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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Activity Report
Overview of WECF’s accomplishments in 2007
Advocacy Activities in 2007

10 Children’s Environmental Health Action Plan and EEHC for all
11 WECF members participate in the NGO preparation meeting for the Belgrade Ministerial Conference Environment for Europe
11 Children have a right to a healthy environment – right from the beginning
11 WECF general members meeting, 13–14 October 2007, Belgrade
12 Women as the Voice for the Right to a Healthy Environment
12 The task force on public participation in international forums and its work
13 Realizing our Potential Women’s and Environment organizations mobilize for sustainable consumption and production
14 International Conference on Chemical Safety
14 WECF promotes Green Chemistry
15 Ecosan in Romania
16 High Level Sanitation Policy Seminar, Sofia, Bulgaria
16 European Commission Water Activities
17 Sustainable Sanitation Alliance (SuSanA)
17 Partnerships for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Armenia
18 World Water Week Stockholm
18 1st Regional Water for Women Women for Water, WfW, Conference
19 WECF called for sustainable energy at the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) 15
20 “Don’t nuke the climate” and “Integrate Gender” – WECF advocacy issues at the UNFCCC conferences in Bonn, Germany and Bali, Indonesia
21 Civil Society Organisations create the German Climate Alliance, WECF joins its steering committee
21 Indoor Air Pollution
22 Protection of Agro-Biodiversity

Implementing Solutions in 2007

24 Implementing Solutions
24 Nesting – helping parents to create a safe and healthy environment for their newborns
25 Nesting Germany – Nesting Greece – Nesting France
26 Nesting The Netherlands – Nesting UK – Nesting Hungary
26 Start into life – seminars for multiplicators
27 Towards sustainable rural development in Overijssel
28 Organic Farming in Armenia
28 Sustainable Development Afghanistan
29 Support programme for Prislop
29 Improving the health and dignity of school children and citizens in Bulgaria, Romania and the Ukraine
30 Water Waste and Waste Water in Bulgaria
30 Developing multi-stakeholder co-operation in the areas of water, waste and energy in Belarus
31 Safe Sanitation for Schools and Households
31 Safe Water
32 Safe Sanitation Aral Sea Region
32 Safe Water Supply Aral Sea Region
33 Safe Sanitation for Schools and Households in Afghanistan
33 Safe Water Supply Afghanistan
34 Poverty reduction by Sustainable Energy
35 Preparatory meetings of the WECF ELA Programme

WECF Organisation in 2007

37 Overview of WECF publications and Press in 2007
40 Members
43 WECF Board and Staff
45 Financial Report
About WECF
Foreword

The Year 2007 has been a year of continuing growth and development for our organisation. WECF received again support for its core activities from the EU Commission, Directorate-General Environment, after an interval of one year, which enabled us to strengthen our network and activities in the EU region. Very important for sustained stability and continuity in our work was the decision by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to grant us financial support for the programme Empowerment and local Action in developing countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA Region), from 2008 to 2011.

We also received grants from private foundations for projects in Eastern Europe. Thanks to this increasing support many new projects could be started with partners in Eastern Europe. WECF worked in 2007 with 34 partners in 10 EECCA countries and with 16 partners in 12 EU countries, demonstrating sustainable solutions to environment related health problems.

This report will give you interesting examples. In many places the partners have started pilot projects that have the function to raise awareness and show the possibility of sustainable and affordable solutions. Many health problems in rural areas are related to polluted drinking water. In the WECF projects Ecological Sanitation (ecosan) has become a proven technical solution for well water pollution by pit latrines. Particularly, when it is combined with organic agriculture and good wastewater management. Pilot projects in schools reach a large target group and improve hygienic conditions and health for hundreds of children. In 2007, two ecosan school toilets were already installed in the Ukraine and Armenia. Also, one was built in a cultural club in Bulgaria. 20 households got ecosan toilets and in the project in Northern Afghanistan 100 existing pit latrines were improved with Ecological Sanitation systems.

Access to safe drinking water is key: 5,000 people received improved access to water in the projects in Afghanistan and Armenia. Furthermore, 10% of the villagers of Topoli village in Bulgaria started composting their organic waste and a water saving system was installed in the school. But to get these solutions accepted and installed on a large scale, awareness raising of policymakers, entrepreneurs and society is necessary. Therefore, WECF and its partners organised 2 high level meetings with representatives of business, ministries and NGO’s on sustainable solutions for rural sanitation. These meetings were held in Bulgaria and Romania, presenting the results of a market study on opportunities for production of affordable ecosan (urine diverting) toilet systems.

A new activity was started to promote a healthy environment for the youngest, targeting young parents. The name for this project is “Nesting.” The parents expecting their new baby want to get their home and their “babyroom” ready. That is the right moment to choose safe products and avoid risky chemicals. The new website on Nesting was published in 6 Languages.

WECF and its members were also active again with advocacy work at conferences at the UN and UN-EECA level. Issues addressed were energy solutions for the EECCA region (at the UN CSD New York), or the Action plan on Children’s Health and the Environment which was discussed in Vienna in June by the WHO and European Environment and Health Ministers. During this last conference the networks of WECF and the European Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) presented an NGO review of the progress of the action plan in a new and creative way. This attracted attention and approval from the official delegations. At this conference three WECF member organisations won an award for their projects on children’s health, improving environmental conditions.

In December, WECF and partners organised at the climate conference (UNFCCC) in Bali a side event and an exhibition. Our main theme was that nuclear energy is not a solution to climate change.

At the end of October, WECF and representatives of its network held their bi-annual network conference with 120 participants. This was following the European Ministers conference ‘Environment for Europe,’ in which WECF and its members actively participated and also organised side-events and a large stand. This network meeting is always very important to connect the members to each other and involve them in our thematic activities and working groups. Everyone worked with enthusiasm and the workshops delivered excellent plans and ideas for the coming two-year period.

A new International Advisory Board was elected by and from the members. This board plays a guiding role in matters of strategy and action. Together with this meeting, WECF organised a high level lunch event: Women as the voice for the Right to a Healthy Environment, with Achim Steiner, head of UNEP and European women in high level functions.

Managing growth has been a key point of attention in 2007 for the board and directors and this will continue. A lot of work has been done to develop the systems to support WECF as a professionally working organisation. Training for staff and project managers followed. The organisation has proved to be strong and viable enough to tackle problems of growth and keep the dynamic spirit of a pioneer while combining this with professional ways of working. A large part of the success must be attributed to the very dedicated and motivated people working for WECF and its member organisations.

Marie Kranendonk
President of WECF
Our Dreams and Drives

Why does WECF work at the international level?

"Our main strength is that we don’t just talk about issues, we solve them! We work on practical projects at the local level, and take our results and experiences to the international policy level. We encourage our partners to raise their concerns at the international policy level even though they may not speak English or have no public speaking experience. Policy makers rarely get the chance to hear from real people affected by real issues, giving a different perspective from official consultants and reports. Through our local projects, we improve the direct living conditions of tens of thousands of people. Through our international advocacy work we reach out to millions."

Why does WECF work at the local level?

"Together with our partners we work on improving the environmental and health conditions of people where it is most needed. We are providing individual solutions to local problems, often in very small villages. These solutions can only be sustainable if they are adapted to local culture. Therefore, it is logical for me to involve local people right from the start. By working for gender equality and equity, we encourage both women’s and men’s participation."

Why does WECF work in Europe?

"For us, “Europe” is the whole European region from Ireland to Tajikistan. In Western Europe we focus on advocacy and policy work. In the EECCA region we implement projects at the local level. Our neighbours – just a few hundred kilometres away – suffer from poor sanitation, energy poverty and environmental pollution. As one of the few Western NGOs working there, we support our partners and encourage the exchange of capacities and knowledge. In today’s globalized world, we cannot afford to ignore anyone."

Why does WECF support women?

"We need two eyes to see straight,” says an old Chinese proverb. Only if we take the life situation from women and men likewise into account, it is possible to capture problems well and to develop solutions. So far the perspective of women is missed too often at crucial points in politics, economy and society. To close this gap, we ask especially for this perspective. Together, men and women, we work for a healthy environment for all, locally and globally."

Why is it important to protect our children?

"Our children are the most vulnerable members of society. All of us share a responsibility to protect them from harmful pollution, which causes physical and mental damage. Children have the right to grow up in a healthy environment, – without being exposed to hazardous chemicals in their food, toys and environment – so their brains and bodies can be developed to their fullest potential.”
Visions, strategies and goals

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 Kranendonk, President WECF).

The WECF network WECF is a network of 90 women’s and environmental organisations in 37 countries of which 33 are 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. (A third office opened in France in March 2008.)

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 WECF’s work is structured around 4 thematic goals and 4 cross cutting issues, under the overall theme of a Healthy Environment for All.

Healthy Environment for All WECF’s 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 overarching 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 of economic reasons

Our Vision By 2020, WECF is the best NGO network 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.
Countries with WECF members and activities

1. Afghanistan
2. Albania
3. Armenia
4. Austria
5. Azerbaijan

6. Belarus
7. Belgium
8. Bulgaria
9. Bosnia
10. Czech Republic

11. France
12. Georgia
13. Germany
14. Greece
15. Hungary
16. Ireland
17. Italy
18. Kazakhstan

19. Macedonia
20. Latvia
21. Lithuania
22. Kyrgyzstan
23. Moldova
24. Netherland
25. Poland

26. Romania
27. Russian Federation
28. Serbia
29. Slovakia
30. Slovenia
31. Spain
32. Sweden
33. Switzerland
34. Tajikistan
35. Turkey
36. Ukraine
37. United Kingdom
38. Uzbekistan

WECF has individual members from overseas regions: Lebanon, Uganda and the USA.
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 Development Goals. WECF wants to pave the way for increased public participation in general, and women’s participation in particular, in environmental and health policy-making.

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 livelihoods. Women’s reproductive health is a matter of concern since environmental pollution and pollutants are passed on to the developing child and lead to lifelong health damage.

Women’s health is also differently affected by environmental pollutants than men, as WECF shows in its publication on links between breast cancer, now affecting 1 out of 10 women in the European region and environmental pollutants. Women often have different ideas and solutions because they are affected differently by the impacts of certain decisions.

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

For example, in WECF’s ecological school sanitation project, improving school attendance of girls by providing better sanitation conditions has shown good results.

**Why in Europe?**
There are large inequalities in Europe and EECCA countries (Eastern Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia).

There are differences in health, pollution, welfare and living conditions. Now that the barriers between the East and West have decreased, it is time for the West to take up its responsibility and assist the East with sustainable development.

**Challenges in the new EU member 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.

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The widespread uninformed use of asbestos as a building material in homes, schools and playgrounds and the large amounts of uncontrolled POPs stockpiles are further characteristics of the region, and pose a great threat to public health.

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With the entry of the new Eastern Member States into the European Union, 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 under-estimated and not sufficiently known. WECF’s work on developmental disorders of children, linked to pre-natal exposure to low doses of common hazardous chemicals found in food, toys and bodycare products, affects increasingly large parts of the population.

WECF’s publications on the “Environmental Burden of Disease” show 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 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 only three examples, are areas where Europe has a competitive edge.
Advocacy Activities in 2007
Health and Environment for All

WECF is the elected representative of the environmental organisations (European Eco-Forum) in the EEHC (European Environment and Health Committee) for the Children’s Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE). The EEHC is responsible for the Children’s Environmental Health Action Plan, coordinated by the World Health Organisation (WHO), Europe. 53 countries from the EU and EECCA region participated in developing CEHAPE, which was approved by ministers of health and ministers of environment in Budapest, 2004. In 2007, WECF attended the Inter-ministerial Review of the CEHAPE in Vienna from the 12th–15th of June. The Member States convened to take stock of progress achieved since Budapest, and to explore how best to move forward for the Rome Ministerial Conference in 2009.

Children have a right to a healthy environment – right from the beginning

WECF is the elected representative of the environmental organisations (European Eco-Forum) in the EEHC (European Environment and Health Committee) for the Children’s Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE). The EEHC is responsible for the Children’s Environmental Health Action Plan, coordinated by the World Health Organisation (WHO), Europe. The ECO Forum is coordinated by the World Health Organisation Europe. 53 countries from the EU and EECCA region participated in developing CEHAPE, which was approved by ministers of health and ministers of environment in Budapest, 2004. In 2007, WECF attended the Inter-ministerial Review of the CEHAPE in Vienna from the 12th–15th of June. The Member States convened to take stock of progress achieved since

CEHAPE Best Practice Award and RPG News with recommendations

The NGO delegation, led by ECO Forum/WECF and HEAL – the Health & Environment Alliance, gained great visibility for activities that enhance children’s environmental health within the four Regional Priority Goals – RPG (Water & Sanitation, Accidents & Physical Activity, Air Quality, and Chemicals) through the presentation of the first ever “CEHAPE Best Practice Awards.” WECF member Women for a Clean Future from Romania had been the overall winner of the best practice award in the category “Water and Sanitation.” In a lively “newscast” report back (“RPG News: Beyond Budapest”) the following recommendations before the Rome 2009 meeting were presented:

- Safe water and sanitation must be a high
  level issue, especially clean and safe school toilets
- Safe water and sanitation is not a luxury but
  a human right
- To improve air quality
  - smoking in public transport systems must be banned

- legislation must set norms for indoor air quality especially for schools; toxic substances from building products must be banned
- To protect children from hazardous chemicals all states should ratify the Stockholm convention and improve REACH. In the Eastern part of the WHO Region obsolete stockpiles of pesticides must be cleaned up
- Governments should act on the basis of the substitution principle: chemicals with irreversible effects on human bodies must be substituted. Organic production should be supported.

