



KNOWING YOUR NEIGHBOURS

January/February 2009



GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOUR

This newsletter is one part of the project financed by EYF next to the website (described at the page 15). The main aim of this project is to increase the interconnection of youth organizations from different countries and to facilitate the communication among them.

We want to encourage you to treat YEE publications as a place where your organisations can post information about their activities, their aims, actions, call for partners, etc. The potential readers are youth people working or participating in organizations, youth workers, trainers, facilitators, as well every individuals that will be interesting so it is worth to share with them your knowledge and experience. For every issue we would like to collect articles and have contribution from many various organisations from different regions, from people with different backgrounds in order to give as many points of view as possible. We hope that our newsletter will enable the youth to have more information, documentation and that it will increase the strengthening of youth organizations and youth participation in different activities. We want to help to interconnect the network and facilitate the transmission among the organizations and particulars. We hope that thanks to these publications more organisations and individuals will be involved in the activities of the youth organizations and in the federation and will be willing to share information, experience and ideas.

This publication are for you to publish all the campaigns, actions and other activities that your organisations are doing.



The aim of this publication is to increase the communication among the public interested in environmental youth activities, as well to serve like an environmental information source. So use this chance and send us reports from activities you made, pictures from them, plans for future actions, calls for partners, articles about environmental topics, about issues that your organisations are dealing with, presentation of your organisation. Let the people know what you are doing, others already are doing it!

Start to get to know your neighbour with the issue you are holding in your hands and help us with continuing our project by writing articles for next issues.

So write us at:
info@yeenet.eu

Hallo, dear YEEers!!!

Happy 2009!!!

On behalf of YEE team, I would like to greet you all with the start of the New Year and wish you a very productive 2009. YEE wishes you all a very fruitful and eventful time and most sincerely hopes that all your endeavours will be completed successfully!

The year of 2009 will highlight a lot of vital environmental issues concerning Climate Change, Sustainable Development or various Renewable Energy campaigns and bring them even closer to the public's attention. It is important for YEE and its Member Organizations to take the chance and have their input, contributing with actions, demonstrations, petitions and participating in any other way and form they want, in an effort to further influence the future development of the respective matters.

Being part of big environmental networks such as the European Environmental Bureau or one of the biggest youth platforms in Europe such as the European Youth Forum, YEE Member Organizations have a great opportunity to be represented on key environmental events like COP15 or CSD. It is a chance that we, as international environmental organization, should not ignore or miss, but coordinate our efforts in bringing change and simply act on it.

Let's bring change together and strengthen youth participation in high level environmental events that will have a strong impact on our lives and our future!!!

Lili Deyanova
YEE External Relations Officer/Vice-Chair

Review from the YEE Board Meeting 28–30.11.2008, Prague, Toulcuv Dvur

At the end of November the new YEE Board together with office staff prepared the first physical Board Meeting. All Board members elected at Annual Meeting in Romania came to Prague to meet and discuss crucial topics together with office people (Secretary General and EVSes).

The following main themes were put on the agenda:

- 1) How to improve the work of the Board?
- 2) YEE Projects
- 3) Discussion about the next Annual Meeting
- 4) Restructuralisation of YEE
- 5) Strategies
- 6) External affairs



These are the main decisions that were taken:

Dealing with the first point, we started with a brainstorming on the Board working problems. Then we discussed, how to improve mentioned areas. We thought mainly about coordination of our work using electronic tools such as Google Agenda and Board members' calendar of important events. Proposed techniques will be fully used with the new YEE webpage creation (February 2009) that will also include the internal website. We decided to involve our assistant offi-

cers and volunteers to help Board members with their tasks. The important decision that was made was to prepare a training to train the next Board directly after Annual Meeting.

For the project topic, there was the demand from the office to help with writing applications for the 1st February deadline. People who would need help were asked to let it know in advance, so that the office could better plan the time and forces needed. This would avoid the problem with the office overloaded with unexpected work just few days before the deadline.



It was confirmed that we are going to organise the next Annual Meeting in Spain. Several places proposed by Marta and Alejandro from Oro Verde were virtually checked and discussed. We chose two best options. Final decision was postponed till we



know exact budget of both places (later done via email, see more in the AM call sent from the office).

We decided to prepare VISA guidelines to help people coming from non-EU countries to obtain VISA easier. Then we decided to prepare detailed information about YEE and its rules of procedures: what are rights and obligations, activities during Annual Meeting... So representatives could be better prepared for the meeting.

The important topic of YEE re-structuralisation proposed by Secretary General was discussed the second day. Six from seven BMs agreed that we need to change YEE working structure in a radical way.

We have found the contemporary state unsustainable – Board members as volunteers spread around Europe are not able to fulfill their tasks properly, they naturally focus on their daily needs and needs of their organisations as priority and they have a lack of time, energy and experience to handle all their responsibilities. The Bertos' proposal aims to shift executive tasks to the office, so that Board members can focus mainly on the policy work, creating “legislative frame” for the work, and direct it. It will need a lot of work for the Board in the beginning - to create rules needed and adapt them to a new situation - but it can be very productive in next years and it can make the situation much more stable.

Brechts' idea was to use a potential of Working groups to broaden their tasks and try to keep them working during the year. The idea of Interest groups that can help to implement some cross-cutting topics (such as external relations or media work) was proposed as well.

We established a group responsible for the changes summa-

risation and for the adaptation of Statutes, Rules of Procedures and other documents. We will discuss proposed changes again at next physical Board Meeting in the middle of March.

During the last AM in Romania we have developed strategies for our work in next two years. During the Board Meeting we had to divide tasks and specify more our roles and targets. Next to many other things, we decided to make a web Forum alive, to encourage

members to write articles (prepare a training) and to work on the promotional movie preparation. The last two ideas are projects proposed for 2010 working plan.

Then we decided to simplify External relations decision, so that affairs that are urgent can be decided by majority of voting people within 5 days. The responsibility for the policy implementation is on the External relations officer.



Now, I hope that you have a better picture of the role of YEE Board. I want to add that democratic procedural rules learned at TC in Sweden last June were followed along the whole meeting and that it was a pleasure to be together and move with those important themes.



