

**youth&environment magazine**



**december 2008**

**peace and  
environment**



**in this issue ...**

**... environmental effects of war  
... refugees camps and environment  
... intercultural dialogue in education**





Dear Readers,

When you look at the title of this magazine – “Peace and Environment” – you can think about many things and points that can be raised for discussion. One of the topics that is developed on next pages is: Conflicts and their effects.

When we turn on the television and hear the news, really often we hear about conflicts between countries. We all know that war will never bring us to the right conclusion and therefore we can be afraid that conflicts will get even worse. One of the main question people ask themselves every single day is: why such a thing has to happen? Without going into details, I assume that war for the majority of the countries’ leaders is a way to make business or at least simply to destroy something that their country does not have and the other one does.

Unfortunately, governments are not always able (or willing?) to come to a conclusion in a peaceful discussion and as a result, the military conflicts not only destroy communities,

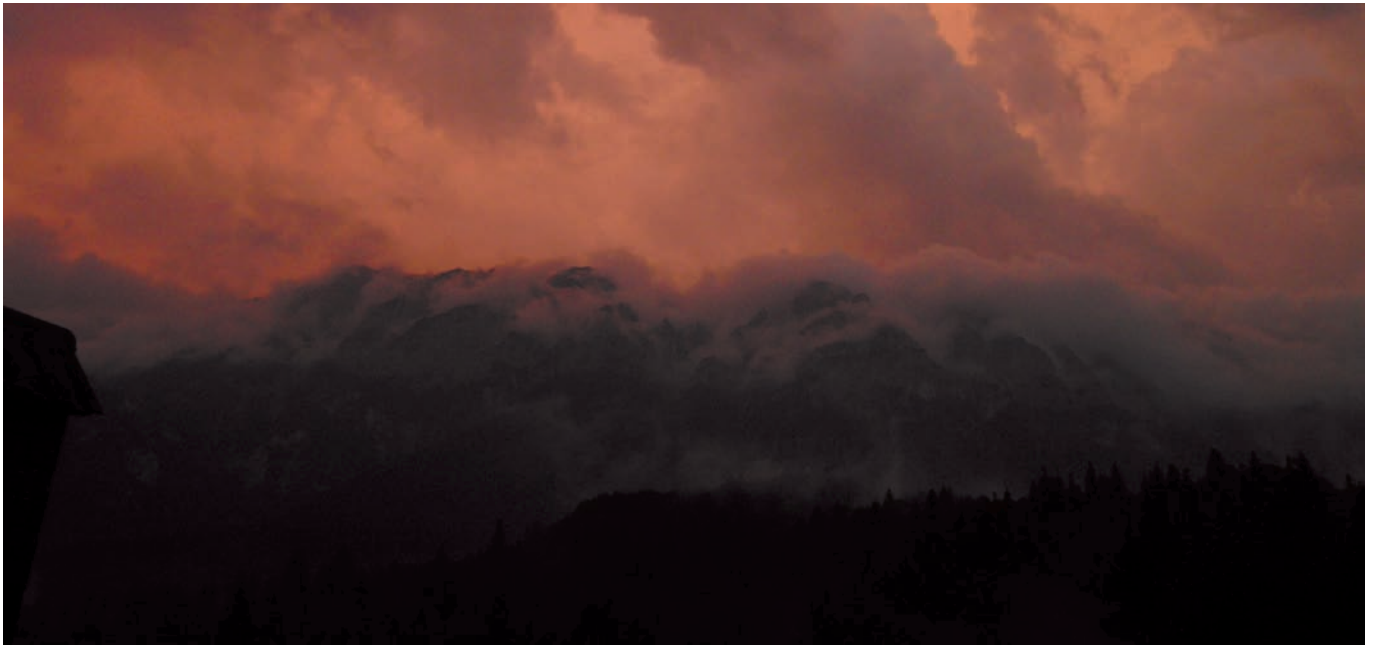
bring death but also cause chaos, destruction and huge health problems to the people affected.

The situation is becoming even worse nowadays, since the nature of the war has changed considerably over the past century. Instead of armies in distinctive uniforms fighting across battle lines, modern conflict is characterized by guerillas striking at seemingly randomly selected targets. This fundamental change is seen clearly in the character of victims. It had been estimated that during the First World War, more than 85% of the dead were soldiers. But in our times, 90% of those who die are civilians – more frequently women and children caught in the crossfire between fighting forces whose ultimate goal is no longer territorial conquest but rather societal disruption. This suggests that despite the best efforts of politicians and humanitarian groups, war and public health remain inherently at odds.

However, such conflicts do not only affect humans. It also affects the area natural habitat. Twentieth century technology, busily applied to the practice of war, has ensured the most lethal harvest ever. For example, landmines: planted in millions in war-torn countries across the world, killing and maiming long after wars are over, and denying agricultural use of the land in which they lurk. Furthermore, it is clearly the testing and manufacturing of the nuclear bomb that is the responsible for some of the most profound and persistent environmental damage to life on the Earth. As a medical expert said: “The complex mixture of contaminants found on many military sites is dynamically moving through the environment”.

The message I would like you to get from this magazine is that whenever there was a problem we could have solved it without a need to kill someone – we would save not only many lives but also many other valuable things, like health, landscape, fresh air, clean water, and even happiness!

Matthew Giordmaina



## imprint

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## Understanding the Importance of Interconnectedness of Peace & Environment For the Maintenance of a Sustainable Way of Living

Peace and environment are not only interrelated and in many ways, dependent on each other, but crucial for the survival of mankind as well. Protection and sustainable management of the environment should be a priority for all humans.

It is important that humans are aware of this interdependence and understand the urgent need for action. The vital importance of biodiversity and preservation of eco-systems for sustaining our lives and making this world an environmentally sound place for people and nature to live in harmony should be acknowledged. There are various threats to environment coming from diverse natures, but mainly caused by humans, which disastrous consequences can now be felt. Thus, it is quite important to note that problems associated with the nature concern everyone and we need to act urgently as decisions made will greatly influence our future. According to the United Nations MillenniumProject, “environmental sustainability is the foundation on which strategies for achie-

ving all the other Millennium Development Goals must be built”. There is a growing understanding that environmental degradation, unequal access and distribution of natural resources could represent a potential reason for conflict. It is important that the dependence of people on environment and vice versa is taken into consideration when reaching those goals. It is quite crucial that an integrated two-way approach is applied and neither the human nor the environmental side is somehow neglected. This holds true not only when talking about reaching UN’s Millennium Development Goals, but also when attempting to find a resolution to any problem affecting the environment in any way.

### In cooperation

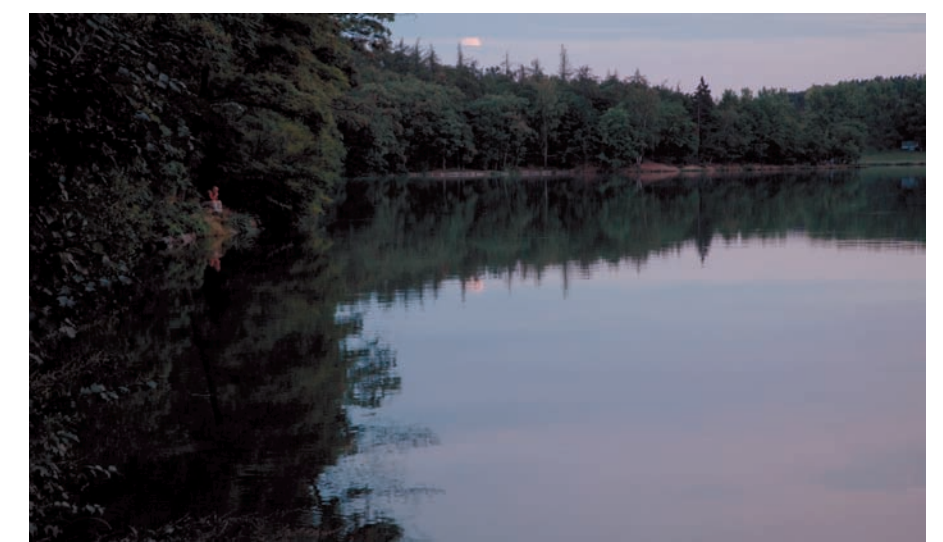
However, history has repeatedly

shown that deterioration of the nature could also be a catalysts for cooperation. It can bring people together to solve a common problem for the benefit of everybody. Instead of fighting over scarce natural resources and worsening the current situation, people can collaborate so that they improve the quality of the environment and reap the harvest of their efforts. By helping each other and protecting the environment humans can achieve and benefit a lot more than if they enter a conflict. Of course, it is quite hard to see this point of view when people are already in a state of conflict. Thus, it is crucial that a preventive approach is taken to stop a conflict from developing and to try to tackle various environmental problems through collaboration and not fight.

### Environmental peacemaking

Natural resources do not need to be sources of conflict, but sources of economic growth, community, partnership and goodwill. Environmental peacemaking could bring parties in conflict together to work on environmental issues in ways that build confidence and reduce tensions. The process encompasses the entire conflict cycle from prevention, mitigation and management to post-conflict peace building. Environmental peacemaking is very beneficial, both to the people and the region because cooperation offers, aside

from the advantage of pooling resources, the opportunity to exchange different perspectives and better understand the other stakeholders involved. Understanding the problem correctly and the stance of the other people involved solves half of issue at stake. Many times problems arise simply out of bad communication and misunderstanding of the other party. In their efforts to address the diverse conflicts in human communities, peace educators often underestimate the devastating impact of humans upon the nature, its ecosystems and species inhabiting it. In the same way environmental educators often overlook the importance of peace to environmental sustainability. Because the link between peace and the nature is not well understood, many decision-makers develop policies focusing on national security that center on the military and the economic competition while giving low priority to environmental sustainability. Not only governors, but all people should understand and see the dependency of the environment on the maintenance of peace, because decision-makers create those policies but the ordinary people are the ones that have to live with the consequences of



the deterioration of the environment and deal with them somehow.

### The importance of natural resources

The importance of the environment as a basis for development is indeed more necessitated in countries where the environment has been degraded to some extent. Where large percent of the population relies directly on the country’s natural resources for daily subsistence it is crucial that peace-building, environmental protection and development go together. It is important that none of those aspects is left behind and those three aspects of development are improved more or less simultaneously so that there is no emphasis on peace-building but negligence of the nature or vice versa. Even though theoretically and according to official documents and policy papers people know they should follow this multifaced approach, in real life it appears it is quite hard to do so and usually one of those aspects, for instance the peace-building takes prevalence.

On one hand, when people are at war both the environment and the people are suffering from the destruction. On the other hand, when the nature resources are

scarce or unequally distributed, humans start fighting over them and this vicious cycle occurs over and over again and continues over time. Therefore, it is vital that people grasp this dependency and stop those destructive processes. But it is crucial not only that they are aware of it (the dependency), but that they fully understand how to approach the encountered issue and solve it using appropriate measures. The failure to see human interconnectedness to the nature has contributed to tremendous environmental destruction. In human communities there will always be conflicts. However, the challenge is to learn to resolve the conflicts nonviolently, to share limited resources and to live in line with sustainable development. This will become increasingly important as the increasing human populations are all seeking a better life. Peace will necessitate environmental sustainability and environmental sustainability will necessitate peace. Humans must put all efforts in maintaining peace among themselves as well as reaching a balance with the nature in order to ensure the sustainable future of all living beings.