NGO Preparatory Conference

“Taking Stock of Progress since the Budapest 4th Ministerial Conference on Environmental and Health” and INCHES 4th Annual Conference – “Reducing the Risk for Our Children.”

The NGO Preparatory Conference coordinated by Eco-Forum via WECF, HEAL and ISDE Austria – the Austrian Doctors for the Environment, 11-12 June, aimed to bring together 30 to 50 NGOs in order to report on good practice and progress made by the non-governmental sector in reducing environmental risks to children’s health and to agree on recommendations to support governments at the IMR on implementing the Budapest Declaration. The 4th Annual INCHES Conference (International Network on Children’s Health, Environment and Safety), 10-12 June, was a platform for compelling presentations of new insights into children’s health, attended by scientists, representatives from NGOs, governments and industry alike.
70 organisations participate in the NGO preparation meeting for the Belgrade Ministerial Conference Environment for Europe

More than 75 NGOs from the entire EU and EECCA region came to Brussels where European ECO Forum organised a strategy meeting in Brussels on 1-3 of March 2007. The meeting focussed on preparations for the 6th Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” (10-12 October 2007, Belgrade, Serbia). The Conference was organised by the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) on behalf of the European ECO-Forum with the support of Eco-Accord Moscow and WECF the Netherlands.

WECF members proposed to organise a “diverse apple” event, where the NGOs ask all delegates to bring typical local apple varieties from their regions to the Belgrade conference, where they would be shown in an apple biodiversity exhibition. WECF and CEE-WEB followed-up on this idea, and organised a very visible diverse apple exhibition in Belgrade.

WECF members also proposed to show a video in Belgrade on the negative effects of infrastructure developments – either privately funded or with EU funds – on biodiversity in the EU. Croatia among others gave examples of pristine nature being destroyed for infrastructure development (video can be downloaded at www.wecf.eu).

WECF members participate in the NGO preparation meeting for the Belgrade Ministerial Conference Environment for Europe

WECF general members meeting, 13–14 October 2007 Belgrade

100 WECF members met for the 2-day general members conference called “Network Meeting,” on 13-14 October 2007 in Belgrade. At the Network Meeting the members of WECF worked in thematic working groups to prepare a 3-year strategic workplan and elected the International Advisory Board (IAB). The committee is constituted of members and advises the organisation on the main directions of its work, the thematic areas and regional issues, and approves member applications. Before the meeting 21 candidates had been proposed by WECF members, coming from different regions and with diverse backgrounds. WECF members elected the following 11 persons to the IAB:

- Svitlana Slesarenok (Ukraine; energy)
- Anna Tsvetkova (Ukraine; water & sanitation)
- Diana Iskrea (Bulgaria; sanitation)
- Sabine Brueckmann (Germany; sustainable rural development)
- Viviane Avandana (Spain; sustainable rural development & sanitation)
- Elena Manvelian (Armenia; health)
- Helen Lynn (UK; chemicals & health)
- Olga Speranskaya (Russia; chemicals & health)
- Victoria Elias (Russia; biodiversity & public participation)
- Irene Dankelman (the Netherlands; gender & environment)
- as well as Nadjeska Kutepova (Russia; energy) as an alternate Gulbachar Izentaeva

The members of the IAB present in Belgrade met that evening, made some working arrangements and elected their co-chairs. As Victoria Elias cannot be a co-chair for the moment, the IAB co-chairs for the coming period are Irene Dankelman and Svtlana Slesarenok.
Public Participation and Environmental Rights

Women as the Voice for the Right to a Healthy Environment

UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme) organised the 1st WAVE conference on October 2004 in Nairobi, bringing together women’s environmental leaders to develop a strategy to strengthen women’s perspective in environmental policy making. In October 2007, WECF together with UNEP organised the 2nd WAVE meeting at the Belgrade Environment for Europe, Ministerial Conference. The official side-event was “Women as the Voice for the Right to a Healthy Environment.”

WAVE lunch event and conference, 10–13 October 2007 Belgrade

More than 120 participated in the WAVE events in Belgrade. At the Lunch Event on October 10th, the executive director of UNEP, Achim Steiner, discussed with women’s environmental leaders on lessons learned of women’s involvement in sustainable development. Themes examined were the right to safe food and safe energy, the right to safe sanitation and water and the right to safe chemicals. At the conference, women’s leaders from the European and EECCA region presented their success stories and policy recommendations. They discussed their lessons learned with Gordana Comic, Member of the Serbian Parliament. The 120 participants worked in small groups to prepare a common declaration, the WAVE Belgrade declaration, in which key concerns and policy recommendations were presented with a focus on strengthening the right to a healthy environment.

The WAVE declaration was sent to the Ministers of Environment of the EU and the EECCA region. See http://www.wecf.eu/english/articles/2007/11/WAVE_Declaration.php.

The task force on public participation in international forums and its work

In May 2005, at the 2nd Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention in Almaty, the Parties adopted “The Almaty Guidelines on Promoting the Application of the Principles of the Aarhus Convention in International Forums.” By these Guidelines the Parties committed themselves to promote the application of the Aarhus principles in other international organisations. WECF has a role in the Task Force bringing in the perspective of the environmental NGOs of Eco-Forum. The aim of the Task Force was to conduct a consultation (June 2006 until July 2007) in order to obtain views of other international forums on the Guidelines. In addition, the goal was to learn from their experiences in the areas of access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters. The results from this process were to be used to provide Parties with further guidance in implementing their obligations under the Guidelines and to assist them in reviewing the Guidelines, if appropriate. Furthermore, a workshop on the issue was organised by the Aarhus Secretariat and held in Geneva, in June 2007. The workshop provided a good platform to meet and exchange experiences of practices in these areas.

The last meeting of the Task Force in November 2007, before the 3rd Meeting of the Parties in Riga, in June 2008, mainly dealt with the future work on the issue. All delegates agreed that there is no need to amend the Guidelines right now, since there has not been sufficient experience gained with the Guidelines in their current form. However, there was consent that the need to review the Guidelines should be reassessed before the 4th Meeting of the Parties. Delegates at the 9th Meeting of the Working Group of the Parties in Geneva, in February 2008, were in favour of keeping the body of the Task Force. A final decision will only be taken at the 3rd Meeting of the Parties in June 2008.

Conclusions

The Task Force with the help of the Secretariat has managed an enormous workload by conducting this large-scale consultation. The consultation provided a good overview of rules, procedures and practices that are used by international forums to involve the public and it showed the importance of the Almaty Guidelines. WECF calls for rules that will establish habits, change cultures that establish certainty and continuity in the application of the Aarhus principles. In practice, the attitude of international forums towards public participation by NGOs very often still depends on the civil servants who work in the secretariats and on those who work in the forums as representatives of national governments. Their background, culture and general attitude towards transparency and democracy as well as towards civil society organisations as such is pivotal for the opportunities of NGOs to meaningfully participate in the work of a specific forum or not. This is not a satisfactory situation: Public participation should be a right and not a privilege or something open to luck and chance!
Realizing our Potential
Women's and Environment organizations mobilize for sustainable consumption and production

Capacity building and raising awareness
Following the adoption of the new EU chemicals policy REACH (Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals) our activities focused on preparing publications about the new legislation and how it serves the public and environment and protects health. Our first step was preparing a final fact sheet about REACH. WECF released two publications about REACH in September and November. The first publication contains an analysis of REACH, its opportunities and its flaws. The second is a pocket size guide for shoppers on how they can use the consumer’s rights under REACH. Both publications have been circulated in the EU and internationally and can be downloaded from www.wecf.eu/publications/. In October 2007, at the 3rd Women’s Forum for Economy and Society in Deauville, France, the project leader highlighted the problem of hazardous chemicals and possible solutions. The Forum is an occasion where, similar to the World Economic Forum, women leaders from all realms of society come together to discuss a variety of issues. A successful workshop about the new international chemicals framework was given. Also, a fact sheet focussing on WECF’s four key chemicals policy principles was introduced to the network and our partner organizations.

Additional achievements
• The policy coordinator also participated in a press conference discussing sustainable development  
• Awareness and capacity building workshop “Stopping children’s chemical contamination” for new EU member states, jointly organized together with the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL), Bratislava, 16 April 2007; http://www.wecf.eu/cms/articles/2007/05/bratislava.php

Demonstrating alternative solutions
WECF is working jointly with our NGO partners on a project that is planning to release a list of substances of very high concern (as classified by REACH), which should be phased out under REACH as soon as possible. It is our intention to engage in a dialogue with decision makers and businesses about this list. This will be important in terms of setting the right political priorities and signaling to the industry the need for proactive engagement in substituting hazardous chemicals. A public document introducing the project to the public has been drafted and is available on the website. We have also put together terms of reference for the toxicologists reviewing our candidate chemicals and decided on a way in which to make this information available. WECF provides information about successful substitution of hazardous chemicals by a number of companies.

Advocacy and policy recommendations
In the second half of the 2007 granting period, our policy activities focussed on the implementation of REACH and the international chemicals policy framework, SAICM (Strategic Approach on International Chemicals Management). The NGO representative in the management board of the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) has been attending the meetings following joint preparation with the NGO Steering Committee. As a member of ECHA’s management board, we have been very concerned with the selection process of the post of Executive Director of the new European Chemicals Agency (ECHA). The implementation of REACH will be to a large extent determined by the workings of ECHA and its chief. We have written to the European Commission President Manuel Barroso, requesting an internal review of the process through which the Commission selected the current head of ECHA as the candidate for the post. In an initial response, the Commission announced it would answer our request by the end of 2007. The project leader continued her involvement with the informal planning committee of the EU -JUSSCANNZ regional group to organize the region’s 3rd meeting, in Paris in February 2008. The project leader has also jointly with IPEN given input to the policy discussions for the development of the Global Plan of Action (GPA) of SAICM. A draft proposal will be presented at the next meeting of the region in 2008.

WECF has also been asked to participate in an IPEN Planning Committee to set up a global outreach campaign pushing for the expeditious implementation of SAICM. Furthermore, we have supported the review of EU pesticides legislation. Preceding our network meeting in Belgrade in October of 2007, WECF hosted the Women as the Voice for a right to a healthy Environment (WAVE) meeting. At the meeting, women leaders present among others demanded strong chemicals policy everywhere in the world.

Gender mainstreaming
WECF is communicating chemicals policy issues to our network members and our partners in the women’s community via a listserv. Since its inception, it has received great feedback and information posted via this listserv was received with a lot of interest. This is very conducive to WECF’s work in the context of this programme. Another highlight has been the attendance of the project leader at the 3rd Women’s Forum for Economy and Society in Deauville, France in October of 2007. The project leader outlined women’s concerns about hazardous chemicals in everyday consumer products to the audience and explained the contribution that policy and industry can make to fundamentally improve women’s exposure to hazardous chemicals in consumer products.

Location International  
Donor Ministry of Environment, the Netherlands  
Contact sonja.haider@wecf.eu
Safe Chemicals

**International Conference on Chemical Safety**

WECF’s member organisation AWHHE, Armenian Women for Health and a Healthy Environment, organised an international conference on Chemical Safety in October 2007. The conference was well attended by national government representatives, international agencies based in Yerevan and national and international experts and NGO’s. This was the first meeting in Armenia that brought these representatives together to discuss chemical safety problems and its relation to human health and environment issues. The aim was to address gaps in national policies and build partnerships to finding solutions.

**Hot topic: Obsolete Pesticides Burial on a landslide**

WECF was one of the co-organizers of the conference. The president of WECF, Marie Kranendonk, had been invited to address the international experts in solving serious problems of obsolete pesticide dumps, such as the one close to the Armenian capital Yerevan. AWHHE has been drawing attention to this dangerous burial site for many years. Marie Kranendonk presented the example of a clean-up of obsolete pesticide storages in Moldova. She explained that the Moldavian Government had made the clean-up of obsolete pesticide storages a priority in their national action plan to comply with the Stockholm convention. At their request several international agencies stepped in with technical and financial aid to help Moldova with the complicated work: safe removal, packaging and transport to a French chemicals incinerator. Moldavian NGO’s, supported by a Dutch NGO and with Dutch Government funding, had participated in the clean up. Marie Kranendonk showed the serious case of the Armenian pesticide burial, which is situated in a landslide area. AWHHE had been doing research and awareness raising about this dump for several years and experts had measured that the dump of 500 tons was slowly moving down to the valley where three villages are situated. AWHHE had been filming the situation and interviewed the villagers and the situation had a lot of publicity. Although the clean up of this dump will be a complex task, there is certainly an emergency. The WECF president expressed hope that the Armenian government wants to make this burial a priority and asked the international agencies to support a plan to help Armenia solve this problem. After the conference participants went to the burial site. Photographs of the landslide cracks were taken. Interviews on TV followed and meetings with international agencies like OSCE and UNDP took place. John Vijgen, an expert who collaborates with AWHHE and WECF, presented the photos and case at a World Bank/GEF conference in Washington. AWHHE has been invited to participate in an emergency commission of the Armenian Government to study possible solutions to the burial problem.

