

AgroWeb Technical Consultation and Training

The workshop was organized for AgroWeb CEE Network member countries, to facilitate the improvement of the AgroWeb CEE initiative, as well as the FAO National Committees or the "[Member country] and FAO" pages that aim to improve the information exchange with FAO.

The event have been be organized by the FAO Subregional Office for Central and Eastern Europe in cooperation with the Croatian Academic and Research Network, as the 4th Workshop of the AgroWeb CEE Network.

Based on the initiative of the Czech, Hungarian, Polish and Slovak COAIM (1st Consultation on Agricultural Information Management - Rome, 5-7 June 2000) delegates, a series of technical discussions and workshops have been organized with the financial support of the FAO SEUR and the International Visegrad Fund. Utilising the expertise of the participating institutions and persons from the V4 countries, pilot developments have been carried out with the view of the future implementation by the other AgroWeb CEE Network members. Current workshop aimed to introduce the development and start the implementation of the achievements.

Detailed information about the V4 cooperation project can be found on the following Internet address: <http://v4.gak.hu>

The objectives of this Workshop were to

1. introduce the recent development of the "AgroWeb CEE Partnership in the V4 Countries" project,
2. discuss the possibilities of the implementation of the V4 results in the whole AW CEE Network,
3. develop strategies for future development of the Network's services,
4. promote the appropriate use of new information management and technology in the field of agriculture,
5. assist the countries in creating and publishing their FAO related information on the Internet,
6. promote new marketing and library related services linked to AW,
7. facilitate the communication between the Organization and the member countries,
8. propose preparations for presentation of the AW CEE Network on the 2nd COAIM, which will be held in Rome, 2002.

Mr Demes, FAO SEUR Information Systems Officer, was responsible for the management of the workshop, and gave a presentation on the CARNet Users' Conference as well about "**The Internet based information services of FAO and the IT/IM related activities of the FAO SEUR in the CEE region.**"

The following outcomes of the workshop were planned:

1. formulation of action plan and strategy for data and information management/ implementation of the V4 results;
2. web pages to be updated by the participants, together with plans for further development.

The Workshop had 22 participants from 16 AgroWeb CEE member countries: Albania, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Georgia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine and Yugoslavia.

FAO SEUR requested the cooperation of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Croatia and the Croatian Academic Research Network in order to organize the event as a satellite workshop of the CUC 2001 Conference, with the possibility of visiting the relevant sessions of the CUC Conference.

In their presentations, the participants introduced their activities, the recent development of their national AgroWeb and FAO related pages, their cooperation with their national authorities and institutions.

Hungary (Mr. Papocsi): introduced the achievement of the V4 project.

Proposed, that the data for the future V4 - in the future to be developed to AW CEE - database should be stored on one common server with good accessibility, security, stable connections, with support of on-line input. It could be possible to use GAK server for testing purposes.

Czech Republic (Ms. Silhova): The organization of the V4 workshop in Prague obtained strong support from the Czech FAO National Committee. The event also strengthened the good relationships between the Czech Republic and FAO SEUR. It is highly recommended to other participants to be open for organising similar events in their countries as it is a good way to promote international cooperation as well as to increase the prestige of the hosting institutions.

Poland (Ms. Dziuk-Renik): highlighted that the organisation of the V4 workshop in Warsaw did not mean difficulties. She recommend to all colleagues to invite outside participants (for example: information management professionals from agriculture research and education institutions) for certain presentations on AgroWeb CEE Network and FAO information activities to promote these for the national users. She agreed that the idea of organising a workshop and presentations as a satellite event is a good opportunity to promote the organisers.

The brochure "Agroweb CEE Network" promoting this initiative has been prepared by the Czech and Polish representatives with the support of Hungarian participants. This brochure will be finalised within October 2001 and will be disseminated to each participating countries.

The participants accepted the proposal to publish the brochure on the national AgroWeb pages.

Slovakia (Mr. Kovac): the V4 promotional CD will be finalised during October and each AgroWeb CEE partner will be provided five copies for dissemination in their own

countries. AgroWeb forum is now available on the Internet (www.uvtip.sk/english/awsk/msg) promoting discussion possibility for the outside users of AW CEE.

Albania (Mr. Hetoja): as far as Albania is concerned, there is no domain for agriculture or forestry related issues. The FAO Technical Assistance Office in Tirana have designed a web site for forestry sector (which is stored in the servers of one of Albanian ISP service providers). Thus, it is extremely important to create and publish AgroWeb Albania.

(Mr. Kromidha and Mr. Hetoja): It is advisable to add information about forestry to AW CEE pages some. Albanian participants have experience in this respect and probably they might assist as a leading edge for other CEE countries. This idea has to be further developed during the upcoming workshop to be held in Tirana in November 2001.

Latvia (Mrs. Dobelnice): the AW Latvia pages are being updated by Mrs. Petrova and pretty soon they will implement the standard AgroWeb CEE design layout. Some of the links for info sites are available only in Latvian language. Needs to be emphasised that the Latvian fishery web pages are very well designed and maintained.

Remark from Mr. Demes (FAO SEUR): lack of cooperation between the Baltic countries. This cooperation should be improved in conjunction with the BOVA and Agroweb authors from the Baltic countries.

Lithuania and Latvia expressed their willingness to organise a workshop for AW authors of the Baltic countries in Lithuania.