Lili Deyanova  
(ECO Southwest)



## The role and impact of some natural resources in managing conflicts

Neighboring states and communities often depend on shared natural resources for their livelihoods and the nation's economic development such as water, forests or mineral resources. However, neighbors share damages too.

In the Middle East, for instance, Palestinian and Israeli communities share the lower Jordan River and the Mountain Aquifer, where in the case of the Mountain Aquifer, interdependence has led to some sort of cooperation. Palestinian and Israeli mayors have jointly supported a foreign aid project to construct sewage ponds for water treatment despite the ongoing conflict. People should recognize the potential benefit of peace when implementing environmental projects and train the coordinators of those projects in peacemaking and conflict resolution skills to be able to take the most of a situation and have a greater influence in the peace-making and peace-keeping process.

Many times managing shared water resources can motivate states to leave aside ongoing conflicts because of common economic benefits and development in the region. Water cooperation can also support efforts to terminate conflict. During times of conflict, water can be a highly contested arena for negotiation even though it has not been the immediate cause of the conflict. For instance, despite the presence of the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty, water is still a highly contested issue between India and Pakistan. Consequently, water has been a special focus in the bilateral negotiations between those countries (India and Pakistan), just as it has been between Palestinians and Israelis. Water

may not have caused those conflicts, but the parties must begin resolving their water issues if they are to reach a sustainable peace.

Often the potential of a natural resource to build peace in a certain region depends on the nature of the resource as well. Ecosystems, for instance, differ largely from forest to forest, but whether they are massive tropical rainforests or small wooded mountaintops, forests are among its most important natural resources. They directly contribute to the livelihoods of many people. Forests are often linked to conflict as a location or an object of conflict and determining the best way to use forests to build peace could be problematic. Using forests as an environmental peacemaking tool depends upon the scale of the forest and when the conflict is occurring. Using forests to build peace between states is difficult because forests are localized resources. Additio-



nally, they cannot only trigger conflicts, but also incite small incursions over time that can build into a long-term conflict. Peacemaking efforts are more likely to help community - rather than state-level conflicts and are even more likely to achieve success when efforts are localized. Promoting public awareness and encouraging participation through educational programs and capacity building at community level can help to keep peace in forests.

Mineral resources also could have a role in managing conflicts. However, they differ from water and forests in three distinct ways. First, they are non-renewable. Second, the value of some minerals can have serious effects on a nation's macroeconomic policy and fiscal planning, especially if the value changes drastically. Third, the gambling thinking encouraged by the lure of valuable minerals increases the risk of conflict over these resources. While mining supporters emphasize the role minerals play in livelihoods, anti-mining activists see mineral extraction could pose a problem of resource depletion and is therefore in conflict with sustainable development. The distance between damages (local) and benefits (national/international) of mining requires intermediate institutions and actors to ensure equal benefit sharing as well compensatory and conflict-facilitating mechanisms to mitigate mining's

effects. This distance between effects and benefits and some stakeholders' removal from the location of the mines poses challenges for peacemaking. At the same time, the close link between valuable minerals and some severe conflicts as demonstrated by the case on diamonds in Sierra Leone, indicates the need for enforcing appropriate measures, developing adequate institutions and transferring knowledge about data, information and available tools. The potential of natural resources

to build peace depends to an extent on the resource. For example, shared water resources appeared to be the most appropriate for successful environmental peacemaking programs. Forests' potential is primarily dependent on the scale of the resource, the timing of the conflict, and the characteristics of the forest ecosystem, while mineral resources hold little promise for environmental peacemaking mainly due to the distance between mining's effects and benefits. Despite the limitations of

some natural resources, environmental cooperation offers a way to proactively address prevention of conflicts. Thus the resolution of a conflict or the peace benefit that could be brought to a region with the help of one or another type of natural resource should not be neglected but seriously taken into consideration by policy and decision-makers when preparing various peace strategies.

Lili Deyanova  
(ECO Southwest)

## Water Resources and Managing Conflicts

The problem of securing and providing clean water for all living beings is one of the greatest challenges the world is facing today. In the years to come, demographic growth, agricultural production increase, higher consumption levels and climate change effects will give rise to lack of clean water.

Many conflicts lie just behind the horizon. As nations become increasingly dependent on each other for food and other goods and services, the need to cooperate will become even bigger. There is a danger that by overstating the likelihood of water conflicts, this argument could undermine the opportunities water offers for collaboration. At the same time, it would be wrong to assume water does not precipitate conflicts simply because states have not fought full-fledged wars over it in the past. While it does not involve armies, those conflicts can involve life and death consequences for the parties of the conflict.

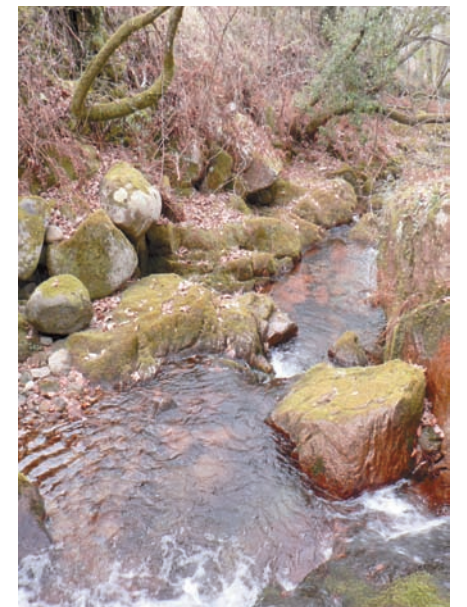
### Valuable water

Water remains quite a disputed resource namely because of its unique characteristics. There is no guarantee the same amount of water will be available from year

to year but climate change trends suggest rainfall's variability will increase in the future. It often crosses national borders and is not easily transportable like other natural resources. Competing use of water related services as agriculture, industry, energy, household and ecosystem lay the ground of inter-sector conflicts within and among different countries. All of these characteristics make water highly contested. Still its complexity may lead more naturally to cooperation rather than conflict.

### Wars and water

Predictions of wars over waters attract the interest of politicians and media, but these groups pay less attention to the cooperation that occurs around water issues and the potential of water to be used as a conflict prevention, mitigation and mediation tool. Working together in an effort to manage water can encourage nations to have



a more friendly-oriented forum to take common decisions. Environmental, economic, political, social and security systems depend very heavily on this resource, emphasizing the need for long-term coordination and collaboration.

### How to cooperate

Cooperation could come in many forms concerning the wide va-



riety of issues related to water management. That could lead, for instance, to benefits to a river from improved ecosystem management or from the river to the indigenous people in the form of resources or even from the reduction of river-related costs as a result of the decreased tensions, which also benefits the environment. Nations usually come together to conclude international agreements, create specific basin and waterway agreements or develop water resource management plans and create joint science and technology research projects. These agreements frequently address issues of equitable allocation, water quality, hydropower, natural resource use and economic development. International agreements concerning transboundary waters are generally guided by three international water management principles reflected in the 1997 UN Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses. Although it has been ratified only by some states, these principles are increasingly becoming shared norms



for transboundary water relations.

Joint management constitutes another type of water cooperation. One of the most prominent examples of such type of cooperation occurs along the Nile River. The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) started as a way to share scientific information among the basin countries and presents a multi-year, ministerial-level negotiations. The initiative not only creates a forum for the joint management of the river, but also serves as a conflict prevention tool, reducing the probability that Egypt will exert its power upon the other basin countries. Currently, regional agreements over basins such as the Senegal River basin and the Niger River basin in West Africa increasingly rely on the international principles of “no significant harm” and “prior notification”. International institutions such as the World Bank and the UN Development Program have been key actors in helping sustain these and other basins as well as mediate sub-basin-level negotiations. Joint management initiatives

usually start by developing a common vision for the basin. Country representatives have discussions on asserting their rights to water, analyzing what their needs are and how water helps them meet those needs as well as taking political boundaries off the map to identify ways to share water benefits.

#### **Water after conflict**

Additionally, successful water management could prevent the recurrence of a conflict in the early stages of post-conflict peace. Access to safe water is essential in post-conflict environment since it is a key to commencing economic activity, providing livelihoods, improving human health care conditions and strengthening peace legitimacy. The inability to provide water-related services in the initial months and years following the cessation of hostilities can undermine the support for the terms of the peace agreement, creating or reinforcing unrest against the state or occupying forces. For instance, support for Iraq’s national government and coalition forces were undermined by the slow pace of improving water-related services in the country, which were not prioritized in the period after the first stage of fighting. The practical experiences of humanitarian NGOs as well as the wider analyses of post-conflict reconstruction by the UN Environment Program’s Post-Conflict and Disaster Management Branch consider natural resources like water essential to reconstructing society, people’s livelihoods and building sustainable peace. The various cooperative water management initiatives illustrate how collaboration can directly benefit peace-making, peace-keeping and peace-build-

ing. It can also play an important role in building confidence among adversaries. While it is rarely stated explicitly that a project could be a water conflict prevention project, these efforts often produce peace benefits in addition to water management advantages. Water conflicts could have negative impact on socio-ecological spheres of life, crucial especially for those who depend on natural resources for their livelihoods. The contamination of a river from an upstream activity such as deforestation or pollution of lakes from spills or industrial activity can leave families unable to feed themselves or derive an income. Water-related protests made up a large proportion of the estimated 51,000 anti-pollution/industrialization protests in China in 2005. Some protests last days, attract thousands of participants, involve significant violence and require armed police or the military to restore order. The 2005 chemical spill into the Songhua River in China caused international tension when downstream Russian cities went days without access to the water source due to contamination. Ubrupt changes in water quality or quantity are not the only challenges to maintaining regular access to that natural resource. As experienced across the Sahel, the combination of longer and deeper droughts, desertification, human and livestock population growth is a critical factor instigating water conflicts. Predicted climate change impacts will make these problems increasingly severe.

#### **Fighting for water**

Conflicts driven by changes in community access to water occur when the quantity, quality or timing of water supply changes. In-



ter-sectoral fights over use of water for economic purposes often expose farmers reliant on water for irrigation against their industrial counterparts. These disputes often arise when domestic users and/or different sectors fight for scarce resources. If the present problems relating to the allocation and utilization of trans-boundary waters and the benefits from these resources are not solved, further conflicts appear to be inevitable, both within States and between them. It is obvious parties will “fight” to obtain access to fresh water as one of the most vital resources to sustain human existence. Scholars from a variety of disciplines would argue the world is entering a level of water pressure it has not previously experienced. But it is less water scarcity and more the extent of change in water availability that should raise concerns about future transboundary water conflicts. As all conflicts have multiple origins, water challenges alone are unlikely to lead to an international conflict. Instead, most disputes occur when unilateral action is taken, such as building a dam or diverting water, and when there is not sufficient institutional

support or flexibility for conflict resolution or mitigation. Abrupt climate change or creation of new countries without developed patterns of water relations could also similarly occur at such a rapid rate that institutions cannot adapt.

