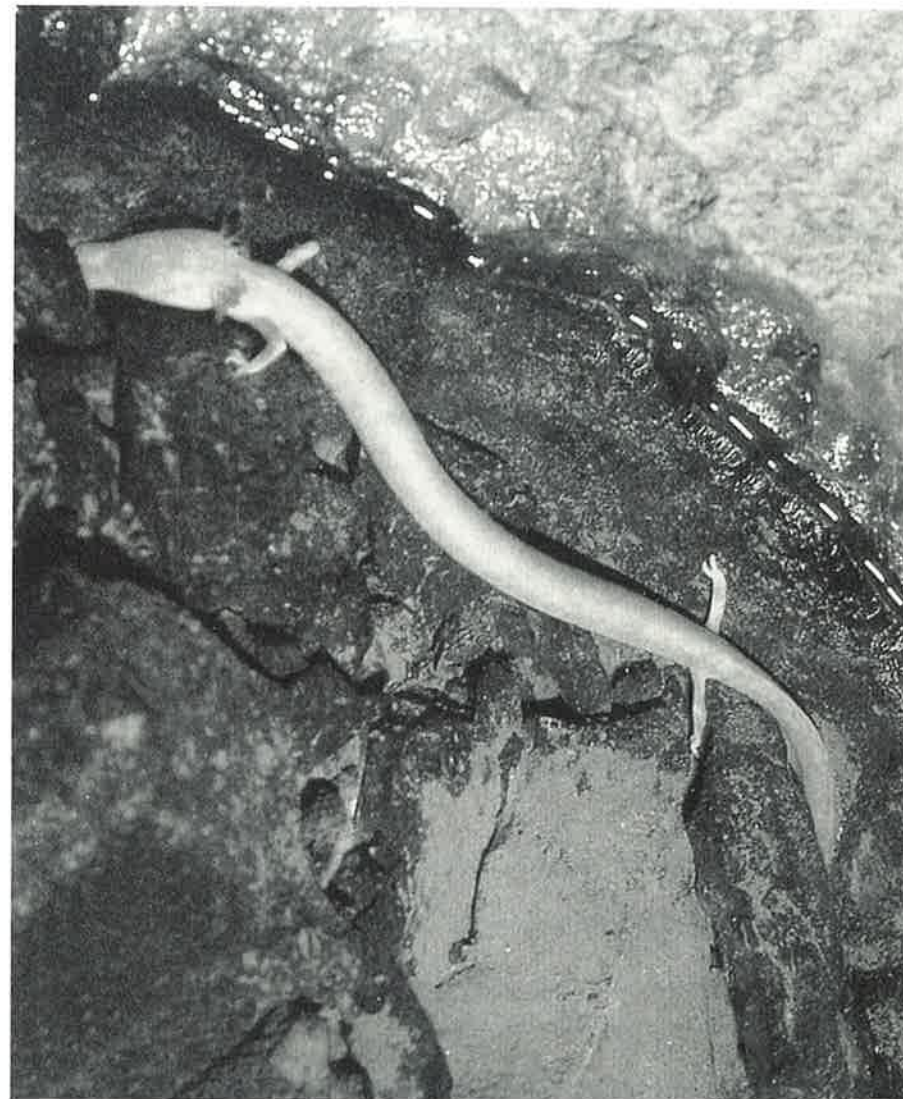
3.1. Political parties should make environmental and conservation issues part of their programmes, and guarantee its consistent implementation.

3.2. Political parties should delegate their representatives to be elected as members of GLOBE Slovenia.

3.3. Political parties should take into account the suggestions of GLOBE-Slovenia, cooperate in their implementation, and monitor the implementation under points 1.1. through 1.10., 2.1. through 2.4., and 3.1. through 3.3..

Prepared by
Dr Branka Berce-Bratko
Minka Vičar, Professor of Biology

Chair of GLOBE
Slovenia
Dr Leo Šešerko



The "human fish" (*Proteus anguinus*), a subterranean species endemic to the Karst

habitats of wild animals and plants. He also stressed that things change, and that pesticides were supposed to be the solution to the problem once, but that nowadays things are different. He especially pointed out the fact that nobody has the right to make a profit at nature's expenses.