However, two months after the Board meeting we can see the lack of consistency of the Board work very well. The example with projects could be used to illustrate how are tasks of people, Board members and assistant officers transferred to YEE office that was once again overloaded with non-announced work.

The need of restructuralisation of YEE is there and urgent. I can say, from my personal point of view, that it is inevitable to change our organisational structure and mechanisms, so that we will be able to respond on ongoing changes, to be proactive and not to waste our time in situations that ask for

powerful actions. In next weeks we will focus on preparation of these changes, so all documents could be ready for next AM in Spain.

We will keep you informed about all our progress. Youth and Environment Europe, YEE, is your federation. We have just celebrated 25 years. The common object of our efforts, our only planet Earth and its amazing life is endangered more then ever before. We need to join our forces and become once again a strong player in local, national and international level. And I am sure that we can do it.

Michal Ruman
Chair of YEE

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Council of Europe

As one of the part of the work of YEE is to help youth organisations, in this new section we will publish information about grants and donors that could be beneficial also for your organisation.

The first chapter will be dedicated to the funding opportunities that the **Council of Europe, COE**, gives to the youth organisations.

In the COE in the **Department of Youth and Sport, DYS** we can find three mechanisms:

- European Youth Foundation
- Mobility found
- European Youth Centre

The European Youth Foundation:

<http://www.eyf.coe.int/fej/>

The European Youth Foundation (EYF) is a fund established in 1972 by the Council of Europe to provide financial support for European youth activities. It has an annual budget of approximately 3 million Euros.

Its purpose is to encourage co-operation among young people in Europe by providing financial support to such European youth activities which serve the promotion of peace, understanding and co-operation in a spirit of respect for the Council of Europe's fundamental values such as human rights, democracy, tolerance and solidarity.

The EYF thus provides financial support to the following types of activities undertaken by non-governmental youth organisations



COUNCIL
OF EUROPE

CONSEIL
DE L'EUROPE

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

or networks or by other non-governmental structures involved in areas of youth work relevant to the Council of Europe's youth policies and work:

- educational, social, cultural and humanitarian activities of a European character;
- activities aiming at strengthening peace and co-operation in Europe;
- activities designed to promote closer co-operation and better understanding among young people in Europe, particularly by developing the exchange of information;
- activities intended to stimulate mutual aid in Europe and in the developing countries for cultural, educational and social purposes;
- Studies, research and documentation on youth matters.

The EYF is divided in four categories:

Category A: For Training Courses, seminars, youth exchanges, conferences, etc.

Category B: For Publications, Campaigns, Use of the new technologies.

Category C and C Bis: Adminis-

trative grant for networks (C) and for organisations that wants to implement a new network

Category D and D-HRE: For Pilot projects and D-HRE for projects based in Human Right Education

The deadlines to apply are:

- For Category A and B – 1st of April for projects starting in the first half of the next year and 1st of October for projects starting the second half of the next year.
- For Category C – 1st of February for the incoming year.
- For Category D – three months before the start of the project.

Budget:

- For Category A and B the EYF covers a maximum of 2/3 of the total budget.

- For Category C you should have at least one grant approved for the year that you are asking for. The amount of this grant depends of many aspects: projects approved, budget of the organisation, people employed, etc. So is quite hard to guess how much you will receive.

- For Category D you have a maximum amount that the EYF

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is giving and it is 7500 Euros, always having the rule that at least 1/3 is coming from other sources.

How to apply?

You should go to the website of the EYF: <http://www.eyf.coe.int/fej/> and register your organisation there, after this your application will be analyzed by the EYF Secretariat. If the response is positive you will have the username and password that will allow you to go inside of the website in order to start to apply for your projects.

The system is really easy and it is one of the most ecological foundations when considering the process of sending applications forms, due

to the fact that all is done through internet, there is no need to print documents to apply for the projects. You have to do it just when you will send the final report, together with the copies of the originals invoices.

If you are applying for more than one project you must prioritize your applications. This is including also the European Youth Center.

Priorities:

The EYF has diverse priorities in the youth field, the last two years these priorities are being adopted for each upcoming year. You can check them in the website of the EYF.

Mobility found

<http://www.eyf.coe.int/fsmj/>

The Council of Europe and the International Union of Railways (UIC) joined forces on 16 December 1994 to set up the Solidarity Fund for Youth Mobility, a fund for the mobility of disadvantaged young people.

For every Inter Rail Card sold, one EURO will be donated by the International Union of Railways

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to the funding of projects involving Europe's young and least well off persons, enabling them to attend international activities, taking them on journeys of cross-cultural contact and discovery.

The fund caters solely for young people from underprivileged backgrounds or economically underdeveloped areas and is intended to cover the rail travel (2nd class) of these young people participating in international educational activities. It does not assist tourist travel. To qualify for assistance, projects must involve at least two countries and a minimum of ten people.

The system of applying is similar to the EYF. You should register in the website in order to have a password and be able to apply for it. There is the same rule about funding maximum 2/3 of the total project and the deadline is one month before the project starts.

European Youth Centre

<http://www.eycb.coe.int/>

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/EYC/Strasbourg_en.asp#TopOfPage

The European Youth Centres (EYCs) in Strasbourg and Budapest are permanent structures for the implementation of the Council of Europe's youth policy. They are international training and meeting centres with residential facilities, hosting mainly the youth sector's activities. They provide a flexible and modern working environment for international activities, with meeting rooms equipped for simultaneous interpretation, information centres, audio-visual and computer facilities.



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The European Youth Centres run an annual programme of 40 to 50 activities in close co-operation with non-governmental youth organisations (NGYOs). These organisations, some 40 of which co-operate regularly with the EYCS, represent a wide diversity of interests: political parties, socio-educational and religious youth groups, rural youth movements, trade union and young workers' organisations, children's organisations and environmental networks.

Which activities can be implemented there?

Week-long international youth seminars (called study sessions) bring together members of youth organisations and experts for discussions on a wide variety of subjects. International youth organisations can apply for such activities, it is the applying organisation(s) or association(s) which suggests the subject of the study session and, if the application is approved by the Programming Committee, chooses the participants and plans the programme in co-operation with the European Youth Centre. Applications for study sessions should suggest subjects directly related to the work priorities of the Directorate

of Youth and Sport:

- Non-formal education
- Human rights education
- Youth participation
- South-East Europe

What is covered?

