



WECF is a network of women's and environmental organisations in 30 countries throughout Central Asia and Europe. WECF strives for a Healthy Environment for All. We use women's potential in balancing environment, health and economy. WECF's activities are based on its partners individual visions and needs. Therefore WECF implements solutions locally and influences policy internationally.

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# | moving people for a world in balance |



**WECF** | Women in Europe for a Common Future

## Impressum

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- WECF is a member of the European Environment & Health Committee (EEHC)

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solid waste, water, wastewater, sanitation, organic agriculture, biodiversity, rural development, poverty elimination

# Activity Report

Overview of WECF's accomplishments in 2006

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# Foreword



Looking back at the past year there are some key achievements that stand out. First of all, the increasing positive response gradually developing in circles of authorities and experts about the pioneering projects by WECF and its members on introducing Eco-Sanitation solutions to the rural areas in Eastern Europe and the EECCA region. WECF is trying to show that Eco-sanitation is an affordable, sustainable and successful solution to the problems of polluted drinking water sources and poor hygiene in vast rural areas where millions of inhabitants are depending on well water. Combined with sustainable methods of farming and better wastewater management Ecosan can prevent the current health problems - particularly for children – that are connected with poor drinking water quality in those rural areas.

The second important achievement is the fact that the good results of the activities by WECF and members over the past years have been rewarded by a substantial programme grant by the Directorate for Development Cooperation of Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This enables WECF and its members to invest more in projects and support of local partner groups in the EECCA region, with the aim to tackle the environmental causes of ill health, poverty and poor safety of drinking water, food and energy supply, with sustainable solutions.

The third memorable fact is the progress made by WECF and its members in advocacy and awareness raising about the environmental health impacts in relation to chemical exposure, particularly the impacts of exposure during the vulnerable period of prenatal development and the impacts on women. During the political debate about the EU chemical policy plan REACH, WECF has been instrumental to raise the voice of many women and their organisations in Europe to demand from the Commission and the European parliament better protection from chemical contamination. That this increasing political participation of women has not had the results on the REACH policy as they had hoped for, does not mean that WECF and its partners abide with the situation.

WECF started in 2006 a new appeal to the European Commission in which we presented results of our international scientific workshop on the Environmental Burden of Disease (EBD). According to the scientists the EBD is underestimated and a new scientific paradigm is evolving which uses new methods of assessment of environmental impacts on health, to explain the increase of many modern diseases such as asthma and allergies, cancers, heart and cardiovascular diseases and neurodevelopmental disorders (such as ADHD, autism). With these results WECF organised on 27 Novem-

ber 2006 a High Level Round Table in Brussels with representatives of the EU Commission, scientists and stakeholders to discuss the connection between the EBD and the EU Lisbon Strategy and the Sustainable Development Strategy and the need to reduce the EBD by legislation. Many participants agreed that environmental health needs specific attention in EU policy and has economic and social impacts that may have been underestimated. WECF has given follow up to this Round-table by advocacy work to the Commission and Council of Ministers of Member States and the EU Presidency.

These three main features of our work in 2006 mentioned above show that WECF and its members have accomplished that women are now considered to represent a specific interest as stakeholders in the Environment and Health and Sustainable Development policy and its implementation. It shows in the increasing invitations to WECF to participate in official conferences. It presents a challenge to us all to answer this recognition without diminishing our efforts for the priority of our work: the implementation projects with WECF members and partners.

**Marie Kranendonk**  
President of WECF

# | About WECF |



# 1 | About WECF

**Our Conviction** An old Chinese proverb says: “We need two eyes to see straight!” It’s the same with men and women; we need both their views equally to achieve a world in balance. (Marie Kranedonk, President WECF).

**The WECF network** WECF is a network of 80 women’s and environmental organisations in 37 countries of which 33 Western European and EECCA countries (Eastern Europe & Caucasus & Central Asia) and 5 other countries. WECF was officially registered in 1994. WECF has two coordinating offices in Utrecht, The Netherlands and one in Munich, Germany, which manage the network, projects and finances.

**WECF’s roots** During the ‘Earth Summit’ in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 – a result of the UN report ‘Our Common Future’ – women were defined as a “major group” in sustainable development and environment policy. As the “Earth Summit” brought together many enthusiastic and active European women working for sustainable development, the representatives from Europe agreed to create the network organisation WECF.

**Mission – Moving People for a World in balance** WECF strives for a Healthy Environment for All. We use women’s potential in balancing environment, health and economy. WECF’s activities are based in its partners own visions and needs. Therefore WECF implements solutions locally and influences policy internationally.

**Goals and Issues** As a result of the WECF strategy meeting in May 2006, WECF

reorganized its working structures and implemented a forward looking strategy.

## Healthy Environment for all

WECF overarching goal is to achieve a

- **Healthy Environment for All:** in the European Union, and it’s neighbouring countries in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. To reach this overarching goal WECF works on four long-term goals:
- **Safe Chemicals for All:** by 2020 all consumer products are free of hazardous chemicals and toxic waste is safely eliminated
- **Safe Energy for All:** by 2020 everyone has access to safe, affordable and renewable energy
- **Safe Food production and Rural Development for All:** by 2020 everyone has access to safe, regional and diverse food, based on fair production in balance with nature
- **Safe Water and Sanitation for All:** by 2020 everyone has access to safe and affordable water and sanitation and take preventive water protecting measures.

Cross-cutting issues: to reach these goals WECF also works on Poverty Reduction, Sustainable Development, Public Participation and Environmental Rights.

**WECF’s four Strategies** WECF uses four strategies to achieve the over-arching goal and the long-term goals.

- Capacity building and Awareness-Raising
- Advocacy and Policy Recommendations

- Implementing Solutions, Demonstrating Alternatives
- Gender: increasing balanced participation of women and men in policy making and implementation

## WECF’s Guiding Principles

- From local to global: WECF implements solutions locally and influences policy internationally by presenting their experience and recommendations to policy makers.
- WECF is looking for practical, innovative and cost-effective solutions always using local structures, capacities, know how, material, women and men power
- WECF is striving for dialogue by involvement of multi-stakeholders in its activities
- WECF is strengthening decentralized structures, local and regional markets and self responsible civil societies
- WECF encourages an interrelated transfer of knowledge and capacities between West and East
- WECF promotes professionalism and competence
- WECF does not accept to compromise on our and our children’s health, out off economic reasons

**Our Vision** By 2020, WECF is one of the best operating NGO networks operating in the pan-European region and with partners worldwide, contributing substantially to achieving a healthy environment for all and a world in balance; balance between economy and environment, health and growth, women and men, current and future generations.

*“An old Chinese proverb says: we need two eyes to see straight. It is the same with men and women, we need to consider both their views equally in order to make the right decisions.”*

Marie Kranendonk  
President, WECF

## Women in Europe

### Why Women?

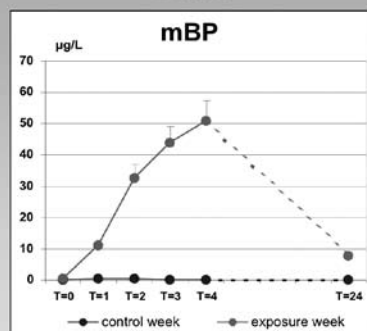
During the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992, women were defined as a "major group" in sustainable development and environmental policy. This fact is still not recognized enough by policy makers. Many governments are little aware of the potential women have as agents of change and as important stakeholders for implementation of environmental policy, sustainable resource use and the millennium goals. WECF wants to pave the way for increased participation by both women and men in policy making.

*Phthalates, a plastic softening chemicals, is suspected to also dissolve testis tissue of boys. Phthalates and other hazardous chemicals are found in many children's products.*

*Medical tests show that phthalates in body lotion remain in the bloodstream for about 24 hours, until the next layer is applied. (source: RK Denmark)*



Mono-butyl-phthalate in serum during 24 hours



Janjua NR, Mortensen GK, Skakkebaek NE, Wulf HC, Andersson AM, in prep.

Women have specific responsibilities for future generations and therefore see different priorities and are often more engaged in sustainability, specifically on issues related to health and livelihood. Women's reproductive health is a matter of concern since environmental pollution and pollutants are passed on to the developing child and can have life long effects. Women often have different ideas and solutions because they are affected differently by the impacts of certain decisions. Policies would greatly benefit from gender mainstreaming: their effectiveness and quality will increase. **as is the case in Germany, Sweden and Norway.**

Health problems related to pollution and **environmental deterioration are crucial issues**, as the consequences are constantly visible in the daily lives of people. Women see it as a priority to strengthen health & environmental policies that will protect citizens, and in particular, vulnerable groups such as children, women and elderly people.

### Why in Europe?

There are large inequalities in Europe and EECCA countries (Eastern Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia). There are differences in wealth, welfare and living conditions. Now that the barriers between the East and West are decreasing, it is time for the West to take up its responsibility and assist the East with sustainable development.

### Challenges in the new EU members states and neighbouring countries

Health problems and poverty in rural areas are rising due to a disintegration of basic services in rural areas and lack of environmental resource management.

The WHO indicates that child mortality caused by water borne diseases in the EECCA region are high, with 14.000 children dying each year. Lack of sanitation, waste-water and solid waste systems contribute significantly to water pollution. Indoor air pollution from burning biomass and (plastic) waste is another main cause of child mortality in the region. Large amounts of uncontrolled POPs stockpiles are a further characteristics of the region, and pose a threat to groundwater and public health. With the entry of Romania and Bulgaria these environmental health challenges have become part of the EU.

### Challenges European Union?

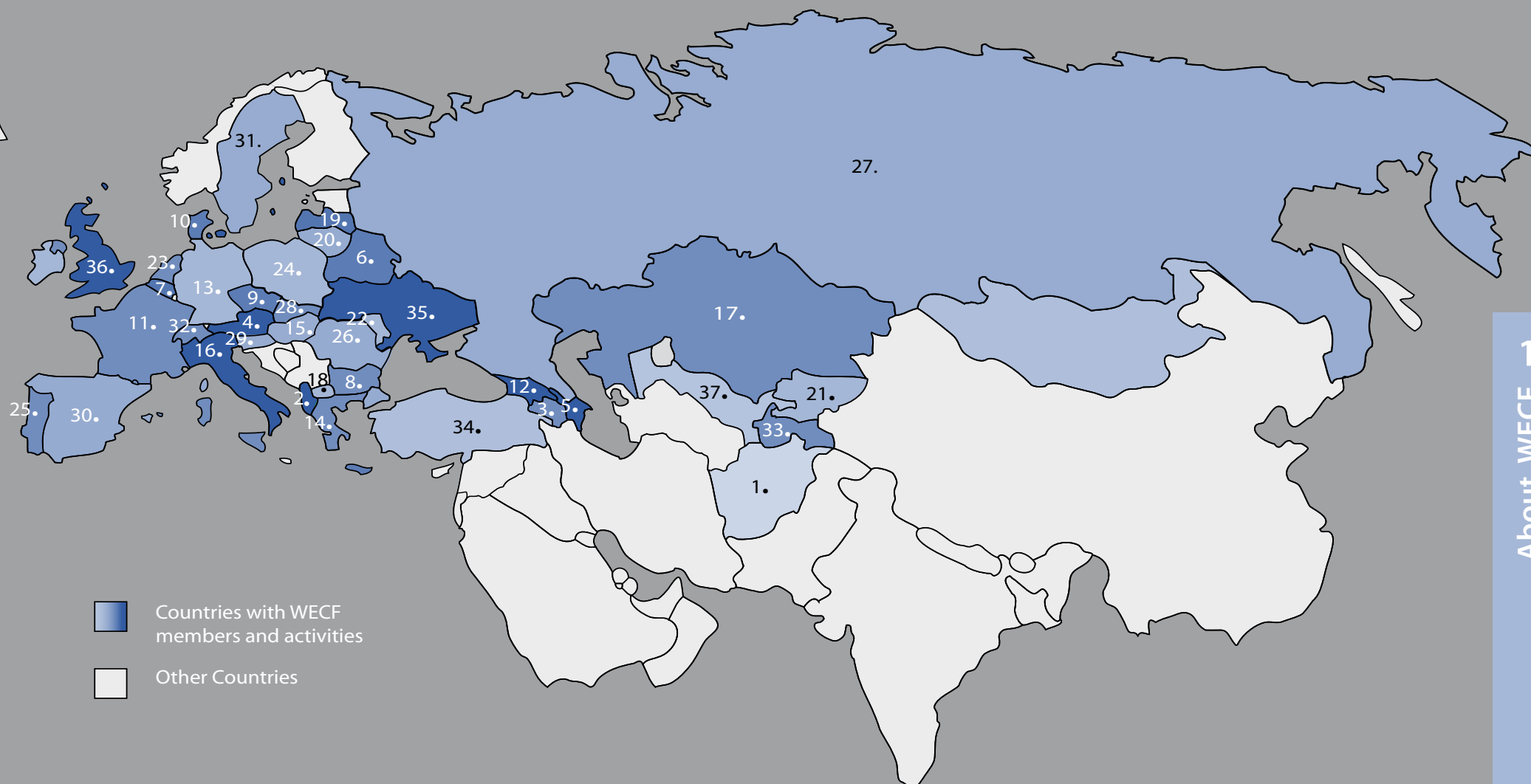
In the European Union the health effects of environmental pollution are often underestimated and not sufficiently known. WECF's high level round table "Clean, Clever and Competitive from a Citizen's perspective" in Brussels (27.11.06) brought together key environmental



*Insufficient quality of drinking water in the village of Prislop, Romania*

*Indoor air pollution from bad stoves and waste burning is common in Prislop village, Romania*

health experts with EU policy makers, and showed the economic costs and need for stronger environmental measures in the areas of air pollution, water pollution, climate change and hazardous chemicals. The inability to stop the loss of biodiversity in the EU is a further great challenge. Climate Change is aggravating existing environmental problems such as biodiversity loss, desertification, and increase of water and vector borne diseases. At the same time eco-innovation in the areas of green chemistry, renewable energy and re-use of waste-water to mention new only two examples, are areas where Europe has a competitive edge.