MR KOMAT, NGO, also expressed the demand for the public to be informed of important environmental issues, and not to have simply a choice between two evils (highways) or to have secrets kept from them (Anhovo-asbestos).

DR LEO ŠEŠERKO once again excused those members of parliament who were attending the session of the National Assembly, and pointed out that this method of work was not optimal, however it was good in that guidelines for cooperation between the government and non-governmental organisations would be set.

He suggested that the ideas, such as those on the gene bank, be prepared in the form of a list of suggestions of that meeting.

ANDREJ KLEMENC, NGO, the Slovene E Forum of the Society for Energy Economics and Ecology, stated that the meeting, which reminded him of the times of democratic socialism, had failed in its purpose, as there were no members of parliament present, and therefore it was only non-governmental organisations and movements who were discussing the current situation in Slovenia. He expressed the opinion that non-governmental organisations are not capable of organising such meetings by themselves, and this was for various reasons. One is money, of course, and lack of a strong enough infrastructure to carry them out. The other is the fact that those who usually organise such meetings are doing so in a very aggressive way, so that others become suspicious of what they see as a desire for self-promotion within the non-governmental sector. This results in meetings of people of one mind.

He was also of the opinion that it would have been sensible to have organised one more meeting before this one, so that at this meeting there would not have been so many people with specific suggestions.

He placed relations with the EU in the context of the results of the meeting in Poland, where the topic was green taxes and green tax reform. He stressed the need for solving problems in an integrated way, for establishing alliances between those industries which have good potentials and which could destroy industrial dinosaurs, which unfortunately have strong economic and political support in Slovenia.

The chair, DR LEO ŠEŠERKO, stressed that the suggestion for this meeting was passed by GLOBE from Brussels, and to talk about the meeting as a self-management exercise would be incorrect. More than 30 such meetings had been organised in different European parliaments, and one of them in Slovenia. The parliament has no intention of interceding in the relationships between non-governmental organisations, its task was merely to organise the meeting.

The problem of biological safety is a problem of destroying fertile land, which per capita is already scarce in Slovenia. some 40,000 hectares of most fertile land out 270,000 ha will be used up by highways, which in his opinion can be referred to as vandalism.

Biodiversity is an issue which should also arouse the interest of all non-governmental organisations. In Slovenia, agents of foreign multinational corporations are stealing genetic material of cultivars, which are then patented abroad and sold expensively back to Slovenia along with pesticides and chemicals. Today, genetic potential is of greater importance than the atomic bomb. Therefore, Slovenia urgently needs a gene bank in order to protect traditional varieties, and



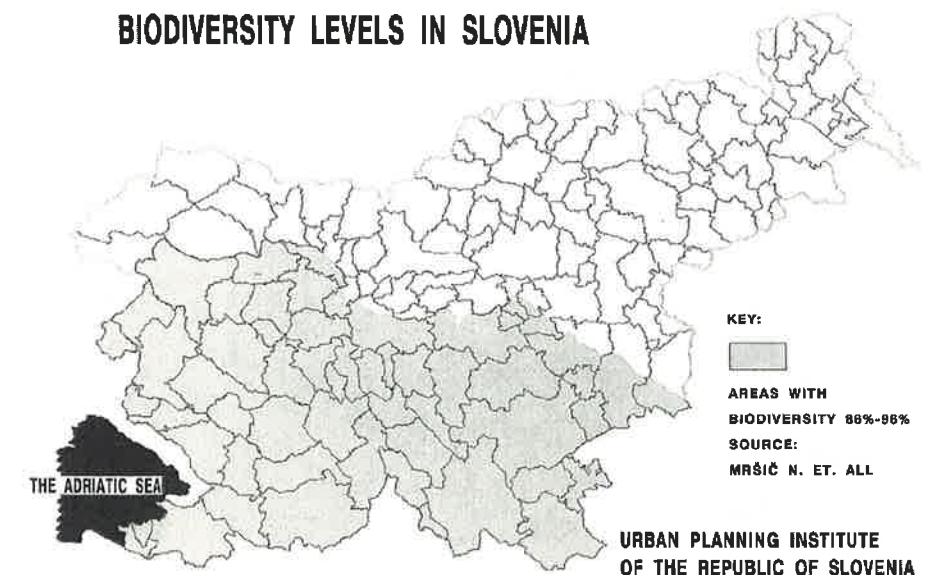
Rajhenavski virgin forest in the Kočevje region

SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MEETING ON OPEN AND EFFECTIVE PARLIAMENT

The point of the meeting OPEN AND EFFECTIVE PARLIAMENT was to place around the same table representatives of non-governmental organisations, members of parliament and members of the government for the first time.