#### **Water for peace**

While increased scarcity could lead to conflict, it also provides opportunities to build cooperation. If addressed early on, issues of water scarcity and utilization can bring parties together to jointly manage resources and solve problems. Those benefits and especially the ones spread beyond the river such as increased interstate cooperation and stronger economic ties are likely to increase as states start to rely on each other’s water resources to meet their food needs. These interstate relationships, based on water and food, have the potential to create a sense of cooperation extending to other spheres of those countries’ relations. If states do not cooperate, the needs of local people may not be met, potentially leading to unstable societies. The fact that local conflicts could affect national and regional stability shows that those working





on economic development, conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction may have to change their approaches and somehow incorporate and manage water resources on all levels. There are established links between adequate amounts of clean water and development and it is increasingly understood that sustainable peace settlements must include water agreements. Wa-

ter is essential to the economic and ecological health of nations but unfortunately water quality and quantity conditions are rapidly worsening. Growing water scarcity and climate change-derived unpredictability may incite states to fight over water. Overlooking cooperation achievements at transboundary level would mean disregarding a po-

werful tool for bringing together states. Though certainly not an absolute conflict resolution tool, integrated water resource management can play a confidence-building and peacemaking role. This framework brings stakeholders together to develop joint management plans that take into account the available resources, the physical characteristics of the region and the needs of all stakeholders, including those of the environment itself. These plans are not easy or simple to develop. Therefore, they require people dedicated to the process, institutions to support them, scientific and technical information as well as adequate funding. There is a need to adapt to water related challenges as we do to climate change related ones. There is still water for all of us, but only if we keep it clean and use it in a sustainable manner.

Lili Deyanova  
(ECO Southwest)



## Basic information

### What is Environment and Security Initiative?

There is a growing understanding that environmental degradation, inequitable access to natural resources and transboundary movement of hazardous materials increase the probability of conflict and thereby pose a risk to human and even national security. For example, transboundary pollution often negatively affects negatively the relations between neighbouring states sharing the common resource base. Also health risks and involuntary migration due to e.g. water scarcity, equitable access to land resources, uncontrolled stocks of obsolete pesticides or other forms of hazardous waste have been identified as threats to stability and peace. Ongoing disputes and disagreements over the management of natural resources shared by two or more states, can deepen divides and lead to hostilities. However, common problems regarding the use of natural resources may also bring

people together in a positive manner. Communities and nations can build confidence with each other through joint efforts to improve the state and management of natural resources. Environmental co-operation can thereby act as an important tool for preventing conflicts and promoting peace between communities. The Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC), established in 2003 by UNEP, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), seeks to facilitate a process whereby key public decision-makers in South Eastern and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus are able to motivate action to advance and protect peace and the environment at the same time.

<http://www.envsec.org/about.php>

## Environment - The silent victim of war

War – the word brings in mind the profound human suffering it causes. It also has another casualty, less mentioned, less thought but still disastrous. As the warfare has developed, the environment has become one of the victims of war.

The burden of armed conflicts often carries the places where the environment is already under a great deal of environmental stress. The use of bombs, chemical and biological weapons as well as the use of depleted uranium, which USA and even NATO seems to be too keen of, leaves its marks to the infrastructure, agriculture forests and biodiversity as well as to the lives of the people living in the stage of those events for a long period of time.

### Damages to the infrastructure

Damage to the infrastructure can happen for example during bombings. A single bomb blast in the wrong place can shut down the whole country's water supply system bringing burden to the agricultural production. Heavy military vehicles travelling over a farm soil and the presence of landmines can destroy a huge amount of useable land. The International Campaign to Ban Landmines estimates that in Cambodia and in Bosnia alone there might be over one hundred landmines per square mile, which are shutting of the access to productive land. Further war can also cause shortages for example in cooking oils, which can force the local people to destroy trees in order to prepare their foods. During a war waste management is often forgotten. Even dangerous nuclear waste has been known to get to the hands of the local civilians living in the war zone causing severe health effects

and burden to the nature. Finally, the bombings are also naturally responsible of the destruction of natural geographical areas.

### Impact to the forests and biodiversity

Military machinery and the use of explosives causes deforestation. Due to the conflicts in Cambodia 35 % of the country's forests had been destroyed. Bombing in Vietnam destroyed over 2 million acres of land. By the year 1991, as a result of the long-term civil war in Angola, the country's parks and reserves have only 10 % left of their wildlife population. During armed conflicts the ecosystem services are often the least thing in people's minds leading to the neglects in erosion control and water quality.

### The use of chemical and biological guns – The case Agent Orange

The improvements in war tech-

nology and the modern warfare have brought a new kind of risk for the environment. The use of chemical and biological weapons, have caused severe effects for the nature of the contaminated areas. The most known case of this is called Agent Orange, which took place in Vietnam. During the years 1962-1971, USA sprayed herbicide, named Agent Orange because it was preserved in orange cans, to a wide geographical area in order to defoliate tropical forests where the counter side's fighters were and to the fields to deprive the peasants their food supplies. As a result of the use of this herbicide 14 % of the South Vietnam's forests were destroyed and several health problems in the population of the affected areas were observed. Other similar substances were also used. According to the article of Pekka Heikura, a Finnish historian and writer, at least 73 millions of lit-





ters of different poisons were sprayed in Vietnam for an area of 2,6 million hectares. Some of the forests have started recovering after the war but the changes in nature's ecology has stayed permanent for an area estimated to be as big as 1,9 million hectares.

### The use of depleted uranium

Depleted uranium, DU, is a weakly radioactive substance of which radiation dose would be around 60 % of that from purified natural uranium with the same mass. The effects of DU are highly controversial, but it is suspected that it can cause health problems for the people infected and negative effects to the environment. Still it is used in warfare mainly by USA, which used it for example during the Gulf War. NATO used it again during the war in former Yugoslavia. Depleted ura-

nium guns are still to be banned. **Making it harder to war** War – such an ugly word has become even uglier when the planet we are living in is facing more severe war crimes year after year. There has been a lack in international and domestic regulations that would help to preserve nature and force nations to take more concern the environmental effects during armed conflicts. Still there is some improvements in sight. Many NGOs have given light to the subject and recent environmental declarations have been made. One of them was put forward 1992 during the Rio's conference. The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development states in its principle 24: "Warfare is inherently destructive of sustainable development. States shall therefore respect international law providing protection for

the environment in times of armed conflict and cooperate in its further development, as necessary."

Kristiina Baltzar

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## Environmental effects of war

From the beginning of recorded history, war has played a major role in shaping the course of events. Though geography changes, nations come and go, vanquished turn into conquerors, and victors become victims, one of the constant elements of warfare is its degrading effects on the environment.

"War is never an isolated act."  
(Clausewitz, 1831)

The application of weapons, the destruction of structures and oil fields, fires, military transport movements and chemical spraying are all examples of the destroying impact war may have on the environment. Air, water and soil are polluted, man and animal are killed, and numerous health affects occur among those still living. From the defoliation of the forests in Vietnam, to the oil fires of Kuwait, all major wars of the 20th century, and current conflicts

like Kosovo, have had a hidden casualty: the environment. Unexploded weapons, polluted rivers, contaminated soil, and damaged landscapes have all harmed human health, local economies, and ecosystems. The long-term effects of such environmental damage have not yet been fully determined.

### How does the war affect environment?

There are many classifications of the environmental effects of war.



Generally they could be classified as: (1) intentional direct destruction of the environment during war; (2) incidental direct destruction; and (3) indirect or induced destruction as a medium - or long-term consequence of war but still attributable to war.

### "Intentional direct destruction"

refers to the deliberate attack on cultivated and uncultivated lands and resources where the objective is indeed environmental destruction for its own sake, as for example with the setting of oil-fires during the Persian Gulf war. Some techniques of warfare seek to weaken the military forces of an enemy by intentionally destroying or denying their means of existence, usually including those of the civil population, which is thereby prevented from supporting the military forces. Included amongst these techniques of warfare are: blockade; the destruction of crops or water supplies; the destruction of forest sanctuary or cover; the driving of pastoral communities into inhospitable terrain lacking grazing land for their livestock; other forced relocation of populations; the destruction of housing, communication

and health facilities; and - most recently - actions that result in the deterioration of the weather. In so far as the environment of the enemy nation rather than its military forces is the direct object of attack, such techniques are appropriately referred to as "environmental warfare". In 1962, the American military in Vietnam initiated a nine-year strategic initiative called Operation Ranch Hand. The primary objective of Operation Ranch Hand was complete destruction of the thick jungle and forest cover that concealed North Vietnamese and Viet Cong soldiers. Using some 19 million gallons of herbicide (particularly herbicide known as Agent Orange) sprayed from aircraft, officials sought to clear vast tracts of trees along major transportation routes, thereby making it more difficult for the enemy to ambush American troops. U.S. planes also sprayed rice fields and other agricultural regions in an effort to limit the enemy's food supply.

### "Incidental direct destruction"

would be soil disturbance by battle tanks moving from one location to another; environmental

damage is collateral but not the primary objective of the action undertaken. Two millennia ago, the Romans sowed salt on Carthaginian fields during the third Punic War to make them infertile. More recently, General Sheridan virtually decimated the remaining American bison herds in 1865, the staple of the plains Indian. A year earlier he had ravaged virtually all cropland in the Shenandoah Valley. There are abundant examples from World War II. In the Pacific Theater, entire tropical islands, above and below the waterline, were denuded by both the Allies and Japanese as an incidental consequence of conflict. Populations of indigenous birds and animals on many of these islands were rendered extinct. In the west, both the German and Allied armies destroyed much soil binding vegetation in North Africa increasing both windstorms and desertification. The Germans sunk an allied ship containing a quarter of a million pounds of mustard gas in an Adriatic port. The extremely toxic effect from the slow release of this chemical has been expected to threaten plant and animal life in this area for 400 years.







In World War II, the Norwegians instigated land slides into their own fertile valleys and the Dutch broke dikes flooding a third of their own productive agricultural land in an attempt to dissuade German occupation. At the same time, the Germans were decimating the rich Czech beech forests.

Finally, “**indirect or induced destruction**” may occur as a result of human population shifts on account of war that, in turn, may exert undue environmental stresses. It refers to habitat denial to nonhuman species and addresses mostly long-term wildlife consequences of war such as species depletion and extinction. This is probably the most important category in terms of damage done and occurs in large part because war induces human population shifts and thereby brings resource pressures to marginal lands. For example, by 1983, Vietnam had lost half of the forests standing only 40 years before. The displacement resulting from this environmental holocaust brought suffering to entire populations of animals and humans. An ecologi-

cal domino effect took place when starving hill tribes were forced to turn. The peculiar story of Agent Orange also offers an intriguing study in the long-term effects of war on the environment. One of the byproducts of Agent Orange production is dioxin - the most potent carcinogen ever tested. That dioxin could build up in the tissues of American soldiers and then be transported home to plague future generations. Agent Orange also continues to threaten the health of Vietnamese. Studies attribute such high levels to food chain contamination as well as documented extremely high levels of dioxin in blood samples taken from residents born years after the end of the Vietnam War.

#### Mass destruction

Nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction have been the object of most of the attention and research on actual or possible environmental effects of warfare.

In the history of warfare only two nuclear weapons have been detonated offensively, both during the closing days of World War II. The first was detonated on the morning of 6 August 1945, when the United States dropped a uranium gun-type device code-named “Little Boy” on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. The second was detonated three days later when the United States dropped a plutonium implosion-type device code-named “Fat Man” on the city of Nagasaki, Japan. These bombings resulted in the immediate deaths of around 120,000 people (mostly civilians) from injuries sustained from the explosion and acute radiation sickness, and even more deaths from long-term effects of (ionising) radiation.