- |                |                   |                |                |                        |                    |
|----------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Afghanistan | 7. Belgium        | 13. Germany    | 19. Latvia     | 25. Portugal           | 31. Sweden         |
| 2. Albania     | 8. Bulgaria       | 14. Greece     | 20. Lithuania  | 26. Romania            | 32. Switzerland    |
| 3. Armenia     | 9. Czech Republic | 15. Hungary    | 21. Kyrgyzstan | 27. Russian Federation | 33. Tajikistan     |
| 4. Austria     | 10. Denmark       | 16. Italy      | 22. Moldova    | 28. Slovakia           | 34. Turkey         |
| 5. Azerbaijan  | 11. France        | 17. Kazakhstan | 23. Netherland | 29. Slovenia           | 35. Ukraine        |
| 6. Belarus     | 12. Georgia       | 18. Macedonia  | 24. Poland     | 30. Spain              | 36. United Kingdom |
|                |                   |                |                |                        | 37. Uzbekistan     |

WECF has individual members from overseas regions: Libanon, Uganda and the USA

# Our Dreams and Drives

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*"We improve the direct living conditions of a few thousand people. Through our advocacy work we reach out to millions".*

**Sascha Gabizon**

*Executive Director, WECF*



*"Protecting the health and wellbeing of our children should always stand above economic interests".*

**Annemarie Mohr**

*Eastern Europe Officer, WECF*



*"WECF promotes ideas of women for a grandchild-friendly-environment".*

**Margriet Samwel**

*Coordinator Water and Sanitation  
WECF*



*"We give women and men the global voice and the local tools they need to protect and improve their home environment".*

**Sabine Bock**

*Energy Coordinator, WECF*



*"Our common future STARTS TODAY: problems of climate change, safe and sustainable food production and consumption, safe chemicals, safe energy and safe drinking water need a solution and cannot be postponed".*

**Ger Roebeling**

*Director Netherlands, WECF*



*"Health effects are the driving force for women to get active in protecting the environment. Let's bring our powerful voices together and create a healthy planet".*

**Sonja Haider**

Director Germany, WECF



*"Just imagine if health standards were set at a level that fully protected children... surely the protection of everyone's health would be ensured!"*

**Jasmine Osorio**

Project Assistant

Health & Environment, WECF



*"If women and men from different countries work together in respect and mutual understanding, we can eliminate poverty and protect our planet and its resources for the next generations to come".*

**Gero Fedtke**

Programme Leader Central

Asia & Caucasus, WECF



*"Women and future generations must raise their voices to ensure that politicians fulfil their promises and implement their mandates transparently and responsibly".*

**Daniela Rosche**

International Policy Coordinator

WECF



*"The cooperation between WECF and Eastern European environmental NGOs gives a good basis for improving the environment and life conditions, in such way that the future generations of these countries can benefit".*

**Mihaylova-Grigorova**

Co-ordinator Bulgaria

WECF

*“We give women and men  
the global voice and  
the local tools they need  
to protect and improve their  
home environment.”*

**Sabine Bock**

*Energy Coordinator, WECF*



# | WECF Advocacy Activities in 2006 |



**Location:** European Union, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine  
**Donor:** Rausing Trust and co-funding by European Commission DG Environment, German Ministry for the Environment  
**Contact:** sonja.haider@wecf.eu  
 daniela.rosche@wecf.eu



MEP Breyer speaking at the launch of the WECF brochure "Women and Their Toxic World" at the European Parliament.

Daniela Rosche, WECF Policy Coordinator, speaking at the Bayer AGM.

# Women Working for a toxic-free Environment for Future Generations

## The year of REACH

2006 was a decisive year for chemicals policy. Women in Europe posed an important question: would 2006 see a new chemicals policy to really protect women and future generations from hazardous chemicals? Or would politicians sacrifice health protection under pressure from industry lobby? 2006 marked yet another challenging year for the women of WECF and our partners who had been campaigning for safe chemicals in consumer products for the last 4 years. In the EU, Members of Parliament and the governments in the Member States had to agree on the scope of the new European chemicals regulation, called REACH: Registration, Evaluation, Authorization of Chemicals.

## No obligatory substitution

At the end of 2005, the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament had come to different opinions about what kind of regulation for chemicals was needed. The parliament wanted 30.000 chemicals on the EU market to be thoroughly tested by companies on their health effects. The Council wanted to include opt-out clauses and address not more than 20.000 chemicals. WECF and the other environmental NGOs wanted Council and Parliament to ensure that the very worst chemicals are taken off the market by obligatory substitution, including the Carcinogenic, Mutagenic, Reprotoxic, Endocrine disrupting and Neuro-toxic substances.

## Women and their toxic world

With these points, WECF got to work with the aim of influencing the outcome of the discus-

sions in 2006. A highlight was the launch of our publication "Women and Their Toxic World" in the European Parliament in October 2006. This brochure is the first publication written for women- by women discussing the threats of hazardous chemicals in our daily life. Members of the European Parliament Hiltrud Breyer and Zita Gurmai supported this WECF event and together with our colleagues from the European Women's Lobby (EWL) and the European Institute for Women's Health, we called on decision makers to agree on a new chemicals policy that will protect women, men and in particular the next generations.

## Press coverage for WECF

Finding safer alternatives to hazardous chemicals is part of the solution to the problems associated with hazardous chemicals in everyday consumer

products. In April 2006 WECF took the opportunity to address the shareholders of one of the biggest chemical companies, Bayer, at their Annual Grand Meeting (AGM) in Cologne, Germany. The German chemicals giant is one of the main producers of the high concern chemical Bisphenol-A, used amongst others, to make baby bottles. The company is therefore instrumental in researching for safer alternatives to this substance, and thus we asked shareholders to ensure that Bayer reinvests part of its profits

Article in Dutch Newspaper

In June of 2006, WECF organized a public action to support a strong REACH and consumer products free of hazardous chemicals on the main square in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.



into producing a safer alternative for Bisphenol-A. In an interview with one of the leading Dutch newspapers printed the next day, Daniela Rosche called on the government of the Netherlands to do more against toxic chemicals in the REACH process. In Germany, the film "Perfume" got a lot of press coverage. We used this to emphasize the negative health effects from synthetic scents and the problems of phthalates – shown to dissolve testis tissue in little baby boys – in perfumes, and to call again for a better regulation of chemicals.

### International chemicals policy

Parallel to the REACH discussions in the EU, WECF continued to follow the international policy process regarding chemicals. Governments discussed a global framework for chemicals policy (SAICM) under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme. The SAICM framework was agreed on in Dubai in February 2006 and will serve as a guidance instrument for the next

15 years leading up to 2020 by when governments must have minimized the use and production of hazardous chemicals. Although the SAICM framework is not legally binding, WECF considers its adoption an important step towards safe chemicals everywhere in the world. WECF member Elena Manvelian of Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment (AWHHE) took part in the session in Dubai where SAICM was adopted. In September, IPEN, the organisation responsible for the POPs elimination network, discussed the successful implementation of the Stockholm convention with its members - WECF is a member of IPEN.

It was wonderful to see that many of WECF members in the EECCA region have been actively involved and have increased their capacities and actions on chemical issues.

The International Forum on Chemical Safety IFCS in Budapest (September 2006) has been used to give substantial input from NGOs for finding solutions for existing and upcoming chemical hazards.

Obsolete pesticide stockpiles continue to be a serious health and environment issue for our members in the pan-European region. They continue to pollute soil and water resources in Armenia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. The outcome of the long REACH legislation process and the NGO campaigns were presented to 30 participants from NGOs and authorities from the EECCA countries in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Our Ukrainian member, Mama 86, published a report in 2006, outlining the problems associated with the management of obsolete pesticides in Ukraine. Also AWHHE once more raised attention to the issue of improving environmental safety in Armenian rural areas in a report released in 2006.

### European awareness raising

In Germany, we continued raising awareness by working with women's organisations. Self-support groups, of people who suffer from the negative health effects of chemicals, are the most interested in WECF's work. These groups experience a lot of problems, but also find solutions and get active in medical and political spheres. The link between health and the environment has always been a driving force behind WECF's activities and political involvement. In Paris, we presented our concerns to the plenary of the ARTAC conference "Environment and Sustainable Health" on the effects of chemical contamination on children. The same issue has been highlighted at the High-level Roundtable on Eco-Efficiency and the Lisbon Strategy organised by WECF in Brussels.

Chemicals are linked to other issues as well: the German risk assessment agency (BfR) is currently re-defining their risk communication and asked WECF to take part in stakeholder discussions. Of great interest was the participation in the stakeholder dialogue of the Intafere (Integrated Analysis of Mobile Organic Foreign Substances in Aquatic Ecosystems) project ([www.intafere.de](http://www.intafere.de)). The working group is looking at hormone disrupting chemicals and tries to find solutions for the multiple exposure to chemical cocktails.

### Public interest for Green Products

WECF sees a growing public interest for "green" products. Using the effectice dialogue format "World Café", we asked participants from companies, health and environmental organisations to describe consumption patterns. Multiple challenges need to be addressed; missing information, availability, traditions, price, etc. The results of the facilitated dialogue are

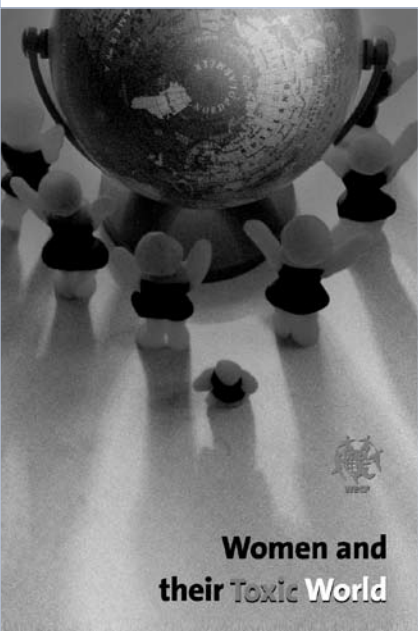


*Local press interest in the chemicals workshop in Almaty Kazakhstan. Olga Speranskaya, from ECO-Accord Russia being interviewed by TV.*

that WECF developed strategies to allow people to make changes in their personal life, and as a next step to request less toxic products from companies and policy-makers.

### Need to implement legislation

As for the new REACH chemicals policy, we, unfortunately, have not seen our hopes realized. Under the new rules, some chemicals, for example those that can cause birth defects and miscarriages or those that can cause cancer, do not need to be replaced by safer alternatives, even if these are available. During the last negotiations in November 2006, many concessions were made to industry demands. Unfortunately, this will leave large loopholes in the legislation by which the protection of women and future generation will not be very effective. The implementation of REACH will be very crucial, also if the EU wants to fulfil its international commitments under the SAICM framework. Our work for a toxic free future will continue in 2007 and beyond- we hope for everyone's support!



*WECF publication Women and their Toxic World, 2006.*

**Location:** *The Netherlands*

**Donor:** *Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, the Netherlands (VROM)*

**Contact:** *daniela.rosche@wecf.eu*

## Towards a Toxic Free Future

### Netherlands Women Organisation

In 2002, WECF started the Dutch project "Towards a Toxic Free Future." WECF had funding for 3 years (2003, 2004, 2006) from the Dutch Ministry of Environment (VROM). The project focuses on women and environmental health, especially on the use of chemicals in everyday consumer products. Women react differently to environmental pollution due to their different physiology and everyday activities, and thus suffer different health effects than men. The bodies of pregnant women are the first environment for their children.

If women's bodies are polluted, those of future generations will be as well. Thus women and women's organizations are important catalysts for change.

The goals of the projects included awareness raising, participation, information, education, publicity, advocacy and lobby, and how to make contact with industry and other NGOs to draw their attention to the issues of health and chemicals.

In the project, WECF cooperated with the Dutch rural women's organization 4VO (an umbrella organization for NBvP, NVVH, Passage, ZijActief, together with 150,000 members), Tiye International (an umbrella organization for 23 black, migrant and refugees women's organizations, together with 50,000 members), VeM, the Dutch center for women and environment, the Dutch Platform on Health and Environment, the NVR, the Dutch Women's Council, and several experts on health and chemicals.



*Participants of TIYE, Netherlands Immigrant Women Association, in one of WECF's safe chemicals workshops.*

### 2600 women trained

In the first project year WECF did much research and formulated a vision and point of view. In the second and third year, WECF organized a training for women, so that they themselves can organize workshops for their own regional and local women's groups. WECF also developed and produced consumers information, such as a Dutch version of the Toolkit, 2 posters, 25 factsheets, tests, a Toxic Tour, methods for presentation and discussion, and recipes for homemade cleaning products and cosmetics with natural ingredients. In the first year, WECF and the project partners organized workshops on a national level; in the second year on a regional level, and in 2006 (and partly in 2007) more than 70 workshops were realized, together for more than 2,600 women!

Via publications and publicity we have reached more than a million households in the Netherlands! From the project, WECF concludes that women are very concerned about chemicals in

everyday products and are willing to make their own choices, change their behaviour, and buy the most healthy products. The women that took part will use their networks and inform and mobilize a great part of the national population. It would also be necessary to give more information to other target groups, such as young people, pregnant women, and schools.

### Women ready for policy action

Women are also willing to take action towards policymakers and politicians. To do so, the women's organizations need extra capacity building on advocacy and lobby and also extra time and budget. WECF will continue the policy work and other activities on environmental health and on chemicals.

We will try to convince policymakers and politicians to take action and choose for prevention and substitution, wherever possible, and guarantee better information for all citizens.

## Access to Safe, Sufficient and Affordable Drinking Water and Sanitation

**Location:** Mexico, Stockholm, Bonn, Helsinki, Brussels

**Donor:** Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Contact:** Margriet Samwel@wecf.eu



*WECF session on Ecological Sanitation at the World Water Forum in Mexico.*

*The WECF and WfW participants at the World Water Forum-4.*



WECF presents lessons learned from its water and sanitation improvement projects to policy makers at regional and international events. In 2006, WECF organised sessions, side-events, exhibitions and gave presentations and interventions at the following conferences:

- World Water Forum 4, Mexico City
- Dry Toilet Conference, Helsinki
- European Water Partnership, Members Meeting, Brussels
- World Water Week, Stockholm
- Transboundary Water Convention, Bonn
- European Union Water Initiative, Stockholm/Bonn
- Water and Health Protocol (Preparations for the MOP1), Geneva

WECF brings different views and lessons learned to these policy meetings, in particular on the

needs of poor communities without access to centralized drinking water and sanitation in the EECCA region, on the need to translate the right to water into concrete legislation on water prices and support schemes for poor households, and finally, WECF brings in gender analysis and perspectives from its projects.

### Protection of water sources

WECF believes that the model of centralized sewage is not feasible and not environmentally desirable for all. Prevention is the best way to reduce costs and protect the environment and people's health. In water management this means that drinking water resource protection needs much more political attention. The less wealthy regions of the EU and EECCA can not afford to pollute at will and then treat the polluted water with energy and capital intensive membrane or other filters. Water source protection needs to become a topic of education in schools and families. Protecting drinking water sources from infiltration from animal and human excreta, from solid waste, pesticides and fertilizers is the first step towards providing safe drinking water access for all. Central Sewage forgets one essential step, that of separation of the pollutants at the source.