For the National Assembly, for members of parliament, for the government and for non-governmental organisations, actual obligations related to environmental protection were suggested; these obligations were defined by the GLOBE Resolution which was accepted unanimously. Within this resolution the wish was also expressed that annual OPEN AND EFFECTIVE PARLIAMENT meetings be held. It was also suggested that a group of members of parliament of GLOBE SLOVENIA be more formally organised, which would engage in nature and environment protection. Members of parliament and non-governmental organisations have more than

BIODIVERSITY LEVELS IN SLOVENIA



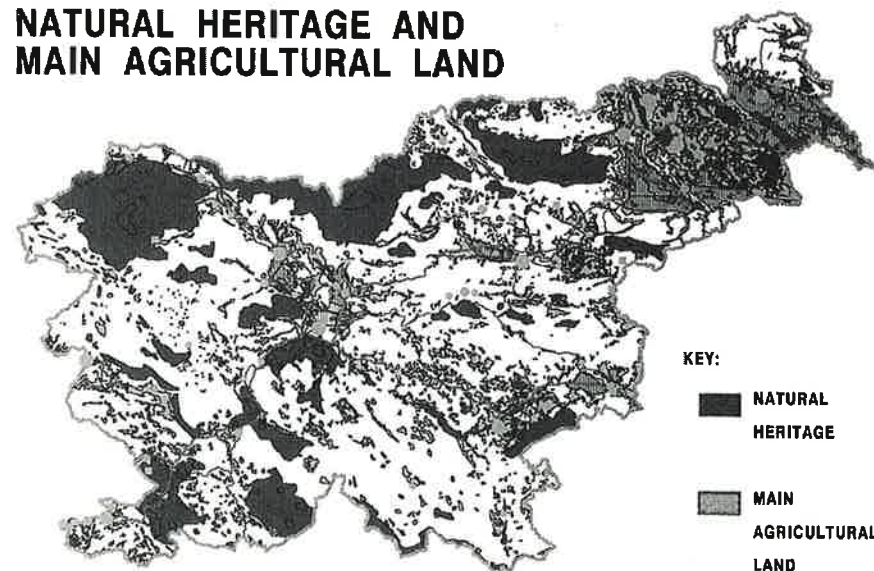
once stressed that Slovenia should encourage the conservation of nature, protect it appropriately and promote it in Europe, especially within the framework of becoming part of the EU, and with the help of GLOBE EU. Non-governmental organisations expressed their interests, presented their programmes and pointed out urgent issues of a professional, financial and status nature. The meeting was a fine example of dialogue between three parties with different views and points of departure.

Unfortunately, the meeting overlapped with a session of the National Assembly, although it was promised that the session of the National Assembly would not take place. However, members of parliament either left the session or wrote reports for the meeting, and these are provided in italics in the abridged version. Non-governmental organisations made numerous complaints about the absence of members of parliament.

The purpose of publishing the abridged version is in the documentary nature of the event, and is intended for comparison with future such events in Slovenia and abroad, where meetings of this kind will be held up to the end of 1996 and in the beginning of 1997.

The illustrations presented are taken from a poster on natural parks published by the Ministry of the Environment, and are intended to provide an impression of Slovenia. With approximately 23,600 registered species, the country's biodiversity level is one of the highest in Europe. The Karst region of Slovenia has lent its name to the very study of karstology, and it joins the Alps, the Mediterranean and the Pannonian plane in providing a rich geographical diversity, all within the boundaries of Slovenia. Important issues under discussion are forests, their quality and

NATURAL HERITAGE AND MAIN AGRICULTURAL LAND



territory is forested, which in this economy represent the most natural landscape element and in great part mitigated the effects of intensive farming. In his speech he stressed the changes in agricultural extension work. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food in co-operation with two non-governmental organisations (Euronatur and Stiftung europäisches naturerbe) issued a collection of papers entitled "Agriculture that preserves biodiversity".