The military operations conducted by Nato against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia during the 1999 Kosovo crisis caused serious damage to the country’s natural environment. The damage extended to several other countries of south-east Europe. Efforts by Nato air forces to destroy industrial sites and infrastructure caused dangerous substances to pollute the air, water and soil. These substances will have a lasting impact on the health and quality of life of the populations of the countries concerned. In particular, the use of ammunition containing depleted uranium is likely to increase the incidence of cancer and congenital disease among the inhabitants of the areas affected, as well as among the members of the armed forces serving in these areas.

The above mentioned examples are maybe the most well known examples of the environmental effects of the war (aside of casualties). It is clear how warfare can result in widespread, long-lasting and severe environmental damage. How to reduce the effect of war on the environment? Many scientists and environmentalists are focussed on this difficult subject. Some of them propose to preserve certain ecosystems as no-fight zones, the other propose to expand the practical knowledge in the civilian community so people are generally knowledgeable about the issue and its intrinsic perils. However, I am shouting aloud and saying: people, stop the war before it starts!

Gjoko Zoroski  
(Ecologists Movement of  
Macedonia - Youth)  
(DEM - Youth)

## Life on the very edge of survival. Refugees camps and environment

“In Germany, the Nazis first came for the communists, and I did not speak up, because I was not a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak up, because I was not a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak up, because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics, and I did not speak up, because I was not a Catholic. Then they came for me... and by that time, there was no one to speak up for anyone.”

Martin Niemoeller,  
Pastor of German Evangelical (Lutheran) Church (1892-1984)

This quotation is a clear example of what should not be done. You have to care about other things, persons and problems that exist because sooner or later they will reach you and nobody will help you.

This article is trying to review the situations in the refugees’ camps and what can be done. Many writers, governments that accept refugees and international organisms make references to the impact of refugees on the environment.

First of all, we need to make a distinction between the different types of persons that need to move from their own home. The majority of us put all of them in the same group but in fact we can divide them in five different groups:

**Refugees:** individuals granted complementary forms of protection; or those under “temporary protection”.

**Asylum-seekers** are individuals whose applications for asylum or refugee status are pending a final decision.

**Internally displaced persons, IDP,** are people or groups of individuals who have been forced to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in order to avoid

the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an international border.

**Returned refugees** (returnees) refer to the refugees who have returned voluntarily to their country of origin or place of habitual residence.

**Stateless persons** are individuals not considered as nationals by any State under relevant national laws.

In order to make the analysis easier, I will approach all these groups in general, due to the fact that all of them cause the same



impact on the nature.

Armies of men, women and children moving in mass from their own home with few belongings in a short time and concentrating in one point, generate negative impact not only on the surrounding environment but also on the local population and refugees themselves (as the overcrowded camps do not provide dignified conditions for living). The Environmental guidelines of UNHCR define the impact as follows:

**Natural resources deterioration**  
Degradation of renewable natural resources, such as forests, soils and water dominates the environmental problems associated with refugees. Depletion of these resources is often accompanied by their biological impoverishment. Contamination of surface water and ground water can occur when sanitary measures are inadequate, or through improper application of agro-chemicals, leakage of vehicle fuel, etc. In the case of settlement schemes, poor land use practices may further exacerbate land degradation.

#### Irreversible impacts on natural resources

Particularly serious are impacts on areas of high environmental value





that may be related to the area's high biodiversity, its function as a haven for endangered species or as an important recreation destination. Some of these areas may be of global importance. Damage to these natural assets can be irreversible, and thus deserves special efforts of prevention or mitigation.

#### Impacts on health

The impoverishment of surrounding natural resources undermines the long-term nutritional base and brings about further adverse impacts on health of an already weakened group. Shortage of fuel wood may result in under cooking of food. A very high percentage of adverse health impacts is related to fecal and chemical contamination of drinking water and ease of disease transmission in the overcrowded refugee camps. Dust and smoke, created by the burning of low-quality fuel wood, heightens the incidence of respiratory disease. Most of these problems tend to affect disproportionately the vulnerable groups, especially the very old or the very young.

#### Impacts on social conditions

The effects of environmental degradation, particularly those related to fuel wood gathering, are felt with a particular force by women and children. Women must spend long hours seeking and carrying wood, activities which put them at increased risk of fatigue and exposure to assault as well as detracting from their child-care and family and social functions.

radation, particularly those related to fuel wood gathering, are felt with a particular force by women and children. Women must spend long hours seeking and carrying wood, activities which put them at increased risk of fatigue and exposure to assault as well as detracting from their child-care and family and social functions.

#### Social impacts on local populations

The host communities suffer similar social impacts as those felt by refugees. Competition between locals and refugees for scarce resources (fuel wood, fodder, water) can result in conflicts and resentment. In some cases, refugee influx has led to the breakdown of traditional and sustainable local systems of natural resource management.

#### Economic impacts

The influx of refugees is felt in the local markets. While sections of local population may benefit, the local poor are usually affected adversely as refugee demand forces up the price of fuel. Deforestation, land degradation and water resource depletion all carry with them an economic cost

for the local population. So does the reduced availability of fuel, housing materials, medicines, and meat derived from nearby forests. The consequences of environmental degradation in the vicinity of refugee camps may be felt at considerable distances from the camps: soil erosion and resulting sedimentation can shorten the life of reservoirs and erosion-related floods can destroy local infrastructure.

Karen Jacobsen wrote in 1997 in "Journal of Refugee Studies" that she believes that another key factor is the manner in which the refugees are settled, arguing that different forms of settlement brings different types of relationships between refugees and locals. That relationship may influence the type of activities carried out by each of these groups, as well as their access to land and other resources, such as water and forests.

#### Types of camps

These impacts can differ depending on the type of the camp where people are put. There exist two kinds of camps, and each of them with their own influence on environment: the refugees camp that is normally run by humanitarian NGOs and the other type that is the camp in which the refugees are part of the local population and usually receive help only from them. There are only few studies about the issue of the second type of camps but the visible fact is that the refugees are spread in a bigger area than if they are based in a camp and the local resources have not a huge demand like in the previous case. For this reason the environmental problems usually are less and the rhythm of recuperation is quicker. There-

fore, environmental degradation is usually minor and the time of recovery of local resources is faster. Furthermore, in the second kind of settlement it is more likely that the refugees worry about the environment, because their existence and relationship with the local population is closer and more dependent on their acceptance.

#### Solutions - strategies

Moreover, the strategies of response to environmental degradation in refugee camps usually have been directed towards the protection of trees, reforestation, the distribution of stoves economic high fuel efficiency and, more recently, environmental education. These strategies usually have just been put in place when refugees are already settled some time. Such environmental policies for the camps should not be uniformed, but adapted to the conditions and natural resources available in each area. For example, Greg Grimsich and Matthew Owen wrote in 'Force migration review' in 1998 that they found in western Tanzania in the camps located in richer natural surroundings that the deterioration caused by the refugees was much

greater than in those located in areas with no ecological value. Similarly, environmental programs worked only in already degraded areas, because in the ecologically rich areas the refugees showed little interest in conservation.

Nowadays, as a result of increased concerns about the issue, three strategies are being used for measuring environmental problems in refugees' areas:

1. The Geographic Information Systems (GYS) and satellite images that provide valuable data in a quick way, which should be confirmed on the field, including availability of biomass and timber in the area, number of people and their distance to rivers and towns
2. The environmental impact studies, which provide information on the possible effects of the arrival of refugees and on which of them should focus the protection policies
3. The Participatory Environmental Diagnostics, which are part of the wide range of participatory approaches and starting to be used, even though timidly, as a complement to the other two techniques for environmental planning.

In the UNCHR (United Nations Commission on Human Rights) guidelines it is stated that during the emergency phase, an expert should make a quickly environmental review, and subsequently develop an environmental action plan.

All these are preventing systems made in order to avoid the situations described above. The problem is that in the majority of the cases we are speaking about poor countries and they can not have these preparative systems to put it into practice. So far thanks to different organisms and governments the way to prepare the camps and solve problems has improved in the last 10 years. Still it is not perfect but in some refugees' camps when the mentioned preparation was not done, it is possible to carry out different environmental programmes in the population that can be a step of further restoration.

Alberto Mogio Perez  
(YEE)

Sources:  
UNHCR Refugees magazine  
UNHCR Environmental guidelines

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## Basic information

### What is OSCE?

OSCE - The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe with 56 participating States from Europe, Central Asia and North America forms the largest regional security organization in the world.

The OSCE is a primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation in its area. It has 19 missions or field operations in South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. The Organization deals with three dimensions of security - the politico-military, the economic and environmental, and the human dimension. It therefore addresses a wide range of security-related concerns, including arms control, confidence- and security-building measures, human rights, national minorities, democratization, policing strategies, counter-terrorism and economic and environmental activities. All 56 participating States enjoy equal status, and decisions are taken by consensus on a politically, but not legally binding basis.

<http://www.osce.org/>



## American grass

"I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones."

Albert Einstein

Just imagine the situation when a person is sitting in the governmental building, with many of his ministers around him, discussing about the war in which their country is involved.

- Sir, our troops can't use all the technologies that they are supposed to use to fight the enemy. They (the enemy) always hide themselves in the jungle or underground in tunnels.

- How is it possible? Isn't it a classical war with tanks, planes and so on?

- No, in this case we are fighting against poor people that have not many means to fight us, but they are still winning because we don't have any concentration of enemy troops to attack. They always hide in the jungle.

- Aha, I see... so you can just destroy the jungle and they can't hide anywhere so the problem can be solved...

The problem can be solved...

This is the kind of mentality that has brought us many times to the biggest mistakes in the history. This "easy" way to see things. It



is like to say that there is much arson in the forest, so let's cut the forests to stop arson. In the above mentioned fictional conversation the solution is as absurd as to say: we have a problem with these people so let's kill all of them... Well, after the World War II these kinds of decisions are not so popular. Nobody wants to be called Hitler for killing people but killing the nature seems to be non-punishable...

Do you know this mixture? 2,4-dichloro65phenoxyacetic acid and 2,4,5-trichlorophenoxyacetic acid. Unfortunately it is not any medicine – it is the well-known Agent Orange used in Vietnam. One of the most popular herbi-

cides used to destroy the nature. This history of deliberate chemical pollution started in 1961 when the programme: "Operation trail dust" for spraying herbicides over Vietnam began. Various methods were implied for spraying these chemicals systematically. On the ground, these chemicals were used by soldiers to clear the perimeters of their base camps. Boats were used to spray the riverbanks. However, the biggest damage to the jungle was done by air. The Air Force Operation Ranch Hand, as it was called, used C-123 cargo aircrafts and helicopters to drop the majority of the herbicides that were used then.

Between 1962 and 1971, as a part of Operation Ranch Hand, the U.S. military conducted more than 6,500 missions in which approximately 72 million liters of herbicides on more than 1.5 million hectares (nearly 10 percent of South Vietnam) were pulverized. Airplanes and helicopters were flying at less than 500 meters above the ground and spraying about 250 liters of herbicide for every one or two hectares of

vegetation. Eighty percent of the product remained on the tree tops, while the rest reached a lower level or came to the soil.

