

Project Update: December 2002

With great pleasure we would like to inform you that we held a successful and well attended gathering on 27th November, about the problems of bird protection in the Ulcinj salt plants.

We organized this gathering in cooperation with Ecological society Kalimero from Ulcinj and with the association of local hunters. Special guest at the meeting was Mr. Borut Rubinic, a member of the international organisation Eurogroup Against Bird Crime, national representative for the international organisation Ecomediterrania and local IBA (Important Bird Areas) coordinator for Secovlje Salt plants.

During the gathering we shared documents from previous projects which are directly related to birds and saltplant, in order to raise ecological consciousness of the hunters. These included a catalogue of hunted birds in Montenegro, which was written in cooperation with the Ministry in charge of hunting; a bird watching brochure on Ulcinj's salt plant, a leaflet about the Golden Eagle and the brochure on salt plants that was printed using our Rufford small grant.

The brochure was printed in both Montenegrin and Albanian languages as 90% of Ulcinj citizens are Albanians - we wanted to get closer to the local citizens.

Attending the meeting were around 100 citizens, hunters from Ulcinj's Hunting Society, representatives of saltplant board in Ulcinj and representatives of Ulcinj municipality.

After the introductory speech by the representative of the Hunting Society, director Mr. Meta Zenka, Mr. Darko Saveljic held a slide presentation of endangered bird species around the salt plant at Ulcinj and explained why hunting should be prohibited in the region and why pelicans and goose do not go together.

In his interesting speech Mr. Borut Rubinic talked about his impressions from his recent visit to the salt plant and about Slovenian experiences in the bird protection and salt plant itself. With great interest hunters watched his slide presentation showing how bird watching can be more profitable than hunting tourism and how this is having a positive impact on the birds of the Slovenian salt plant.

At the end, Mr. Borut Rubinic and Mr. Darko Saveljic answered questions from citizens and hunters. There was so much interest shown, and so many questions asked that we have had the impression that better days are coming for the birds in the salt plant region.