He also mentioned forests and wild animals, and concluded that the situation in this area is good.

In so far as co-natural farming, he mentioned **Miha Magliča** of the Republic Administration for Promotion of Agriculture, who has lately been very much involved with ecological farming.

ANTON KOMAT, NGO (Harmonija), expressed his regret over the fact that the debate was not attended by members of parliament, and pointed out that environmental problems which grow to be economic and social, may later on turn out to be political or even of a security nature.

The environment in which non-governmental organisations are working, is mostly formed by the media and the public. He was of the opinion that those who harm our environment are groups or specific centres of power with clearly defined capital interests. The loss of support to non-governmental organisations would mean destroying one of the pillars of democracy in a country. A possible guarantee that environmental questions would really be solved and not be slowly forgotten when new ones came along, is permanent financial help to non-governmental organisations which have an organisational nucleus, are qualified and dedicated. Mr Kosmač spoke of the necessity of connection between the civil society and the government in the stage of developing certain legal and operative solutions in Slovenia, and expressed the feeling that the work of non-governmental organisations was like a natural alliance. Otherwise, there are likely to be excesses. He mentioned the case of mad cow disease and of shifting responsibility from politicians to field experts and vice-versa.

He reminded the participants of the troubles with drinking water in 1986 in Dravsko Polje, which was solved by the state through simply raising the standard of admissible load to factor 10. He condemned any alteration of regulations as ineffective and short-sighted, and claimed that hyperproduction leads to chaos and lack of clarity. The final goal is of course to cover the problem.

He also saw one solution in Slovenia building basic environmental justice into its legal, economic and tax system, as is done today by the Scandinavian countries. The polluters should pay for what they are doing. He suggested that we be original in this field, that we take our situation as the point of departure and also offer something original to others.

He mentioned the chemical and biological safety of the country. He stated that a struggle was being fought to set up a chemical safety agency, which would be responsible for matters out of ministerial hands and away from pressure.

He also expressed the desire that more environmentally aware people might be elected to parliament, and mentioned some activities in the election campaign which could facilitate this goal.

In connection with financing he stressed the fact that experience must be gained from other non-governmental organisations and from attending consultations organised by Johns Hopkins University in the USA, promoted here by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs or by individual activities (publishing books, magazines etc.).

The success of the co-operation between the government and non-governmental organisations is, in his opinion, dependent on the awareness that the suggestions are made in good will, as well as the criteria which should be prepared in such a way that everyday politics would not determine financial means through approved projects.

After some words of greeting, **DR LOJZE ČAMPA**, NGO, talked about the importance of being aware of Slovene national and cultural roots, and about the importance of a critical approach to Europe.

He also stressed that it is important to live in an environmentally friendly way rather than have to clean up the mess of polluters.

The implementation of all the signed documents was also very important.

He pointed out the problem of depopulation in rural areas and stressed the importance of the programme aimed at overcoming problems of demographically endangered local communities.

In connection with the privatisation process he stated that privatising areas and natural resources is a special problem, and presented data indicating that after privatisation, 80 per cent of forests in Slovenia will be in private hands, owned by approximately 300,000 people who will need to be made aware of the fact that this new property of theirs also has a public meaning.

A similar strategy will need to be adopted for water resources.

DR ČAMPA also posed the question about the place of environmental movements, either in the government or within non-governmental organisations. He found it dangerous that people in the government tended to lose contacts with the public.

DR LEO ŠEŠERKO, MP, chair of GLOBE Slovenia, replied to DR ČAMPA and said that environmental activists should be everywhere. The problem of alienation from the public should, in his opinion, be corrected by elections to the National Assembly. He felt that it is important that environmental activists work in every field and do not accept any limitations.