**Location The Netherlands**

**Contact** chantal.vandenbosche@wecf.eu

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**WECF promotes Green Chemistry**

On November 8th 2007, Sascha Gabizon, Director of WECF was invited by Arthur D. Little, a consultancy firm to speak about the need for green chemistry. She addressed an auditorium full of technical students and representatives of the chemical industry, at the Technical University of Delft, in the Netherlands. The University hosted a chemical industry market, which included dialogues and seminars.

**Lisbon economic strategy**

The EU Lisbon economic strategy aims to make Europe the most competitive economy in the world. According to WECF, a healthy population is a key element for a strong economy. However, we see worrying trends in Europe. Small particle emissions from increased car use are reducing the average life expectancy by 24 to 36 months. This is an average for the more industrialized parts of Europe. Studies in the Netherlands show that children living along busy roads have a 25% increase of asthma and respiratory diseases. The WHO indicates asthma as a major cause for absence among European children. Another threat to society is chemical pollution. Cancer rates are on the rise in Europe. For example, France has seen a 16% increase of breast cancer in the past two years. As studies in Scandinavia show, the cancer rate is lowest in Finland, which for a long time showed less economic development than the other Scandinavian countries. Economic development and cancer levels seem to be linked. A reason could be the amount of hazardous chemicals emitted from consumer products. One specific chemical group, plastic softeners, also called phthalates, has shown to have life long health effects including reproductive defects. Phthalates not only dissolve plastics, but also affect tests tissue of baby boys. Unfortunately, it is almost impossible as a consumer to try and protect one’s children from phthalates, which are found in a great number of consumer products, like toys, body-care products and shampoos.

**REACH**

Strong lobbying from the chemical industry has unfortunately weakened the new framework regulation for chemicals, which has been enacted in the European Union, called “REACH” (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation of Chemicals.) Key elements such as toxicity testing, low-tonnage, or neuro-toxic chemicals have been omitted, but it remains a milestone legislation in view of trying to protect public health in the EU. WECF gave examples of how the Chemical lobbyists presented its cases and made clear that some chemical substances, like brominated flame retardants and phthalates, which the industry assured could never be substituted, were found to have a great number of safe alternatives as a recent US research project claimed. WECF called for the industry to make green chemistry the norm. Green chemistry should not be tokenism, but a relevant part of the market. Down stream chemical producers should insist that the industry substitutes hazardous substances as soon as safe alternatives have been developed, which is already the case, for example, for phthalates, where castor-based oils can substitute this hormone disrupting chemical.
**Background and Goal**

On 29 March 2007, WECF organised a high level international workshop on eco sanitation in Turnu Magurele, in the southern part of Teleorman County, Romania. The seventy participants included experts in ecological sanitation and local authorities from Germany, Sweden, Finland and the Netherlands, along with representatives of the Teleorman County authorities, both regional and local, NGOs, Romanian ceramics and plastics industry representatives and construction companies. The aim of the workshop was to share the experiences of experts from different countries working on the issue of safe and environmentally friendly sanitation, to raise awareness and to discuss possible ways to implementing eco sanitation in Romania.

Rural areas of Romania face severe pollution of water resources, and school sanitation is a particular problem. WECF is working with its Romanian partners to introduce ecological sanitation (dry urine-diverting toilets) in rural areas, which represent a sustainable, efficient and locally appropriate solution.

The workshop included presentations of successful ongoing projects where dry urine-diverting toilets have been built in the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden and India. There was also a chance for participants to visit the pilot schools where the toilets will be built. A similar workshop was organised in Sofia, since Bulgaria faces many of the same challenges in providing safe water and sanitation to its rural inhabitants (see page 16).

**Participants and speakers**

Presentations were given by WECF experts and representatives of the Province of Overijssel, the Netherlands, GTZ, Germany, the Environmental Microbiology Institute for Infectious Disease Control, Sweden, TUHH (University of Technology Hamburg-Harburg) Germany, STOWA, the Netherlands, Coram Sealskin, the Netherlands, the Romanian Ministry for Environment and Water Management and a World Bank Rural Development project.

**Ecosan in Romania**

**Developing local production of decentralized ecological wastewater and sanitation equipment for Romania and Bulgaria**

**Location** Romania, Turnu Magurele city, country of Teleorman

**Donor** Aqua for All via Women for Water Partnership, the Netherlands

**Contact** Olivia.radu@wecf.eu

**Highlights of the market survey**

The following key recommendations were made for effectively implementing WECF’s projects on decentralised wastewater treatment and sanitation:

- Cost comparisons must be carried out (centralised, septic tanks or eco-san)
- The fact that Eco san is used in Western Europe should be promoted
- Ecosan should be promoted as a climate change mitigator, especially in drought-prone areas, since no flush is required
- The technical, financial and health benefits for the rural areas should be emphasised
- Developing local production of dry urine-diverting toilets
- Developing demonstrations on the reuse of nutrients from ecosan (waste as fertiliser)
- WHO guidelines must be promoted, recognised and used in order to safely re-use human excreta in agriculture

**Market opportunities for decentralised sustainable sanitation**

In February 2007, a joint Romanian and Bulgarian feasibility study was carried out by Peter van Luttervelt, representative of Coram Sealskin Sanitation Producer, the Netherlands, to find out if both countries have the potential for introducing eco sanitation in rural areas.

The results of the study concluded that there is a lack of supporting legislation for the implementation of eco-san toilets in Romania. On the one hand there is a clear need for raising awareness of the benefits of ecologically sustainable systems, with decision-makers, and on the other, there is a need for improved legislation which would harness the support of the authorities and lead to more widespread and easier dissemination of the eco-san technologies.

Local production is also a priority for WECF: the study included a survey of the Romanian market which explored the possibilities of locally producing this type of toilet. Subsequently, WECF set up a co-operation with the local ceramics company Bianca in Romania in order to produce dry urine-diverting toilets.

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Safe Water and Sanitation

High Level Sanitation Policy Seminar, Sofia, Bulgaria

The NGO Earth Forever Foundation, member of WECF in Bulgaria, has been working with WECF on demonstrating safe and affordable sanitation for schools and households in rural areas of Bulgaria. 42% of the Bulgarian population, mostly living in rural areas, do not have access to safe sanitation. Earth Forever built modern dry toilets for the public bus stop in the tourist village “Stara Zagora Spa,” a village without a functioning sewage system, and another one for the cultural club of “Sulitsa” village.

Together with an expert from a Dutch toilet and bathroom producer, Earth Forever carried out a market study of the sanitation market, identifying opportunities for decentralized ecological sanitation systems such as soil and plant based waste-water filters and urine diverting dry toilets.

The results of the demonstration projects and the market study were presented at a High Level Policy seminar in Sofia, in May 2008. Representatives of the Bulgarian Ministries of Agriculture, Environment and Public Works participated in the seminar, as well as representatives of Bulgarian and Dutch businesses, scientists and local authorities. In total, 50 participants took part in the 2 day seminar which included presentations by international experts. Professor Thor Axel Stenstroem of the Swedish Environment Institute and WHO advisor, presented the work of the World Health Organisation on setting guidelines for safe management of excreta and waste water. Lack of safe treatment of excreta is a main cause of infant morbidity and mortality, even within the EU. For example, Bulgaria regularly has outbreaks of hepatitis-A, which are linked to unsafe waste-water and excreta management. Recent studies estimate that some 20 to 30 million people in the European Union do not have access to safe sanitation.

Earth Forever presented the results of their low cost sanitation projects such as soil filters to clean wastewater from kitchen and bathroom, combined with dry urine diverting toilets, where faeces are sanitized and urine is collected in separate containers for later use as fertilizer. Urine is a quick-acting fertiliser, containing valuable nutrients, such as phosphorous (P), a non-renewable resource. Research in Sweden shows that compared to mineral fertiliser, urine is the superior option. The cadmium levels in urine are up to ten times lower than in mineral fertilisers.

Earth Forever has been testing urine use as fertilizer on demonstration plots and achieved good results. The participants of the seminar identified that current financial programmes for rural development do not yet include a component on improving rural sanitation, and recommended that the Ministry of Agriculture – responsible for the EU cohesion funds for rural development – makes this a priority. The participants also discussed the need for transposing the WHO guidelines on safe management of excreta and wastewater into Bulgarian legislation.

The results of the high level seminar have been published by Earth Forever in their publication “Sustainable Sanitation,” available from Earth Forever and WECF.

WECF was asked to contribute to the “Mediterranean Wastewater Reuse Working Group” established by EC and EUWI. Chaired by the EC, several EU member states, in particular the drier southern regions with neighbouring countries from the Mediterranean, exchanged experiences on the re-use of wastewater and legislative measures to stimulate safe re-use of wastewater. With the goal to push the launch of a new “Directive on the Safe Use of Treated Wastewater,” the “Mediterranean Wastewater Reuse Report” was developed and presented to the EU Water Directors in December 2007. WECF water re-use expert Claudia Wendland contributed with a presentation on WECF’s experience with re-use of wastewater and excreta in its rural sanitation demonstration projects in the new member states. See http://www.wecf.eu/english/projects/ela/index.php.
WECF joined the Sustainable Sanitation Alliance, a network of organisations worldwide, with a common goal of making sanitation projects sustainable.

The network includes development agencies like GTZ (German Development Agency) and the World Bank. It also includes the WASH programme, Ecosanres, the Swedish Environment Institute, research bodies like EAWAG Switzerland, associations of ecological engineers and NGOs like WECF and its members.

The Sustainable Sanitation Alliance has developed a common definition of what “sustainable sanitation” means. See http://www.wecf.eu/english/articles/2008/01/year_of_sanitation.php

On May 11, 2007, WECF took part in the meeting where UNSGAB announced the international year of sanitation, chaired by Prince Willem Alexander of the Netherlands. At a reception in the UNICEF premises SuSanA was presented to the water and sanitation organisations that were in attendance. A lively debate took place, where some organisations, not members of SuSanA, questioned if what they were doing should be considered “unsustainable sanitation.”

WECF gave examples from its work in villages, of unsustainable sanitation projects in the EU and in the EECCA region, where in many rural areas drinking water sources are polluted with human faecal bacteria from pit-latrines, which the Joint Monitoring Programme of the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) classifies as “improved” sanitation.

WECF believes that a sustainable sanitation system should include treatment to assure that excreta do not pollute water and food sources. This can be a very simple and safe treatment such as composting.

The conference took place on the 27th of October 2007, in Yerevan, Armenia. It was organised by the Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment (AWHHE), WECF’s local partner in Armenia. Many stakeholders from different institutions and authorities responsible for the improvement of the sanitation situation in Armenia and the region attended. There were official representatives from the RA National Assembly, the Ministries of Health, Nature Protection, Agriculture, UN agencies, local self-governmental authorities and NGOs that participated in the conference. A number of international and local experts participated as keynote speakers.

The conference aimed at achieving the provision for the rural population with clean, safe drinking water and safe sanitation. The conference was organized to present the Sustainable Sanitation Alliance (SuSanA) Partnership for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Armenia.
Safe Water and Sanitation

The leading annual global meeting place for capacity building, partnership building and follow-ups on the implementation of international processes and programmes in water and development.

"Progress and Prospects on Water: Striving for Sustainability in a Changing World" was the main theme in 2007. Nearly 2,500 participants represented more than 130 countries from the business and government sectors, water management and science groups, inter-governmental organisations and NGOs, training institutes, and the United Nations agencies.

Participation of WECF members in the EU Water Initiative (EUWI)

WECF invited members from Moldova, Ukraine and Armenia participated in the meeting of the European Water Initiative (EUWI) at the Stockholm Water Week. The WWW Stockholm allows WECF and its members to meet with key decision makers in the area of water and sanitation, and to present lessons learned, in the areas of capacity building, technical solutions and policy recommendation, from WECF and its members’ projects.

1st Regional Conference of the Women for Water partnership

WECF is one of the founders of the Women for Water partnership (WfW). WfW registered as a partnership at WSSD “World Summit on Sustainable Development,” and has 20 non-governmental women’s organisations as partners, working on water and sanitation issues. From the 4th–6th of November 2007, the first regional working conference on water and sanitation took place in Kyiv, Ukraine organized by the WECF member organisation “All Ukrainian Environmental NGO MAMA-86.” The WfW Working Conference aimed to contribute and to create effective partnerships between civil society, businesses and authorities, in order to increase access to safe and affordable water and sanitation in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia.