The effects of spraying this dangerous substance on the jungle were immediately recognizable. Estimations show that six millions acres or twenty percent of the entire land area of the Republic of South Vietnam was covered with chemical poisons. The President of South Vietnam, Nguyen Van Thieu, announced that herbicides had destroyed 23% of forests in his country. Scientists from the American Association for the Advancement of Science who visited Vietnam in 1970 reported that Bamboo had spread to reclaim forest floors that were once covered by hardwoods. Nearly all trees of coastal mangroves were destroyed after one spraying and were not expected to return to their normal states for at least one hundred years. (1)

Two herbicides that compose the Agent Orange degrade quickly, the mixture of these two herbicides creates a dioxin that is a compound that can remain highly persistent in the environment for decades and cause cancer and other health problems.

The study done by Hatfield Consultants is one of the most important that has been done till now on Agent Orange. He found high levels of dioxin in the blood of Vietnamese born after the war, suggesting that the contaminants are transmitted through the food chain. He also found high levels of dioxin in fishes and animals. The study did not determine the number of people affected, but authors noted there is a need to do

an investigation to find the link between Agent Orange and the high rate of congenital anomalies found in the population.

Since the war, Vietnam has not demanded compensation, but it needs international assistance to recover their devastated forests. Weeds and wild herbs now cover large tracts of land that were once forested, and their recovery without human intervention could take centuries. Vietnam also needs help for the medical care of 70,000 people, according to the government, that suffer from health problems caused by exposure to Agent Orange on them or their parents.

How is the situation there after 40 years? Before the war the hillsides would have been covered with thick forest, but now the landscape looks poor. The hills are covered with a thick, green grass. There is hardly a single tree in sight. Soon after the herbicide killed the jungles, the grass moved in. Now it will not let the trees grow back. The Vietnamese call it American grass. (2)

But this is not the only visible effect. The Agent Orange is still destructive, especially for children, the main victims of this environmental horror. It is believed that more than one million children are affected by these chemical residues.

It may be recalled that in periods of conflict, environmental damage is inevitable. In fact, wars have always caused environmental damage, some very durable. Thus, some of the battlefields of the First or Second World War, to mention only those conflicts, are

not still being exploited nowadays, or there is significant risk to the population, due to the presence of war materials (particularly mines and bombs). Could the environmental and post



human disaster being avoided in the war described above? Just a simple fact: in 1964 the Federation of Scientists in the United States condemned Operation Ranch Hand, considering it an unjustified chemical experiment. But it was suspended following the publication of several reports in 1970 and 1971, that established a link between malformations of the newborns and Agent Orange... 7 years after the first announcement was done by specialists!

Alberto Mogio Perez  
(YEE)

Sources:

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- Red Cross
- Hatfield Group
- (1) Institute for Advanced technology in the humanities
- (2) The legacy of the Agent Orange. Daniel Zwerdling





## War in Congo: bloody laptops and killing silence

The negative effect of wars on the environment is undeniable. But what if the environment (or more precisely said the natural resources) deeply influences lives of million people?

I am referring to a war taking place in the middle of Africa, in the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly called Zaire). There situation is obverse so this article will not describe how conflicts influence environment but how natural resources cause conflicts and influence inhabitants' lives in tragic way. This conflict has already had the biggest amount of victims since the World War II. Within the last ten years, more than five million people have died



and the numbers keep rising. In spite of this, the world does not know much about it.

### Horrible past

To understand what is happening there, you have to go back more than a decade, when the genocide that claimed nearly a million lives in neighboring Rwanda spilled over into Congo. Shortly after this, in August 1998, The Second Congo War, also known as Africa's World War and the Great War of Africa, began. Although the war formally ended in 2003, people are still dying of disease,

starvation and consequences of the civil war which has overwhelmed the country. The results of the war are alarming: 5.4 million people killed, 200 thousand women raped and millions of people forced to leave their homes. In 2004, 1000 people died daily from easily preventable cases of malnutrition and disease.

### Coltan curse

Are you asking why this all is happening? Congo is one of the

richest countries, having almost the poorest inhabitants at the same time. Both its wealth and curse come from its huge deposits of gold, copper, diamonds, tin and predominantly coltan – a metal used for the production of mobile phones, laptops, play stations, etc. The demand of coltan is naturally increasing, that is why it is often called “black gold” and that is also the reason for the terrible fights in the area. Congo has 80% of the world's deposit of coltan, however, the biggest producer is not Congo, but the neighboring Rwanda which illegally exploits

coltan in Congo, smuggles it to Rwanda and sells it to the international producers of communication devices. The toughest conflicts take place in the province of Southern and Northern Kivu, in the area of Large Lakes, which is just on the borders of Congo and Rwanda. The place is occupied by two main Rwandan armies – about 10000 rebels of Tutsi lead by the general NKunda and around 8000 soldiers of Hutu, allied in FLDR. Beside these, there are other rebels fighting just by their own and the official Congolese army (FARDC). Moreover, the United Nations (MONUC) was called in and today their mission is the largest peacekeeping operation in history. Despite ensuring the fragile peace and first democratic elections after 40 years, the „blue helmets“ of UN were accused by the leading British broadcaster BBC of the illegal trade with weapons, diamonds, gold, ivory and of sexual abuse. All of the “uniforms” operating in the area terrorize the local inhabitants and one of their most powerful weapons is rape.

### Experts say...

Marketa Kutilova, the humanitarian worker of Czech NGO People in Need says: “Women in Congo are the ones, who cook, work, take care of children, and bring water, wood, work on fields and so on. In other words, they are the crucial factor of maintaining the society. Rebels know very well that if they destroy women, they destroy the family, the commu-



nity and consequently the whole society.”

Judith Registre from the organization called “Women for Women” agrees: “When a woman is raped, it's not just her that's raped. It's the entire community that's destroyed. (...) when they take a woman to rape her, they'll line up the family, they'll line up other members of the communities to actually witness that.” As a result, even if the women survive rape, they are not accepted by their families. What's more, many of them suffer serious injuries (they can not control their bodily functions and some of them can not have children any more) and need complicated operations but the medical care is insufficient. The hospital in Goma is overcrowded and Judith Anderson, the director of the NGO running the hospital, adds: “There are permanently 120 – 140 women waiting for the operation. Usually they have to wait for three months, but some of them are waiting for even half a year.”

### Tragic consequences

Due to the refusal of their families, many of the victims keep silent about what happened to them. And no wonder. The legal system

is not much better than the medical situation either. In the prosecutor's office, the complaints pile up. Only a \$10 bribe could get a rape accusation investigated, but few cases ever go to court. However, the main task of the international law should be to inquire which laptops and mobile phones producers take off the smuggled coltan from Rwanda.

There are organizations trying to help rape survivors get back on their feet. “Women for Women” teaches survivors how to make soap, how to cook - skills they can use to earn money. They also learn how to read and write. It is the first time many of these women have ever been in a classroom - it is their chance for a whole new life. “People in Need” chose the area of Bunyakiri to help there.



For 150 000 inhabitants there is only one doctor and many people suffer by the lack of proteins and anemia as they are afraid to keep farm animals – easy loot of soldiers. “People in Need” cooperates with a nun who provides shelter for them – together they managed to build new houses and fields to plant their own vegetable, started a protected workshop where women sew school uniforms (there is no competition in this field so the demand is ensured) and make soup out of the palm oil, had new beds created for the local hospital and bought necessary medicaments. The victims are being helped, but the war is going on...

If you want to get to know more about the Congo war victims, check the documentary movie The Greatest Silence by the American director Lisa F. Jackson (see the trailer on YouTube). You can also help on [www.womenforwomen.org](http://www.womenforwomen.org) or <http://www.clovekvtisni.cz/indexen.php>.

Katka Lejčková  
(YEE)

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## The problems of Borjomi National Park after the war

The fire began on 15th of August 2008 in the Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park after Russian military helicopters dropped firebombs on non inhabited territory that is covered by forests in Borjomi district.



### Borjomi – Kharagauli National Park

The history of protected natural areas in Georgia dates back to the Middle Ages when the territories were used by local feudal lords for hunting. The next stage of environmental protection began in the 19th century when Georgia lost its independence and became a part of the Russian Empire. In 1862, the brother of ruling Russian Emperor Mikhail Romanoff was appointed Viceroy of the Russian Empire to Transcaucasia. He was greatly impressed by the beauty of the Borjomi Gorge and decided to build a summer residence there. In 1871, King Alexander II presented his brother the whole of the Borjomi Gorge. Soon, Mikhail Romanoff fenced a large part of the forest and forbade the felling of the trees and hunting without permission. After more than a century of the country's turbulent history, the implementors of the Borjomi-Kharagauli used the territory established by Mikhail

Romanoff as the basis for the first national park in the Caucasus region. In 1995 Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park was created with the support of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the German Government and was officially inaugurated in 2001.

### First National Park in the Caucasus

Today the National Park's area covers more than 76,000 hectares, which amounts to nearly 1% of

the territory of Georgia. The large area of mountainous forest has been preserved here in its pristine and virgin state. A number of endemic and relict species of flora and endangered species of fauna can be found in the forests as well as among sprawling subalpine and alpine meadows of the Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park.

### The tragedy of Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park

The fire that began on 15th of August 2008 was particularly strong in Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park. Russian military helicopters dropped firebombs on non-inhabited territory covered by forests in Borjomi district. This area is far away from conflict and military operations zone, and it is without any military or other targets. This barbaric act resulted in a conflagration with 15 inflaming sources that extend over 280-hectares of territory.

Local authorities and population were unable to extinguish a fire as



additional fire brigades or rescue helicopters could not reach the area because of the war.

However, after the Russian withdrawal, Georgian helicopters managed to reach the area of fire and extinguished the fire, in close cooperation with Turkish forces, as confirmed by Irakli Gvaladze, Georgian Minister of Environment. It is still unclear whether Azerbaijan and Ukraine participated in that action.

Up to 280 hectares (692 acres) of forests have been burnt or are alight in Georgia after its conflict with Russia, the WWF stated on 20th of August, warning that key conservation areas were under threat.

### Consequences

In August war in Georgia, over 280-hectares of territory of national park with unique trees were burned and this fact will have severe effects on ecological situa-



tion of the region.

Huge amount of animals from these territories will move from their places, trees which were standing there for many years and centuries are irrevocably lost. Moreover, the source of Borjomi mineral water - one of Georgia's top exports - is located in the park.

We can see the good example of violation of internationally agreed norms, namely, Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed

to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CWC). This international treaty concluded in Geneva on 10th October 1980 and entered into force in December 1983, seeks to prohibit or restrict the use of certain conventional weapons which are considered excessively injurious or whose effects are indiscriminant. Unfortunately, again a beautiful area was destroyed.

Dmitri Kopitov  
(SAEM)

## The development of Environment & Peace legal framework

A universal declaration establishing a set of principles providing some standards for environmental justice is the Earth Charter

- In 1987 the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development called for a charter that would lay the foundation of some fundamental principles for sustainable development.

- In 1992, the need for a charter was urged by then-Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali at the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit, but the time for such a declaration was not right. The Rio Declaration became the statement of the achievable consensus at that time. However, the drafting of an Earth

Charter was part of that 1992 Rio Earth Summit.

- The Earth Charter was created through an open and participatory worldwide consultation process. Many thousands of people and hundreds of organizations contributed to the drafting process. The drafting of the text was also overseen by the independent Earth Charter Commission, which was convened by Maurice Strong and Mikhail Gorbachev with the purpose of developing a global consensus on values and princi-

ples for a sustainable future.