ALEKSANDER GOLOB from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, expressed his ideas in connection with the words of Mr Timi Ecimovič, and stressed that 54 per cent of Slovene

variety, plus their ownership as shown by the Forestry Services in the municipalities, agricultural land and demographically endangered local communities along the border.

It is important to stress that there was a good response from the press, and particular mention should be made of articles published in the newspapers *Dnevnik* and *Republika*.

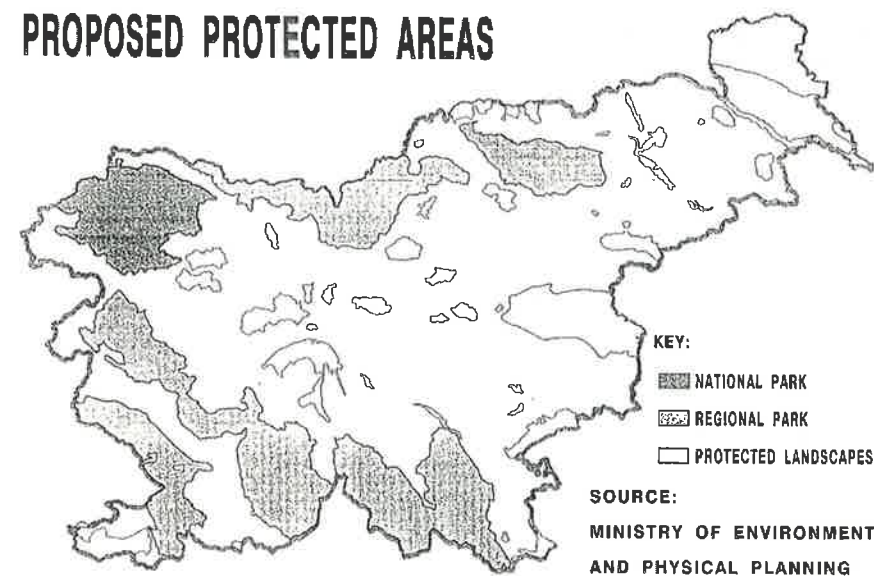
PERCENTAGE OF FORESTS IN MUNICIPALITIES OF SLOVENIA



OPEN AND EFFECTIVE PARLIAMENT ABRIDGED VERSION OF THE CONSULTATION DISCUSSION

The consultation was opened by the chair of GLOBE Slovenia, **DR LEO ŠEŠERKO**, MP who greeted the foreign guests and the participants from Slovenia. The introductory address was given by the vice-president of the National Assembly, **DR VLADIMIR TOPLER** MP in which he emphasised some specific features of importance to Slovenia. In his opinion, the diversity of the geographic regions is reflected in the people, and this is undoubtedly linked to the question of effectiveness of the parliament. At the same time, due to modern computer technology, there has been an increasingly strong linking and establishing of what is called global thinking, and Slovenia must become a part of this. In further considering this connection process, he

PROPOSED PROTECTED AREAS



Spruce forest

The biodiversity of Slovenia should be preserved, although the current agricultural policy is set against this. He criticised the Ministry of Agriculture for having a policy that still does not include ecological farming.

KAREL LIPIČ, chief secretary of the Slovene Ecological Movement then gave a chronological overview of the activities of the civil society in protecting the environment, and indicated the issues which have not been implemented although agreed upon. He mentioned the flaws in financing non-governmental organisations. He expressed the feeling that reducing the funds available for marking the European Year of Nature Protection (1995) was particularly remiss. Funding for more than 500 environmental projects, which represented Slovenia's share, fell from a planned amount of between 700 and 800 million tollars to 12 million tollars. The situation this year is no better.

Cooperation of the Slovene Ecological Movement with political parties is ongoing, however, it is true that in the parliament few parties have elaborated specific environmental projects, and still fewer have chosen to cooperate with non-governmental organisations in carrying out these projects. LIPIČ mentioned the Liberal Democracy of Slovenia - LDS, the Green Alternative, the Slovene People's Party - SLS, the Democratic Party - DS and the Slovene National Party - SNS.

DR GANTAR expressed the opinion that Slovenia is sensitive to environmental issues, and that the public is involved in everything that happens in this country in this field.