The youth centres provide youth organisations with a meeting place, board and lodging, travel costs, interpretation and preparation costs of holding "study sessions", and 4 to 7 day long seminars on issues relevant to the Council of Europe's youth work. So the organisers just need to take care of the economical aspects, or technical arrangements, due to the fact that all other things are provided by the center.

How to apply?

You have two deadlines, the same as for the EYF 1st of April and 1st of October. To apply you should download the application form from the youth centres and send it by email or by post.

If you want more information about these funding opportunities or you have some questions you can also contact us to info@yeenet.eu

Alberto Mogio Perez
Secretary General of YEE

Do you know your neighbours?

Yes – great! Do you want to know them better? No – so here you have a chance to start to know them. Do you have enough of mails in your account?

So from YEE and thanks to the main support of the European Youth Foundation, we will develop a new website, where youth organisations can post their own news about their projects, look for partners, search for information, share your best practices, get to know better other people from different countries and be involved in international youth work meanwhile you are helping the environment.

This new website will be structured in internal and external website where you will have all the chances that we were mentioning before. In the main page you will have information about publications, things that you can do for the environment, calls for partners, information about environmental organisations, practical things that you could do by your own to protect the environment, links and news. The internal webpage, will have forums, a database where you will be able to find information about different youth topics, managing the organisations, share documents that you want to show to the people, experts from different fields.

The system will be developed like a wiki page, so all the people can post their information.

All your comments are more than welcome! You can already send the information that you want to start to share, details of your organisation that wants to be there.

Alberto Mogio Perez
Secretary General of YEE

Stepanavan Youth Center



The SYC was established in October 2001 by active young people of Stepanavan with the aim to assist in the development of their home town and country. Starting from the local projects throughout the years SYC has become a link between regional youth in Armenia, not only creating opportunities for young people from different towns and villages of the country to work together, get information and education they need, but also building bridges for them to connect their peers worldwide.

The mission of the SYC is to promote active youth citizenship and youth participation in addressing social, cultural and environmental issues in local communities organizing trainings, consultations, special projects, campaigns, spreading information and providing possibilities for exchange of information and competences with their peers. Projects in all spheres of activities of the SYC are directed to the involvement of young people in their community, promotion of their active participation and development of youth volunteerism and leadership. The main five spheres

of activities are cultural exchanges, social development and peace building, environmental actions, leadership and volunteerism and information accessibility. While concentrating on local issues and challenges, we are actively working with international actors. Our main goals are to assist in the exchange of experience, knowledge and skills of young people from Stepanavan and Armenia with their peers across the world, increase information accessibility and opportunities for cultural exchange.

2008 has been a year of activeness, cooperation and volunteerism for SYC. Several youth exchanges, seminars, trainings and events took place on local, national and international levels. Here are some examples.



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Cultural Exchange

Explosion of cultural events organized by SYC allowed about 1500 people from Lori region to participate and 200 young people to get directly involved in projects related to children theatre performance, international dance concert, music and dance festival, national art and craft exhibition, European myth and legends show, food festival, Polish national day, puppet theatre show and anti-drug theatre performance.



Social development and Peace Building

The social projects of SYC covered peace building initiatives, minority and anti drug seminars. Photography, art and theatre have been the tools used for addressing those issues.

NGOs PRESENTATIONS

GLOW project

The 2008 has been the start of a new national project Girls Leading Our World. This is an ongoing project aiming to provide education, empowerment and connections to 13-17 years old girls from regions of Armenia. The topics covered by the program are leadership, peer education, healthy lifestyle, gender issues, career building, and self understanding. A six day summer school, peer educational sessions, regional sessions, and GLOW newsletter are the components of the project. So far about 300 girls have benefited from the project.

For more information check the website:

www.stepanavanyouthcenter.org

Lilit Simonyan
SYC, Armenia



Luonto Liitto - Nature League **The voice of the environment**



Luonto-Liitto - Nature League - is a Finnish environmental and nature studies organisation for children, youth and young adults. Nature League was founded in 1943, and it is a politically independent organisation.

Finnish forestry has been hailed as the best in the world. You may also have heard that clear cutting is no longer practised in Finland, that old-growth forests are protected and that forestry has become so environmentally friendly that endangered species are no longer threatened. Do not believe everything you hear.

While the forestry industry, authorities and landowners, in pursuit of economic benefit, present issues in a favourable light, ecologists and researchers warn of a wave of extinctions threatening old-growth forest species. Valuable pristine forests with giant trees hundreds of years old are even at this very moment being logged around Finland. Besides destroying forests here at home, multinational corporations based in Finland also participate in the mass destruction taking place in

the tropical rainforests. Because of all this, Nature League's forest action group vigilantly monitors the state of forests, points out wrongdoings – and achieves results.

Wolf conservation has failed, even though the wolf is classified as a highly endangered species in Finland. Despite slandered conservation measures, the wolf population has not grown. Poaching is unfortunately a commonplace occurrence. Is it impossible for wolves and humans to coexist peacefully? The most important single measure in wolf conservation is keeping the existing wolf packs intact. Only in a coherent pack can wolves hunt their natural prey, such as elk and deer.

Nature League's wolf action group strives to spread factual information about the wolf as a social and family-oriented animal, to influence attitudes and to reduce unnecessary fear and hate of wolves. The group has participated in the building of fences to protect domestic animals from wolves and organised, among other things, trail excursions in Finland and abroad.

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The Baltic Sea is the largest brackish water basin in the world. The ecosystem of this on average rather shallow body of water is delicate and fragile. A continuous overload of nutrients has left large tracts of seabed devoid of oxygen and increased the amount of poisonous cyanobacteria. Nature League campaigns for a cleaner Baltic Sea!

The aforementioned are but a few reasons for why we do not feel that all is well with nature in Finland. The situation will not improve if we fool ourselves into thinking that government action and economic growth will solve our problems. Environmental protection is no fashionable fad. Nature League has been around since 1943 – and will be needed far into the future.