Country and FAO as well as FAO National Committees' webpages have been analysed and discussed. Czech FAO-NC pages are considered to be the best and most informative so far.

General remarks and recommendations to all:

- All jumping pages to institutions should be annotated.
- The AgroWeb CEE pages - even in national languages have to maintain similar AgroWeb standard design layout, however they can be different in content and services - hopefully richer in up-to-date information. First innovations have already been made by Russian and Slovakian AgroWeb sites.
- The buttons linked to FAO NC pages, have to be changed to Country and FAO in the cases when the actual country has no FAO National Committee.
- It is recommended that all AW members should create Country and FAO pages.

Romania: (Mrs. Popa) proposed to involve some representatives of the NC in the maintenance of the pages in order to let the promotional efforts be more smoothly going on.

Yugoslavia (Mr. Zvicer): the first task is to seek and establish cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and also with FAO Emergency Coordinator placed in Belgrade (Mr. Biggar).

Georgia (Mr. Zviad Sulaberidze): AW CEE members from the Caucasus region are looking forward to improve the cooperation between Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan,

and find a possibility to create their AgroWeb database on a common server.

SEUR (Ms. Pocza): gave a presentation about the library related services and information resources of FAO and FAO SEUR. She recommended to create a link on all AW CEE English language pages to the World Food Summit Five Years Later and World Food Day sites of FAO. A summary of the official promotional document should be translated to national languages and published on the AW network national language sites.

Presentation of AW CEE Network activities will be prepared for the COAIM 2, 2002. AgroWeb CEE authors expressed their willingness to participate that event and their willingness to contribute with their presentations.

Russia, Belarus and Ukraine (Mr. Kramchaninov, Ms. Sivurova, Mr. Sivurov and Mr. Bagrin): Recommendation: AgroWeb CEE authors of these countries expressed their willingness to organise a workshop in Minsk, Belarus. This workshop should aim the strengthening of relations between the countries using Cyrillic, in the development of AW pages not only in English but especially the national language versions.

Croatia (Igor Hitrec): Introduction of the Farm data information network initiative, and the possible cooperation with AgroWeb (www.fdin.agr.hr).

Five countries have been selected to participate in the evaluation period, these are Croatia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Latvia and Hungary.

At the end of the workshop the participants formulated and accepted the conclusions and recommendations of the workshop.

The participants presented the level of agricultural information network in their countries and discussed their experience in maintenance and development of AgroWeb CEE network. They learned about the recent achievements of the V4 project and its contribution to enhancement of cooperation within the CEE sub-region and FAO.

During the workshop particular attention was drawn to the following activities:

1. Improvements to several AgroWeb pages, (e.g. AW Latvia).
2. Improvements and corrections of several [Country] and FAO pages.
3. All participants contributed in the discussion and finalisation of the workshop presentation pages.
4. Participants discussed further steps and follow-up of the workshop.
5. During the workshop the RC gave a brief presentation about the World Food Day 2001, the TeleFood and the WFS FYL event.

Participants all contributed with their recommendations related to the further development of the AW CEE Network.

1. General remarks and recommendations:
 - All jumping pages to institutional information should be annotated.
 - The AgroWeb CEE pages - even in national languages have to maintain similar AgroWeb standard design layout, however they can be different in content and

- services - hopefully richer in up-to-date information. Russian and Slovakian AgroWeb sites have already made first innovations.
- The buttons linked to FAO NC pages have to be changed to [Country] and FAO in the cases when the score country has no FAO National Committee.
 - It is recommended that all AW members should create [Country] and FAO pages.
2. The data for the V4 database should be stored on one common server with good accessibility, security, and stable connections, with support of on-line input. It is possible to use GAK, Hungary server for testing purposes.
 3. The future AW CEE database could be created progressively by extending the data with additional countries' data sets.
 4. The cooperation between the Baltic countries' AW authors has to be developed, this cooperation should be improved in conjunction with the BOVA and AgroWeb authors from the Baltic countries. Lithuania and Latvia expressed their willingness to organise a workshop for AW authors of the Baltic countries in Lithuania.
 5. Representatives of the NC should be involved in the creation and update of the FAO NC pages, when it is possible.
 6. AW CEE members from the Caucasus region are looking forward to improve the cooperation between Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, and find a possibility to create their AgroWeb database on a common server.
 7. Participants from Russia, Belarus and Ukraine expressed their willingness to organise a workshop in Minsk, Belarus. This workshop should aim the strengthening of relations between the countries using Cyrillic, in the development of AW pages, especially the national language versions.
 8. The World Food Day and TeleFood related FAO sites should be directly linked to the AW CEE main pages, all national events related to the WFD should be promoted on the AW pages. A summary of the official promotional document should be translated to national languages and published on the AW network national language sites.
 9. AgroWeb CEE authors expressed their willingness to participate the 2nd COAIM event, and agreed to contribute with their presentations.
1. The "AgroWeb CEE Network" promotional brochure will be published online, and will be linked to all AW CEE pages.
 2. Possible cooperation and harmonization of AgroWeb and the marketing information systems has to be examined during the MIS workshop to held in Prague, December 2001, in cooperation with GTZ/ZMP and FAO.
 3. The possibility of linking national forestry-related information to the AW pages should be examined. This idea has to be further discussed during the upcoming workshop to be held in Tirana in November 2001.