He also stated that environmental regulations and standards must be harmonised with those of the EU. For some directives which cannot be implemented immediately due to the current environmental situation in Slovenia, so-called transition deadlines have been drawn up. These are at the very heart of the negotiations on adjusting to the environmental legislation of the EU. DR GANTAR also stressed that at the moment Slovenia has had references prepared for all the directives.

The chair DR LEO ŠEŠERKO, MP then gave the floor to the chair of the Committee for Infrastructure and Environment, **ŽARKO PREGELJ**, MP who greeted the participants and then stressed that unfortunately, the Committee had been working more in the field of infrastructure, as Slovenia was very much involved in construction works. But he stressed that he had been open to any initiatives at all times, whenever the discussion was about the environment. He also pointed out that environmental activities require time and that on the expiry of his term of office he would be able to state that the national policy under the influence of the public had re-routed itself towards solving these problems in harmony with nature. He continued to stress the importance of Pan - European network for Slovenia. He said that he expected new connections to be established between the government and non-governmental organisations, which will not only concern financing but also specific changes of status. At some time there was an idea of establishing an institution which would collect information and knowledge in connection with environmental issues. This project was not carried out, although mention should be made of the work of the regional environmental centre, which had been connected with a similar one in Budapest for years.

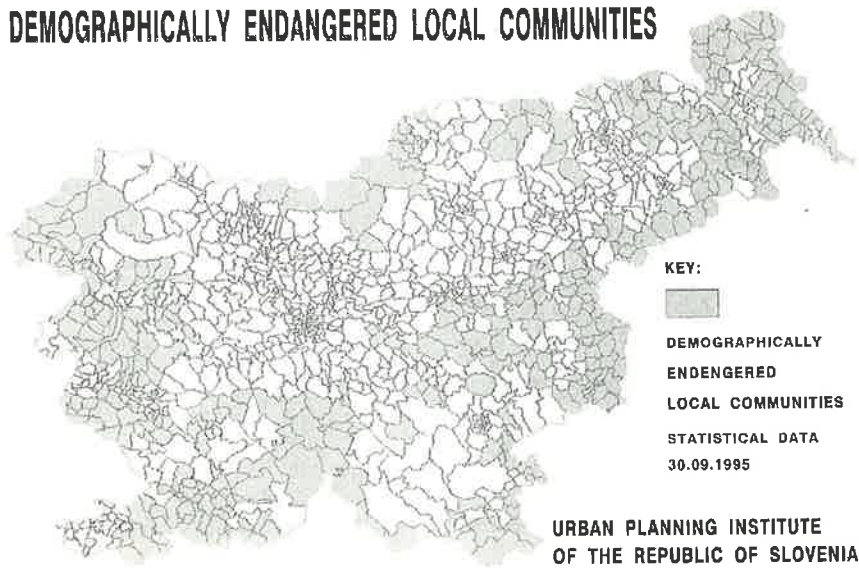
After the break, the chair, Dr LEO ŠEŠERKO, excused some of the members of parliament as they were attending the session of the National Assembly, although it was promised that the session would not take place at that time. He thanked the secretary-general for organising the consultation and for the possibility of printing the GLOBE Slovenia Resolution in both the Slovene and English languages.

The next to speak was **DR TIMI ECIMOVIČ**, NGO head of the Institute of Climatic Changes. He stressed the importance of continuous work, and offered for consideration his proposal that on a "fifty-fifty" basis, half of the members of parliament should be elected in alternate years with a four-year mandate.

In connection with the environmental issues of Europe, Slovenia should also be mentioned. The greatest enemy of all mankind is of course the atomic bomb, followed by climatic changes which can greatly influence every relationship within society.

emphasised the threat of environmental disasters of major consequences. The significance of GLOBE, he believes, lies in establishing a global security. He then enumerated some of the most important documents Slovenia has adopted, especially those from Rio de Janeiro, and emphasised that parliament had been effective enough in this area of work. In implementing laws and in influencing environmental policies, an important role was played by society and by the representatives of non-governmental organisations. He was of the opinion that the parliament is open enough to initiatives, but that there was not yet proper regulation of financing to facilitate the use of the intellectual potential of non-governmental organisations for the benefit of legislation. He also emphasised the reputation of the civil society around the world and in Slovenia, and supported this statement by noting the interest of the public in the issue of pesticides, which really arose only after society linked it to the question of responsibility and to certain criteria. He was convinced that we had done a great deal at a time when some people were trying to rescue social welfare at the expense of the environment. Developmental guidelines are good, and legislation on environmental protection can be compared to that of other European countries, or is even better. But we are still left with the problem of waste and waste management, or rather, with the implementation of the strategy connected with this problem.