### Separation of urine and faecals

Only a fraction of household waste-water, – the human faecals –, are the main pollutants of the waste water with pathogens. Separation at source makes waste-water treatment a great deal less expensive. In addition, collection of urine and faecals separately allows sanitization and re-

use of valuable nutrients in agriculture. WECF tests and promotes ecological sanitation and presents the results of its demonstration projects at policy events.

### World Water Forum 4, Mexico City

From March 12-15, 2006 Women for Water (WfW) organized an international Working-conference in Mexico City. WECF is co-founder of WfW and provides part of its funding via its TMF programme "Tapping Resources". Women's organizations from all over the world gathered in Mexico to present their local sustainable solutions for access to safe and sufficient water and sanitation. Countries present included Afghanistan, Armenia, Bulgaria, Colombia, Chile, Germany, Mexico, the Netherlands, Romania, Sri Lanka, Uganda, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Lesotho and Zambia.

The WfW Working-conference took place just a couple of days before the 4th World Water Forum (WWF-4) and resulted in substantial input for the women's sessions at this international water conference.

### Two official WECF sessions

WECF and its member organisations MAMA-86 Ukraine and AWHHE Armenia organised two workshop sessions during the 4th World Water Forum in Mexico. WECF brought a delegation of women from the European Union and EECCA countries to present their local actions at the sessions. On 19 March under the framework theme, Water and sanitation for all, WECF held a session entitled: "Access to safe water and Ecological sanitation for rural areas good practices in Latin



*Visiting the  
production of urine  
diverting toilets near  
Mexico city.*

America and Eastern Europe from a gender perspective". WECF's session presented successful local actions on ecological school sanitation in Ukraine, Romania, Armenia and Bulgaria, as well as successful local actions on financing water supply in Bolivia and Mexico.

On March 21, under the framework theme "Risk management", WECF held a session entitled: "Managing Safe Drinking Water in Areas of armed conflict and ecological disaster from a Gender Perspectives: Learning from Local Actions in Central Asia and Latin America". During this session examples of women's organisations providing affordable water and sanitation in conflict areas and ecological hotspots in Afghanistan, Aral Sea, Pakistan and Colombia were presented.

Both of the sessions took place in rooms with a capacity of 250 persons. Both rooms were full to capacity due to the great response and interest of the attendants.

### **Excursion to ecosan projects**

On Wednesday March 15, WECF organised an excursion for WfW members to two different Ecological Sanitation projects not far from Mexico city. The participants were shown local production of dry urine diverting toilets, the reuse of urine and dehydrated faeces in horticulture and the treatment of waste-water with planted soil filters. The women were also encouraged to make use of the different dry 'ecosan' toilets, to be convinced that indoor dry urine diverting toilets do not smell.

### **Exhibitions and Press**

WECF and WfW had two exhibition stands in the Fair area of the 4th World Water Forum. This allowed to spread information documents

and inform about their organisations and projects carried out within their countries and to contact other participants.

WECF and WfW organised 3 press conferences. At least four interviews were given to Mexican radio stations interested in gender issues; Gisela Herrerias (Alternativas y Procesos de Participación Social), Aurora Ramirez and Petra Peña (Centro de Mujeres Tonantzin), and Sascha Gabizon (WECF) were interviewed. Facts related to the participation of WECF members were published in different Mexican and international media.

Two documentaries in which WECF has been involved, were shown during the 4th WWF. At the WWF film contest the documentary produced by Rapsode and co-produced by WECF "No Drinking Water" about women's struggles for access to safe drinking water in Romania, Ukraine and Sri Lanka was shown.

"The Aral Sea" – Where the Water Ends, the World Ends", produced by Umwel Film, was shown during one of the sessions and was part of the presentation made by WECF's member from the Aral Sea region. The report of the WECF and WfW activities at the World Water Conference is available at [www.wecf.eu/publications](http://www.wecf.eu/publications)

### **Dry Toilet Conference, Helsinki**

Margriet Samwel of WECF gave a presentation on the results of the WECF user survey of its demonstration toilets in Romania. The presentation was also presented as a poster. Both are available from the WECF website at: [www.wecf.eu/publications](http://www.wecf.eu/publications)

### **World Water Week, Stockholm**

WECF and Women for Water participated with a delegation of 20 members in the Stockholm

World Water Week, August 2006. WECF member from Uzbekistan took part in a meeting with the Netherlands Prince of Orange with 2 other WfW members. Several WECF members spoke at side-events. The 2nd Women for Water members meeting was held following the Water Week.

### **European Water Partnership, Members Meeting, Brussels**

WECF is a member of the EWP and took part in the first general assembly in Brussels in October 2006. WECF is one of the few NGOs in this multi-stakeholder network, and brings in different experiences and perspectives, particularly on the needs for on-site, locally produced and managed water and sanitation system for the new EU member states and EECCA countries.

### **Transboundary Water Convention, Bonn**

WECF was represented by MAMA-86 Odessa at the COP of the Transboundary Water Convention which took place in November in Bonn. WECF member MAMA-86 Odessa presented its experience with public participation in transboundary river basin management in the Dniester basin.

European Union Water Initiative, Stockholm/Bonn WECF and 5 members took part in the stakeholders meetings of the European Union Water Initiative in Stockholm and Bonn, providing input from its lessons learned for the NIS component of the EUWI.

# Energy and Climate Change – Local Actions for Local Solutions

**Location:** Germany, Armenia  
**Donor:** WECF donations,  
Munich Re Foundation  
**Contact:** [sabine.bock@wecf.eu](mailto:sabine.bock@wecf.eu)

*Kerosine burners in a class room in Hayanist school, Armenia, produces considerable indoor air-pollution. WECF director remarked that „it looks and smells as if a truck has just passed through this classroom“*

*Outside view of the Hayanist school, with broken windows.*



## Implementation of Sustainable Energy at the local level –

### WECF takes on new challenges

Many people in the rural areas of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) experience severe energy poverty. The pupils and teachers of the Armenian village Hayanist, for example, suffer from energy poverty. In the winter this means wearing coats and hats in the classrooms to stay warm. The school has insufficient insulation, heating and electricity. The current heating system, consisting mainly of kerosene stoves, emits fumes causing respiratory diseases. The danger of accidents and fire is an additional concern.

WECF and its Armenian partner AWHHE started to work on a concept to improve the energy situation of the school. After first assessments, WECF commissioned a technical study of the school, organised by our partner AWHHE, to determine whether renovation would be financially feasible. At the same time, WECF and AWHHE started to make new contacts in the field of sustainable energy in Armenia including solar companies and NGOs, as well as potential donors. Our aim is to initiate a sustainable development for the school and the whole village. We will encourage local people to use the fallow

land for growing of organic biomass and to set up a business for biomass processing into insulation materials.

## WECF and partners advocate for safe and sustainable energy

### Germany and the EU

WECF helped develop the German NGO statements addressed to the German government for their EU presidency in the first half of 2007. This paper was officially given to the German government at the conference „Deutscher Vorsitz EU-Rat und G8“ (German presidency at the EU and G8) in October 2006 in Bonn, Germany. WECF took active part in this conference and other discussions about sustainable energy. This included a session on “Poverty reduction by renewable energy,” organised by the German NGO Forum on Environment and Development and one on “Sustainable Bio energy – Challenges and Opportunities,” organized by the United Nations Foundations and German NGO Forum on Environment and Development, both in Bonn, Germany. WECF contributed to the meetings with its experience with energy problems in EECCA countries, as well as the experiences of growing organic bio-mass by its German partner Unser Land.

### International

On November 6, 2006 the UN Climate Change Conference in Nairobi began. Some five thousand delegates from 189 countries and many representatives from NGOs and industry discussed the implications of climate change, the Kyoto Protocol and effective ways of curbing emissions.

WECF advocated for a gender-differentiated approach to climate change and energy development at the UNFCCC COP12/MOP2 in November in Nairobi, Kenya, “Pulling together for our planet.” Unfortunately this slogan of the Conference didn’t really become true. The results have been unsatisfying. Despite everyone agreeing that climate change is real and is happening all over the world, that data exists and countries are experiencing the changes, agreements about who should take which steps when have not been made.

Mitigation and adaptation have been two of the key words at the conference.

But to face these challenges, we have to realize the important fact that women and men are different, contribute differently to climate change and are differently affected by it. The Women Caucus at the conference, organized by WECF partner Life/Genanet and attended by WECF, focused on this reality and developed a statement for the plenary session, delivered by Annabell Waititu.

The statement raised awareness about the importance of a gender related approach to fight against climate change and to develop mitigation and adaptation strategies.

## Climate change actions and dialogue on a local scale

Whilst ministers were meeting in Nairobi, WECF took steps at a smaller and more local scale. With the financial support by the Munich-Re Foundation WECF together with Green City, a local Munich NGO, organised a “Climate



Change World Café Dialogue” on the evening of November 8, 2006. More than 35 people from different walks of life produced in a few hours very inspiring ideas for solutions. The goal was to discover innovative ideas for climate protection using an equally innovative method: dynamic teaming. The participants sat at tables of four and in the first round they told each other short success stories. They then shared the success story and key qualities of their partner with the other two people. This was followed by rounds of project development, with people changing tables to discuss their projects with other people and receive support for their own project development.

Despite some reservations at the beginning, the participants truly enjoyed themselves. It just shows how stimulating an inclusive, open dialogue form can be for fostering innovative thoughts and creating ideas.

Besides this dialogue on climate change and innovation, WECF together with its local partner Green City organised two local press actions on the Marienplatz, Munich’s central square. Both were met with considerable interest by newspapers and citizens. The actions were designed to increase the awareness in Munich about climate change and the conference in Nairobi. WECF added its voice to the many other voices calling for a rapid and effective action on climate protection. The work continues.

And these were the projects developed during the WECF/Green City “World Café”:

- A Climate Protection Race between different cities in Germany, eg Munich vs Hamburg.  
Who will save more energy?  
In combination with a large media campaign.
- A solar cooker project for Northern Cameroon.
- A campaign to convince house owners and tenants to save energy through insulation
- A project for increasing the number of people travelling per vehicle; similar to a city toll.
- Increasing excellence in housing construction.
- A campaign for more effective heating systems
- A storybook on CO<sub>2</sub> – emissions, people, impacts and avoidance.
- Climate Change education in primary schools.
- An art exhibition on climate change with live effects – you walk into a room and you are in a hurricane. You pass on to the next room and you are standing in a desert.

*Greencity Munich and WECF Germany organised a climate change event at „Marienplatz“, November 2006*



## Health and Environment

**Location:** *Western and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia*

**Donor:** *WECF donations, Netherlands*

*Ministry of Environment*

**Contact:** *Jasmine.Osorio@wecf.eu*

### **WECF advocates for a healthy environment for all.**

WECF is actively involved in the following policy processes:

- EU Environment and Health Action Plan (EU countries)
- Children's Environment and Health Action Plan Europe (EU and EECCA)
- European Environment and Health Committee (EU and EECCA)

WECF advocates in particular on preventive action on hazardous chemicals, in particular to protect the developing child, and on chemical contamination of drinking water and children's health.

### **EU Environment and Health Action Plan**

The European Environment and Health Action Plan 2004-2010 (EHAP) aims to implement the Environment and Health Strategy (SCALE-science, children, awareness, legislation, evaluation). The action plan consists of 13 action points and is designed to give the EU the scientifically grounded information to reduce the adverse health impacts of environmental factors and to create better cooperation between actors in the environment, health and research fields. It has three main themes: improving the information chain, filling the knowledge gap and reviewing policies and improving communication.

In 2006, WECF gave comments to the draft policy documents of the EU Commission regarding the implementation of the EHAP. The platform

for delivering this input is the Consultative Forum (CF), which was created by the Commission in 2003 at the presentation of SCALE.

The Consultative Forum is set up as the stakeholder consultation body. Members States and EU institutions are participating.

WECF was accredited as a member of the CF from the start. The main issues for WECF discussed in the CF included:

The Environment and Health Information System The draft document on Environmental Public Health Tracking (EPHT), 'Provisional Issues for Discussion,' was presented in December 2005 and WECF gave input in January 2006 through a common position with the European Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL), of which WECF is a member. WECF had previously consulted the Dutch Platform for Health and Environment. A central issue was the implementation of the Aarhus Convention in this Information System: it should serve not only policy-makers but also citizens, NGO's, and environment and health professionals.

### **The Review of the Environment and Health Information System**

At the CF meeting on April 19 2006, WECF commented on the review, the work plan of the bio-monitoring expert group and the work plan of the expert group on air pollution and health. WECF discussed this input beforehand with colleagues of the Dutch Platform on Health and Environment as well as the Dutch Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment (VROM). Important issues for WECF and her members included:

- The prenatal environment: the most sensitive

period regarding effects of exposure was totally missing in all the documents.

- Great concern about the sudden reversal in the Commission which now stated that only 2- 6% of health problems can be linked to environmental factors, instead of more than 20% as originally mentioned in SCALE.
- The need to apply the precautionary principle in environment and health policy (as was the aim of the original strategy, SCALE).
- Transparency in the work of the Commission, prevention of conflicts of interest in the working groups.

WECF has given additional and more detailed input in written form on the review of the information plan with collaboration of a member of her advisory committee and colleagues from the Dutch Platform.

At the CF Meeting November 30, WECF gave input via HEAL. We emphasised again the need to bring the effects of prenatal exposure to the foreground in the information system, translating the facts from research to policy-makers and the public. We criticised an interview to the press a week before the CF by a representative of DG Environment, regarding the Health and Environment Action Plan, which suggested that effects of environment on health had been exaggerated by DG Environment in the original SCALE Strategy. DG Environment rejected in the Consultative Forum the statement printed in the press article and reiterated they do believe that much more substantial part of health effects is linked to environmental pollution.

# **Children's Environment and Health Action Plan Europe (EU and EECCA)**

WECF is the elected representative of the environmental organisations (European Eco-Forum) for this process, which is coordinated by the World Health Organisation Europe. 53 countries from the EU and EECCA region participated in developing the Children's Environment and Health Action Plan Europe which was presented and approved by ministers of health and ministers of environment in Budapest, 2004.

The CEHAPE has set 4 regional priority goals:

## **RPG I – Water and Sanitation.**

Reduce gastrointestinal and other water pollution related diseases – improve drinking water quality and sanitation conditions for European children.

**RPG II – Accidents and Injuries.** Reduce accidents, injuries, trauma and obesity – work for a better and healthier physical 'constructed' environment for our children.

## **RPG III – Indoor and outdoor air pollution:**

Reduce respiratory diseases – ensure cleaner indoor and outdoor air for our children.

## **RPG IV – Chemicals and radiation:**

Reduce intoxication and chronic disease – prevent and reduce chemical and ionizing hazards that endanger life and health of European children.