- In 1994, Maurice Strong (Chairman of the Earth Summit) and Mikhail Gorbachev, working through organizations they each founded (Earth Council and Green Cross International respectively), restarted the Earth Charter as a civil society initiative, with the help of the Government of the Netherlands. The initial drafting and consultation process drew on hundreds of international documents.

- Successive drafts of the Earth



Charter was spread around the world for comments by non-governmental organizations and international experts in diverse fields.

- The final Charter was adopted in 1999 and officially launched at the Peace Palace in Hague on the 29th of June 2000. Its mission is to establish a sound ethical foundation and help build a sustainable world based on respect for nature, universal human rights and a culture of peace. The Charter has since then been formally endorsed by thousands of organizations representing millions of people, including the UNESCO Conference of Member States, the World Conservation Union of IUCN, national government ministries, national and international associations of universities, and hundreds of cities and towns in dozens of countries. It has also been endorsed by tens of thousands of individuals, and publicly supported by numerous heads of state.

#### Preamble to the Charter

“We stand at a critical moment in Earth’s history, a time when humanity must choose its future. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and fragile, the future at once holds great peril and great promise. To move forward we must recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny. We must join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace. Towards this end, it is imperative that we, the peoples of Earth, declare our responsi-

bility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations.”

#### Principles

The Earth Charter urges environmental responsibility, peaceful coexistence, respect for life, democracy, and justice. It is organized into 16 general headings, each covering a general principle, as follows:

1. Respect Earth and life in all its diversity.
2. Care for the community of life with understanding, compassion and love.
3. Build democratic societies that are just, participatory, sustainable and peaceful.
4. Secure Earth’s bounty and beauty for present and future generations.
5. Protect and restore the integrity of Earth’s ecological systems, with special concern for biological diversity and the natural processes that sustain life.
6. Prevent harm as the best method of environmental protection and, when knowledge is limited, apply a precautionary approach.
7. Adopt patterns of production, consumption and reproduction that safeguard Earth’s regenerative capacities, human rights and community well-being.
8. Advance the study of ecological sustainability and promote the open exchange and wide application of the knowledge acquired.
9. Eradicate poverty as an ethical, social and environmental imperative.
10. Ensure that economic activities and institutions at all levels promote human development in an equitable and sustainable manner.
11. Affirm gender equality and equity as prerequisites to sustain-

able development and ensure universal access to education, health care and economic opportunity.

12. Uphold the right of all, without discrimination, to a natural and social environment supportive of human dignity, bodily health and spiritual well-being, with special attention to the rights of indigenous peoples and minorities.

13. Strengthen democratic institutions at all levels, and provide transparency and accountability in governance, inclusive participation in decision-making, and access to justice.

14. Integrate into formal education and lifelong learning the knowledge, values and skills needed for a sustainable way of life.

15. Treat all living beings with respect and consideration.

16. Promote a culture of tolerance, nonviolence and peace.

The Earth Charter has been publicly endorsed, recognized, or supported by people and organizations across a wide range of the political spectrum, from conservative to liberal, as well as from all major religious traditions. It has received support from business corporations, grassroots activists, universities, governments, and global non-governmental organizations. Overall, reaction to the document can be characterized as overwhelmingly positive.

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Useful links related to the Earth Charter:

- <http://www.earthcharter.org/>
- <http://www.earthcharterus.org/>
- <http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/>
- <http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/youth/>
- <http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/>

## Peace Ecology

The idea of Peace Ecology is built on key concepts such as bioregionalism, place, sustainability and interconnectedness of the two spheres (peace & environment), which leads to a new definition of environmental peacemaking as well as a new methodological approach.

The concept of Peace Ecology, built on the combined vision of peace and environmental studies, gives a broader context in which we can evaluate environmental peacemaking more precisely. It applies a worldview approach to environmental peacemaking and emphasizes the long-term benefits of an environmental consciousness. Inspired by the idea of environmental peacemaking, it provides space for integration of the two fields of study, where the tolerance for epistemic, cultural, spiritual, societal, as well as ecological diversity is largely reflected.

Without Peace Ecology and a vision of the transforming society we live in, capable of dealing with changes and its challenges constructively and non-violently, humans may be able to claim a given environmental peacemaking project has certain effect, but to comprehensively estimate the effects and to what results they lead, cannot be completely determined. Peace Ecology creates conceptual space for looking at the peace-building potential of environmental practices and projects regardless of whether they are driven by problem solving or by a worldview, whether they focus on some task or on human consciousness. There is an inevitable and total interconnectedness of life through nature. Regardless of the specific circumstances, humans take part in the same set of interconnected ecological cycles.

The world is changing over time. Conflict is in a way a natural by-product of change, which could be both destructive and constructive. It may provoke positive or negative change. Unfortunately, all forms of violence have human as well as environmental costs. Peace and ecology are directly interconnected and interdependent and there are several types of violence (physical, structural, cultural, epistemic, psychological or ecological) determining whe-

physical violence. The impact of a war on the environment does not end with a ceasefire, it persists for decades due to destructed infrastructure, movement of refugees, internally displaced people, remaining risks from mines and the political shortcomings of reconstruction.

Peace Ecology values the preservation and harmonious and peaceful interaction of societies with nature. The value of biodiversity is closely connected to



ther a society is leaning towards peace or conflict and violence. A society subjecting its members to violence deprives itself of the prospect of maximizing its own societal, economic and environmental potential. For instance, in the case of direct or physical violence, victims include both people and the environment. Environmental degradation caused by violent conflict leaves societies crippled, having to deal with the effects of war for a very long time after the actual occurrence of the

the value of cultural diversity. Ecosystems with high biodiversity are home to great number of cultures, where each culture has a different approach how to live in harmony with nature. In terms of peace, each one of these cultures carries its own system and techniques for dealing with conflict non-violently. With the current high rates of destruction of biodiversity comes a similarly rapid destruction of cultural diversity. The principles of interconnectedness and interdependence, shared



by both the peace and the ecological approaches, extend human responsibility in terms of protecting the environment and maintaining peace far into the future.

Peace Ecology is closely connected to the “do-no-harm” principle. In conflict resolution studies, it implies sensitivity to human suffering, to the local culture and customs and the great responsibility accompanying peace intervention. In environmental practice, it suggests sensitivity to the ecosystem’s tolerance against human intervention and the fragility in the balance of the chemical, biological, and ecological cycles of life as well as the responsibility that comes along with managing the environment. In Peace Ecology, all of the above meanings of “do-no-harm” apply simultaneously at every level of an environmental peace activity, from designing methodological tools for pre-evaluation of projects and practices to implementing those tools together with the local populations and ecosystems. Expanding people’s knowledge to include diverse ways of comprehension increases their understanding of how to achieve ecologically sustainable life for all. Thus, the impact of Peace Ecology is tested in two ways: for its capacity to maintain ecological integrity with humans residing responsibly and as part of nature and for its effectiveness in managing conflicts constructively while eliminating various forms of violence. Failure to achieve the first goal is considered a failure to realize the second and vice versa. For example a project such as eco-tourism that may reduce certain forms of violence but fails to protect the integrity of the local ecosystem is considered a violent practice, since it simply transfers the weight from one form of violence to another. Likewise, a project such as a peace park succeeding in preserving the local

ecosystem but intensifying old or generating new forms of social violence, is also considered a failure and violent practice.

The concept of Peace Ecology suggests that peace and ecology can and should be evaluated as interdependent concepts. It suggests a sensitive and integrated approach, considering the type of society, ecosystem and conflicts such projects are expected to influence. It does not presume effective environmental projects will necessarily lead to peace nor vice versa. It does not assume cooperation in an environmental peacemaking project would suggest a peaceful transformation of the society in which the project is implemented. Both concepts should not be understood and treated as separate, but instead they should function synergistically, enhancing and improving each other.

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## The relationship between peace & environment education

Peace and environmental education help people to identify problems and search for solutions. The utilization in peace studies of an increasing number of themes and disciplines within environmental studies, such as environmental security, justice and peacemaking, makes the environment academically relevant to conflict and peace.

The intersection of peace and environmental studies and the potential of the environment to promote peace is a relatively new area of study. It stems from developments within environmental studies extending its scope to include issues of conflict analysis and peace-building. While environmental conflict resolution has been an essential part of the en-

vironmental studies field for several decades, understanding the implications of the environment in terms of international security and peace-building has only been explored since the late 1980s, when the concept of environmental security emerged.

Generally speaking, peace education is concerned with the study



of conflict, conflict prevention and resolution and is focused on violence and conflicts primarily among humans. Among its goals are the appreciation of peace, providing information about security systems, understanding violent behavior, developing intercultural understanding and promoting the concept of peace accompanied by social justice and respect for life. The environmental education, on the other hand, is also concerned with violence but focuses on human-nature interactions and the damaging effect of human activities on the environment. It also teaches how to live in a more responsible and sustainable manner and has three fundamental goals: to provide opportunities to acquire knowledge and obtain the qualities needed to protect and improve the environment, to encourage people to explore and understand the environment from different perspectives and to arouse their awareness of the environment and motivate them to participate in resolving environmental problems. Environmental studies also emphasize how humans are dependent on the environment for their wellbeing. The destruction of the nature poses a serious threat to human existence. That is why, peace educators should also teach how to minimize human harm to the nature and encourage greater human participation in natural processes as well as better understanding of the interconnectedness of all living creatures.

Beginning in the late 1980s, a series of publications including Norman Mayer’s “Ultimate Security” and Homer-Dixon and Blitt’s edited volume “Ecoviolence” provoked a debate on the link between the scarcity of environmental



resources and regional violence. The debate led to the development of environmental security as a sub-field in political science and several scholars and researchers focused on identifying regions of the planet where environmental scarcity could trigger instability and threaten regional and global security. It was evident, only under very specific circumstances the environment could be a source of violent conflict. However, environmental scarcity was found to be a key component in escalating existing conflicts to violence.

However, environmental peacemaking remains predominately engaged with the fields of political science and policy studies and has had very little engagement with the fields of peace studies, conflict resolution and environmental studies. That is why the full potential of the methods and case studies analyzed have not been sufficiently explored. Those interested in the field of environmental security come from a wide variety of backgrounds such as political science, international relations and security, environmental management and economics, agriculture, wildlife as well as microeconomics. But, instead of

shaping a new approach to solve environmental and peace crisis based on the synergy of the two fields, a case-by-case method is applied which very frequently leaves unclear how, if, in what way or to what extent the environment or peace are affected.

So far the majority of environmental peacemaking analyses have focused on policy transformation through the handling of one or another environmental problem. If a project is designed to protect primates, the focus of analysis will be limited to measure the primate population having only a peripheral focus on the project’s peace/conflict implications. In the same manner many projects focusing on the peace-building effectiveness of environmental projects, prioritizes the peace-building components, providing only a partial view of the followed environmental successes or failures. As a consequence, people’s understanding of environmental peacemaking is created either through examining the environmental and policy impacts with a very restricted view of the peace/conflict component or from peace/conflict analyses with little attention paid to the environmental implications. This unbalanced approach confines people’s view of environmental peacemaking as either an environmental problem-solving tool or a peace-building tool. The environmental and peace sphere lack an integrated approach that explores the possibilities intrinsic to the intersection of the environment and peacemaking.