The effectiveness of parliament is connected to its responsiveness. DR TOPLER stated that all parliaments in the world are facing the problems of the new millennium, which have been triggered by genetics. He posed the question of whether it will be possible to formulate global legislation. Then he emphasised the importance of cooperation between governmental and



non-governmental organisations or parliamentary and non-parliamentary ones, and concluded that opinions of non-governmental organisations have been taken into consideration many times.

The chair of GLOBE, Dr LEO ŠEŠERKO, MP also stressed the importance of an open parliament and from his point of view defined it as a parliament accessible to citizens and non-governmental organisations, such that they might be able to shed their prejudices towards cooperation on this level of decision-making, to inform their representatives of different questions, and to monitor their decisions. He also emphasised that non-governmental organisations dispose of a mass of information which is scientifically very well supported. They deal with different questions in a very active and honest way. It is different in parliament, where individual lobbies are already at work and can intervene in decisions which concern them.

The influence of non-governmental organisations in decision-making processes is an important step towards more democratic decision-making and towards transparency of the work of the parliament.

In his opinion, the resolution of the meeting, which is the basis for further proposals, needs to be broadened by one point which would state that making decisions on all public affairs should be organised in such a way that this information will also be accessible to the public. Here he stressed the need for open information lines (Internet), and saw trouble in the fact that the parliament's information centre is subordinated to the government's information centre, which is a remainder from the old system.



A typical Pohorje landscape

Effectiveness can be claimed by those parliaments that find answers to the main social, environmental and economic issues of the society they are working for. This he connected to information, monitoring and transparency of work. He also made an outline of the history of the parliament, and stressed once again the need for a parliament to open up to non-governmental organisations and to citizens, if it really wants to work effectively.

In his opinion, solving the issue of environmental protection, a special topic of GLOBE, shows the way to more democratic political solutions. And although the term of office has expired for the current parliament, the purpose of this conversation is to outline forms of cooperation between members of parliament and non-governmental organisations and the people. This is also connected to the effectiveness of the parliament.

The next speaker was **MR NICOLASTAVITIAN**, EU, the representative of GLOBE from Brussels, a man extremely well acquainted with procedural work in different parliaments. He presented the tasks and the role of GLOBE. He stressed that the original idea was that the project of an open and effective parliament would last for one year, but he expressed the hope that similar meetings would be organised in future years, as it is necessary for the members of GLOBE to connect and to focus on individual issues and topics.

Integration with the EU is of great importance, especially to countries in transition, however, it can also sometimes be very unpleasant due to various pressures that are dangerous for the environment. He mentioned mad cow disease and warned that officials of the EU were well aware of the disease as early as the late 80's. He was sure that with appropriate handling at the very beginning, this problem would have been solved by now. A consequence of concealing the evidence is the now practically ruined market for bovine meat, handicapped agriculture and grave consequences for people's health.

He stressed once again that this meeting was very important and that through GLOBE and its members of parliament, Slovenia will transfer its ideas and suggestions to the European level and present them at the meeting on 5 and 6 December 1996 in Brussels.

Then followed greetings from the Minister of the Environment, **DR PAVEL GANTAR**, who spoke about the efforts of the government and of the Ministry to establish permanent connections with non-governmental organisations, and to include the latter in all the most important decisions connected with the environment in Slovenia, at least on the level of preparing decisions. DR GANTAR also enumerated some extreme situations, real restrictions which prevent the consideration of initiatives from non-governmental organisations. The Ministry would like to avoid this by forming a group of three people which would provide for this connection and work with the public. DR GANTAR also mentioned the financial means for non-governmental organisations, and the need for these organisations to be able to respond to mechanisms on how to include financial means in their activity.