Two meeting of members states took place in 2006. In each meeting 1 of the regional priority goals was the focus. WECF was asked to present its work on water and sanitation to the member states at the CEHAPE meeting in Cyprus, October 2006, as an illustration on possible actions to improve children's health from improved water supply and sanitation (regional priority goal 1). WECF member Diana Iskrevia of Earth Forever Bulgaria, gave a powerpoint presentation focussing on WECF's experience with ecological sanitation, and reducing groundwater contamination with faecal bacteria.

## **European Environment and Health Committee (EU and EECCA)**

WECF's executive director, as representative of the environmental organisations (European Eco-Forum) is a member of the European Envi-

ronment and Health Committee. The Committee gives strategic guidance to the Health and Environment process, in particular to the CEHAPE. The EEHC met twice in 2006. WECF was asked to give a presentation to the members of the committee on its experience with improving children's health related to water and sanitation. Margriet Samwel of WECF gave a presentation to the Committee in November 2006 in Budapest.

The EEHC is planning the programme for the upcoming Inter Ministerial Review, which will take place in Vienna in June 2007. The member states will present progress made since Budapest 2004, on the development of their CEHAPs. WECF together with the representative of the health organisations, HEAL, presented recommendations for the programme, including a CEHAP Best Practice Award.

*Probability of Dying Before Age 5 Source: WHO Regional Office for Europe.*



*Meeting in Budapest, 28 November 2006, of the European Environment and Health Committee that steers the Health and Environment process of the EU and EECCA countries. WECF represents the environmental NGOs of the European Eco-Forum.*

# Eco-Efficiency: Environmental Health and the Lisbon Agenda

**Location:** European Union

**Donor:** Netherlands Ministry of Environment

**Contact:** [jasmine.osorio@wecf.eu](mailto:jasmine.osorio@wecf.eu)

## Environmental Health and the Lisbon Agenda: Project Background

In 2005, WECF began work for its project "Eco-efficiency and Sustainable Development; Women promoting the Environmental Pillar of the Lisbon Strategy and SDS," funded by the Dutch Ministry for Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM). Within the original scope of the project, WECF wanted to engage citizens, particularly women, in the debate on how to advocate, with convincing arguments, the incorporation of protection of health and the environment into the Lisbon Strategy, an overarching framework for EU economic policy and competitiveness with as main goal of Europe becoming "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-driven economy by 2010". Eco-efficiency and eco-innovation were key concepts as they presented a means to include an environmental dimension to Lisbon, seeking ways to reduce environmental pollution and resource depletion (which can have a positive impact on public health), while simultaneously boosting competitiveness. For WECF to succeed, it was important to establish the link between environmental pollution and its effect on health (the environmental burden of disease-EBD) as well as related economic effects and subsequently Europe's competitiveness.

## International Scientific Expert Workshop: The Environmental Burden of Disease

After building a knowledge base through developing three fact-sheets on Eco-Efficiency, the Sustainable Development Strategy, and the

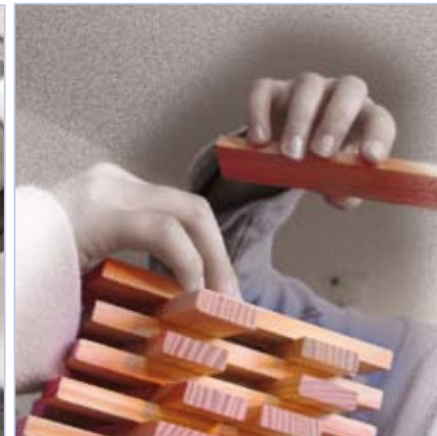
Lisbon Agenda, WECF sought international scientists at the frontline of the increasing evidence that the impact of the environment on our health is underestimated.

On 13 April 2006, 16 European health experts gathered in Brussels to discuss the relationship between increasing health problems and environmental pollution. The meeting was chaired by Prof. Jacqueline Cramer (appointed in Feb. 2007 as Minister for Environment in the Netherlands).

## The discussion focussed on two issues:

1. The need for a new paradigm: The scientific community is split between the conventional paradigm, one based on single-causality and standard risk assessment (found in traditional methods of epidemiology and toxicology), versus those who have developed or are developing a new paradigm based on a multi-causal approach that looks at complex interactions, long term effects of multiple, low dose exposures and the timing of exposure (e.g. during development).

*The WECF eco-efficiency project focused on the need to address all aspects of moving the EU towards becoming the most competitive region in the world: Economic development, Environmental protection, Social justice and - often forgotten - public health protection.*





*WECF High Level Roundtable on Environment Health and the Lisbon Agenda 27 November 2006 Brussels, Professor Grandjean of Harvard Medical University speaking on neuro-toxins and children's health.*

*Dominique Belpomme, University of Paris, speaking at the WECF International Expert Meeting on the Environmental Burden of Disease, April 2006.*

The conventional assessment is that less than 5% of disease can be linked to environmental factors. Policy makers base their actions on these assumptions. However, the new paradigm shows a much stronger correlation between environmental factors and health effects. For cancer, some research shows that the environment plays a crucial role in more than half of all cases.

2. Convincing policymakers and advisory institutions. After deliberating on the science, the question then arose how to convince scientists and politicians of the new findings. Firstly, it is important to acknowledge that there will always be controversies and uncertainties in research results. But given the seriousness of the research results, the precautionary principle should lead policymaking; science has its limitations and full proof can never be guaranteed.

Working from the results of the workshop, WE CF developed a Briefing on the Environmental Burden of Disease (EBD) and a Discussion Paper looking at the new evidence in conjunction with political implications of Lisbon. Both documents were a basis for the High Level Roundtable in Brussels at the end of November 2006.

### **High Level Roundtable: “Clean, Clever, and Competitive from a Citizen’s Perspective”**

Following the momentum of diverse events on the EBD and related aspects, and bolstered by the Finnish EU Presidency theme of “Health in All Policies,” WE CF organized a high level roundtable to set a stage for scientists to showcase new findings, and for debate between members of the EU Commission and Parliament, Member State governments, and opinion leaders from business and civil society on how the Lisbon Strategy can better incorporate the reduction and prevention of environmental pollution so as to decrease the EBD, subsequently lowering societal costs of illness and better integrating citizen’s environmental health concerns.

Internationally renowned scientists - Prof. Philippe Grandjean, Harvard University, Dr. John Peterson Myers, Environmental Health Sciences (“Our Stolen Future”), and David Gee, Emerging Issues Coordinator, EEA – gave stirring presentations on the “chemical braindrain,” (neurotoxicity of substances in everyday use), new scientific approaches to the EBD, and understanding why the conventional paradigm (that says the environment is responsible for only about 5% of diseases) is flawed. The discussion was lively and there were diverse opportunities for audience intervention.

The Representative of the German Environmental Protection Agency discussed health as an economic value with examples from the automobile industry. The DG Sanco representative supported this concept and noted various studies commissioned on this matter. The representative from the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) was more cautious and advised against linking the health agenda with the economic one: good

public health policies are needed irrespective of whether or not they are good for the economy. The representative from DG Environment disputed an article published in *Ends Europe* daily that claimed the DG had exaggerated environmental effects on health. She re-emphasized the DG’s continuing commitment to environment and health and announced a future launch of a large-scale bio-monitoring project. The Chemical Industry representative expressed the need to have safe products, and after discussion arose on REACH, the new EU Chemicals legislation, the DG Enterprise representative discussed a need for a clear framework and set of rules, especially for issues like the substitution and precautionary principle. The representative from the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) discussed a social gap in health and remarked that no single position on substitution can exist because not everyone is exposed to the same dangers. Sascha Gabizon, the WE CF representative, concluded by reminding that some of the highest incidences in modern disease (e.g. cancer) are occurring in the richest countries, disputing the conception that a prosperous economy is needed to ensure a healthy population. She further stressed the alarming trends in children’s diseases (e.g. asthma, cancer, neuro-developmental disorders) and the need to protect them using policies based on the precautionary principle.

# Solid Waste Management Preventing waste burning, promoting composting

**Location:** Western and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia

**Donor:** WECF donations, Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Contact:** [Bistra.mihailova@wecf.eu](mailto:Bistra.mihailova@wecf.eu)

## Sustainable waste management

WECF proposes recommendations on effective policies to promote household composting in EU new Member States. WECF calls on policy makers to speed-up the implementation of the Stockholm Convention to eliminate the large amounts of obsolete pesticide stockpiles in the EECCA region. WECF also calls attention to the ignored link between energy poverty in the new member states and EECCA region, and the burning of (plastic) waste in homes.

At the international level, WECF continues to contribute to the implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and its further development.

WECF cooperates with the international trade unions in calling on new member states and new neighbouring states to ban use and production of asbestos in their own countries, stop trade in asbestos and set up policies for safe clean up and disposal of asbestos waste.

## Household composting

As part of the WECF project funded by Fondation Ensemble in Romania, containers for separate collection have been bought for the village of Garla Mare. WECF also initiated the collection and composting of pig manure. During the WECF project in Bulgaria, 50 households in the village of Topoli and Stara Zagora Spa have been trained in a "Master Composting Programme" and are continuing to train neighbours on effective composting. The aim is to have all households composting. In Ukraine WECF carried out a workshop for private gardeners about organic gardening and composting. In the village of Gozhuli people normally collect organic waste from households, gardens, fields, and backyards, mostly mixed with trash (e.g. plastic, glass). Often they burn it and then put it on the fields. That is why WECF and Mama 86 offered this workshop. WECF provided information on compost bins, organic gardening, and companion plants.

## Household waste burning and obsolete pesticides

WECF has found that in many of its rural projects, people burn plastic waste in their home ovens or gardens, unaware of the health hazards. Plastic burns 'well' and is increasingly used now that fuel prices have risen.

In addition, in all the former communist countries the 'spring cleaning' tradition exists, where all the waste on the streets, which 'appears' after the snow melts, is gathered in heaps and burned in the open. WECF's health and waste burning fact sheet (English) is available from [http://www.wecf.de/cms/publications/2004/homeburning\\_plastics.php](http://www.wecf.de/cms/publications/2004/homeburning_plastics.php) and has been translated into Bulgarian.

WECF has found several destroyed obsolete pesticide and fertilizer stockpiles in the project villages in EECCA countries where it works, and has found high levels of nitrates in the groundwater which could be linked to the fertilizer stockpile, and aims to support the local communities in cleaning up the dump sites. Under the Stockholm Convention countries have committed to cleaning up their POPs dumpsites, but in many EECCA countries there is a lack of awareness among local authorities and citizens about the hazards of these stockpiles, and about the possibilities to obtain support for cleaning them up. WECF's publications on Obsolete pesticide dumpsites in Ukraine and Armenia are available from [www.wecf.eu/publications](http://www.wecf.eu/publications)

*WECF representative (left) and Ukrainian participants of the composting course in Gozhuli, 2006.*



**Location:** Germany

**Donor:** WECF donations

**Contact:** Sabine.bock@wecf.eu

## Chernobyl + 20 – Events and Discussions around the Worst Civilian Nuclear Disaster

On April 26, 1986 the world heard about a major nuclear accident at a power-station in Ukraine. As the magnitude of the disaster spread through the news, the reports became more and more shocking. 1986 was the start of many anti-nuclear organisations.

At the same time, measures were being taken in Ukraine. The "liquidators" were sent to assess and report on the damage, nuclear contamination and give suggestions for cleaning up and containment.

One of these liquidators was Natalia Manzurova, a radio biologist, who along with her colleagues took part in the damage assessment. Now, on the 20th anniversary, WECF and Genanet invited her to Munich to voice her thoughts and feelings on what happened 20 years ago and since. During a press conference at the Press Club in Munich on April 18, 2006, she spoke about her experiences in Chernobyl and answered

the questions of numerous journalists. During a panel discussion in the One-World-House in Munich, Natalia Manzurova captured the interest and emotion of the audience by sharing insights and her very personal experiences.

Natalia Manzurova had been working for a radiological institute in Ozersk, Russia, researching the effects of nuclear radiation on humans and the environment. The government sent the scientific team to assess the damage on and around the reactor after the explosion of Block 4 on April 26, 1986. Beginning on May 4, they assessed a 30 kilometer wide stretch around the area. On the way to the disaster area, Manzurova knew she was risking her health and even her life. Her scientific training gave her enough knowledge on the dangers of nuclear radiation. The team spent 15 days each month on-site and 15 days at home recovering. During the time on-site the work was so intense that there was no time for reflection. This came later with the nega-

tive effects of such dangerous work becoming ever more apparent.

Chernobyl was not the first nuclear disaster in the former Soviet Union. In 1957 a serious accident occurred at the nuclear plant in Majak in the region of Chelyabinsk near Ozersk. The town is closed off and is one of the main production sites for weapons-grade plutonium.

The Chernobyl disaster proved one thing to Manzurova, "A nuclear explosion always has pan-regional consequences and the civilian use of nuclear energy has the same health and economic effects as military use."

After four years of working on-site at Chernobyl, Manzurova had become handicapped, she was physically and mentally a wreck. Most of her colleagues have since died. The fact that she is still alive gives her the energy to spread her knowledge and experiences. Together with some of her remaining colleagues she has been insisting on academic research on post-accident effects of nuclear disasters - until now without success.

Manzurova says "she was there when her country needed her". Now she is actively engaged in preventing the further use of nuclear power for civilian or military uses. "The victims must not have died in vain," she believes.

WECF is of the same opinion and is working to change energy use from nuclear and conventional fuels to sustainable options such as wind, water, biomass and geothermal.

Within the nuclear energy area, WECF took part in demonstrations against the financing of two nuclear power stations in Bulgaria. Intensive lobbying by many organisations against the three main German banks who were prepared to finance the power station project resulted in all three boards of directors deciding to withdraw from the deal. A small step in the right direction.

WECF will continue its work for designing and implementing renewable energy projects together with its partner organisations in Eastern Europe and Central Asia as well as taking part in and initiating advocacy projects in the EU.

*Child suffering from Chernobyl accident (source: Manzurova)*

*Natalia Manzurova, Chernobyl liquidator (2nd Left) speaking at the public meeting in Munich, April 2006*



*WECF invited Natalia Manzurova, one of the few remaining liquidators of Chernobyl, to present her lifefory in Munich.*



# The Aarhus Convention on Environmental Information, Justice and Public Participation

**Location:** Geneva, Switzerland

**Donor:** WECF donations,

**Contact:** [anke.stock@wecf.eu](mailto:anke.stock@wecf.eu)

## Public Participation – the Aarhus Convention

WECF, under the umbrella of the European Eco-Forum, takes active part in monitoring the progress of the UN/ECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, the so-called Aarhus Convention.

The Aarhus Convention is the first legally binding instrument guaranteeing access to information, public participation in decision-making, and justice in environmental matters. The governing body of the Aarhus Convention is the Meeting of the Parties. It meets every 2-3 years to review progress in the ratification and the implementation of the Convention and to decide on future work programmes. In between the Meetings of the Parties, the Working Group of the Parties oversees the implementation of the work programme assisted by other Task Forces, which work on specific issues. Furthermore, a Compliance Committee has been established to address issues of alleged non-compliance with the Convention.