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## Some peace strategies and their application in environmental education

Preventing war is the best way to guarantee peace, and preventing environmental damage is the best way to assure a healthy planet.

Trying to stop a violent activity from occurring costs much less than cleaning up after wars and environmental disasters and spares the suffering, death, social, economic and health problems that result from war and environmental destruction. The precautionary principle is in a way the first step in environmental protection. Many other measures used to prevent war are also employed to prevent ecological harm, including information gathering and sharing, monitoring environmental conditions, early warning of environmental threats, freedom of environmental information or democratic participation.

Peacemaking is similar to preventive diplomacy in that it brings to-



gether opposing forces to resolve conflicts, but usually after they break out or when hostilities are at a crisis point. Generally, peacemakers are facilitators and peacemaking begins with the commitment to talk about the conflict and



usually relies upon communication, listening, problem solving as well as shared decision-making concerning actions. Environmental conflict resolution applies conflict resolution techniques to environmental disputes but has two main concerns: to facilitate agreements, which stop actions harming the environment and causing conflict and to facilitate agreements on values, norms and laws that will protect nature against future damage. Environmental peacemakers use their rational, ethical, and legal skills to develop norms, treaties, and legislation that will protect nature from harmful human behavior that could be detrimental to the environment.

It is difficult to develop and apply peacemaking and peace-building strategies without first bringing an end to the killing and destruction. It is also difficult to sustain a healthy planet without first stopping the activities that destroy the nature. Human health and survival depend on water, air, soil, plants and animals and human activities

harming the environment have a detrimental impact on human life as well. For instance, toxic and radioactive pollutants are both ecocidal and homicidal. Thus, human behavior that causes harm to nature needs to be stopped by the relevant authorities. When effective legal and judicial frameworks are at work, they usually help to diminish environmental harm. However, even when good legislation is in place it may not be enforced. Some violent practices will elude even the most vigilant and conscientious authorities.

Peace-building strategies were generally developed by the United Nations for post-conflict situations to rebuild political, social and economic infrastructure devastated by war and to build the foundations for a just and lasting peace. Those strategies go beyond the mere prevention of war and aim to establish system of social justice and environmental sustainability. They proceed from the premise that if you want peace, prepare for peace and develop

social, economic, cultural, and environmental conditions supporting and maintaining stable peace. Peace-building within environmental education raises important questions about ecojustice. It has a strong focus on the relationship between environmental degradation, racism and poverty. Often racial, ethnic minorities and poor people see their neighborhoods become dumping grounds for toxic waste.

When parties are locked in bitter conflict, environmental issues can be (not always) less contentious

than other issues, providing a forum for dialogue and serving as a communication between conflicting groups. Such a process could be started by identifying the causes of the conflict over resources, ensuring access to information on natural resources, recognizing the environmental deprivations suffered by poor people, also clarifying property and access rights to environmental resources and striving for the equitable sharing of benefits. Where conflict does demand intervention the environment could be used as an entry point for peace building of sus-

tainable development. Through these initiatives humans are gradually moving toward behavior that respects the nature and regulate their activities in line with environmental sustainability. But, so far, this work has been mostly reactive and partial. However, those initiatives need to become more proactive and comprehensive in order to have long-lasting effects in a given region both in terms of maintaining peace and good quality of the nature.

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## Games for understanding

“A mind that has been stretched by a new experience will never go back to its old Dimensions”

(Kurt Hahn, founder of Outward Bound)

Imagine that there is a country where the people are born with a pair of sunglasses with yellow lenses, yes as you hear, the same as you: with two legs, two eyes, a mouth and... a pair of sunglasses. For all the people there, it is normal due to the fact that they grow with them. But not far from them, there is another village where the inhabitants are born also with sunglasses but with blue lenses. One day, a girl from the first village wanted to travel to the other village. She knew that to be involved in their way of life and to understand better the people from the other village she had to act like them and try to do the same as they do. So she bought sunglasses with a blue lenses and went to the other village to live there for some months. She was fascinated by the new world and habits that the people had there. After some months,

she came back to her village and started to explain how beautiful it was and how she integrated in their community. She said that thanks to their glasses she could see the world like the other people. With a green color! While reading this story we can see an example of culture awareness. However, it was not the way for clear observation due to the fact that this person carried to the other village her own culture, so she was watching another reality but she did not realize that her culture was affecting her. Many wars start because of political decisions, economic reasons, “prevention”... but as well due to a lack of understanding between cultures. Since the 70’s when the non-formal education concept was started, it has shown a big potential to educate people in different ways. Non-formal education is the

way of teaching people various skills that is not obligatory and structured and is learned outside the context of a formal school. In the last 30 years, a huge number of activities and exercises that deal with intercultural dialogue has been developed. The dialogue among cultures is one of the first steps to avoid future wars. Here some games and activities that can be used to deal with intercultural dialogue will be presented. The most important of these activities is the follow up part, due to the fact that the exercises are just simple tools to begin the learning. So the majority of the preparations comes in the follow up part.

### Cultionary

This game deals with images, prejudices and stereotypes. It is an adaptation from the board game



pictionary. The participants have to represent or draw the culture that is written in the card that is given to them. For the game you just need to have cards with the names of different countries or cultures. This game is a good start to see how the people see the others and which prejudices or stereotypes other nations have about them. Starting from this point, you can begin a debriefing about how the people felt when their culture was represented, if they identify with it or just simply recognize it.

#### Ali and Antonio

This game addresses the different images that the people have about different cultures. The activity starts with a simple sentence: Antonio is a Spanish boy that lives in Madrid. After this sentence another person follows with the history as s/he wants, just saying one sentence. Later the session continues till all the people have a chance to speak. (If there is a big group, not all of people need to say something, some can be just observers). After some minutes the next history can start: Anto-

nio knows Ali – a boy from Morocco who also has a history. And the activity can be continued. The debriefing starts with asking the participants what these two persons have in common and how different points of view we have about them, if all the people think that these two histories could be true.

#### Euro rail a la carte

Addressed: prejudices and limits of tolerance. The participants can work together or individually. They will have a list of persons which they should choose and prioritize to travel with in a train from one country to another one. The list can be similar to the following one:

A French speaking only French, carrying a basket full of smelly cheese

A Bask activist who just came from one country at war

A Serbian soldier from Bosnia

An Italian DJ listenning to the loud music

An Ukrainian student that does not want to come back home

A blind accordion player from Austria

A German rapper living a very alternative life

A young artist who is HIV positive

A Dutch hard line and aggressive feminist

A skinhead from Sweden under the influence of the alcohol

A Romanian woman without visa and with children in her arms

A Russian prostitute from Berlin

A noisy Spanish singing all the time

A wrestler from Belfast going to a football match

An overweight Swiss financial broker

An alcoholic that is coming home after wasting all his money

The participants have to tell their first three choices and the last three ones of people with whom they would (not) like to travel with the explanation of the reasons.

#### First Impression

Addressed:

- To see how people differ in their initial impressions of others

- To explore how our past experiences colour our impressions about others

- To become more aware of how

our impressions affect our behaviour towards others.

Select from magazines pictures of people who have interesting/ different/ minority/ challenging, etc. look or background. Selection should be done with regards to the group, the background of the participants and topic of the training. Cut out the pictures and stick each one at the top of separate A3 paper. Pass each A3 paper sheet around and ask each participant to look at the picture and write down the first impression about the person on the picture at the bottom of the page. Then turn the bottom of the paper up, to hide what they have written and pass the sheet to the next person. Repeat until each participant has all the pictures. After that unfold the sheets and ask some participants to read out all the impressions collected under each picture.

Open up a discussion focusing on:

- What surprises were there?
- Why are the impressions so different?
- Is it linked to our background, experience, place we live in, etc.?
- What feelings did participants have while doing the exercise, hearing the results?
- Discussion on stereotypes and prejudices

Be prepared that the discussion may be very personal and some people may feel touched. Do not let participants to criticise each others impressions. Try to focus on the reasons for the impressions. After the discussion more theoretical input on stereotypes and prejudice can follow.

#### What do we know about them?

Participants are put into pairs of mixed nationalities and genders. (It is better to divide them

in the morning or in the evening so that they have enough time for preparation). Each couple chooses one of the participating countries (from hut-random choice) to present that day. It cannot be country from which one person from the couple is. Their task is to prepare short (3 minutes) presentation of this country in whatever way they choose. It is allowed to use other people from the group (or country they should present) as the resource.

#### Power and participation:

##### Establishing a new society

The story (to be read/distributed to the participants):

You are among about 40 (number of the participants and trainers) people who survived a ship crash. The waves of the ocean have brought you to an uninhabited island. Nobody was ever living here or ruled over this island. You have unique opportunity to start your life by new. Four people from the ship (the trainers) were chosen to supervise the establishment of the new society on the island. The group of Four has decided to call for the elections to the Council of Great Wisdom.

In order for the elections to take place every survived is expected:

1. To unite with others in order to establish a group platform which must indicate:

- the priorities of the society building
- the system of leadership and decision-making on the island
- the election campaign strategies

2. To campaign with your group in order to promote a group platform

3. To vote by secret ballots for no more than 2 group platforms

4. Come and express your opinion about the elections at a General

#### Meeting of Survivals

Note for trainers:

- Either trainers brake participants into groups or participants choose the group they want to join at the condition that no more than 7 and no less than 6 persons are working in a group

- Total number of participants: at least 24 people and no more than 60 (but may be used for bigger groups under special considerations)

- Timing (with a group of about 40 people): establishment of platforms 40 min, campaigning 50 min, voting 10 min, evaluation 40 min

- Campaigning may be organised by order, one group after another will be presenting its platform

Suggested Questions for the evaluation at the General Meeting of Survivals:

- What were the priorities of group platforms?

- Which types of leadership have been suggested?

- What were the methods of campaigning?

- What images and messages have been involved?

- What was the division or roles in your group?

- What was your motivation to vote?

- What you have learned?

Note for trainers: any relevant discussion technique can be used at this stage.

#### Hotel Glocal

Participants should divide into pairs. One person from the pair will be receptionist, the other one guest. Every guest will get a problem card where his problem is written and his task will be to explain his problem to the receptionist during 1 minute.

The problem can be really

?

## Basic information

### What is United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Post-Conflict and Disaster Management Branch?

The Post-Conflict & Disaster Management Branch (PCDMB) extends UNEP's work in areas of the world where the environment is impacted by conflicts and disasters, or where the environment is a factor contributing to conflicts and disaster impacts. PCDMB has worked in post-conflict settings such as Afghanistan, Sudan, Iraq, as well as in countries affected by major disasters such as Pakistan, Indonesia and Sri Lanka. Because conflicts and disasters are so closely intertwined with the environment, proper environmental

management and governance are essential for long-term peace, stability and security in any conflict- or disaster-prone country. It conducts environmental assessments in crisis-affected countries and strengthens national environmental management capacity through institution building, promoting regional cooperation, environmental information management and integrating environmental concerns and risk reduction measures in reconstruction programmes.

<http://postconflict.unep.ch/>



general. For example: the elevator is broken and the guest needs help to take his luggages up to the third floor. Then it can be specified, for example; the neighbour uses sandal sticks because she is Buddhist and the smoke is too strong.

