

The IENE network: objectives and activities

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The IENE network was founded in 1996 as a non-political, formalized network of experts on ecology and transportation. It is a community of practise providing an independent arena for exchange of knowledge, experience, ideas etc., and it aims at fostering collaboration for a safer and sustainable transport infrastructure. The main efforts of the period 1998-2003 have been summarized in the publication “COST action 341: Habitat Fragmentation due to Transportation Infrastructure”. In 2003 the network has coined the expression “road ecology”, during the ICOET conference in Colorado. After a period of inactivity the network has then re-started its activities with the workshop held in Nyiregyhaza, Hungary, 9-12.04.2008. Its reactivation was strongly supported by the Swedish Transport Administration and its secretariat was set up in the headquarters of the Swedish Biodiversity Centre (CALLUNA). A steering committee was elected and a new statute was developed. Its new structure was therefore based on a basic general assembly made of individual memberships, and of an elected steering group. The IENE network is steadily growing, having now reached 360 members from 50 countries from all over the world.

After 2008 four international conferences have already been developed, and the next two are being planned (the upcoming one will take place in The Netherlands in 2018). At each conference a Declaration is produced focusing in a topic that requires particular attention. Moreover the IENE network experts are involved in providing consultancy and advice for planning and policy issues, and it is appointed as official observer at the Bern Convention. In addition, the network is periodically issuing technical handbooks to provide support to the different authorities, conservationists, researchers etc.

IENE is now facing a number of important challenges: Define sustainable boundaries / goals applied to Roads and Railways and mitigation strategies; develop strategic masterplans, multi-national/national and regional Transport plans; develop models, tools and guidelines for mitigation activities; Educate, Inform and Advice.

Finally, IENE has set up a joint venture on scientific publications about Ecology and Transportation, aiming to 1. establish a joint platform for publishing scientific papers from conferences and workshops, 2. support cross-disciplinary access and dissemination, 3. enhance the quality of research and data acquisition and 4. increase evidence-based knowledge.