On 5 and 6 April 2006, WECF participated in the 6th Meeting of the Working Group of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention in Geneva. The main issues on the agenda were the following:

- Pollutant release and transfer registers;
- Genetically modified organisms;
- Public participation in international forums;
- Public participation in strategic decision-making;

- Capacity-building;
- Work programme and financial arrangements for 2006-2008.

An important decision for WECF was the decision of the Working Group to give a green light to the Task Force on Public Participation in International Forums for the planned consultation process. The aim of the consultation is to obtain views of other international forums on the Almaty Guidelines and also to learn from their experiences in the area of access to information, public participation in decision-making, and access to justice in environmental matters.

From 9 and 10 November 2006, one WECF representative took part in the second meeting of the Task Force on Public Participation in International Forums. The main topics were the results of the consultation process that was conducted to receive comments on the Almaty Guidelines and the organisation of the workshop "Involving the Public in International Forums Dealing with Matters Relating to the Environment," due to take place on 20 and 21 June 2007 in Geneva. Since then, WECF under the umbrella of the European Eco-Forum, is working on the preparation of input of a wide range of NGOs for the workshop.



*The representatives of European Eco-Forum at their evaluation meetings after the closing of the Almaty Conference .*

*WECF participating in Aarhus MOP-2 in Almaty.*

## Environment for Europe – Preparing for the Ministerial Conference in Belgrade 2007

**Location:** Geneva

**Donor:** Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, WECF donations.

**Contact:** [jasmine.osorio@wecf.eu](mailto:jasmine.osorio@wecf.eu)

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*WECF will bring a delegation of its members to the Environment Ministers Conference in Belgrade next year, as it has done at the previous Environment for Europe Conference (Kiev)*



The “Environment for Europe” process is a unique partnership of the Member States within the UNECE region, organizations of the United Nations system represented in the region, other intergovernmental organizations, regional environment centres, non-governmental organizations and other major groups. The process has given birth to important conventions and protocols, such as the Aarhus Convention on the right to access to environmental information, public participation and environmental justice. WECF’s director as board member of the European Eco-Forum, has been following the preparations for the upcoming Environmental Ministers Conference in Belgrade (October 2007).

In July 2006, the second meeting of the Working Group of Senior Officials “Environment for Europe” took place in Geneva. The main issue during this meeting was the agenda of the 6th Ministerial Conference. European ECO-Forum was represented by Victoria Elias (ECO-Accord, Russia, Chair of the ECO-Forum Coordination Board), Mara Silina (EEB), Sascha Gabizon (WECF). The Belgrade Agenda was discussed with strong opinions as to how the conference should be structured and what it should achieve. It is regrettable that no new commitments are planned to be made at the Belgrade conference, instead it should be a conference of evaluation and

delivery. WECF is sceptical that this will attract a great number of environmental ministers. Another contentious issue is the planned 2 hour round-table dialogue on Biodiversity, which the USA wants to see purely as a ‘parallel’ process. WECF has supported Eco-Accord Moscow and EEB Brussels with the preparation of the NGO preparatory conference (March 2007), where the Eco-Forum members will evaluate the implementation of decisions made in the framework of the Environment for Europe process from 1991 till now and prepare the NGO statement with recommendations to member states.

# WECF Projects and Programmes in 2006



### 3 | WECF Projects and Programmes in 2006

#### Tapping Resources – The Strength of Women for Sustainable Development

**Location:** Afghanistan,  
Aral Sea Region, Armenia  
**Donor:** Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
(TMF programme)  
**Contact:** [gero.fedtke@wecf.eu](mailto:gero.fedtke@wecf.eu)

In 2006, WECF continued the three-year (2005–2007) project on poverty alleviation and sustainable development with partners from the poorest countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia. The main project implementation took part in three countries: Afghanistan, Armenia, and the Aral Sea region.

New activities are being developed in Georgia, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. The project is funded by the TMF programme of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The goal of the project is to achieve direct sustainable poverty alleviation and direct improvement of the environment and living conditions of people living in poverty in marginal rural areas in Afghanistan, the Caucasus and Central Asia. This is accomplished through the implementation of applied and sustainable water, sanitation and agricultural pilot projects, capacity building of civil society, improving governance, and increasing democracy through citizen involvement in policy development. The strengthening of women's positions on all levels is of particular importance. Thus, the project is working towards the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals, especially Nr. 7 (environmental sustainability, focusing on access to water and sanitation). The project has developed demonstration projects with a focus on involving women in implementation and local decision-making. The demonstration projects help to identify legislative, institutional and cultural barriers as well as catalysts and appropriate technologies.

The lessons will be used to replicate and improve the results and to prepare recommendations for national and international policy making, in particular, on reaching the Millennium Development Goals. Part of the international policy work is carried out within the framework of the WSSD partnership Women for Water, Water for Women, of which WECF is one of the founding members ([www.womenforwater.org](http://www.womenforwater.org)). The implementation activities in 2006

concentrated on the pilot projects in the areas of sustainable water supply, sanitation, and organic farming. The project was originally planned for 4 years (2005–2008) but will now be completed by 2007, and will be extended within the three-year project "Empowerment and Local Action" (2008–2010), funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFS programme). The following three sections present information on the activities in the main project countries.

*Drinking water well built in Afghanistan, benefitting 26 users.*



*A woman with her child next to a well built with by Katachel, WECF's TMF programme partner in Afghanistan*



## Tapping Resources – Northern Afghanistan

**Location:** Afghanistan,  
Aka Khel and Kata Khill Villages  
**Donor:** Dutch Ministry of Foreign  
Affairs (TMF programme)  
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*Ashes are strewn on  
top of the faeces after  
defecation.*



*Urine is collected in  
canisters.*

The Afghan-German NGO Kata Khill / Katachel e.V., with support from WECF, works in the Kunduz and Takhar provinces in Northern Afghanistan on direct sustainable poverty alleviation. The activities contribute primarily to reaching MDG 7, Target 10 (access to safe drinking water and sanitation) through building wells and building and promoting dry urine diversion toilets. The project also contributes to MDG 2, Target 3 (primary schooling), and MDG 3, Target 4 (gender equality in education), through construction of schools for girls and boys. Finally the project contributes to MDG 4 (reducing child mortality) and 5 (improving maternal health). Kata Khill also conducts income-generating activities, such as shoe and tent making, and provides medical care and equipment. Kata Khill-WECF activities are covered by the three-year TMF-project 'Tapping Resources,' sponsored by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In 2006, Kata Khill built 60 new wells in the Ludin and Anghor Bagh regions. The wells are reinforced with rings of concrete and can be closed by a lid when not used to protect the well water from contamination. The wells serve about 1500 people and will considerably improve the water supply situation of those who were forced to walk far or had to use contaminated sources. The wells are built in the yards of homes. This is especially important for women. It is often difficult for women to go on their own to wells located in streets or public places. Only in a private space can women use wells freely. This is not only important for gender considerations, but also ensures a more effective usage of the available

water, e.g. using excess water for watering plants in the yards, which in turn improves a family's diet. Each well owner invests many workdays in constructing her/his well with project-provided construction material; the more complicated part of the work is executed by contracted construction companies.

Over the two-year project duration, the implementation of dry urine diversion toilets has made considerable progress. Katachel e.V. director Sybille Schnehage, Kunduz project manager Dadgul Delawar, and Kata Khill's staff have promoted and demonstrated the ecological sanitation approach in schools built as part of the TMF project, several of their project facilities, and selected homes. After the successful introduction in the Aka Khel school in 2005, the pedagogical academy of Kunduz has now been equipped with dry urine diverting toilets along with many homes. The former Military Commander of Kunduz has built such a toilet for himself with the help of Kata Khill staff. This example has an impact on many of his neighbours who followed his example. Overall 60 household toilets and 5 public toilets at schools (including ZaKhel school), the pedagogical academy and the premises of a weaving project were built. The overall number of users is about 3300 of which about 1200 are in private households. Household toilet owners use the urine as fertilizer on their fields. In 2006, Kata Khill also constructed a new school in the village of Za Khel near Kunduz. The children of this village had been unable to go to school during the Soviet Occupation, the Afghan Civil War and the years that followed.

The involvement of a former commander as an additional site manager ensured the involvement and positive attitude of critical stakeholder groups for this school construction.

The school is erected on a foundation of limestone. Pillars of reinforced concrete and a ring beam enhance the building's protection against earthquakes. Walls are made of bricks, and the ceilings are reinforced with a layer of concrete under a tin roof. This new kind of ceiling has the advantage that scorpions cannot inhabit it, which happens in simpler ceiling constructions – distracting pupils from learning when they drop down on chairs and desks. The school territory is surrounded on three sides by a wall, leaving open space for the children to go to the nearby field and play. Large mulberry trees shade the school yard on hot summer days.

Fifteen teachers, including one female teacher, educate 290 girls and 540 boys in the school. The number of girls and female teachers is expected to increase in the years to come as scepticism among parents regarding sending older girls to school will diminish, analogous to experiences from schools built by Kata Khill in operation for several years now. The teachers working in the new school, built by Kata Khill, are paid by the local government – a mode of cooperation that Kata Khill has been successfully employed for many years. The school is equipped with dry urine diversion toilets and has its own well in the courtyard.

All projects pay attention to maintaining a balance between the local tribes (Pashtuns, Uzbeks, Turkmens, Tajiks, and Hazara) to avoid problems that could result from assumed favouritism.

## Tapping Resources – Aral Sea

**Location:** Aral Sea Region

**Donor:** Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (TMF programme)

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*WECF partner's doctor working in the project village.*



*School children – winners of the drawing contest “hygiene and health”*

As part of the three year TMF-project ‘Tapping resources,’ WECF, in cooperation with its local partner, is conducting projects aimed at poverty reduction through improved water and sanitation, waste management and development of alternative sources of income. The activities contribute to reaching MDG 7, Target 10 (access to safe drinking water and sanitation), MDG 1 (reducing poverty), MDG 3 (Eliminate gender disparity in primary education), and MDG 5 (improvement of maternal health). Projected activities, which concentrated on one project village so far, have now been extended to a second village. The project is supported by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Inappropriate irrigation has completely destroyed the region's water balance, resulting in the dramatic shrinking of the Aral Sea, salinisation of river and ground water sources and desertification of once fertile land. The Aral Sea, once the world's 4th largest lake, has lost more than 75% of its volume. The concentration of salts in the water is 2.5 times higher than that of seawater. Except for a small part, the ‘small Aral sea’ which has been separated from the main part, the Aral Sea is biologically dead. Many people left the area, but the remaining population suffers from low income and unemployment. The water most local sources provide is too salty to be suitable for drinking. Bad drinking water quality, malnutrition, and poor sanitary conditions are responsible for a deteriorating health condition; anaemia, respiratory disease and thyroid and kidney problems are widespread. WECF partner's activities in 2006 concentrated on improving sanitary conditions, raising

awareness on health, water, and hygiene, and providing basic medical services. 100% of the project village population use simple pit latrines. Intensive awareness raising work on the link between sanitation and health in 2005 and the first months of 2006 had prepared the ground for the first dry urine diversion toilets to be constructed in summer 2006. This new type of sanitary facility soon found followers. Until the end of the year, four toilets were built in the village. Word of mouth propaganda quickly reached neighbouring villages, so that two more toilets were built in a second project village.

It was decided to gather experiences with the functionality of these toilets before continuing with construction. Different materials were tested: a solid brick construction as well as the traditional “to pan lay,” reed walls with daub. The toilets are properly used and function well. The cold winter brought some problems with freezing pipes, but these problems could easily be solved. The toilet owners used urine on their fields and became convinced of its good fertilizing effects. Construction of a school toilet was also started – the semi-finished building will stay during winter, and the construction be finished in spring 2007.

The local WECF partner constantly monitored the quality of the drinking water. In the project village, people use water primarily from hand pumps, but also from open sources, e.g. canals. Only some houses are connected to a Central Water Supply system (CWSS). While CWSS water is suitable for drinking in its chemical composition, it is also often microbiologically polluted. This is also true for all other sources, and their

water is also far too salty for human consumption and even contains uranium. Conveying the results of these findings to the local population and raising awareness about the health impacts of water pollution that can neither be seen nor tasted was a constant topic of meetings and seminars conducted by the partner in both villages. A leaflet was designed, published and distributed. Connecting to the CWSS is now a wish of all villagers. The project will facilitate these connections in 2007.

The partner also conducted medical observations not provided by the local doctor's facility. A medical doctor working with the organization examined people's blood pressure and heart, the respiratory system, and eyes, and provided medical consultations. A leaflet about anaemia was developed and distributed during consultations and meetings. The link between hygiene and health was the topic of two theatre plays staged by school children at the project village school with the help of active teachers and the school's parents' committee: “Clean cucumber” and “Listen to mom.” There were also drawing contests and lectures given at the school.

*EcoSan toilet constructed with reed walls, which are then covered with daub, a cheaper building material than bricks.*

*EcoSan toilet house made from bricks.*



## Tapping Resources – Armenia

**Location:** Armenia,  
Fantan, Hayanist and Dzoraghbyur villages  
**Donor:** Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
**MATRA Programme**  
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### Improvement of Access to Safe Water and Sanitation in Rural Areas of Armenia and Development of Income Generating Organic Farming Activities

WECF carries out activities with its partner “Armenian Women for Health and a Healthy Environment” (AWHHE) aimed at poverty reduction through improved water and sanitation, organic farming and increased community participation in communal development. The projects are covered by the three year TMF-project “Tapping Resources,” funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In Armenia, the project focuses on working towards the realisation of five Millennium Development Goals at a local level: environmental sustainability, especially increased access to water and sanitation (Goal 7), reducing poverty (Goal 1), increasing access of girls to primary schooling (Goal 3), development of partnerships (Goal 8) and improvement of maternal health (Goal 5). AWHHE is implementing demonstration pilot projects in three villages in the vicinity of the capital Yerevan: Hayanist and Dzoraghbyur in the Ararat province, and Fantan in the Kotayk province. The project’s focus is to involve women in project implementation and local decision-making.

Activities of the year 2006 concentrated on the implementation of pilot projects for water supply, sanitation and organic farming. These activities were complemented by various awareness-raising activities and political dialogue. AWHHE cooperated with the Ministries for Nature Protection, Agriculture, and Health. Citizens organized

their support for the project activities, on the initiative of AWHHE staff, via village- and women’s committees, who took an active part in the awareness raising activities, as well as in designing, implementing, and sustaining the demonstration projects.