The receptionist and the guest can use only their mother tongue and body language. They can not use any common spoken languages! They can not speak with each other before their meeting. Every pair has 1 minute to speak and the receptionist should solve the problem. If he does not succeed during one minute, afterwards he can guess and the other participants will be asked as well. At last the guest can say what was the problem.

Firstly, all pairs will play and try to find solutions.

After the exercise, debriefing will happen. Debriefing can be on cultural identities, similarities and differences between cultures, intercultural dialogue, communication.

### Beware of culture

Split the participants into 4 groups. Each group will be given a case they have to discuss and then present in plenary. They will get a sheet with 1) a case, 2) some questions to discuss.

Part one (30 minutes):

The participants discuss cases.

Part two (30 minutes):

In plenary each group is asked to present their case shortly

Part three (20 minutes):

Debriefing:

What can culture explain in connection to behaviour?

What can it not explain?

Which other explanations of the behaviour did you come up with?

What happens when we try to explain delinquency, unemployment etc. with the concept of culture?

When arguing that we should respect culture no matter what, what do we miss out?

Part four (10 minutes):

Sum up the debriefing with a presentation of stereotypes, prejudices, discrimination and exclusion. Be aware of cultural differences

as a first best guess, but beware of the use of culture to explain or excuse negative behaviour. Otherwise culture turns into a new concept for "race".

Case 1

The following quote is taken from a book "Generous Betrayal. Politics of Culture in the New Europe", which is written by the Norwegian anthropologist Unni Wikan who works on issues of immigrants and refugees in Norway.

As a culture expert – an anthropologist – I receive frequent calls from people who are dealing with immigrants and refugees. One type of questions is of this nature "He has beaten his wife (or children), but he says it is his culture. What are we to do?" The callers are social workers. A different type of question comes from a lawyer who phones and says: "I have this client. He has beaten his wife (or murdered a man or something), but I think it is his culture... Would you please appear in court as an expert witness for the defense and say that?"

Unni Wikan continues...

And when I say I will not, this is not a matter of culture, the lawyer then proceeds: "But do you think we can find somebody else who will say this is his culture?" To which my answer is "Certainly!"

Discussion points:

We have previously discussed culture and cultural differences. We will now ask you to discuss whether the concept of culture can explain violence (e.g. against women) or not, and if not which other factors can explain it.

If you have more time you can:

- Relate the discussion to similar cases where forced marriages, circumcision of women, or abuse of the social welfare system is

excused with culture.

- Discuss whether explaining with culture can disempowered people.

### Equiano

Do not explain the purpose of the activity to participants.

Tell participants that you are going to read a series of extracts from a book which describe one person's experience. It is their task, individually, to visualise this person, to build up a mental profile of him or her. Tell them that you will read and show them the extracts, one at a time. Between each extract there will be a pause to give them time to think about the text and the profile of the person. Ask them to make a few notes each time and so gradually develop this profile. Tell them that it is not very likely they will know the person's name – the person is not really famous. Explain that because the English in the text is not so modern, more straightforward terms have been added to the text, in green between brackets. Square brackets indicate words omitted because they would make the task too easy. Ask them not to talk during the exercise - if they fail to understand the meaning of the text they should raise a hand and you can clarify the meaning for them.

Read the first extract and give or show a copy to participants.

"I feared I should be put to death (killed), the [...] people looked and acted, as I thought, in so savage a manner;"

With this first extract they will see the simplified term in the green brackets and the square bracket, so you can explain this to them again. Make sure everyone has understood before proceeding.

Now repeat this procedure for each extract, making sure every-

one understands the text and has time to make a few profile notes each time.

"were we to be eaten by these [...] men with horrible looks, [...] faces, and loose hair?"

"I was amazed at their...eating with unwashed hands..."

"I was amazed at their...touching the dead."

"...we were totally unacquainted with (we knew nothing about) swearing (bad language), and all those terms of abuse...which they use."

"I could not help remarking (noticing) the particular slenderness (thinness) of their women....and I thought they were not so modest (pure) as [our] women."

At this stage, ask the group for feedback. Invite one or two people to share their profile with the group and then ask who agrees and who disagrees. Quickly establish the general groupings of opinion. Then you can introduce one more extract.

"I was amazed at their not sacrificing, or making any offerings..."

You can begin the fuller debriefing now by asking them if this final extract changed their view in any way. Then ask more questions about the writer's profile to clarify further what participants felt and to see what common views there were in the group, for example:

How did you visualise this person?

Did you think of him/her as from this century?

Did you regard the writer as European or non-European?

Usually, though not always, participants from European cultural backgrounds develop a profile of a European explorer, missionary, or similar, coming into contact with non-European cultures in



the past.

Once you feel you have a fairly comprehensive picture of how the group saw the writer, let them know the identity of the writer and the source of the material.

"The Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa the African." - written in 1789.

Also, give the participants copies of the text including the omitted words at this stage.

"I feared I should be put to death, the white people looked and acted, as I thought, in so savage a manner:"

"were we to be eaten by these white men with horrible looks, red faces, and loose hair?"

"I could not help remarking the particular slenderness of their women...and I thought they were not so modest as the African women."

Now you can explore the profiles and ideas participants come up with, with questions such as:

Were you surprised or shocked when the identity of the writer/ was said?

Sources:

- Education Pack. Council of Europe
- Salto Youth Center
- Compass






# YEE member organisations list for 2008

Federation of Youth Clubs Armenia FYCA	Shirak Street 6-30, 378414 Yeghvard	Armenia	www.youthclubs.am
Sissian development center	27 Sissakan, 379 8010 Sissian	Armenia	
Stepanavan Youth center	Charents st. 137, 377320 Stepanavan	Armenia	www.stepanavanyouthcenter.org/
Active Young citizenship initiative	Baghramyan, 4 line, house 30, 0033 Yerevan	Armenia	
Association for Sustainable Human Development	33 Khanjyan st., apt.18, 0010 Yerevan	Armenia	http://users.freenet.am/~ashd
ÖNJ - Österreichische Naturschutzjugend	Pater-Stefan-Str. 7, 5061 Elsbethen	Austria	www.oenj.at
JNM - Jeugdbond voor Natuur- en Milieustudie	Kortrijksepoortstraat 192, 9000 Gent	Belgium	www.jnm.nl
Natuur 2000	Bervoetsstraat 33, B-2000 Antwerpen	Belgium	www.natuur2000.be
Jeunes et Nature	BP 91 B-1300 Wawre	Belgium	www.jeunesetnature.be
Ecosouthwest	P.O. Box 29 2700 Blagoevgrad	Bulgaria	http://ecosw.dir.bg
YEO Rhodope	Tourist Information Centre, 4710 Shiroka Luka	Bulgaria	www.rhodope.net
Eco Club Yetti	University of Mining and Geology, 1100 Sofia	Bulgaria	
Hnuti Brontosaurusius	Hvězdová 10, 602 00 Brno	Czech Republic	
Konopa	Chvaleč 236, 542 11 Chvaleč	Czech Republic	www.konopa.cz
Ekolyceum	Stara Silnice 76, 74707 Opava	Czech Republic	www.ekolyceum.wz.cz
Natur og Ungdom	Klostermrllvej 48A, DK-8660 Skanderborg	Denmark	www.natur-og-ungdom.dk
Luonto Litto	Annankatu 26 A, 5.KRS. 00100 Helsinki	Finland	www.luontoliitto.fi
GYEM - Georgia Youth EcoMovement	4.Khetagurov Str. App 7, 0102 Tbilisi	Georgia	http://saembilisi.mail333.com/en/
Alliance For Society Advancement (ASA)	3mk, 5 kv, bl-24a, Apt-2., 380097 Tbilisi	Georgia	
Studio Re	Aleksidze street, Institute of Geophysics, 0193 Tbilisi	Georgia	www.studiore.org.ge
Bundjugend	Am Kollnischen Park 1a, 10179 Berlin	Germany	www.bundjugend.de
DJN - Deutscher Jugendbund fur Naturbeobachtung	Geiststraße 2, 37073 Göttingen	Germany	www.naturbeobachtung.de
Naturschutzjugend NAJU	NAJU-Headquarter Herbert-Rabius-Str. 26 D-53225 Bonn	Germany	www.naju.de
Naturschutzjugend im LBV	Postfach 1380, 91157 Hilpoltstein	Germany	www.naju-bayern.de
FTK: Club of Young Naturalists	Ludovika ter 6, H-1083 Budapest	Hungary	http://www.ftk.tar.hu/
ECO-Unesco	26 Clare St., Dublin 2	Ireland	www.ecounesco.ie
Green Future	House of creativity Vilties 16, LT- 31121, Visaginas	Lithuania	
VNPS Vilnius Nat. Prot. Society	Pylimo 15/2, Vilnius 2001	Lithuania	
DEM	ul. Vasil Gjorgov 39, b 6, 91000 Skopje	Macedonia	http://www.dem.org.mk/
Nature Trust Malta NTM	P.O. Box 9, VLT 1000	Malta	info@naturetrustmalta.org
Organizacja Mkdodziejowa Ligi Ochrony Przyrody	ul. Tamka 37/2, 00-355 Warsaw	Poland	http://www.lop.org.pl/
Oddzial Akademicki Polskiego Towarzystwa Turystyczno-Krajoznawczego w Krakowie (OA PTTK)	Radziwillowska 21/4, 31026, Krakow	Poland	http://oakrakow.pttk.pl
GAIA	Travessa da Nazaré, 21, 2º 1100-368 Lisboa	Portugal	www.gaia.org.pt
Ecological Mountain Foundation	7th M.Eminescu street RO, 5600 Pietra Neamt	Romania	
Eco Terra	Str. Cetatatea de Balta 116, Bl.8, Ap. 17, 060954 Bucharest	Romania	
LUGA Environmental Organisation	Volodarskogo, 5/1-83, Leningradskaya Oblast Luga 118230	Russia	
EYC Environmental Youth Club	Leninskie gori 119991 Moscow	Russia	
Civil initiative	Uritskogo str., 25 188350 Gatchina (Leningradskaya oblast)	Russia	
Young Researchers of Serbia	Bulevar Umetnosti 27, 11070 Novi Beograd	Serbia	www.mis.org.yu
Zveze Za Technico Kulturo Slovenije	Lepi pot 6 SI-1000, Ljubljana	Slovenia	http://www.zotks.si/portal/
Asociación Ambiental y Cultural Oro Verde	C/Grande, nº 2, 24273, Las Omañas, Leon	Spain	http://groups.msn.com/oroverdeleon
Fältbiologerna	Brunnsgatan 62, SE 802 52 Gävle	Sweden	www.faltbiologerna.se
For the Earth!	14 Naberjnaya Street, 734003 Dushanbe	Tajikistan	www.seu.ru/members/fe
Arkadas	Ilhan Akgün C. 12/C, TR 33960 Silifke	Turkey	
GSM	Bayindir Sokak 45/9, 06650 Kizilay / Ankara	Turkey	www.gsm-youth.org
METU Nature club	Middle East Technical University, 06531 Ankara	Turkey	http://metu.edu.tr
Look at East	2 Pound Place, SY23 1LX Aberystwyth	U.K.	www.lookeast.org.uk
Youth Environmental League of Prydnyprovya (MELP)	kim. 175, bud. 6, vul. Moskovska 49000 Dnipropetrovsk	Ukraine	www.melp.dp.ua





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