Seminars and study visits

The goals of the WfW regional working conference was to share experiences and lessons learned from water supply and sanitation programmes and projects in the EECCA region. Another goal was to formulate opportunities for up-scaling the best practices, based on in-depth analysis of case presentations. Ukrainian Ministers, State Committee for Water Management of Ukraine, international NGOs and experts and guests from Armenia, Belarus, Bulgaria, Germany, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, the Netherlands, Romania, Ukraine, Uzbekistan NGOs attended and contributed their knowledge and experiences at the event.

The conference started with a one-day excursion to the villages Bobryk and Vertijvka, Nizhyn rayon Chernigivska oblast, where pilot projects on sustainable water and sanitation for a school, kindergarten and household - implemented by MAMA-86 and WECF – were visited.

In the following plenary session a representative from the World Health Organisation (WHO) presented the issues “Protocol on Water and Health” and “Water Safety Plans.” Local partners presented cases of WECF projects on water and sanitation from Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, Armenia and Uzbekistan.

Conference participants watched a film produced by MAMA-86 about School Sanitation in Gozhuly, Ukraine, showing the problems of sanitation in schools and the solution implemented in the pilot projects.

During the two-day event workshops were organised to discuss and develop future projects on water and sanitation and to identify interested parties for future cooperation.

The Conference report and presentations are available on http://mama-86.org.ua/news/13112007_e.html.
Safe Energy and Climate Change

CSD preparations
In January 2007, in Brussels, WECF participated in the joint preparation for the NGO CSD statement at the NGO workshop “Lobby CSD 15 to change the world on Energy, climate and consumption.” The dialogue with the EU presidency on climate, energy, industry and atmosphere issues in March in Brussels and the preparation meetings of the NGO- and the Women Major Group in April in New York, were on the agenda as well.

CSD 15 in New York, USA – participation in the first week, 30 April – 4 May
WECF participated with nine delegates in the 15th session of the UN Commission for Sustainable Development, bringing into the policy debate the perspective of women from the pan-European region. WECF raised awareness about energy poverty and indoor air pollution during an interview in the NGO newspaper ‘Outreach.’ The launch of the Armenian movie “The cost of poverty” and specific policy recommendations were presented. WECF called for the participation of the public, especially women, in decision-making on energy sources and management. In addition, WECF drew attention to the fatal nuclear accidents of Mayak in Russia and Chernobyl, Ukraine, with the exhibition “Mayak and Chernobyl – lessons are not learned,” an article in Outreach and interventions at pro nuclear side events.

The WECF Position Paper, “bio fuels – a sustainable choice is possible?” stated the necessity of real sustainability criteria. WECF as part of the Women Major Group and the NGO was involved in the final statements of the conference.

The highlight for WECF was the side event on the topic “From Best Practice to Policy.” WECF delegates from transition countries presented the local situation, addressed the problems, showed best practice examples and concluded with policy recommendations on the issues of indoor air pollution, health effects from nuclear industry, energy efficiency and renewables. The side event was organised as a dialogue with EU representatives from Italy and the Netherlands and focused on the importance in the joint efforts between the local and global levels in order to move towards a sustainable development.

WECF called for sustainable energy at the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) 15

Location Brussels/ Belgium, New York/ USA
Donor EU DG Environment Life
Contact sabine.bock@wecf.eu

WECF attended the United Nations Framework of Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC) 27th Sessions of the Subsidiary Bodies from the 7th-18th of May 2007 in Bonn, Germany, and focused on the UNFCCC in Bali from the 3rd–14th of December 2007. WECF and a delegation of 6 women environmental leaders voiced their strong opposition to nuclear energy being promoted as a solution to climate change.

WECF members work in regions near Chernobyl, Ukraine, Mayak, Russia, and near uranium mines in Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia which have suffered severe nuclear damage.

The WECF delegates addressed the immense negative health effects of nuclear energy from every point of production and highlighted the experience of the more than 94 of its member organisations, which show the long term negative health effects on local populations living near nuclear production plants or near uranium mines. In addition, they addressed the struggle of the victims to obtain any support when they have lost family members or have become too ill to work. WECF also advocated for the inclusion of gender in the process.

The activities

WECF and its partner, the Munich Environmental Institute, Germany, followed the negotiations closely and immediately raised their concerns. When Japan complained that nuclear energy was not included in the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), WECF placed an article in the NGO conference newspaper, ECO, called, "Keep nuclear energy out." The position paper, "Women from all regions of the world strongly oppose including nuclear energy into clean development mechanism," published by WECF together with Gender CC – women for climate justice, pointed out the total inability of nuclear energy to tackle the challenges of climate change. The paper addressed the health, environmental and human rights threats that the nuclear industry imposes. The paper highlighted the negative effects of nuclear energy, like radiation on women. The sensitivity to radiation for women is twice as high as it is for men with regards to the relative risk. Especially at high risk is the unborn child. Women are also more affected by the burden of the negative health impacts, as they usually are the caretakers of the family. At its exhibition booth, WECF and its partners provided expert information on the nuclear issue and shared knowledge and experience. One part of the exhibition focused on the communities near the Mayak nuclear plant in Russia and the severe health effects caused by radiation contamination during an accident that took place 50 years ago. WECF organized a side event, “Regional experience and information on nuclear energy – scientists, witnesses, and activists speak out.” The jointly organized press action "Don’t nuke the climate," proposed by WISE, World Information Service on Energy, together with anti-nuclear activists from all over the world positioned in front of the conference centre at the final countdown of the conference reached the delegates and the general public worldwide with a front page photo of the demonstration on the UNFCCC website.

Coverage on the BBC, television and radio stations and in different newspapers publicised the issues. During the side events of nuclear energy promoters, WECF intervened and distributed information about the dangers of having nuclear energy in an area like Indonesia, which is prone to natural disasters. The goal of WECF to build the capacity and knowledge of women and give people access to safe energy seems to be even more important. Luckily the resistance against the proposed nuclear plans in Indonesia is huge and WECF linked up with the Indonesian anti-nuclear activists.

Gender and climate change

WECF also advocated for integrating gender into the climate change regime. As part of Gender CC – Women for Climate Justice, WECF participated in the joint statements, interventions, side events and press activities on the future climate regime protecting tropical forests and gender justice, agro fuels, nuclear energy and financing and gave input to the trade union major group on gender aspects concerning climate change.
Climate protection now!  
Civil Society Organisations create the German Climate Alliance, WECF joins its steering committee

In April 2007, the German Climate Alliance was founded. Climate protection activists in Germany felt the need for a new broad civil movement to demand specific measurements for the protection of the environment from all sectors of society. Too often short-term interests block the implementations, but time is running out.

Over 90 organizations from a wide spectrum; environmental organizations, development and women’s organizations, churches, trade unions, animal protection agencies, anti-globalization groups and others have joined hands for the protection of our climate. Shortly before its launch in April ’07, WECF Germany became a member of the alliance and as of June has been active in its steering committee. The steering committee, which is made up of 10 elected people, is responsible for implementing the decisions made in the general assembly of the alliance.

On December 8, 2007, the Climate Coalition held a campaign called Global Action Day. There were two main demonstrations parallel to the UNFCCC conference in Bali, Indonesia. 10,000 activists from around Germany participated in the Global Action Day.

In the German capital city of Berlin the activists addressed their concerns and called for crucial decisions for real climate protection measures. Simultaneously, in an area outside Cologne called Neurath, which previously housed Europe’s largest brown coal power plant, activists demanded for more climate protection. The demonstrations were accompanied by music, performances and speeches. In addition to these two major rallies, interested groups in 14 cities in Germany called for more climate protection measures.

For more information, in German, see http://die-klima-allianz.de/index.php.

Location Armenia  
Donor Netherlands Ministry of Development Cooperation  
Contact sascha.gabizon@wecf.eu

Indoor Air Pollution

WECF provided support for its member from Armenia, AWHHE, to study the situation of indoor air pollution and its health effects. They produced a video called “The Cost of Poverty, Indoor Air Pollution and Energy Poverty in Armenia” available from the WECF library. The 10-minute video shows how a rural school depends on kerosene burners in class rooms for heating, emitting dangerous particles, and how poor families, like a widow and her 2 children, have no money to pay for safe heating fuels. Instead they use risky waste materials to burn in their home ovens, putting a layer of black soot over everything and everybody. In addition, the video presents solutions of renewable energy sources.

Presentation of the Armenian Indoor Air Pollution video at the UN CSD and at the Inter Ministerial Review.

WECF organised 3 showings of the “The Cost of Poverty” video. The first showing was during the WECF official side event at the UN Commission for Sustainable Development 15th session, on May 2007, in New York. The 2nd showing was at the International Conference on Environment and Children’s Health organised by ISDE, on June 11th, 2007, in Vienna. The 3rd showing was during the plenary of the IRM where all the country delegations were present, on June 13th, in Vienna.
“Make biodiversity visible and tasteable”

WECF sees biodiversity as a basis to all life on our planet and calls for a common right of biodiversity. Biodiversity as a whole includes diversity of genes within a species, genetic variability among the populations and the individuals of the same species and diversity at a higher level of organization, the ecosystem. Biodiversity provides the foundations for our health and well-being. It provides the essential natural capital for our social and economic development, now and in the future. Agricultural biodiversity in particular is vital to the food security of billions of people worldwide. However, agro-biodiversity is endangered by economic standards and legislation.

With a colourful, palatable and creative exhibition about traditional orchards and old apple sorts, WECF supports the regional Landcare Association in Germany and fosters the richness and value of our still existing Agro-Biodiversity. WECF and the Landcare Association developed a mobile exhibition. This exhibition raised awareness about the negative effects on biodiversity and on landscape from the loss of fruit orchards, the so-called “strewing fruit meadows,” as these traditional orchards are being destroyed at an alarming rate in many European regions.

The biodiversity value of traditional fruit orchards is more than double that of modern orchards. The exhibition raises consumer awareness, that modern low-growing apple tree varieties require much (chemical) plant protection, and that the ancient native varieties of trees are often better adapted to the local environment in terms of cold and disease resistance, taste better, provide nutrition and excellent value. The exhibit raised interest with individual owners of strewing fruit orchards, for protecting their traditional orchards and providing new perspectives to the rural regions by involving the local communities in creating and maintaining markets for traditional apple sorts. In October 2007, during the 6th Ministerial Conference of the “Environment for Europe” process in Belgrade, the exhibition was shown to the participants and was one of the highlights of the event.

Meanwhile a second version of the exhibition, about the special situation of old fruit orchards in Poland was produced. In addition, an introductory booklet offers more information about the partners and topic.

Location: Germany, Munich
Donor: Ministry of Environment, the Netherlands
Contact: sabine.brueckmann@wecf.eu
Implementing Solutions in 2007
Implementing Solutions

One of WECF’s 4 strategies is to demonstrate sustainable alternatives. When addressing specific environmental health problems, WECF’s projects include demonstration components, which show how pollution and exposure can be reduced, whilst improving health and well-being. WECF implements demonstration activities in its four thematic areas, safe chemicals, safe water and sanitation, safe energy and safe food production and sustainable rural development. This chapter will highlight a few examples, particularly in the area of improving water supply and sanitation, with WECF’s innovative ecological toilet projects.

WECF also works on regional marketing of safe and fair food products, on reducing exposure to hazardous chemicals on affordable safe energy solutions.

Implementing WECF training: “how to make your own toxic-free body care products.” Visiting the solar hot water heater during the Caucasus WECF network meeting in preparation of the ELA project.

Location Germany, UK, the Netherlands, Greece, Hungary, France
Donor EU DG Environment Life+
Contact sonja.haider@wecf.eu

Nesting – helping parents to create a safe and healthy environment for their newborns

Expectant parents need to prepare a healthy and safe environment for their newborn. This is what is known as the ‘nesting’ instinct. While purchasing new products for the baby’s room parents become aware through research for safer alternatives.

An environment free of hazardous chemicals, tobacco smoke and mould and a space with safe furniture becomes a priority. It is in such times of transition that parents are more critical of their behavioural patterns. They are more likely to change to environmental friendly, healthier and safer products in order to protect the health of their newborn. The project called Nesting provides positive health effects for the children and increases the awareness of the parents regarding specific information as well as suggesting alternative solutions.

Interactive website
An interactive website has been created to educate and mobilize new parents to change to sustainable and safe consumption patterns by providing information on indoor environmental hazards for newborns as well as environmental safe solutions. See www.projectnesting.org.

The website includes:
- Layout of a baby’s room and info on sources of environmental and safety hazards and alternative solutions
- Tips for healthy behaviour, environmental products, labels, and information links
- Information on product types: renovation, furniture, textiles, care products, all-day products for children aged 0 – 1 year

The contents have been created by using current information from authorities, recent scientific research and have been revised by a group of experts.