New committees emerged in Fantan adding to the existing ones in Hayanist. The project intensified the cooperation between local authorities, water supply companies, and other NGOs.

### Water Supply

In 2005, the project acquired water meters for Fantan from the water company. With this the village households could connect to the existing central water supply system.

But due to ambiguous regulations, unresolved questions of ownership, and unclear responsibilities the actual flow of water was prevented. The development of the issue reveals much about the rural conditions in former ex-Soviet Union countries.

This often does not reach official reports and is being resolved very slowly. AWHHE and WECF continue to try and find a solution so that the water can start to flow from the pipes. Cooperation with the state committee on water resources proved to be more effective. The project brought representatives of the committee and Hayanist village authorities together and initiated a joint agreement on extending the existing irrigation system, with 70% of the necessary expenses covered by the state committee (through a World Bank loan), 10% by the village authorities and 20% by the TMF project. 206 ha. are now irrigated and a total of 150 poor families



Instructions: How to use the EcoSan toilet.

reap the benefits. Land previously unusable due to lack of water can now be ploughed and sown.

### Ecological Sanitation

As a result of the project the local school in Hayanist now has a dry urine-diverting toilet building. 345 schoolchildren and about 40 members benefit from the new sanitation facilities that were completed in November. The dry urine-diverting toilet is equipped with special squatting slabs that divert the urine from the faeces, which are then collected separately. Instead of flushing, the faeces are covered with sawdust that absorbs the moisture and prevents smell. Without any bad odours, the new toilet has been constructed directly adjacent to the school building allowing access from inside, a great advantage over the previous outdoor pit-latrines at the end of the school yard. Both the school children and teachers received careful instructions on the correct



*School Activities  
Competition on waste  
– what to reduce,  
reuse, recycle...*

*Lecture by AWHHE  
on reducing,  
separating and recy-  
cling waste*



*Apple Tree treated  
with organic  
phytotherapy gave  
better harvest than  
conventional apple  
trees in neighbour-  
ing plots.*

usage and principles of the toilet. A caretaker looks after the toilet, cleaning and maintaining it daily. The facilities were opened festively; representatives from Hayjrmugh, the Armenian water and sewage company, village authorities, UNDP, and interested NGOs were present, as well as newspaper and television journalists. They inspected the toilet building with great interest and were eager to learn more about its technology and principles. Architectural plans for a similar school toilet in the project village of Fantan are under way – the facilities will be built in 2007. The project village committees held information meetings and discussions on EcoSan for households with 120 families participating from both villages.

### Organic Farming

Two village agronomists from Fantan and Dzoraghbyur, and two AWHHE organic farming experts, with the support of an international organic farming expert, devised a crop rotation scheme for a demonstration plot in Fantan, and phytotherapy schemes for orchards in Fantan and Dzoraghbyur. Despite a very dry summer, crops on the demonstration plot grew well, especially when compared to neighbouring conventional fields. A harvest of 1500 kg/ha is very good considering the weather conditions and compares favourably with the 600-800 kg/ha from the conventional fields. Some of those conventional fields had harvests that failed completely. The fruit harvests in the orchards were also very good. The applied phytotherapy proved effective against pests. Compared to the year before, when a large part of the harvest was lost, the demonstration orchard's output was fivefold. The team visited farms in Bavaria and learned

about the regional distribution network "Unser Land" during a study tour in January. In Armenia, the team worked not only with small-scale farmers, but also with schools. The team organized 7 seminars and 10 trainings on organic farming and distributed information leaflets, prepared by AWHHE, that reached 300 small-scale farmers and 720 schoolchildren. AWHHE organized a conference on "Organic Agriculture: Development Perspectives and opportunities in Armenia," in Yerevan, January 26, 2006.

### Raising Awareness

AWHHE's community mobilisation unit worked intensely in the schools of the three project villages. 40 lectures on health, sanitation, waste management, organic farming, eco-games, eco-competitions and photo exhibitions were organized. This was met with great interest by the schoolchildren and teachers. 11 classes participated in the contests and the most active children received awards. During these activities more than 2,000 copies of information leaflets on these topics were distributed. The materials most favoured by the school children included a picture book, "Adventures of a water droplet," and a colouring book on waste recycling.

Armenia is lacking an effective waste management system. Avoiding and reducing waste, and the promotion of recycling have thus been the topics of AWHHE's awareness raising activities and meetings with the authorities and specialists. AWHHE also developed a video clip, "Do not burn waste," that was shown three times on Armenian TV channels. The project activities were covered by national and regional media, newspapers, radio, and TV.

# Practical Solutions for Water, Waste and Sanitation in Bulgaria

**Location:** Bulgaria, Stara Zagora Spa, Sulitsa and Topoli villages  
**Donor:** Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (TMF Programme)  
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**Partners:** [diskreva@earthforever.org](mailto:diskreva@earthforever.org)  
[ikonomov@enviro-link.org](mailto:ikonomov@enviro-link.org)

During 2006, WECF continued working with the two Bulgarian partners – Earth Forever Foundation (Stara Zagora) and Institute for Ecological Modernisation (Varna) on the implementation of the pilot projects in the selected villages: two rural villages (Stara Zagora Spa and Sulitsa) and one semi-urban village (Topoli). In 2006 the project moved rapidly towards successful implementation of the main goal: Enabling multi-stakeholder participation in sustainable water and waste management.

The implementation of pilot projects has been finalized in the village Sulitsa by Earth Forever Foundation (EfE) with the construction of five ecological waste water and sanitation systems:

- one dry urine diverting public toilet for the cultural center
- two dry urine diverting household toilets
- two soil filters for cleaning waste water (household and cultural center)
- 20 households were supplied with composters (3-bin wood composters) for the composting and reuse of biological waste.

A series of educational materials (original and translated) were published in 500 copies and used by children during summer courses and adults during workshops organised by EfE and WECF (citizens and experts). The implementation of the pilot projects (public dry urine diverting toilet and soil filter) in the neighbouring village, Stara Zagora Spa, are ongoing and will be finished by July 2007.

*Children participated in the summer school organised in the cultural club in Sulitsa, summer 2006. Event carried out by Diana Iskrevva (EfE)*

*New "Ecosan" system in the yard of the cultural club in Sulitsa. On the left side of the photo is the soil filter for grey water treatment, on the right side is the view of the ecosan building with two toilets for women and a urinal room for men.*



*Testing for nitrates in the drinking water sources in Sulitsa and Stara Zagora Spa.*



*Building a composter in Topoli. Residents participate in the Master Composter Programme, held in September 2006.*



The pilot project implementation in Topoli is focused on:

- Public campaign to accelerate the completion of the sewage system in Topoli. The current result of the campaign is 700,000 BGN allocated by the Municipality of Varna from its annual budget for households not yet connected to the sewage system in the village
  - Construction of a demonstration rain water harvesting system in the school yard in Topoli
  - Master Composter training – 25 households participated and IEM developed a programme for further monitoring of participants who want to join the programme in the future (vision: all households compost) During January 2006, IEM organised a three day training event on „Modern Environmental Infrastructure Suitable for Rural Areas“.
- The project received good media coverage during 2006. Several newspaper articles were published in both regions, Maria Ilieva (IEM)

gave an interview to national and regional TV stations. Diana Iskrevva (EfE) participated in the 4th World Water Forum in Mexico, and presented the sanitation problems in Bulgarian rural areas and the activities implemented in the Stara Zagora region that help improve the sanitation conditions of the region.

## A Decentralised Sustainable Wastewater Management System for Kyrgyzstan

**Location:** Kyrgyzstan

**Donor:** German Ministry of the Environment,  
Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety

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The two-year project (2006-2008) provides the basis for the widespread introduction of decentralized sustainable wastewater management systems in the Kyrgyz republic, thereby contributing to achieving Millennium Development Goal 7 (to ensure environmental sustainability), Target 10 (halve the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and achieve basic sanitation by 2015).

Kyrgyzstan is among the poorest countries of the former Soviet Union. The rural population faces many problems – poor sanitary conditions are among them. Kyrgyzstan's National Statistics claim that only 12% of the rural population has access to improved sanitation.

Outdoor pit-latrines are the norm and are a cause of groundwater and drinking water contamination, and of bad hygiene. The bad smell and outdoor location makes them unpleasant to use. Wastewater is usually discharged untreated into pits or open water bodies.

Through the project, WECF and the four partner organizations, ALGA, BIOM, Habitat for Humanity Kyrgyzstan, and ULGU, are introducing key elements of ecological sanitation into Kyrgyzstan: dry urine diverting toilets and planted soil filters for grey water treatment. Pilot units will be built and their functions, costs, usability, and acceptance by users will be tested and analysed. The findings will be compared to conventional pit latrines and soak-aways. The four partner NGOs will form the nucleus of a future network for the implementation of these technologies. Project results will be summarized in a handbook,

thereby making the necessary information available to a broader public.

WECF and the partners met in Bishkek from December 5-10, 2006, for a project planning and start-up meeting. It included a 4-day training on ecological sanitation. It was attended by 30 participants, who learned with great interest about the effective but simple technology, and devised plans for the construction of model toilets, soil filters, and schemes for testing urine as a fertilizer.

*Ramshackle structure above a smelly pit – the most widespread toilet type in rural Kyrgyzstan.*



*Bishkek start-up meeting; discussing soil filter technology for waste-water treatment.*



*Training sessions on dry urine diverting sanitation systems can be very entertaining, as in the case of the start up meeting in Kyrgyzstan.*



**Location:** Romania, Garla Mare  
**Donor:** Fondation Ensemble, France  
**Contact:** margriet.samwel@wecf.eu  
**Partners:** angela\_garla@yahoo.com,  
Claudia\_tulei@yahoo.com



*Most drinking water wells were tested on nitrate pollution.  
(source GeoSan)*



*Public ecosan toilet for the town hall and the first container for plastic waste in Garla Mare (source WECF)*

## Sustainable Development for All, Romania

### Garla Mare, Romania

In cooperation with the local NGOs of Garla Mare village – GeoSan and FVC –, WECF carried out the project „Sustainable Development for All” from September 2005 till November 2006. The project received financial support by the French Foundation Ensemble (FE). On request of the local NGOs of Garla Mare the project focused on: ecological sanitation (ecosan), solid waste management and identifying the potential for eco-tourism.

### Water and Sanitation

The project tested nitrate levels for most of the 500 private and public wells and for the “Sipot” spring. The spring – which villagers go to for “clean” water – was also tested for pesticides, and levels well beyond the norms were found. WECF did not identify any source of safe drinking water in the village. Together with the local partners, WECF developed funding proposals on the establishment of a safe drinking water supply.

After the successful implementation of the dry urine diverting toilets for the primary school in Garla Mare in a previous WECF project, a start was made for scaling-up and promoting the approach of ecological sanitation (ecosan). Ecosan was introduced as an affordable and sustainable measure to improve sanitation and to protect groundwater against infiltration of human excrements from pit latrines. Double vault dry urine diverting (u.d.) toilets with

public access were constructed for the town hall. The design and construction was coordinated by the local NGO GeoSan and carried out with local labour and in kind support from the municipality. The toilet facility has two urinals, and two separate u.d. toilet rooms for men and women. In October 2007 the facility was festively inaugurated. There was great interest from regional and national authorities and media. With the support of the Hamburg University of Technology 2 workshops on the construction and operation of u.d. toilets for households were conducted.

A trained local trainer assisted 4 households to built their own u.d. toilet.

### Solid waste

A researcher from the Open University of Amsterdam conducted a study on the manage-

ment of solid waste in Garla Mare. The results were presented in March 2006, during a public meeting in Garla Mare. In workshops with the citizens the most affordable and effective steps towards a sustainable solid waste management were identified.

The primary school started with waste collection and separation; cleaned up some areas in Garla Mare from wild garbage, and waste bins and a waste container for plastic waste were installed.

### Awareness raising

30 Mayors from the county of Teleorman were invited by the local authorities of Garla Mare on the 1 of April 2006 to visit the Ecosan toilet building.

WECF and the Dutch province Overijssel gave presentations on the concept of Ecosan and

organised the visit of the school toilet and new urine diverting household toilet.

The next day the local NGO FVC, together with WECF, hosted a symposium on environmental education, which was attended by 150 teachers from Mehedinti county. Presentations and education materials on hygiene and sanitation were provided.



*Clean-up action by schoolchildren of Garla Mare, (source FVC, Garla Mare)*

*Teacher and WECF representative give an award to the schoolchildren after their clean-up action, (source FVC)*



*30 Mayors of Teleorman province visit the ecosan school and household toilets in Garla Mare (source WECF)*

*Symposium for the teachers of Mehedinti province in Garla Mare (source WECF)*



**Location:** Romania, Prislop settlement  
**Donor:** Hewlett Packard (HP)  
**Contact:** margriet.samwel@wecf.eu  
**Partner:** aidb@ctrnet.ro



*Discussing the paving  
of paths in Prislop  
(source WECF)*

*Prislop, a poor  
Roma Family  
(source WECF)*



## Poverty Reduction, hygiene and health for Prislop, Romania



*Making a documentary  
on the daily life in  
Prislop (source WECF)*

Prislop is a small Roma settlement of approximately 300 inhabitants at the border of Sibiu's urban region in Romania. It is located about 3 km of rough clay road uphill from Rasinari village, 12 km from Sibiu. The project aims at improving the living conditions of the inhabitants of Prislop, who live in extremely poor conditions. The project receives financial support from Hewlett Packard (HP).

### Hygiene

In October 2005 WECF started a hygiene programme in Prislop. The object was to improve the overall sanitary situation of the settlement. Lessons on the importance of proper handwashing and on basic knowledge on diseases were implemented. The programme was continued in 2006, and new themes were added.

### Schooling program

The local WECF partner developed lessons for analphabetic citizens of Prislop. Educational materials were collected and the schooling programme was started in autumn 2006.

### Pavement of paths

The 'streets' in Prislop are not paved and the soil contains a high clay concentration, the paths are often steep, very slippery and dirty. This is one of the reasons why it is hard to keep the houses and the children clean. In Autumn 2006 the mayor of Rasinari decided to support the project with a donation of gravel to cover and solidify the paths. The delivery of gravel started in November, but was stopped, because due to rain and mud, the trucks could not reach Prislop any longer. In springtime 2007 the pavement will be continued.

### German Television shows documentary about Prislop

A television team joined WECF for a two-day visit of Prislop and made a documentary on the daily life in Prislop, with theme: "Welcome to the European Union". The documentary was broadcasted in November 2006 by the German television channel ZDF at prime time. Many viewers were shocked by the poverty of the Prislop people and offered support and donations. The documentary will be shown again in a longer version on ARTE, the French-German, channel in May 2007. As a Christmas gift, HP provided again a financial donation to continue the work in Prislop in 2007.