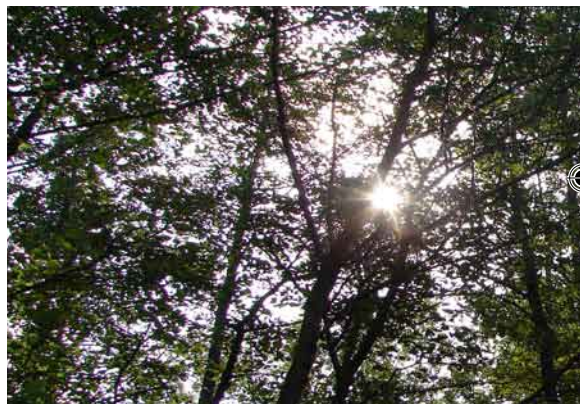
What does Nature League do?

Nature League includes everything from hiking crews and nature clubs to youth action groups and anti-consumption activists. In summer, Nature League organises camps for youth and children, during which we study nature, learn wilderness skills and go hiking. Some camps have special themes, such as the Baltic Sea, international co-operation, or environmental art.

Voluntary work camps are organised to help restore national parks and build fences to protect domestic animals from wolves.

Environmental education – an important link to the future

Nature League offers a wide variety of nature studies and environmental activities for children and youth. Hundreds of nature clubs for children meet weekly around



Finland. Club members experience nature in new and valuable ways, and acquire information about the natural world and the environment. Tens of camps, open to all children and youth interested in nature, are organised every summer. In addition to clubs and camps, Nature League also arranges environmental education courses and trains nature club leaders. Nature League produces new environmental edu-

cation material and ideas for activities for clubs, day-care centres and schools. Nature League also publishes two magazines for its members: Nuorten Luonto and Sieppo.

Nature League's environmental action and policy work

Nature League spreads information, campaigns, organizes theme days, provides training and education, demonstrates, and com-



municates with policymakers. It also monitors the implementation of environmental legislation and informs about possible offences. Representatives of Nature League are also invited as experts to various committees and working groups. Nature League is committed to non-violent action.

Nature League in a nutshell:

- Finland's largest environmental

and nature studies organisation for under thirty-year old young people

- National head office in Helsinki, regional offices around the country

- Around 8000 members

- Youth organisation of the Finnish Association for Nature Conservation

- Organises, among other things, nature clubs, camps and courses, and produces material for environmental education. Some material is presented in schools by young activists.

- Main areas of expertise are environmental education for children and youth and environmental policy work in the fields of, e.g., forestry, eco-friendly consumerism (organises Buy Nothing day each year), predator conservation, and watercourse issues

- Politically independent

This year 2009 we are planning to organize childrens camps, keep on working with forest issues, publish consumption critical comics and we are going to save the Baltic sea.

HK Hellsten

sec. of environmental issues

Luonto-Liitto / Nature League,
Finland

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Naturschutzjugend (NAJU) im Naturschutzbund Deutschland - Youth Association for the Protection of Nature

NAJU is the biggest environmental organisation for young people in Germany. It offers a framework for children and young adults aged 6 to 27 to protect nature and the environment within a federal structure.

The emphasis of NAJU's activities lies on environmental education and practical nature conservation. Teenagers and young adults participate in exiting competitions. The biggest is the annual competition "Erlebter Frühling" (Spring Alive). Here classes from over 5000 Germany schools or environmental groups are invited to create own projects, artworks or actions

according the each years chosen topic.

Furthermore, focussed on teenagers and using the internet as a common communication platform NAJU offers the opportunity to improve knowledge and skills through online competitions.

In partnership with the "dsj-Deutsche Sportjugend" (Youth Sports Association Germany), NAJU members investigate the impact of various sports on our natural environment: the co-operation program called "JUUS- Jugend für Umwelt und Sport" (Youth for Environment and Sports) provides several actions bringing together members of both organisations.

Besides several local actions the NAJU is working internationally as well! NAJU arranges international exchanges in which teenagers and young adults gain valuable experience about people, culture and natural habitats in partner countries. If you want to get in action NAJU surely provides you with a lot more ways to participate! You are more than welcome to join the



open working groups (AK/ Arbeitskreise) like AK International or AK Climate). Here you will find the perfect base for creating new projects and find friends who will help to realize everything.

Interested? You will find more about our program and activities on: **www.naju.de**.

Knowing that keeping in touch is always very hard the NAJU AK International created an own social network: www.eurotope.ning.com!

You are already a member of a social network? For example you have MySpace profile? The NAJU as well! You can add www.myspace.com/naju_internationales to your friend list! We are really looking forward to get to know you!

What's going on right now?

- The NAJU Headquarter in Berlin happily welcomes the new executive secretary Dietmar Pühler who started his work the first of February.

- The international youth exchange with a group of young Kyrgyz will take

place this year in Berlin and Brandenburg from 25th of July to 8th of August. You

are welcome

to join! Please see: www.naju.de/projekte/internationales or contact Juliane Rosin: juliane.rosin@naju.de

- The new program "Be(e) in contact" started. Supporting school classes or environmental groups to produce their own honey, the participants will get to know much more about bees and how to protect them.

- The next youth-campaign is already under way. Youth and young adults all over Germany may take part in the one-year campaign called "Wi.L.D-Wildes Land Deutschland" (Wild Land Germany). Within an online competition the undertaken actions for nature conservation are going to be evaluated and rated. We are working hard so soon you will have a chance to participate on www.wild-will-dich.de



Juliane Rosin
International Affairs
NAJU Headquarter, Germany

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Study Session on “What is Renewable Energy”

SAEM (Georgia Youth Eco-Movement) is constantly organizing different activities, for interested youth!

On 24th of October of 2008, SAEM organized the study session in Tbilisi secondary school №31 for its pupils on What is Renewable Energy.

Volunteers and board members of SAEM aware with this topic, read a short concise and answered to the questions, during the session several power point presentations and videos, where demonstrated.