Six countries
Partners in six countries have been contributing to the success of the nesting concept. In 2007, they translated the website into English, Greek, Hungarian, Dutch, French and German. Due to different mentality and local baby-cultures, website content is culturally sensitive and differs. E.g. carpets in children’s room in cooler countries versus tiles and rugs in warmer ones. Knowledge about healthy living conditions (especially for babies) of all participants has increased significantly. Due to the very different backgrounds of the participants the future of developing the concept further will have diverse goals – from training midwives to mass media coverage; from internet-forums to working with focus groups.

Location Germany, UK, the Netherlands, Greece, Hungary, France
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Partners in six countries have been contributing to the success of the nesting concept. In 2007, they translated the website into English, Greek, Hungarian, Dutch, French and German. Due to different mentality and local baby-cultures, website content is culturally sensitive and differs. E.g. carpets in children’s room in cooler countries versus tiles and rugs in warmer ones. Knowledge about healthy living conditions (especially for babies) of all participants has increased significantly. Due to the very different backgrounds of the participants the future of developing the concept further will have diverse goals – from training midwives to mass media coverage; from internet-forums to working with focus groups.

Location Germany, UK, the Netherlands, Greece, Hungary, France
Donor EU DG Environment Life+
Contact sonja.haider@wecf.eu

Interactive website
An interactive website has been created to educate and mobilize new parents to change to sustainable and safe consumption patterns by providing information on indoor environmental hazards for newborns as well as environmental safe solutions. See www.projectnesting.org.

The website includes:
- Layout of a baby’s room and info on sources of environmental and safety hazards and alternative solutions
- Tips for healthy behaviour, environmental products, labels, and information links
- Information on product types: renovation, furniture, textiles, care products, all-day products for children aged 0 – 1 year

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Safe Chemicals

The website has been one tool to inform parents and multiplicators about healthy living conditions. The website has been promoted and links from other relevant sites have been placed. Very positive feedback came from authorities. The environment ministry will publish an article in their magazine and the Bavarian health and environment ministry has informed their stakeholders. Further activities – see “start of life.”

The environmental and health awareness in Greece remains low and there is still a lack of information. Therefore, the aim of the Nesting Project to help parents in Greece to create a safe and healthy environment for their newborns meets exactly the need of expertise on this subject.

Our partner ‘Clean up Greece’ has influential contacts to policy makers and is active in the media. Since the Greek population is not yet as familiar with web information as in other European Countries more conventional media platforms were used. The result; 13 articles and adverts in newspapers, magazines and websites. Mailing and faxes have been sent to the target groups.

Our WECF France colleague, Nita Chaudhuri, is a specialist on the issue of a healthy environment. She published a book for parents in Canada and worked with focus groups. She organized a forum for mothers with newborns to discuss the content and the design of the website. To highlight the nesting website launch she met environmentalists in France and distributed the news in their newsletters.

The timing of the launch was key in publishing a postcard, where Saint Nicolas presents the safe baby room tips for parents. It was handed out at the opening of Amsterdam’s annual women’s festival. The website was covered by one TV channel, some magazines and was featured in many internet platforms like www.goedewaar.nl - the Dutch sustainable consumer organisation or organisations of midwives.

Nesting Germany - www.nestbau.info
Location Germany
Donor EU DG Environment Life+
Contact Sonja Haider, info@nestbau.info

Nesting Greece
Location Greece
Donor EU DG Environment Life+
Contact Carla Baer Manolopoulou, desk@cleanupgreece.org.gr

Location France
Donor EU DG Environment Life+
Contact Nita Chaudhuri, info@projetnesting.fr

Nesting Netherlands – www.eenveilignest.nl
Location Netherlands
Donor EU DG Environment Life+
Contact Chantal van Denbossche, info@eenveilignest.nl
The press release for the Nesting site was circulated to all contacts in the UK, including national newspapers, parenting and environmental lifestyle magazines, and organisations working on the issues related to children and the environment, and other environment groups and women’s organisations.

The leaflets were distributed at two major conferences, and the Baby Show in London. The website received a link from one of the largest women’s organisations in the UK, the Women’s Institute.

The Hungarian website is working and is linked to the newly reconstructed website of the NOE Association. Due to technical reasons and difficulties of domain registration the Hungarian site was launched later as planned. This fact did not cause relevant problems. The articles to be published are ready but it is difficult to find papers and magazines where we can publish them because the prices are too high. It seems that relevant websites are better partners. NGOs working in the field of consumer protection were satisfied with the launching of the site and with the content. List of further useful topics is under edition. This will help the further work. A discussion must take place about the suitable promotional methods at places with poor or no internet access.

The German environment agency Umweltbundesamt is publishing a brochure on questions about environmental health during pregnancy and the first months of the newborn’s life. Parts of the content are congruent with the nesting information. The aim of the project was to inform multiplicators – as midwives, doctors, trainers of prenatal courses – about current scientific background and concrete tips for their patients. A series of events have been developed with partners in Berlin and Bonn (Silvia Pleschka and Martina Abel, BAG Mehr Sicherheit für Kinder e.V.). The agenda included a theory part of presentations and an interactive part, where the participants tried to visualise the incorporation of the new information into their daily work. Local personalities could function as patrons and the associations acknowledged the seminar as training for their constituencies. The participants were satisfied with the gained information and the organisation. Nevertheless, it was quite difficult to attract many participants. Therefore, there are plans to offer the workshop to existing conferences of the multiplicators. Contacts to midwives will be used in the future.
Towards sustainable rural development in Overijssel

In 2007, WECF together with a local group of rural women carried out a pilot project on sustainable rural development in the province of Overijssel, the Netherlands. The Unser Land Network based in and around Munich, Germany was a source of inspiration.

Unser Land; a source of inspiration

The Unser Land Network started over 10 years ago to give civil society a choice to shape their living environment by establishing sustainable production and consumption patterns on a regional base. The main partners collaborating in this network are farmers, local craftsmen, entrepreneurs and traders, churches, environmental as well as consumer groups. Politicians, local governments and administrations, authorities and educational institutions all support this system. Women play an important role in the development of the network, wherein they are the driving force for sustainable development.

Unser Land intends for a stable and affordable supply of food produced in the region and has launched an urban-rural network to strengthen the promotion, distribution and marketing for the region’s sustainable rural development. The environmental impact of Unser Land is remarkable with reduced transport emissions, conservation of bio-diversity and traditional varieties, conservation of nature and landscape, touristic and recreational development and reduction of the use of chemicals in agricultural production. Nowadays more than 40 products are produced in a sustainable way by 180 farmers and sold with the Unser Land label in the region’s bakeries, butcheries, supermarkets and restaurants.

Oons Ambacht; implementation in Overijssel

During the first months of the pilot project, interest was built among farmers and other stakeholders for the Unser Land initiative and what this concept could mean for Overijssel.

An inventory taken showed that many small-scale initiatives had been started in Overijssel to stimulate regional rural production and that these provided a good basis for further activities. In March, the initiative was presented at a conference under the name, ‘Oons Ambacht,’ and a website was launched. Discussions and interviews were conducted with farmers. In September, a group of representatives from different stakeholders visited the Unser Land Network in Munich. The group returned with many ideas and was inspired to develop further activities in Overijssel; first on the local level then on a provincial level.

WECF and Oons Ambacht encouraged the participation of women in these processes by organising trainings on sustainable regional production. WECF facilitated the fundraising for follow-up activities that will be guided by an initial operating group in Overijssel. The aim will be to develop sustainable agricultural product chains and to cultivate a solidarity network like Unser Land wherein consumers, producers and other stakeholders share a common goal, towards a sustainable rural development in Overijssel.

Unser Land, a non profit network, distributes over 200 regionally produced, fair priced, sustainably grown products, under the label of Unser Land.

Visitors from the Netherlands visiting one of the farmers participating in Unser Land.
**Organic Farming in Armenia**

As a part of a 3-year project “Tapping Resources. Making use of the strength of women for sustainable development” (2005-2007), the Armenian organization, Armenian Women for Health and a Healthy Environment, AWHHE, continued implementing demonstration projects of Organic Farming in three villages. AWHHE is promoting phytotherapy as a part of integrated pest management (IPM), using plant liquids to protect fruit trees from pests. In Fantan village, organic agricultural methods are demonstrated on a field. AWHHE is supporting farmers to apply for certification of organic agriculture, which was introduced in Armenia in 2006. All these activities take place in close collaboration with local farmers.

**Demonstration projects**

An organic peach and apricot orchard with 200 trees on 3300 m2 was founded in Hayanist. The soil was tested and proven to abide by the Armenian Organic Certification standards. The certification process for this orchard was thus started.

**Phytotherapy**

4 fruit orchards were treated with plant preparations in Fantan, Saghmosavan and Dzoraghbyur for a total of 20 times. The trees were treated with plant liquids made from wormwood (Artemisia absinthium) and milfoil (Achillea millefolium). During each treatment, AWHHE organized field days for the neighbouring farmers. During this time farmers could learn how to prepare the plant liquids and received preparation packages to try the method themselves. Approximately 100 farmers participated in all field days. The demonstration field in Fantan was in its second year of a 6-year crop rotation plan. As of last year, it produced a good harvest for Fantan conditions: 1.7 t/ha of winter wheat and 2.2 t/ha of onobrychis. Both harvests were above average.

**Training and Marketing**

Four trainings for farmers and other interested villagers were organized on sustainable agriculture and IPM promotion. The total number of participants trained was 63. During the trainings AWHHE presented the experience in replacing ordinary pesticides with herbal pesticides as a part of IPM. In addition, all other important aspects of sustainable agriculture such as crop rotation, composting, and bio humus production and application were presented. AWHHE helped the cooperating farmers present their produce in the first and only organic market in Armenia “Amur korz.” Phytotherapy was also presented and packets with dry plants for preparations sold in the market. The autumn fair was a very nice event and gave opportunities to organic producers to sell their products.

**Sustainable Development Afghanistan**

As a part of a 3-year project “Tapping Resources. Making use of the strength of women for sustainable development” (2005-2007), the Afghan-German Organizations Katashill Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Organization (KRRO) and Katachel e.V. have invested in activities supporting a sustainable economic development for rural areas in Northern Afghanistan. Since the victory of the Anti-Taliban Alliance and despite the reported economic growth of Afghanistan, rural areas continue to remain very poor. Some of the reasons are a lack of job opportunities and infrastructure. KRRO and Katachel e.V. started a fish-farming project late in 2006. With agricultural activities being still on a very low level after decades of warfare and civil strife, the food supply in the region is poor and one-sided particularly during the winter months. This leads to many cases of child malnutrition. Fish breeding offers an improved food supply and at the same time generates income opportunities. The project encompasses the construction of a fish farm consisting of three ponds and a building for upbringing of larvae, processing, and storage. Villagers constructed the ponds with voluntary work. They are fed with water from the Gaukush river, close to Katachel village. The building was financed by the TMF-programme of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. When in full operation, the ponds will produce ca. 10 tons of fish annually, having a market value of ca. 20,000 euros. Five different types of fish are farmed which are all native to North Afghanistan. The first fish was harvested late in 2007. The fish farm is also used for professional training. Apprentices were chosen according to their skills, reliability and their accessibility to the necessary land plots to operate their own fish farms in the future. Realization of produce like this fish or any other products villagers generate requires a road infrastructure so that markets can be reached. KRRO and Katachel e.V. contributed to improving infrastructure in Kunduz province by building 7 small bridges and one middle-sized bridge, which are needed to pass the manifold canals and streams. All bridges are made from Ferro concrete and can support the weight of loaded vehicles. The bridges not only make it easier to reach markets, but also provide better access for children to their schools, as well as for the villagers to get medical care and other services offered in Kunduz city or other villages.

**Location** Armenia

**Donor** Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Contact** gero.fedtke@wecf.eu

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**Location** Afghanistan. Provinces Kunduz, Takhar

**Donor** Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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Improving the health and dignity of school children and citizens in Bulgaria, Romania and Ukraine

Only 15% of the Romanian rural population have access to a central water supply, 3% of the rural households are connected to a sewage system and only 5% of the schools have proper sanitary facilities. The project Safe Sanitation, Health and Dignity, started on October 1, 2007, is implemented in 16 rural Romanian communities of the county Mehedinti, Teleorman and Ilimnata. The objective of this 3-year sanitation programme is to improve the health and dignity of the school children and citizens through improved sustainable sanitation and hygiene. The project is carried out in cooperation with local project partners, experts and universities.

Objectives of the 3-year project
The programme builds on the 1-year project “Sustainable Development for All” funded by Fondation Ensemble (FE) in 2006. Results of this project are being scaled up with support of NGO, local and regional authorities, universities and international partners. The overall SSHD project 2007-2010 will be carried out in two other countries, Ukraine and Bulgaria and some “new” areas of Romania. In the Romanian project counties some demonstration household urine-diverting toilets will be built. Each toilet building includes: 1 urine-diverting toilet, 1 urinal, 1 washbasin, urine tank, faeces storage chamber, and light.