# Sustainable Development for All, Ecological sanitation and waste-(water) management in rural areas of Ukraine

**Location:** Ukraine, Stepanovska village  
**Donor:** Fondation Ensemble, France  
**Contact:** [margriet.samwel@wecf.eu](mailto:margriet.samwel@wecf.eu)  
**Partners:** [slesarenok@ukr.net](mailto:slesarenok@ukr.net), [atsvet@mama-86.org.ua](mailto:atsvet@mama-86.org.ua)

*Results of the nitrate quick tests, 80% of village wells have exceeded the norm (source Mama-86)*

*Training for pupils and stakeholders on the principles and use of dry urine diverting toilets (Photo: Deegner)*



This project in the Ukraine was implemented in cooperation with the local NGOs partners, Mama-86-Odessa, Mama-86-Kiev, Mama-86 Sebastopol and MAMA-86-Ternopol and supported by the Local Authorities of Stepanovska and Peredovoe.

The project aimed to raise awareness and build capacity on sustainable ecological sanitation (ecosan), improve sanitation in a way which is both sustainable and affordable, to construct demonstration units of dry urine diverting (u.d.) toilets schools and households, and to create an enabling environment for replication.

The beneficiaries of the project are the 6000 inhabitants and 350 school children of Stepanovka municipality including 5 neighbouring settlements and the 700 inhabitants of Peredovoe village and the 6000 school children visiting the Peredovoe summer camp.

## Awareness raising and capacity building

The local project committee finalized the testing of all the drinking water wells. In Stefanovska, each house has a garden of 10 acres and one shallow well (11 meters). 80% of the wells showed high levels of nitrates. This was the first time residents found out about nitrate pollution of their drinking water.

World Water Day (March 23 2006) was celebrated with great enthusiasm in the village of Stepanovka. The Mayor of Stepanovka arranged an information panel with posters on water-problems

of the village, such as the high levels of nitrates in groundwater, and the problem of the high ground water-table, which in some places is only 2 m below the surface. The exhibition explains the influence of pit-latrines and septic tank infiltration on ground-water quality.

85 representatives of different stakeholders participated in the educational seminar "Ecological Sanitation is a New Approach to the Wastewaters management" in October 2006.

As a result of the project, the inhabitants of Stefanovska :

- are aware that their drinking water wells are very polluted with nitrates (in the case of the family where the household toilet was built with more than 500 mg p/liter)
  - are making the link between the latrines, animal manure and the high nitrate levels in their wells.
  - are convinced that urine is a good fertilizer for their crops and have no reserves to it.
  - see ecological sanitation as a way to reduce the pollution of their wells.
  - have an ecological school toilet.
- Before starting the construction of the school toilets a lot of time was spent on the design and authorisation of the building.

The ecosan school toilet in Stefanovska is the first in Ukraine to be built entirely according to the building reglementation. MAMA-86 Odessa insisted on obtaining all the necessary permits

such as the building permit and the fire-protection permit. This was a great challenge. For the first architectural design, 10 signatures from oblast and rayon level were necessary, which meant spending days in different institutes.

This did have an unexpected side-effect: MAMA-86 could widely spread the concept of Ecosan among the authorities.

The school toilet was constructed between September and November 2006.

The school toilet serves 360 children (7- 16 years old) and their teachers.

In total 80 square meters were constructed, consisting of the following elements:

- 1 UD-dry toilet for teachers
- 4 UD-dry toilets for girls
- 2 UD-dry toilets for boys
- 4 urinals for boys
- 3 washbasins for girls/teachers
- 3 washbasins for boys

The district school administration pays an extra caretaker for the toilets to support the project. The caretaker checks the toilets after each school break and adds dry matter into the faecal compartment, if this was not done properly by the pupils.

Interviews with the teachers after the first 5 months of use indicates that the users perceive positive health impacts, in particular, cases of cystitis have gone down since pupils



*Stefanovska family are proud of their new toilet facility (source: Deegner)*



*Festive inauguration of the new ecosan school toilets (source TUHH)*

do no longer have to go to the cold outdoor pit latrines. In November 2006 the school toilets were inaugurated with participation of local and national authorities and press.

There were at least 2 articles about the new school-toilets in a (local) district newspaper and one in a Ukraine-wide newspaper. From all sectors of society there is great interest in the dry u.d. school toilet system.

The district-administration wants to write a letter of intent to build more UD dry school-toilets in the district of Odessa.

Two international delegations visited the new school toilets, Swedish Sanitation experts and a Swiss Development Cooperation team.

### Constructing the summer camp toilet building

Obtaining the permits for the ecosan toilets for the summer camp was an easier process, than for the school. The construction of the 2 toilet rooms, urinals and washbasins was ready before the summer holidays. The building was made from natural stones from the region which have a good insulation capacity.

### Household Ecosan Toilet Building

One demonstration household toilet was built in May 2006 for a family of 5 in Stefanovska.

The toilet is built against the house, and therefore is warmer than if it had been outside in the garden. The household has been using the urine (collected in a 20 meter tank) throughout summer 2006 in its garden. They put the urine in ditches around their grape bushes and on their wheat plants, and added water. The family had no hesitation in using urine as fertilizer and they were very pleased with the results, the grapes were very tasty!

Throughout the summer, a major 'informal' awareness raising activity unfolded itself in the village. Almost every day villagers came to visit the family where MAMA-86 has built the first demonstration household ecosan toilet. All the villagers wanted to see the "miraculous" toilet that does not smell and has no flies! Many of the visitors also 'used' the toilet, to test it in practice.



*Outside and inside view of the new school toilet building (source Deegner)*

*For the boys an extra room with urinals was built (source Deegner)*



*Start of the construction of the ecosan toilets for the summer camp in Peredovoe (source Mama-86)*



*The ecosan toilets are accessible from inside the school and a caregiver looks after their cleanliness every day (source Deegner)*

## Cooperation for Sustainable Rural Development

**Location:** Ukraine, villages Vorokhta (Ivano-Frankist Province), Bobryk / Vertijevka (Nizhyn Province) and Gozhuli (Poltava Province) with MAMA-86

**Donor:** Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs MATRA, Programme MATRA Programme

**Contact:** [annemarie.mohr@wecf.eu](mailto:annemarie.mohr@wecf.eu)  
[Solomiya.babyak@wecf.eu](mailto:Solomiya.babyak@wecf.eu)

**Partners:** [atsvet@mama-86.org.ua](mailto:atsvet@mama-86.org.ua)

**“Involving citizens and local authorities in rural Ukraine in the improvement of drinking water, sanitation and agriculture.”**

This 3-year project, financed by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, started in November 2003 and was carried out in cooperation with MAMA-86 Kiev and local Mama-86 organisations, in three villages in different parts of Ukraine

**Bobryk, under the administration of Vertijevka, Oblast Nizhyn**

### Water and sanitation

The village Bobryk depends on drinking water from shallow wells, which are partly polluted with nitrates. MAMA-86 and WECF analysed and cleaned the wells in the village. School children continued with monitoring the nitrate concentration in the wells, using quick-analysis test-strips. They made maps of the different nitrate concentration per well and presented the results to regional and national authorities.

MAMA-86 and WECF connected the school in Bobryk and its canteen to a piped drinking water supply. Furthermore, a new well for the kindergarten in the nearby village Vertijevka was drilled, providing clean drinking water. Because of these improvements, the number of children visiting the kindergarten increased from 30 to 100. For the school WECF replaced the bad-smelling pit latrines by a urine diverting (u.d.) indoor toilet facility, and installed wash basins for hand washing. MAMA-86 and WECF organised training sessions on how to build and maintain urine diverting toilets for the citizens, and constructed one demonstration toilet for a household.

### Agriculture

The gender-socio-economic analysis, which MAMA-86 and WECF carried out at the project start, indicated the presence of extreme poverty in Bobryk. Improving the yields and income from agriculture were therefore a priority for all citizens.

In cooperation with the Chernigiv Institute of Agricultural Microbiology MAMA-86 and WECF experts identified potatoe sorts that suit the climate and soil in Bobryk better. Through training sessions WECF introduced the principles of organic farming, and MAMA-86 helped to set up an information centre on organic farming in Vertijevka, a large neighbouring village.

### Obsolete Pesticide Stockpiles

During the base line study MAMA-86 and WECF found out that there was a large, completely destroyed obsolete pesticide dumpsite close to Bobryk. Many negotiations with local authorities



*Bags with pesticides in the obsolete pesticide dumpsite near Bobryk.*

and round table discussions were carried out by Mama-86, to discuss the possible solutions to remove these obsolete pesticide stockpiles. Although within the time frame of the project no solution was found, MAMA-86 and WECF are continuing to work towards a solution.

### Gozhuli village, Oblast Poltava

#### Water and sanitation

The central drinking water supply system catering citizens and the school, takes water from a 200 m. deep well, which has a very high fluoride level. High fluoride levels can lead to several illnesses such as ‘dental fluorosis’ and problems with bone structure. MAMA-86 and WECF examined and proposed an alternative drinking water source. To this end, WECF put MAMA-86 in contact with Dutch experts and donors from the organisation Aqua for All, who have carried out a technical feasibility study and made a design for a new well.

*Bad-smelling pit latrines (3) were replaced by a dry urine diverting indoor toilet (2) and urinals (1) (source WECF).*





*Training session on composting; building a low-cost compost bin.*

*Organic farmers field visit in the Ukraine.*

*100 citizens received piped water, including the elder inhabitants of this building.*



Like in Bobryk, school children in Gozhuli monitored several wells on nitrate contamination and the results were summarized in maps accessible to the public. The local authorities cooperated on the improvement of the central water quality and the rehabilitation of the deteriorated sewage system.

In the previous year, MAMA-86, with support from WECF and the University of Technology Hamburg, built the first Ukrainian dry urine

diverting school toilet in Gozhuli. Because some odour problems occurred, the ventilation was improved. In autumn 2006, urine from the school toilets was for the first time applied on a wheat field. Urine is an excellent fertilizer.

### **Agriculture**

As part of the project, farmers and gardeners were informed about the principles of organic agriculture. Field visits were organised and informative materials were provided. Ukraine farmers from the project areas were excited to visit farmers and processors in Germany, who produce more than 200 different food products in a sustainable way using one common logo and marketing organisation. Farmers also received advice from Ukrainian organic farming consultants.

### **3. Vorokhta, Oblast Yaremche**

The project goal was to install a water filtration system as a contribution to the rehabilitation of the old drinking water system. Due to a number of bureaucratic obstacles and elections held during the project, the renovation of the existing water supply system in Vorokhta was slowed down, and could not be finished within the project time frame. Nevertheless, MAMA-86 and WECF developed an alternative solution and obtained co-funding from the local authorities to extend the central drinking water supply system to 100 additional citizens. These 100 people now receive water in their homes. Thanks to intensive lobbying by Mama-86, in cooperation with local citizens and authorities, additional financial resources for improving the future safe water supply system in Vorokhta were obtained from the budget of the local authorities. In addition,

with support of the University of Technology Hamburg, five hygienic dry urine diverting toilets for households were built, as demonstrations models.

WECF and MAMA-86 shared their experiences gained during the project implementation at many national and international events, including the International Water Forum "AQUA 2005 Ukraine," "World Water Week" in Stockholm, and the "World Water Forum" in Mexico. WECF organized excursions for international participants to visit the dry urine diverting school toilet facilities in the project areas.

*Excursion to the ecosan toilet facility of the school in Bobryk by visitors from the Netherlands, Germany, Armenia and Uzbekistan (source WECF).*



## 4 WECF Publications and Press in 2006 |



⑨  
ROOTS cont.  
 in Miami: priority Health + Environment  
 in RIO they women were listened to  
 for the first time women as a  
 major group  
 had influence on official RIO  
 agenda  
 Decided to set up WECF  
 Preparation for Women's Global Conference  
 Beijing '95  
 we brought women to Beijing  
 - Health + Enviro  
 - Sustainable Production +  
 role of women  
 choices should be



Vision of European Women's Environmental Leaders

Our Common Future  
 Future of Europe



## 4 | WECF Publications and Press

### Overview of WECF publications in 2006

#### Publications in Dutch

Poster: Schadelijke stoffen in verzorgingsproducten en cosmetica.

*April 2006*

Lekker in je vel - Keukengeheimen voor een stralende teint.

*May 2006*

Speurtocht naar gif:  
Wat zit er in mijn cosmetica?

*May 2006*

#### Publications in English

##### Tapping Resources

A socio-economic and gender survey of Hayanist, Fantan and Dzoraghbyur in Armenia.

*December 2005*

##### Dry Urine Diverting Toilets

Principles, Operation and Construction  
Part 1: Dry urine diverting or no-mix toilets; principles and operation  
Part 2: Construction of an outdoor dry urine diverting toilet with urinal.

*February 2006*

##### From Pit Latrine to Ecological Toilet

Survey results on school toilets and pit latrines in Garla Mare, Romania.

*July 2006*

##### Sustainable Development for All

Case Study on the development of rural sustainability in Romania.

*February 2006*

##### Poster on Ecological Sanitation

A colourful poster printed on both sides with concentrated information on ecological sanitation.

*February 2006*

##### Gender and Climate Change

A closer look at the connections between climate change and gender.

*February 2006*

##### Report: Environmental Burden of Disease

Results of the international experts workshop on environmental health.

*April 2006*

##### Eco-efficiency and sustainable development

Women promoting the Environmental Pillar of the Lisbon Agenda and the EU SDS.

*May 2006*

##### Women and their Toxic World

The first publication by women for women about chemicals in everyday life.

*October 2006*

#### Statements in English

##### Energy from Biomass in the Sense of Sustainable Rural Development

Position paper from the international workshop of the networks WECF and Unser Land.

*January 2006*

##### Women and Sustainable Rural Development

Position paper from the international workshop of the networks WECF and Unser Land.

*January 2006*

##### A Healthy Population at the Heart of EU Economic Strategy "

Clean, Clever and Competitive from a Citizens Perspective".

*December 2006*

#### Reports in Dutch

##### Verslag van de Train de trainsters Training

"Naar een toekomst zonder gif".

*May 2006*

##### Gender en Milieubeleid, VROM

*September 2006*

#### Reports in English

##### Report on the 6th Meeting of the Working Group on Water and Health Geneva,

Switzerland.

*June 2006*

##### REACH facts and figures

A report on the REACH process as seen by WECF

*October 2006*

##### Project Summary:

##### Eco-Efficiency and Sustainable Development

Women promoting the Environmental Pillar of the Lisbon Strategy and the EU.

*December 2006*

#### Presentations in English

##### From Pit Latrine to Dry Urine Diverting Toilet-

Protecting Groundwater and Improving Sanitary Facilities in a Romanian Village, Tampere, Finland.