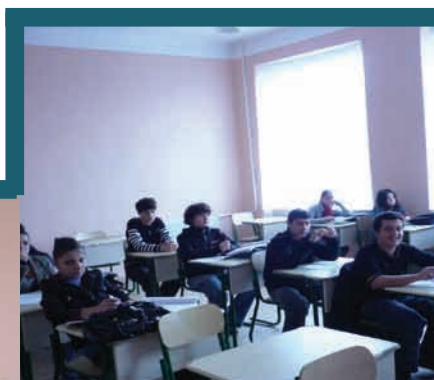
In future SAEM is planning to

continue educational programs for interested youth of different educational institutions in different regions of Georgia.

Members of SAEM who took part in Study Session:

Dmitri Kopitov (Head of Tbilisi Office), Gayane Muradova (International Secretary), Aleksander Arutinyats (Communications and Liaisons Officer), Vladinir Katamadze, Nikoloz Varshalomidze

Project coordinator: Dmitri Kopitov



Solar Panels on the School's Roof

In 2007, Environmental Organization **“Little Earth”** began implementation of activities in the field of energy saving in a remote mountainous village Labijai, Jamoat Karatag, Tursunzade District (**Tajikistan**). Local comprehensive secondary school became one of the first target objects in the village.

Last year the school was heat-insulated – specialists from “Little Earth” installed double-glazed windows, made the back wall of the school building waterproof, constructed a roof drainage system and heat insulated the doors. These measures made it possible to raise the temperature inside the classrooms, create a more favorable atmosphere, lessen firewood consumption (for heating during the cold season), and consequently reduce the smoke pollution inside the premises.

Another problem, which the schoolchildren and teachers faced, was lack of light inside the class-

rooms. Small windows did not allow sufficient daylight inside the premises, whereas during grey days it became completely dark inside. There is no access to central power transmission line, as there are no own sources of independent electric power. Therefore, it was impossible to accomplish the set task in a traditional way. Alternative sources of energy came to the



rescue.

In May 2008, a lighting system operating on solar energy was installed in the school. Solar panels with a capacity of 100 watts were placed on the school roof. Electrical power generated by the panels

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accumulates in two batteries and is then used for lighting of two classrooms and teachers' room. Luminous tube lamps, each having a capacity of 36 watts, are used in all rooms.

If there is no sunlight, the accumulated energy is enough to use electric light for 10 hours.

In the teachers room there is one socket installed, which may be used for operating low-power equipment.

"It's like a miracle for us", - says the school headmaster Azizov Jabbor, - "we do not have electricity in our village at all, but in the school we can use light and even other equipment, all by virtue of solar energy."

The batteries and lamps, which were installed in the school, are available at local markets and may be replaced if necessary. Solar panels are long-lasting and can be

faultlessly operational for several decades. In order to ease handling of the equipment and the system, a brief operation manual in Russian and Tajik languages was prepared for the school administration. In addition, the school administration and the environmental organization "Little Earth" will be monitoring the functioning of the system.

Installation and use of solar panels in school buildings is one of the first projects in Tajikistan, which became possible thanks to support of Norwegian Society for the Conservation of Nature.

This technology is yet fairly expensive in the context of the Republic, however, constant rise of prices for energy resources and electric power, fuel deficiency, and the issues of environment preservation will push the government and the private sector to progressively use renewable, independent and environmentally friendly energy sources.

For detailed information please contact:

Timur Idrisov,
SPARE national coordinator
"Little Earth", Tajikistan
e-mail: forearth@yandex.ru





CEEweb Training Course

CEEweb for Biodiversity is the network of nature conservation organizations from Central and East European countries that was established to protect the biological heritage of the region. „The mission of CEEweb for Biodiversity is the conservation of biodiversity through the promotion of sustainable development.“ People who are willing to help are invited to the following working groups: Rural Development, CITES, Natura 2000, Sustainable Tourism, Policy WG. For more information check: **www.ceeweb.org**

YEE is the member of this network and that is why I was invited for the training course (TC) for CEEweb Office and the collaborators that took place at the beginning of December 2008 in Budapest. TC consisted of two main parts: “Project planning and coordination” and “Motivation and management of inactive target groups” – the topics that are important for every NGO.

We started with the model of personal efficiency taken from the

book of Stephen R. Covey “The 7 habits of highly effective people” and we learnt that the most important is to have the proactive approach in every activity you start. This is the attitude of people who feel responsibility for every work they do and they start every activity with optimism.

We were working as well with the topic of better time management – we were checking how to



prioritize activities you have to do every day and how to concentrate on those that are important but not urgent (such as future planning, team-building, coaching) However, the latter are the most important to make organization working

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well but they are often forgotten because of too big amount of daily, urgent things.

The other important topic was communication that is important not only for organizations networks but also for every day work. We named axioms of communication and through activities we were practicing how to deal with communication problems. The topic of communication led us to define types of problems and solutions for them. We learnt that steps of solving problems should be: identification, analysis, alternatives, decision, implementation, review, feedback.

Every topic was accompanied by interesting observations, problem analysis, examples from our experience and interesting games helping us to understand the clue of the problem and giving us the possibility to find different strategies and methods for

dealing with the task.

I think these kind of training methods, non-formal education are useful for every NGO to improve its work and to realize weak points.

If your organization is interested in improving its work you can check on the internet the following tools, which we were learning and using during the TC:

- Book of Stephen R.Covey: "The 7 habits of highly effective people"
- Eisenhower matrix – used for better time management
- Problem tree/Goal tree – used for problem solving
- Logical Framework matrix, SMART analysis, SWOT analysis, Fishbone model – used for project planning

Małgorzata Zubowicz
YEE

“European Citizenship - Environment and Sustainable Development”

The “European Citizenship - Environment and Sustainable Development” project was realized by the common efforts of Regional Movement **“Ecosouthwest”** and Municipality Nevestino, sponsored by the Youth in Action Programme. There were 10 participants aged between 16 and 22 years old, coming from various cities in the region. Most of them are students majoring in Environmental Studies, but some are still in high-school. The project had two main parts: a week long seminar on European Citizenship and a follow-up part with regular meetings of the participants in the project with the local authorities in Nevestino, working together on the creation and development of another project.