In two counties school/public urine diverting toilet facilities will be constructed for children and staff. Demonstration gardens for testing the use of sanitized urine as fertilizer and faeces compost as soil conditioner will be established. Soil filters for treating kitchen grey water of households and schools will be demonstrated. Much attention will be paid to training of coaches for construction, operation and maintenance of the urine diverting toilets and the safe reuse of the toilet products. Water Safety Plans (WSP) for small-scale water supplies will be developed on the local level in cooperation with schools. Case studies and cost analysis of the completed installations will provide policy recommendations and will be presented at the local, national and international level. The project will have long-term positive effects: reduction of drinking water pollution, improved sanitation and health of the villagers.

Preparation of the implementation of the project
In Autumn 2007, the preparatory works on implementation of the project were carried out. The final project villages and schools were selected and practical, organisational and financial structures were developed. Educational materials for schools on the implementation of the WSP were developed.
Water Waste and Sanitation in Bulgaria

Water

The water supply system covers 98.8% of the country and the drinking water quality is relatively good. There are specific regions with problems, but they are of local character. Rural areas in Bulgaria cover 81% of the total country territory and 42% of the population live in the 231 rural municipalities. A larger part of the pipe network was built from 1960 – 1980. Some regions experience water shortages. WECF works together with its local partner Earth Forever Foundation in Stara Zagora region in the villages Stara Zagora Spa and Sulitsa in the project “Developing a model for sustainable water and waste management in rural areas in Bulgaria.”

According to the investigations in the region, the water quality is good, with an exceptional higher nitrate concentration (50mg/l) of the drinking water coming from one source in Sulitsa. There is no sufficient available data for the quality of groundwater and the sources of pollution.

Waste

Only 41% of the population in Bulgaria has access to wastewater treatment facilities. There is an underdevelopment of the sewage system in the rural areas, particularly in the villages; only 2.1% of the villagers have a sewage system, most of them without wastewater treatment. The villages which do not have sewer systems use pit latrines and soakaways. The people usually do not have the means to empty the facilities properly and on time, which causes problems for the neighbours. Particularly in the summer, the soakaways overflow into the streets or in the neighbour’s garden. In some villages (Stara Zagora Spa) there are partly constructed sewage systems that discharge their wastewaters without any treatment into the gullies, rivers and parks. Though the small sewage systems and the pit latrines are a serious problem for the environment and health, there is no other solution for the rural communities. According to the new EU regulations, Bulgaria has to comply with the requirements of Council Directive 91/271/EEC on urban wastewater treatment – by December 31, 2010 for all agglomeration with a population above PE 10,000 and by December 31, 2014, for agglomerations with PE between 2,000 and 10,000.

WECF, together with Earth Forever Foundation, works in Bulgaria in two villages with a population of less than 2,000 inhabitants: Sulitsa and Stara Zagora Spa in Southern Eastern Bulgaria. In these villages demonstration projects have been completed. Two public Ecosan systems were built – in the cultural club of village Sulitsa and a public toilet in the centre of Stara Zagora Spa. The ecological sanitation systems separate the flows and prevent the infiltration of the black waters into the ground. In several households in the villages constructed urine-diverting toilets with filters for treatment of the grey water have been completed. The Ecosan systems serve as an example for the local population and authorities of what a good solution it provides for the problems of waste management and sanitary conditions faced by the rural communities. In addition, these systems can be used as a good base for replication for other regions in the country.

Developing multi-stakeholder co-operation in the areas of water, waste and energy in Belarus

Together with its partner Ecoproject Partnership WECF started a 3-year project in December 2006, called “Developing multi-stakeholder co-operation in the areas of water, waste and energy in Belarus.” The project’s overall aim is to raise awareness of sustainable development, mainly in the areas of water, waste and energy, amongst NGOs, local authorities, citizens and businesses in their communities in Belarus.

The main activities carried out in 2007 were the base-line studies carried out by Ecoproject and two trainings. 17 local NGOs took part in conducting the base-line study. The outcome of these studies provided the project team with a very good overview of the most pressing problems and the needs of the communities. It clearly showed an increasing concern about rising energy prices and the problems faced by the lack of proper waste separation systems and polluted water wells.

Furthermore, on the 26th and 27th of October 2007, a training session on water and sanitation was conducted. 25 participants were trained on water treatment and Ecosan toilets in Zhdanovichy/Belarus. Two international experts (Margriet Samwel and Stefan Deegener) and one local expert (Alexander Gnedov) gave presentations on the issue with examples from German and Belarusian experiences and held different workshops. 8 samples of water were tested on nitrate concentration.

On the 7th and 8th of December 2007, a training on solid waste was held in Minsk. The 37 participants (representatives from NGOs, schools and local authorities) were trained on waste management, composting, recycling and hazardous waste. One international expert from the Netherlands (Sophie van den Berg) and one local expert (Alexander Gnedov) gave presentations on the issues and held different workshops. In addition, other people with experiences on waste, e.g. through projects or their own waste separation company, informed the participants about their work. Furthermore, Sophie van den Berg showed the participants how to make their own paper from used paper. The working groups allowed the participants to start identifying which proposed technologies and processes could be a solution to the problems of the different communities. By this exercise and a training session on energy, which takes place in 2008, potential demonstration projects will be developed.
New Dry Urine Diverting Toilet next to what the
owner now calls his “sanitation museum.”

Safe Sanitation for Schools and Households

As part of the 3-year project “Tapping Resources. Making use of the strength of women for sustainable development” (2005-2007), the Armenian organization Armenian Women for Health and a Healthy Environment (AWHHE), continued implementing demonstration projects of Ecological Sanitation in three villages. Three Dry Urine-Diverting Toilets were constructed: one in a school in Fantan village, and two in private households in Hayanist and Dzoraghbyur villages. Two more household toilets are under construction.

The school toilet was built outside directly connected to the existing school building. Pupils no longer have to go out to use the toilet, which is especially important in the long cold winter months in this mountain village. The dry urine-diverting toilets serve as examples of how to improve the sanitary and hygienic conditions, in particular for the children in a sustainable manner; how to protect soil and groundwater against infiltration of human excreta. Now the pupils and school staff use comfortable, warm, clean and odour-free toilets. A caretaker looks after the toilet, cleans and maintains it every day, thus guaranteeing its hygiene. All 175 schoolchildren were trained on how to use the toilet properly.

AWHHE periodically monitors the use of the ecosan toilet in Fantan. The water from the hand washbasins are biologically treated in a sand filter. A second school toilet has been in operation since 2006. The facilities function well and there is no smell. Pupils and Teachers are very satisfied. This year the 10th grade children taught the 1st grade children how to use the toilet. The urine collected from this school toilet has been sanitized and applied to a field. The fertilizing effect will become visible with this year’s crop. With the school toilets as examples, 4 families decided to be the pioneers in introducing dry urine-diverting toilets for households in Armenia, replacing the common pit latrines. The costs for all toilets were shared between the owners and the project funds. All toilet owners are farmers who will use the urine and sanitized faeces as fertilizers on their own fields.

Looking back on the three-year joint activities of AWHHE and WECF, it can be said that the basis for application of ecological sanitation principles in Armenia has been laid.

Location Armenia
Donor Netherlands Ministry of Development Cooperation and Aqua for All, the Netherlands
Contact gero.fedtke@wecf.eu

Safe Water

As part of the 3-year project “Tapping Resources. Making use of the strength of women for sustainable development” (2005-2007), the Armenian organization Armenian Women for Health and a Healthy Environment (AWHHE), continued to work for the improvement of the drinking water supply in two project villages.

In the mountain village Fantan, the drinking water provided to taps on the streets was biologically polluted, which lead to regular outbreaks of waterborne diseases. In the early 2000’s, the village received a new pipe system but it was not covered all costs for putting the system to use while the “Tapping resources” project. Even with the households connected, the system could not provide enough water to meet the demand of the villagers. This was mainly due to illegal water consumption in a neighboring village situated “up-pipe” from Hayanist. With water meters being introduced only step by step, such illegal water use is not exceptional. Both cases revealed that many realities of rural life in Armenia are not covered by official reports, which is also true for other countries of the former Soviet Union.

It is only at the time of writing this report, that water in both villages is running, servicing 900 people in Hayanist and 1,200 people in Fantan.

Water meter in Fantan village.

Finally water is running inside a village house in Fantan.
Safe Sanitation Aral Sea Region

As part of a 3-year project “Tapping Resources. Making use of the strength of women for sustainable development” (2005-2007), WECF and its partner organisation in the Aral Sea region reached a breakthrough in implementing Ecological Sanitation. To demonstrate the principles and benefits of ecological sanitation in one village, the WECF partner built three Dry Urine-Diverting household toilets in 2006. The partner had also conducted an intensive information and awareness raising campaign on hygiene and sanitation in this and another village. In 2007, the campaign included conducting 16 trainings in the two villages. These activities centre on the village schools, whose teachers and parents play a very active role. For both schools, Dry Urine-Diverting toilets were constructed in 2007 and are successfully used. It has improved the sanitation situation considerably in both schools. Because the old pit latrines were in a very bad state many teachers and pupils would not use them, which caused them to be distracted from teaching and learning. The new facilities solved all these problems. The year 2007 saw the completion of 18 additional Dry Urine-Diverting toilets in the two villages for private homes. The average ecological sanitation coverage is 13,5%. The toilet construction expenses were shared; construction materials for the foundation and the chambers for collection of the faeces were financed from project funds, materials for the superstructure were from the house owners. The homeowners, often with the help of their neighbors, executed all construction works. Urine is widely used among local people as a fertilizer. Demonstration fields by villagers in both villages have shown the positive effects for plant growth and harvest, so that more and more of the village population become aware of its benefits. The interest towards ecosan in both villages is enormous. Many households who wanted to construct toilets with project support had to wait for the next year. Thanks to the practical benefits of ecological sanitation, local people became much more aware about their health, sanitation and hygiene, and the link between the three.

Safe Water Supply Aral Sea Region

As a part of a 3-year project “Tapping Resources. Making use of the strength of women for sustainable development” (2005-2007), WECF and the partner organisation in the Aral Sea region continued to research sustainable approaches to improve the drinking water supply for rural areas. The water supply situation is extremely critical in rural areas of the Aral Sea region. Extensive irrigation has severely changed the water regime of the area, leading not only to the desiccation of the Aral Sea, but also to increased salt levels in the groundwater used for drinking. The most common source of drinking water is hand pumps. However, the water they provide is much too salty for human consumption. Central water supply systems providing drinking water piped over long distances are one solution to the problem. Three years ago the WECF partner started working in one project village. Only few households were connected to a central water supply system, which had been constructed in the late 1980-ies. The water supply company lacks funds for proper maintenance of the system, therefore providing irregular supply. Three years ago the population was very sceptical about the quality of the piped water, although WECF tests proved its compliance to drinking water standards. Intensive awareness raising over three years has led to a new situation: a survey in 2007 revealed that currently 90% of the villagers are willing to pay for the water. In addition, they contribute work hours and money for getting connected. On this basis, a project has been developed which ensures the sustainability of the system. The installation however, still requires a large proportion of funds from donors. For remote villages, connection to a central water supply is too costly an option. WECF and the partner organisation have researched and tested small-scale decentralised desalination options, which have to be at a low-cost so that the local population can afford them. The “watercone,” a simple device using solar energy to produce distilled water proved to be a potential solution. It found a high degree of acceptance among the test families. But it works insufficiently in the long, very cold winter – a time of the year no solution has been found for yet.
As part of a 3-year project “Tapping Resources. Making use of the strength of women for sustainable development” (2005-2007), the Afghan-German Organizations Katakhill Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Organization (KRRO), and Katachel e.V. continued to improve the drinking water supply in rural areas in Northern Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, only 27% of the rural population are using an improved source for their daily drinking water. KRRO has built 90 wells in 11 villages: Dukane Admkhan, Ger guzer, Lar khabe, Naseri, Ambar tepa, Mer zowq, Omer khel, Shaher, Ludin, Kata khel, Qalai rafiqan. KRRO chose villages in regions of Kunduz province where the situation is considered unsafe and for this reason have not benefited much from international aid. KRRO can help because it is very well rooted in and respected by local society. Altogether, these wells provide drinking water to 2,243 people. All wells were built inside the yards. This is important to enable women to use the wells freely, which is not the case with wells located on streets or at public places. Wells located in public places remain difficult for women to access when they are alone. All wells are reinforced with ring-beams made of concrete and equipped with 2 buckets. They all have a lid, which protects the water in the well from pollution. The usual source of drinking water for the beneficiary families were canals, open streams or unprotected public wells. The new wells improve their situation considerably. The official inauguration of the new water supply was overshadowed by a dramatic incident: just three hours before, a suicide attack had taken place on the bazaar of the city, which cost the lives of 5 Afghan civilians and 3 German soldiers. In light of this event, the participants of the inauguration event reiterated how important these wells are as a contribution to building a better and peaceful future for the country, and expressed their gratitude to the Dutch people and government.
Safe Energy and Climate Change

Poverty reduction by Sustainable Energy

Sustainable energy can be the way out of poverty as it builds up on the local, decentralized potential and uses the resources.