*August 2006*

##### A Healthy Population at the Heart of the EU

Economic Strategy

As part of the Brussels High level Roundtable.

*December 2006*

#### Factsheets in Dutch

Toekomst zonder gif

Module afval

Module beleid

Module bestrijdingsmiddelen

Module cosmetica intro

Module cosmetica recepten

Module cosmetica voorbeeldbrief

Module huis binnenlucht

## Factsheets in English

### Briefings

The Countdown 2010 Initiative: Save Biodiversity  
The Leader Approach  
Life +

Natura 2000  
The New EU Organic Agriculture Rules  
Rural Development Policy in the EU  
*January 2006*

### “the EU Sustainable Development Strategy”

How committed is the EU really?

*November 2006*

### “Eco-efficiency”

The principles for engaging citizens as part  
of the EU Lisbon Strategy.

*January 2006*

### “The Lisbon Agenda of the European Union”

Environmental protection is a precondition  
to economic growth.

*November 2006*

“Eco-Efficiency Making industry competitive  
through eco-efficiency”.

*November 2006*

## Press Releases 2006

### Press Releases in Dutch

press release for the REACH action in Amsterdam  
- “A strong REACH for safe products!”.

*June 15*

### Press Releases in English

Joint press release of European NGOs on the  
REACH process: Alive but not kicking.

*December 13*

Press release on the shareholder meeting of  
Bayer “Substitute hazardous chemicals women  
tell Bayer shareholders”.

*April 13*

Invitation to press conference during the 4th  
World Water Forum in Mexico.

*March 19*

Invitation to press conference during the 4th  
World Water Forum in Mexico.

*March 21*

Press announcement: A Silent Pandemic: Indus-  
trial Chemicals are Impairing the Brain Develop-  
ment of Children Worldwide.

*November 8*

Press release - European women sound alarm  
over health threats from everyday chemicals.

*November 23*

Press release - DG Environment denies having ex-  
aggerated environmental health risks in the past.

*November 28*

### Press Releases in German

BUND, Greenpeace und WECF  
kritisieren zu wenig Schutz vor Chemikalien  
Gemeinsame Presseerklärung  
REACH: Kaum geboren, schon geschwächt –

*December 13*

Das Recht des Menschen auf sauberes Trink-  
wasser und sanitäre Versorgung:  
a press release in German on the human right  
to clean drinking water.

*March 15*

## Media coverage in German

TV broadcast of WECF project in Romania:  
Poverty in a Roma village.

*November 19*

## Letters

### Letters in Dutch

Brief aan tweedekamer nav NVR.

*November 9*

### Letters in English

Letter of invitation to the Environmental Burden  
of Disease Workshop.

*February 2006*

Letter to the Environment Ministers of the EU  
member states Re: Lisbon and Sustainable  
Development Strategies at Environment Council.

*March 9*

Response to published letter about NGOs as  
potential terrorist threats Letter to the Financial  
Times.

*February 15*

Joint letter to Lidl, a major German consumer  
chain - Open Letter of 18 non governmental  
environmental and consumer organisations from  
14 European countries and EU level.

*October 31*

Joint letter with Health and  
Environment Alliance to the members of the  
European Parliament -  
HEAL Letter Plenary Vote.

*December 12*

Letter to EU president Barroso

Re: Recommendations for Environmental Health  
in the Lisbon Strategy, and Beyond.

*December 14*

## Articles in Press about WECF

### Articles in English about WECF activities

Pollutants’ Links with disease  
“underestimated” ENDS Europe Daily.

*November 29*

### Articles in German about WECF activities

Dünger aus Toiletten, Kultur & Technik.

*March*

“Ich fühle mich oft minderwertig”,  
article about Natalja Mansurowa on Chernobyl  
+20, Süddeutsche Zeitung.

*April 25*

“Jobs mit Mehrwert”, article about  
environmental jobs.

*March 29*

“BRUCKER LAND und WECF schlagen Brücken in  
von Armut betroffenen Länder”, article on the  
visit of Ukrainian representatives to rural network  
and WECF partner Unser Land, Kreisbote FFB.

*January 24*

## | 5 WECF Members |

## 5 | WECF Members

WECF has had active members since 1996 that are classified in 3 categories.

Full members (with full voting rights)

- NGOs with articles of association that endorses the mission of the WECF network.

- Individual members (<50% of the votes at any meeting)

- Environment & Sustainable Development committees

or working groups within larger organizations

Associate members (no voting rights)

Honorary members

### Full Members (full voting right)

Number	Organisation	Country
1	Agentura Gaia	Czech Republic
2	Aigul-Chelyabinsk Region Charity Fund for Helping Nuclear Victims	Russia
3	Akhalsikhe Center of Social Development	Georgia
4	Alga, Rural Women's NGO	Kyrgyzstan
5	Aral Aielderi	Kazakhstan
6	Armenian Women for Health and a Healthy Environment (AWHHE)	Armenia
7	BIOM	Kyrgyzstan
8	Caucasus, Environment Foundation	Georgia
9	Chelyabinsk City Public Movement of Women 'Fatiha'	Russia
10	Clean up Greece	Greece
11	Eco Accord	Russia
12	Ecobaby, Stichting	Netherlands
13	Ecological Centre "Tau"	Kazakhstan
14	Ecoproject Sustainability Initiative	Belarus
15	Ecosphere	Belarus
16	Ecotox	Moldova
17	Eden Center (Environmental Center for Development, Education and Networking)	Albania
18	Femmes & Changement	France
19	Futura- Mujeres para el Desarrollo Sostenible	Spain
20	Georgian Agricultural Women's Assn. GAWA	Georgia
21	Georgian Association of Toxicologists	Georgia

22	Georgian Environmental & Biological Monitoring Association	Georgia
23	Global Action Plan	Sweden
24	GREENWOMEN Ecological News Agency	Kazakhstan
25	Irish Doctors Environmental Association (IDEA)	Ireland
26	Jabagly – Manas	Kazakhstan
27	Journalists for children and women rights and protection of environment in Macedonia	Macedonia
28	Katachel	Afghanistan/Germany
29	Leefmilieu (Human Environment)	Netherlands
30	Lore Eco Club NGO	Armenia
31	Mama-86 Artemivsk	Ukraine
32	Mama-86 Feodosia	Ukraine
33	Mama-86 Kharkiv	Ukraine
34	Mama-86 Kiev	Ukraine
35	Mama-86 Odessa	Ukraine
36	Mama-86 Poltava	Ukraine
37	Mama-86 Sevastopol	Ukraine
38	Mama-86 Yaremche	Ukraine
39	Medium & Sanitas	Romania
40	Mehriban	Uzbekistan
41	Meldpunten Netwerk Gezondheid en Milieu	Netherlands
42	Nabat Muslyomovo	Russia
43	Nederlandse Bond van Plattelandsvrouwen	Netherlands

44	Network of East-West Women Polska	Poland
45	Open Asia	Denmark/Tajikistan
46	PAROS	Georgia
47	Pesticides Action Network Europe	UK
48	Planet of Hopes	Russia
49	SABR Trust Center	Uzbekistan
50	Social Ecological Institute	Poland
51	Step Forward Snezynsk	Russia
52	TETA-KHAZRI	Azerbaijan
53	Ukrainian Scientific Hygienic Society (USHS)	Ukraine
54	Ural's Women Network - Argayash	Russia
55	Ural's Women Network – Kashli	Russia
56	ULGU, public association	Kyrgyzstan
57	VeM, centrum Vrouw en Milieu	Netherlands
58	VHUE e. V.	Germany
59	Women for Green Way for Generations (WGWG)	Armenia
60	Union for Defense of the Aral Sea and Amudarya (UDASA)	Uzbekistan
61	Women in Sustainable Development of Moldova (WISDOM)	Moldova
62	Women's Environmental Network (WEN)	UK
63	Youth Ecological Center	Tajikistan
64	Youth Ecological Society "Gaia"	Ukraine
65	ZijActief	Netherlands

#### Individual Members (never more than 50 % votes)

Number	Name	Country
66	Maja Bavdaz Solce (DEA KLUB, Citizens' Anti-Toxics Action)	Slovenia
67	Kitty Bentvelsen (Fem Consult)	Netherlands
68	Karimova Nodira (Generation of the Future)	Uzbekistan
69	Willy Douma (Hivos)	Netherlands
70	Claire Greensfelder (INOCH, Plutonium Free Future Women's Network)	USA
71	Adriana Debora Hulsmann (Kiwa Water Research)	Netherlands
72	Victoria Yurescue (Mama-86)	Ukraine
73	Patimat Gadzhieva (Moscow State University)	Russia
74	Silvia Pleschka	Germany
75	Svetlana Bashtovenko	Kyrgyzstan

76	Johanna Wilhelmina Kleute	Netherlands
77	Mina Yapar	Netherlands
78	Catherine Wattiez (Pesticides Action Network PAN)	Belgium
79	Mark Hengen	USA
80	Clare Flenley	UK
81	Elisabeth Ruffingo	France
82	Nita Chaudhuri	France
83	Galushkiva Tatijana (Women for Environment)	Ukraine
84	Anne Sofie Andersson	Sweden
85	Caterina Choreftaki	Greece
86	Clare Flenley	UK
87	Dr. Minnu Hemmati	Germany
88	Dr. Nazik Pacha Bezian	Lebanon
89	Katarina Korytarova	Slovakia
90	Mildred Thulin	Sweden
91	Mine Yapar	Netherlands
92	Pamela Lawson	Netherlands

#### Associate Members (no voting rights)

Number	Organisation	Country
94	Bugday	Turkey (applicant)
95	Clean World Social Union for Civil Rights	Azerbaijan
96	Concord	Uzbekistan
97	ECOS – Environmental Sustainability	Azerbaijan (applicant)
98	Eco-sense / Eko-svest	Macedonia
99	Ecology and Peace, Feodosia Regional Organisation	Ukraine
100	Environmental Center for Administration and Technology (ECAT)	Lithuania
101	Global Mothers- Initiative of Women for the Environment and Peace	Austria
102	Greens Movement of Georgia	Georgia
103	IDS Initiative de Developpment Strategique	France
104	Independent Social Support (ISS)	Belarus
105	NVR- Commissie Duurzame Ontwikkeling	Netherlands
106	Uganda Women's Health Network	Uganda
107	Women's Issues Information Centre (WIIC)	Lithuania
108	Women and Modern World Social and Charitable Centre	Azerbaijan (applicant)

# International Steering Committee

The WECF international steering committee represents the WECF members, leads the WECF working groups and helps to develop strategies for the organization.

Name	Function	Country
<b>Irene Dankelman</b>	Chair	Netherlands
<b>Svetlana Slesarenok</b>	Co-chair	Ukraine
<b>Nadjesda Kutepova</b>	Energy WG leader	Russia
<b>Muborak Sharipova</b>	Gender WG leader	Tadjikistan/Denmark
<b>Anna Tsvetkova</b>	Water WG leader	Ukraine
<b>Michaela Vasilescu</b>	Water co-leader	Romania
<b>Isabel Ripa</b>	Agriculture WG co-leader	Spain
<b>Sabine Brückmann</b>	Agriculture WG leader	Germany
<b>Helen Lynn</b>	Health WG leader	UK
<b>Elena Manvelian</b>	Health WG co-leader	Armenia
<b>Sascha Gabizon</b>	Director WECF	Netherlands

The WECF network currently works through 5 working groups.

## WECF Working Groups

They prepare common statements and exchange information through 6 list serves:

**Health and Environment**  
health@mailman.wecf.eu

**Safe food production and Rural Development**  
agri@mailman.wecf.eu

**Safe Energy and Climate Change**  
energy@mailman.wecf.eu

**Safe Water and Sanitation**  
water@mailman.wecf.eu

**Safe Chemicals**  
safechemicals@mailman.wecf.eu

Cross-cutting:  
**Gender mainstreaming in Sustainable Development**  
gender@mailman.wecf.eu





## WECF Board and Staff

### WECF Board of Directors

**Drs. Marie Kranendonk**

*Board President*

**Drs. Willy Douma**

*Board Secretary*

*Environmental Policy Officer-Hivos*

**Bert Kuiter**

*Board Treasurer*

*Corporate Treasurer- DHV Holding*

**Ir. Gerda van Dijk**

*Board Member*

*Managing partner - De Galan Groep*

### Staff

WECF activities are coordinated from the offices in Utrecht, The Netherlands and in Munich, Germany. WECF works with volunteers, interns, paid staff and consultants.

**Sascha Gabizon**

*Executive Director*

**Ger Roebeling**

*Director Netherlands*

**Sonja Haider**

*Director Germany*

**Gero Fedtke**

*Programme Leader*

*Central Asia & Caucasus*

**Margriet Samwel**

*Coordinator Water and Sanitation*

**Sabine Bock**

*Energy Coordinator*

**Daniela Rosche**

*International Policy Coordinator*

**Sabine Brückmann**

*Agriculture Coordinator*

**Anke Stock**

*Environmental Rights Coordinator*

**Annemarie Mohr**

*Eastern Europe Officer*

**Bistra Mihaylova-Grigorova**

*Project Coordinator Bulgaria*

**Isolde Overbeek**

*Project officer Chemicals Netherlands*

**Yvette Bellens**

*Project officer Ecoefficiency Netherlands*

**Solomiya Babyak**

*Project Coordinator Ukraine/Moldova*

**Tatiana Deriviago**

*Project Coordinator Belarus*

**Jasmine Osorio**

*Project Assistant Health & Environment*

**Johanna Hausmann**

*Press Officer Germany*

**Irma Thijssen**

*Press Officer Netherlands*

**Sabine Hanisch**

*Office Manager,*

*Bookkeeper Germany*

**Hetty Minkjan**

*Office Manager Netherlands*

**Margreet Munneke**

*Bookkeeper, Netherlands*

**Hanno Langfelder**

*Webmaster, network*

**Fedde Jorritsma**

*Project Assistant Central Asia*

**Mattie Wolters**

*Publications Assistant*

**Anna Samwel**

*Project Assistant Caucasus*

**Elena Glik**

*Assistant EECCA*

**Farida Shorukova**

*Assistant Kyrgyzstan*

### External

**Stefan Deegner**

*Sanitation Specialist*

**Theo Poort**

*Financial Manager*

**Véronique Grassinger**

*Graphic Designer*

**Frauke Paré**

*Asst. Graphic Designer*

**Monica Diaz**

*World Water Forum Mexico*

**Anne Barre**

*Project Leader*

### Volunteers

**Jennifer Harvey**

*Chemicals*

**Hans van Bommel**

*ICT*

**Grevorg Chogerian, IT**

**Jacqueline van Drunen**

*administration*

**Sara Poort**

*events*

**Danca Cieskova**

*administration*

### Interns

**Sarah Woods**, policy REACH

**Melanie Bayon**

*administration*