The project itself aimed at introducing the participants with their rights and responsibilities in the Union as well as at acquainting them with the history, culture and traditions of Municipality Nevestino, where the project took place. They had the chance to visit, designate and popularize some historical and cultural places of great significance for the region such as a Thracian tomb, a waterfall, a cave and a me-

dieval church. The youths had to make those places easier to access and more visible for tourists in an effort to facilitate and stimulate ecotourism in the region. In addition the participants had the opportunity to take part in a genuine Bulgarian cultural tradition transmitted throughout the centuries - the “sabor”. They also helped with the preparations for the event itself and enjoyed it together with the local people.

In the end of the project, the participants had to come up with new ideas for a follow-up project to be executed perhaps during the same time next year (2009). They had 4, 5 meetings throughout October-December with the indigenous population and the local authorities to concentrate on one of the suggested ideas and further develop the new project. The youths and the local authority as well as the indigenous population took the decision to focus the next project on one village in the region and work on the preservation and promotion of its historical and cultural heritage.

Lili Deyanova
YEE External Relations Officer/
Vice-Chair

NGO'S PROJECTS

The vaguely field GMOs in Bulgaria

I would like to try to describe in short the history of the GMOs in Bulgaria, the conditions and how the things changed.

Agriculture in Bulgaria plays an important role in its economy. In the North, the black soils support the cultivation of corn, vines and fruit trees, while in the more mountainous regions potatoes, tobacco and flax are grown. Along the Danube plain the most important crops are corn, sunflowers, sugar beet and grapes. During the authoritarian rule of the communist regime all agriculture was managed by State collective farms. Since 1991, the collectives are being privatized and land is being returned to former owners. The economic recession of the 1990s had also hit agriculture, reflected in the drop in the percentage of working population. Livestock and cereal production are both down by some 40% since 1990. The main agricultural exports are tobacco and wine.

Bulgaria has a history of tinkering with genetic engineering. Already in 1991 transgenic tobacco plants were the first genetically modified organisms (GMOs) released in the Balkan region. In the

mid 1990s, extensive field trials of virus and bacteria resistant tobacco, as well as GM alfalfa, were being undertaken at the Institute of Genetic Engineering (IGE). As recently as March 2000, Bulgarian scientists were still claiming that the greatest progress had been achieved with GM tobacco.

Bulgaria was caught in a war between the US corporate seed producers, targeting farmers with their genetically modified maize seeds, and the corporate food processors and commodity traders, who want to buy GM-free products for the EU market.

Ecosouthwest has really primary role in the field of giving information about GMOs, what is related with giving more publicity and the legislation of the law. The beginning of Ecosouthwest's anti-genetic engineering activities was laid in 1998. After this year with the support of international organizations and sponsors we could realize research about the spreading of GMOs in Bulgaria. Since the beginning of our campaign against the genetic engineering our representatives regularly took part in seminars

organized by our partners from the Western European countries. The year 2000 marked a push forward in this field, since we received a grant from JMG Foundation. Thanks to our initiative, we conducted a national study on the spread of genetically modified foodstuffs and plants in Bulgaria. Ecosouthwest realized a Anti-Genetic Engineering Strategy for 2000 and achieved the following results:

- Bulgarian Government stopped financing and banned genetic experiments with genetically modified tobacco and vines
- a regulation for labeling of genetically modified soya and maize
- Bulgaria ratified the Biosafety Protocol
- Nine Bulgarian NGOs created an anti-GE group

The time between 2000 and 2005 Ecosouthwest succeeded to release really a lot of reports, brochures, films, seminars and meetings, related with getting more information about the GMOs practices in Bulgaria.

Thanks to Ecosouthwest's lobby and activities there is one of the most restrictive GMO Law in Bulgaria. Still there is a lack of information about GMO food on the market and for the border control. It is im-

portant to mention that on the 9th of May 2007 Ecosouthwest sent an appeal letter to the European commissar Meglena Kuneva, where we asked for more clearness and more publicity related with the work of the control agency for food. That refers to the need to attach labels on the products. Another request from Ecosouthwest was also to make clear the reports of the work of the control agency and to publish them on the webpage of the Ministry of Health.

The answer of the European commission was: Every EU memberstate should have transparency and free information about the control on the food and the inspections. The citizens have access to the control activities. The national agency should guarantee the effectiveness and the expedience of the official control.

There are still many things to be done in this field but we believe that Ecosouthwest rised the public awareness of the problem of GMOs in Bulgaria. We hope also that the EU membership, with the good laws, could help us to find the right policy in fight with GMOs.

Yulia Yordanova
Ecosouthwest, Bulgaria

NEWS

Action 350!

On 8th of December in Poznan (Poland) hundreds of young activists and participants of the COP 14 conference, made a huge “350” number on one of the most important squares in Poznan – Square of Freedom, by using only their bodies. The hot bodies on the cold cement made a composition (woman, who walks on the waves and stretches her hands to the sky), which was visible even from the height of a bird’s flight (see the photo).

350 – it means 350 particles of CO₂ to million particles of oxygen. Exactly to this amount of concentration in the atmosphere the organization 350.org aims for. According to the conclusion by scientists, the level of carbon dioxide already has reached 385 parts per million (ppm), while in pre industrial period it was only 275 ppm. In the report of Nicolas Stern (known as Stern’s report) it is noted that the level of atmospheric CO₂ must remain between 450 and 550 ppm. However, later after new studies, Jaimes Hansen (director of the

NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies) stated that this number of CO₂ must be 350 ppm; if not, climate disasters are to be averted.

In this way the young activists again called official representatives of the country to stop empty talks and immediately start the actions, directed toward reducing the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

Timur Idrisov
“Little Earth”, Tajikistan
(translated by Beatrise Trope)



Don't flush our climate down the John!

Proceedings for the 'Parliament's Speech from the Throne' from New Zealand's new Government began this morning with Greenpeace activists filling the Beehive front lawn with an ironic message the Government should remember.

New Zealand - volunteers from Greenpeace of New Zealand decided to draw the attention to the problem of climate change, by bringing 30 porcelain toilets with a globe inside each one and the message: "don't flush our climate down the John" to the House of Parliament.