Fight energy poverty in Armenia

In 2007, WECF and its Armenian partner, Armenian Women for Health and a Healthy Environment, AWHHE followed up on the detrimental situation of the lack of energy in Armenia. Together, they raised awareness, analyzed and assessed the situation of private houses and schools in three poor villages, focused on the schools in the refugee village Hayanist and the mountain village Fantan. Conceptual work for a new ecological school building and renovations were completed.

Sustainable energy trainings in the EECCA region

Building on these experiences and preparing for the three year project “Empowerment and Local Action (ELA)” in 10 countries through Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, WECF organized so called “Start-Up” meetings in all three regions with the regional partners. The goal was to exchange experiences, to analyze the current situation in the region and to come up with objectives and concrete project plans. The partners got an insight into the current goals and activities of WECF and were trained on application writing. Excursions were part of the programme. At the end of each meeting, the WECF staff got a clearer picture of the situation in the countries and the partners were equipped with the necessary knowledge and tools to write their application in terms of content and methods for 2008.

Start-Up-Meeting for Eastern Europe in Moldova, 29 May – 3 June 2007

In Moldova 35 partners that participated from Ukraine, Moldova and Transnistrien stated that the high cost of energy is a problem because it is no longer subsidised. Furthermore, because of insufficient energy saving and energy efficiency measurements of buildings in Odessa, Ukraine the high demand of energy cannot be satisfied. Another problem is deforestation caused by the high demand of firewood. The options of energy saving and efficiency measurements and renewable energy are unknown. Awareness raising, capacity building and demonstration projects are important steps for this region to learn about solutions. A good example is the “Green Building Project” of MAMA86, the Ukraine partner in Odessa. In just one year they had a 30% drop in electricity bills, a reduction rate of 70% for heating bills and an 80% reduction rate of the hot water bills by using energy efficiency measurements.

Start-Up-Meeting for Caucasus in Georgia, 19 – 22 June 2007

Our Georgian and Armenian partners identified that the root cause for their energy problems was the lack of knowledge about the possibilities of energy saving, efficiency and renewable energy–similar to the Eastern Europe training. Awareness raising, capacity building and trainings are the crucial steps to take and demonstration examples have to be implemented. There is already a huge potential of experience and knowledge of the partner NGOs to build on.

“Start-Up-Meeting for Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan, 16 – 20 July 2007

Partners from Uzbekistan (Karalkalpakstan), Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan participated and addressed the issue of the regular energy shortages and stated renewable energy as a solution. The training was complemented with the workshop “how to construct a solar batch (solar collector for hand washing),” given by the Kyrgyz WECF member BIOM. Best practice examples could be experienced during the whole meeting, as the facilities itself provided a solar shower, a solar cooker and several other solar installations (solar batch heater and others). Low cost solar installations are key for the region in providing access to sustainable, reliable and safe energy.

Location Armenia, Moldova, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan

Donor EU DG Environment Life+, Netherlands Ministry of Development Cooperation

Contact sabine.bock@wecf.eu

Participants of the “Training of Trainers in conducting & facilitating multi-stakeholder meetings” from Ukraine, Moldova & Transnistria.

The aim of the programme is to demonstrate the core elements of an integrated approach to sustainable rural development, which leads to the reduction of poverty in rural areas and increases gender equity. Local partners will implement such demonstration projects in the thematic areas of drinking water supply (e.g. setting up community managed water supply systems), sanitation (e.g. dry urine-diverting toilets), agriculture (e.g. integrated pest management, composting) and energy (energy saving and renewable energies). The capacity of rural communities as well as of partner organisations to understand, apply, and promote such approaches will be improved, empowering them to act on a local level toward a sustainable future for themselves. Partners and WECF will lobby politicians on the regional, national, and international level to include the integrated approach in their policies.

Potential partners of the ELA programme took part in three 5-day meetings: in May 2007, in Chisinau, Moldova, in June 2007, in Mtskheta, Georgia, and in July 2007, at lake Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan. They were informed about the aims of the programme and were trained on problem analysis and goal oriented project planning. WECF presented its experiences and approaches in the four thematic areas, as well as in capacity building and political work. Partner organisations presented their achievements and approaches. All participants split into working groups according to the four thematic issues and developed sample problem analysis and projects. All meetings witnessed an intensive exchange of knowledge, experiences and opinions.

After the meetings, partners developed their own projects to be realized within the ELA programme. WECF received 34 proposals. After a careful selection process, 27 partners started to work together with WECF for empowerment and local action.
WECF Organisation in 2007
De teddybeer krijg je van Sinterklaas, tips voor gezonde – en veilige babyproducten van ons Vrouwen – en milieubiorganisatie WECF lanceert vandaag de internationale Nesting website in zes talen om internationale baby’s een gezonde toekomst te kunnen geven. [www.eenveilignest.nl](http://www.eenveilignest.nl) geeft informatie over een veilige en gezonde leefomgeving voor jouw pasgeboren baby. **December 2007**

Straling van kerncentrales zorgt voor meer gevallen van kinderkanker.
Duits onderzoek bevestigt: straling van kerncentrales zorgt voor meer gevallen van kinderkanker. WECF en het Duitse Umwelt Institut spreken zich op Bali uit tegen kernenergie als oplossing voor klimaatverandering. “De schadelijke gevolgen voor de gezondheid van kinderen bevestigt de juiste beslissing van de duistere overheids om geluidelijk het opwekken van kernenergie aft e bouwen.”

Aldus Karin Wurtz-bacher van het Milieu Instituut in München en WECF-partner tijdens de klimaat-top in Bali. **December 2007**

**Media Coverage in Dutch**

Richt je babykamer veilig in. Dutch TV broadcaster Link "Richt je babykamer veilig in" item on website Dutch TV broadcaster Link about Nesting website. **December 2007**

Jullie zaaien voor mijn toekomst. Nieuwe Oogst Magazine “Jullie zaaien voor mijn toekomst” “Planting the seeds for our future,” WECF work featured in Nieuwe Oogst Magazine, agricultural magazine. **October 2007**

**Media Coverage International**

REACH. Daniela Roscha and daughter Clara a topic on BBC World covering the work of WECF concerning REACH. **June 2007**

Don’t Nuke the Planet! WECF organizes anti-nuclear protests at Climate Conference in Bali (text in English and German). Reuters and BBC filmed WECF members participating in the event. **September 2007**

WECF launches shoppers guide for toxic-free products. Pocket size guide informs about consumer’s rights under REACH.
An interview with Sascha Gabilon, Executive Director WECF; about the new consumer’s guide was broadcasted on thursday the 6th of December on carrefour Europe on Deutsche Welle. **November 2007**

**Press Releases in English**

Fifty years after Mayak. Mayak 1957 – Tchernobyl 1986 – We haven’t learned much from the past. **September 2007**

WAVE Belgrade. Women speak out for the Right to a Healthy Environment, WECF takes leadership in the upcoming UNECE Environment for Europe Conference in Belgrade. **October 2007**

WAVE Belgrade. Women Environmental Ministers join UNEP Executive Director and Grassroots Women Leaders in Support of a Women’s Agenda for the Right to a Healthy Environment. **October 2007**

Companies and retailers: get REACH ready, women say. New publication for women launched to promote consumer’s rights under REACH. Women in Europe for a Common Future, WECF, has today launched a new publication, informing women, the largest group of shoppers about their consumer’s rights in the new EU chemicals policy, REACH. “We are very excited to make this information available to women anywhere in the EU. We have worked hard to make sure REACH provides us with the tools to find out about hazardous chemicals in every day consumer products!” says Daniela Rosche, WECF chemicals expert and author of the guide. **November 2007**

Nuclear power plants increases number of children with cancer. German research confirms: radiation of nuclear power plants increases number of children with cancer (text in Dutch).
WECF and German Environmental Institute speak out in Bali against nuclear energy as a solution for climate change. **December 2007**

Nesting. What your baby wants – a healthy start from the very beginning! [Www.projectnesting.org](http://Www.projectnesting.org) helps European parents-to-be create a healthy surrounding for their child. Translated in six languages. **December 2007**

Brochure Een gezonde baby... belangrijke informatie voor jonge vrouwen en mannen met kinderwens over milieuvriendelijke, chemische stoffen, zwangerschap en borstvoeding. Published by WECF in cooperation with Platform Gezondheid & Milieu en Ecobaby. **December 2007**

Saint Nicolas Postcard. De teddybeer krijg je van Sinterklaas, tips voor gezonde – en veilige babyproducten van ons Vrouwen – en milieubiorganisatie WECF lanceert vandaag de internationale Nesting website in zes talen om internationale baby’s een gezonde toekomst te kunnen geven. [www.eenveilignest.nl](http://www.eenveilignest.nl) geeft informatie over een veilige en gezonde leefomgeving voor jouw pasgeboren baby. **December 2007**
Publications in English
Opportunities for wastewater treatment in rural areas in Eastern Europe. Developing a model for water and waste management in rural areas in Bulgaria. February 2007


WECF discussion paper on "A Healthy Population at the Heart of the EU Economic Strategy". Accompanying information for the WECF Eco-Efficiency High level Round Table in Brussels. March 2007

WECF briefing on the Environmental Burden of Disease. Accompanying information for the WECF Eco-Efficiency High level Round Table in Brussels. Russian translation 2007

WECF factsheet on Eco-Efficiency. Accompanying information for the WECF Eco-Efficiency High level Round Table in Brussels. March 2007

WECF factsheet on the EU Sustainable Development Strategy. Accompanying information for the WECF Eco-Efficiency High level Round Table in Brussels. March 2007

Film about WECF project in Prislop/Romania. Welcome to the European Community / Willkommen in der europäischen Union. July 2007

The Cost of Poverty (Armenia). WECF Partner Video on Energy Poverty and Indoor Air Pollution in Armenia, as seen by the Ministers of Health and Environment of the WHO Europe Region. August 2007

Urine Diverting Toilets in Climates with Cold Winters. Technical considerations and the reuse of nutrients with a focus on legal and hygienic aspects. August 2007

Sustainable Rural Development in Ukraine. Demonstrating solutions for water supply, sanitation and agriculture. October 2007

Women Speak Out for the Right to a Healthy Environment. WECF takes leadership in the upcoming UNECE "Environment for Europe" Conference in Belgrade, Serbia. October 2007


Companies and retailers: get REACH ready, women say. New publication for women launched to promote consumer’s rights under REACH. November 2007

Shoppers guide for toxic-free products. Pocket size guide informs about consumers’ rights under REACH. December 2007

WECF at Bali UN Climate Change Conference. Posters of Majak exhibition show that nuclear energy is not a solution to climate change. December 2007

Nuclear is not a solution, it is too great a risk. WECF and Umweltinstitut München (Germany) publish flyers in which it states not to consider nuclear power an instrument to answer the challenge of climate change. December 2007

The Right to a Healthy Environment: How to use international legal mechanism for the protection of our environment and our health – a manual. December 2007

Press Releases in German

Children have a Right to a healthy environment – right from the Beginning! WHO Midterm Review on Children’s Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE) in Vienna. In Europe each day 35 children die of diseases caused by dirty water. Fotopressrelease. June 2007


Die WHO sollte einen internationalen Wettbewerb um die beste Umwelt- und Gesundheitspolitik für unsere Kinder ausrufen. To Außenansichten Süddeutsche Zeitung. June 2007


Wo werdende Eltern im Produktdschungel Hilfe bekommen können. In Berlin/Bonn diskutieren Hebammen, GynäkologInnen und ExpertInnen über Möglichkeiten Kinder besser vor Unfällen und Schadstoffen im Lebensumfeld zu schützen. October 2007 Berlin/November Bonn

UNEP Direktor Steiner für „Blau Mützen“ für Umwelt und Gesundheitsschutz und Genderfragen UmweltministerInnen, UNEP Direktor und Frauenorganisationen fordern Europäische Umweltministerkonferenz in Belgrad auf, das Recht auf eine saubere Umwelt zu verankern. October 2007


Don’t nuke the climate! – Verstrahlt das Klima nicht! Umweltorganisationen sprechen sich auf der Klimakonferenz in Bali für ein Ende der Atomkraft aus. December 2007, Bali/Indonesien

Press invitations Germany

WHO Konferenz Umwelt und Gesundheit von Kindern, Wien.

WAVE Belgrad. Frauenorganisationen für ein Recht auf eine gesunde Umwelt
Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF) übernimmt den Vorsitz bei der UNECE Konferenz “Umwelt für Europa” im Rahmen der Europäischen Umweltministerkonferenz in Belgrad Presseseinladung, October 5

Media coverage in German
Articles in Media about WECF
Prislop/Rumänien:
Händewaschen – das müssen die Menschen hier erst lernen Tina. January 2007

TV Broadcast of WECF Project in Romania
ARTE. September 19

Fortschritt oder Mogelpackung?
teleopolis. Februar 8


Unsere Kinder haben ein Recht auf eine gesunde Umwelt, ÖKOBOTIKUM. March 2007

Wien war eine Reise wert, ÖKOBOTIKUM, March 2007

Other Publications
Frauenansichten 2008 – Ein Lesekalender zu Umwelt und Gesundheit Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz und Reaktorsicherheit Interview Sonja Haider WENIGER IST OFT MEHR!