Members of the public have been invited to come to the toilet display to have pictures taken that will then be sent to the UN climate talks and shown to delegates from New Zealand and all other countries in attendance.

Visually this was a simple and humorous protest but it has a very serious undercurrent. The toilets upstaged the somewhat detached National led Government at their own proceedings stressing its international non-stance on climate change. Fittingly, today also marks

the 9th day of UN climate talks in Poznan, Poland, which will culminate in Copenhagen in December 2009.

"Prime Minister John Key must start taking the threat of climate change seriously, and instruct our delegation in Poznan to do the same," said Greenpeace Senior Climate Campaigner Simon Boxer. - "If a deal is not reached at Copenhagen, future generations will have political leaders like John Key to blame for runaway climate change,"

"If people, which now suffer from floods and drought, would see, what going on at the conferences, they would get horrified from how slowly and unhurried everything is happening there", said Stephanie Tanmor, the representative of Greenpeace in Poznan.

Timur Idrisov
"Little Earth", Tajikistan
(translated by Beatrise Trope)

Sources:
Greenpeace Russia
<http://www.oneclimate.net/2008/12/09/dont-flush-the-climate-installation/>

A short story about the pearl of Macedonia

Even though Macedonia is a small country by surface area, it is a country of many lakes. There are three large tectonic lakes, fifteen artificial lakes and also twenty-five glacial lakes located in the highest areas of the mountain ranges dating from the Ice Age. Therefore, it earned the epithet “pearl of Balkans”.

The largest tectonic lake, Lake Ohrid (Ohridsko Ezero), lies at an altitude of 693 metres on the mountainous border between southwestern Macedonia and eastern Albania. It comprises a total area of 349 square kilometres, 119 of which belong to Albania. Lake Ohrid is the one of deepest lakes

in Europe, with a maximum depth of 289 metres and a mean depth of 155 metres. It is 30 kilometres long and 15 kilometres wide at its maximum extent. The lake is one of the largest biological reserves in Europe, possessing unique flora and fauna, which are extinct elsewhere. It is also the oldest in Europe and one of the oldest on the planet, with more than 200 endemic species and is therefore of international importance: in 1979 UNESCO declared it a World Heritage site.

Only Lake Ohrid, Lake Tanganyka, Lake Caspi, and Lake Baikal are believed to have been formed during the Tertiary Period some 2-4 million years ago, and hence these lakes are characterised by unique flora and fauna distinct to that period. Due to its age, many of Lake Ohrid’s aquatic species are endemic including ten of the seventeen fish species. In addition, there are five particular endemic species which are restricted to small areas of the Lake - various special birds some of which are put on the Corine List, as well as four fish spawning grounds. Scientists call it lake of the living fossils. It provided sanctuary for creatures from the Tertiary Pe-





riod which died out elsewhere during the ice ages. The most famous among these are two types of Ohrid Trout (*Salmo letnica*) (*letnica* and *belvica*, in Macedonian). Other unique Ohrid creatures include two types of eel as well as the bleak, whose scales are used for making the well-known Ohrid pearl. The closest relatives of species like the endemic Ohrid Trout survive only as fossils. The Ohrid trout is facing extinction because of extensive fishing in the past. Nowadays the threat comes from illegal fisherman and thanks to wealthy consumers who pay top euro to fill their bellies with the mystical Ohrid Trout. Thanks to the efforts of the Ohrid Hydrobiological Institute and local ecological society “Grashnica” from Ohrid, the Macedonian authorities put a ban on trout fishing a few years ago. However, there is

still lack of visible efforts from the Albanian side to protect the trout.

In addition to its ancient species, the lake has another quality: its water purity. Visitors are able to peer 22 metres down through crystal clear waters. For centuries, locals drank direct from the lake, without fear of disease. The source of Crn Drim (Black Drim) is one of the few, and the most beautiful, that fill Ohrid Lake with water. It is located at the southeastern corner of the lake by the Saint Naum monastery. The water comes from the large and shallow lake called Prespa, some 153 metres higher, and is purified as it travels through the limestone. The exceptionally clear water rises in giant springs at the foot of a 2265-metre Galichica mountain, a forested national park containing bears, wolves and wild boar.

Ohrid Lake's blue color reminds Macedonians of the sea, and many like to travel there on summer holiday. Ohrid city, on the lake's banks, has many ancient churches and five mysterious pre-Roman royal golden masks have been found nearby. Especially interesting is the old part of the city, situated on a hill and its cobblestone streets. Not only is Ohrid one



of the most pleasant places in the Republic of Macedonia, it is one of the most historically significant in Eastern Europe. The shores of Lake Ohrid have been inhabited since prehistoric times. Archaeological findings reveal early Stone Age settlements from 6000 years B.C. The city once named Lichnidos, dates back about 2500 years; long before Alexander the Great set out from the Macedonian king-

dom to conquer the world.

Ohrid developed into a leading center of Slavic cultural and literary activity. The two best-known disciples of the missionary brothers Cyril and Methodious, Sts. Clement and Naum established the first Slavic university in the 10th century, in placid Ohrid. During Byzantine times, Ohrid was famous for its 365 churches, one for each day of the year.

Thus Ohrid developed into a prosperous town which it remains to this day with about fifty thousand inhabitants. Whatever the actuality is, Ohrid was and is a secret and sacred land. Trapped in the mysticism of its natural aura, Ohrid brings peace to mind, body and soul. The unique symbiosis between the nature and the cultural heritage amazes each visitor. There are a lot untold in this short story about this part of the Balkans, called the pearl of Macedonia. If you come here to explore maybe you will find something that I did not portray in this article. Maybe you will find something I still don't know and you will have your own story to tell to the others.

Gjoko Zoroski
DEM - Youth, Macedonia

Bamboom

Imagine that you are answering the final question from a very popular quiz and the last question is ...Which is the fastest growing plant on this planet having almost the same strength as the steel? Hmmm... Maybe you cannot bring to your mind the answer quickly. But when you will hear some other amazing facts about it, you will probably remember it. The correct answer is – bamboo.

A brief introduction: bamboo is a woody perennial evergreen plant that is actually part of the true grass family. There are over 1000 species of bamboo on the Earth. Bamboo can be found all over the world in varied climates, from the cold mountainous regions to the hot tropical areas. It can be found in North and South Ameri-

ca, throughout East Asia, northern Australia and southern Africa. Although they can grow to towering heights – ranging from miniatures to 60 meters, bamboo is not actually considered a tree. Bamboo along with being one of the tallest grasses in the world is also the fastest growing plant in the world, capable of growing up to 1 meter per day!

In addition to these characteristics, bamboo also boasts incredible environmental benefits. Despite its lowly reputation, bamboo may be the strongest stuff on the planet. Its growth pattern makes it easily accessible in a minimal amount of time. Bamboo provided the first re-greening in Hiroshima after the atomic blast in 1945.

A grove of bamboo returns 35 percent more oxygen into the air



than an equivalent stand of trees. By taking in more carbon dioxide and emitting more oxygen bamboo naturally battles global warming and climate change. Bamboo does

tive watershed, stitching the soil together along fragile riverbanks, deforested areas, and in places prone to earthquakes and mudslides.



it year around because it is an evergreen. Fuel made from bamboo would have a neutral carbon dioxide impact because any fuel made and burned from bamboo will release the same amount of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere that was consumed by the bamboo while it was growing. In an age ridden with fuel wars, and an ever-declining ozone layer, natural products like bamboo have taken a front scene in the international energy crises, primarily for production of renewable ethanol and diesel.

Bamboo is an exquisite component of landscape design. Its anti-erosion properties create an effec-

Another important benefit of bamboo cultivation is that it helps sustain China's endangered panda population. Giant pandas usually eat only the four or five kinds that grow in their habitat of south-western China.

Bamboo is strong – it is one of the strongest building materials in the world. Yet despite its strength, when made into clothing, bamboo is softer than the softest cotton and smoother than the smoothest silk. The bamboo fibre is eco-friendly, without any chemical additives. It takes 150 grams of chemical fertilisers to produce one cotton t-shirt. In contrast, bamboo requires very

little water because it is 300 percent more absorbent than cotton and it requires no harmful pesticides or insecticides. In addition, growing bamboo actually enriches the soil with nutrients while growing cotton depletes it. More importantly, bamboo fibre is a unique biodegradable textile material. As a natural cellulose fibre, bamboo fabric can be 100% biodegraded in soil by microorganisms and sunlight. The decomposition process does not cause any pollution in the environment.

What else about bamboo? Thomas Edison also successfully used a carbonised bamboo filament in his first experiment with the light bulb.

In Limon, Costa Rica, only the bamboo houses from the National Bamboo Project stood after their violent earthquake in 1992.

It is also interesting that:

- bamboo furniture is light, durable, and affordable
- bamboo shoots provide nutrition for millions of people worldwide. In Japan, the antioxidant properties of pulverised bamboo bark prevents bacterial growth and it is used as a natural food preservative
- current research points to bamboo's potential in a number of me-

dicinal uses, especially in cure of some types of venereal diseases and cancers

- bamboo is a mystical plant as a symbol of strength, flexibility, tenacity, endurance, luck and compromise. Throughout Asia, bamboo has for centuries been integral to religious ceremonies, art, music and daily life.

With time and dedicated research, perhaps our future will be a bit brighter due to the widespread use of bamboo. We should not be surprised to see a bamboo plantation pop up in a field near us!

I am for bamboom, are you?

Gjoko Zoroski,
DEM-Youth, Macedonia



CALENDAR

MARCH

YEE Youth Exchange: Last Heroes and Heroines

Ijevan, Tavush region, Armenia

18- 26 March 2009

A multilateral youth exchange using outdoor activities and nature as tools for talking about intercultural dialogue, challenges and values. Young people mediate about values and are willing to create and change things. That is why the most important element of educating youth is helping them to create and experience values. During the nine days spent in a tourist base in beautiful mountainous and forest environment of Tavush region in Armenia group of 36 young people from seven countries will have direct contact with the nature in order to experience interpersonal and intercultural relations. More information: info@yeenet.eu

“Climate Change: Global Risks, Challenges and Decisions”, International scientific congress on climate change

Copenhagen, Denmark

10-12 March 2009,

More information: <http://climatecongress.ku.dk/>

Environmental “Auction Floor” Conference

Brussels, Belgium

13 March 2009

More information: ENRTPauctionfloorconference@mci-group.com

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/worldwide/environment/auction-floor_en.htm

World Water Forum

Istanbul, Turkey

16 - 22 March 2009

More information: <http://www.worldwaterforum5.org/>

Conference Towards eEnvironment

Prague, Czech Republic

25 – 27 March 2009

More information: <http://www.e-envi2009.org/>

2nd European Water Conference

Brussels, Belgium

03-04 April 2009

More information: <http://www.ewc2009.eu>

YEE TC for Trainers: Teamwork and communication

Kamenice Nad Lipou, Czech Republic

09-13 April 2009

The Training Course (TC) for trainers will take place in Czech Republic and it will deal with the topic of teamwork and communication. This project is addressed to youth involved/active in NGOs or informal groups that are leading activities, managing or training people in their organisations. The TC will involve 17 organisations from 10 different countries and 36 participants who are working directly with youth issues or youth will take part. The aim of this TC is to introduce to the participants the activities, behaviours and techniques that can help with effective team building and communication. More information: katka@yeenet.eu

YEE- Konopa: Innovate your Life: Make it Sustainable

Jindrichovice pod Smrkem, Czech Republic

31 May - 06 June 2009

Training course "Innovate your life: Make it sustainable" faces the main environmental threats - unsustainable production and consumption, pollution and climate change. It provides youth with knowledge about sustainable alternatives - solutions of these problems - and encourage them to become partners and multipliers in their communities as well as at pan-European level. In 7 days, 26 participants from 6 neighbouring and 7 EU countries will develop theoretical and practical competencies to become multipliers in the field of RR and sustainability; they will exchange their ideas and experiences and create follow-up projects.

The calendar for next months of 2009 you will find in the next issue of 'Knowing your neighbours'

APRIL

MAY

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