Kalender 2008 Firma Steinzeug Keramo
Fünf mal täglich ohne Fliegen – Wasserlose Trenntoiletten für Kirgisistan, Zentralasien

Das NGO Handbuch, greenpeace magazin, 2007


Internet Links
Nestbau: http://www.babynews.de/content/view/739/532/ December

Letters in German

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 (c.50% of the votes at any meeting)
- Environment & Sustainable Development committees or working groups within larger organizations

Associate members (no voting rights)

Honorary members

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
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<td>VHUE e.V. – Verein zur Hilfe umweltbedingt Erkrankter</td>
<td>Germany</td>
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<td>Clean up Greece</td>
<td>Greece</td>
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<td>Irish Doctors Environmental Association (IDEA)</td>
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<td>Mehriban</td>
<td>Karakalpakstan, Uzbekistan</td>
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<td>GREENWOMEN Ecological News Agency</td>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
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<td>NGO “Jabagly – Manas”</td>
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<td>CSPC, Center for Sustainable production and consumption</td>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
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<td>CAAW, Central Asian Alliance for Water</td>
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<td>UILGU, public association</td>
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<td>UNISON</td>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>SO SPS (Mutual Aid Association)</td>
<td>Latvia</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>Journalists for children and women rights and protection of environment in Macedonia</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>Ecotox</td>
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<td>Women in Sustainable Development of Moldava (WISDOM)</td>
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<td>36</td>
<td>Ecospectrum</td>
<td>Moldova</td>
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<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Eco-Tiras</td>
<td>Moldova</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Ecobaby, Stichting</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Leefmilieu (Human Environment)</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Meldpunten Netwerk Gezondheid en Milieu</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Nederlandse Bond van Plattelands-vrouwen</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>VeM, Centrum Vrouw en Milieu</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
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<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>ZiActief</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
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<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Network of East-West women Polska</td>
<td>Poland</td>
</tr>
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<td>45</td>
<td>Social Ecological Institut</td>
<td>Poland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Femei Pentru un Viitor Curat, FVC</td>
<td>Romania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Geo San</td>
<td>Romania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Medium &amp; Sanitas Slobozia</td>
<td>Romania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Aigul – Chelyabinsk Region Charity Fund for Helping Nuclear Victims</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Chelyabinsk City public movement of women Fatinha’</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Nabant Muslymovno</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Planet of Hopes</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Step Forward Snezynsk</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Ural’s Women Network – Argayash</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Ural’s Women Network – Kashli</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
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<td>56</td>
<td>Environmental Youth Club</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>Environmental Ambassadors</td>
<td>Serbia</td>
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<td>58</td>
<td>Ozone</td>
<td>Serbia</td>
</tr>
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<td>59</td>
<td>Global Action Plan</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Youth Ecological Center</td>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
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<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>Bugday</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
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<td>62</td>
<td>PAN / Pesticide Action Network Europe</td>
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**Full Members (full voting right)**

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<td>Ecobaby, Stichting</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Leefmilieu (Human Environment)</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>Meldpunten Netwerk Gezondheid en Milieu</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
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<td>41</td>
<td>Nederlandse Bond van Plattelands-vrouwen</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
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<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>VeM, Centrum Vrouw en Milieu</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
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<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>ZiActief</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Network of East-West women Polska</td>
<td>Poland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Social Ecological Institut</td>
<td>Poland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Femei Pentru un Viitor Curat, FVC</td>
<td>Romania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Geo San</td>
<td>Romania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Medium &amp; Sanitas Slobozia</td>
<td>Romania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Aigul – Chelyabinsk Region Charity Fund for Helping Nuclear Victims</td>
<td>Russia</td>
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<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Chelyabinsk City public movement of women Fatinha’</td>
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<td>51</td>
<td>Nabant Muslymovno</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Planet of Hopes</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Step Forward Snezynsk</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Ural’s Women Network – Argayash</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Ural’s Women Network – Kashli</td>
<td>Russia</td>
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<td>56</td>
<td>Environmental Youth Club</td>
<td>Russia</td>
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<td>57</td>
<td>Environmental Ambassadors</td>
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<td>58</td>
<td>Ozone</td>
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<td>59</td>
<td>Global Action Plan</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
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<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Youth Ecological Center</td>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
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<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>Bugday</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>PAN / Pesticide Action Network Europe</td>
<td>UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Women’s Environmental Network – WEN</td>
<td>UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>Black Sea Women’ Club</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Mama-86 Artemivsk</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>Mama-86 Kharkiv</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>Mama-86 Kiev</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>Mama-86 Poltava</td>
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</tr>
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<td>69</td>
<td>Mama-86 Sevastopol</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Mama-86 Yaremche</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
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<td>71</td>
<td>Ukrainian Scientific Hygienic Society – USHS</td>
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<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>Youth Ecological Society “Gaia”</td>
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<td>73</td>
<td>Vozrozhdenie</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
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<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>Women for Environment</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
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<td>75</td>
<td>SABR Trust Center</td>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76</td>
<td>Women for Sustainable development in the NGO</td>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Associate Members (no voting rights)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>77</td>
<td>Global Mothers – Initiative of Women for the Environment and Peace</td>
<td>Austria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>Clean World Social Union for Civil Rights</td>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>ECOS NGO; Environmental Sustainability</td>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>TETA-KHAZRI</td>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>ISS Independent Social Support</td>
<td>Belarus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>IDS Initiatives de Développement Stratégique</td>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>Greens Movement of Georgia</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>ECAT Environmental Center for Administration and Technology</td>
<td>Lithuania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>Women’s Issues Information Centre, WiIC</td>
<td>Lithuania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86</td>
<td>Eco-sense/ Eko-svest</td>
<td>Macedonia</td>
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<td>87</td>
<td>NVR-Commissie Duurzame Ontwikkeling</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
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<td>88</td>
<td>Eco Accord</td>
<td>Russia</td>
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<td>89</td>
<td>Uganda Women’s Health Network</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
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<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>Ecology and Peace, Feodosia Regional Organisation</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
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<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>Mama-86 Feodosia, Feodosia Town Organisation</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
</tr>
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<td>92</td>
<td>Concord</td>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
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</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93</td>
<td>Inga Zaratyan</td>
<td>Armenia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94</td>
<td>Karine Danielyan</td>
<td>Armenia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td>Catherine Wattiez</td>
<td>Belgium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96</td>
<td>Muborak Sharipova</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>Elisabeth Ruffingo</td>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98</td>
<td>Nita Chaudhuri</td>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td>Dr. Minnu Hemmati</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Sabine Bruckmann</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>Silvia Pleschka</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>Caterina Choreftaki</td>
<td>Greece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103</td>
<td>Svetlana Bashkovskaya</td>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104</td>
<td>Inese Eister</td>
<td>Latvia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>Dr. Nazik Pacha Bezian</td>
<td>Lebanon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td>Adriana Debora Huismann</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>Irene Dankelmann</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108</td>
<td>Johanna Wihelmina Kleute</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>109</td>
<td>Kitty Bentvelsen</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
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<tr>
<td>110</td>
<td>Pamela Lawson</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111</td>
<td>Rosemarie b.j. Oude Luttikhs – Merz</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>Thérese van Gijn–Bruggink</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113</td>
<td>Willy Douma</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
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<tr>
<td>114</td>
<td>Olga Senova</td>
<td>Russia</td>
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<tr>
<td>115</td>
<td>Patimat Gadhieva</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>Victoria Elias</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>117</td>
<td>Ivana Blagojevic</td>
<td>Serbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118</td>
<td>Katarina Korytarova</td>
<td>Slovakia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119</td>
<td>Maja Bvdaz Solice</td>
<td>Slovenia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>Isabel Ripa</td>
<td>Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121</td>
<td>Viviana Avendano</td>
<td>Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122</td>
<td>Anne-Sofie Andersson</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>123</td>
<td>Mildred Thulin</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>124</td>
<td>Karin Sondergard</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125</td>
<td>Mine Yapor</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>126</td>
<td>Clare Flenley</td>
<td>UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>127</td>
<td>Helen Lynn</td>
<td>UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>128</td>
<td>Sonia McLay</td>
<td>UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>129</td>
<td>Galushkiva Tajiiana</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>130</td>
<td>Victoria Yuressuce</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>131</td>
<td>Claire Greensfelder</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>132</td>
<td>Mark Hengen</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>133</td>
<td>Karimova Nodira</td>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WECF Working Groups

The WECF network currently works through 5 working groups. WECF working groups prepare common statements and exchange information through 6 email mailing lists.

Safe Chemicals
safechemicals@mailman.wecf.eu

Safe Food Production and Rural Development
agri@mailman.wecf.eu

Health and Environment
health@mailman.wecf.eu

Safe Water and Sanitation
water@mailman.wecf.eu

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

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

International Advisory Board

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irene Dankelman</td>
<td>Chair / Gender &amp; environment</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Svetlana Slesarenok</td>
<td>Co-chair</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sascha Gabizon</td>
<td>Executive Director WECF</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nadjesda Kutepova</td>
<td>Energy – alternate</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diana Iskueva</td>
<td>Sanitation</td>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna Tsvetkova</td>
<td>Water &amp; Sanitation</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Elias</td>
<td>Biodiversity &amp; Public Participation</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viviane Avandana</td>
<td>Sustainable Rural Development &amp; Sanitation</td>
<td>Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabine Brückmann</td>
<td>Sustainable Rural Development</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olga Speranskaya</td>
<td>Chemicals &amp; Health</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen Lynn</td>
<td>Chemicals &amp; Health</td>
<td>UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elena Manvelian</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Armenia</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is legally responsible for supervising the directors of WECF. The Board of Trustees meets at least 2 times per year to approve the years accounts and report, and to approve the upcoming years budget and workplan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marie Kranendonk</td>
<td>President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bert Kuiter</td>
<td>Treasurer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willy Douma</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerda van Dijk</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Staff
WECF activities are coordinated from the offices in Utrecht, The Netherlands, Munich, Germany and since 2008, Annemasse, France. WECF works with volunteers, interns, paid staff and consultants.

Sascha Gabizon
Executive Director
Sonja Haider
Director, Germany
Theo van Koolwijk
Director, the Netherlands, ad interim
Anne Barre
Director, France / Switzerland
Gero Fedtke
Programme Coordinator ELA/MFS
Margriet Sanwel
Coordinator Water and Sanitation
Sabine Bock
Coordinator Energy and Climate Change
Daniela Rosche
Policy Officer & Programme Coordinator Chemicals
Sabine Brückmann
Coordinator Sustainable Rural Development
Anke Stock
Environment and Women’s Rights
Annemarie Mohr
Financial Project Management
Bistra Mihaylova-Grigorova
Project Officer, Bulgaria
Solomiya Babyak
Project Manager EECCA
Tatiana Deriavgo
Project Officer, Belarus
Jasmine Osorio
Policy Officer Health & Environment
Johanna Hausmann
Public Relations & Press, Germany

Chantal van den Bossche
Public Relations & Press, the Netherlands
Irma Thijssen
Press Officer, the Netherlands
Sabine Hanisch
Office Manager, Bookkeeper, Germany
Ulrike Meyer-Bachmann
Executive Assistant
Stefanie Blicke
Chemicals Assistant
Hetty Minkjan
Office Manager
Jannet van Dijk
Office Manager, ad interim
Heidi Emes
Central Asia Officer Assistant
Saar Slegers
Project Assistant Eastern Europe
Elke Altena
Secretary
Toos van Oers
Agriculture Coordinator EECCA
Olga Plekhanova
Country Officer Eastern Europe
Olivia Radu
Country Officer Romania
Annemarie Hekkers
Office Administrator
Margreet Munneke
Bookkeeper, the Netherlands
Hanno Langeleder
Webmaster Network
Fedde Jorritsma
Project Officer Central Asia
Stefan Deegner
Ecological Sanitation Management
Mattie Wolters
Editor

Anna Samwel
Project Assistant Caucasus
Elena Glik
Project Assistant EECCA
Farida Shorukova
Project Assistant Central Asia
Véronique Grassinger
Corporate Identity & Publications

External
Patrick Meyer
Webdesigner
Gevorg Chogerian
Volunteer System Administrator
Theo Poort
Financial Manager
Nita Chaudhuri
Environment & Health Promotion Expert Consultant

Volunteers
Sonja van Wolfswinkel
Office Administrator
WECF Balance as per 31 December in Euro

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office equipment</td>
<td>29.642</td>
<td>1.618</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants to be received</td>
<td>321.366</td>
<td>92.185</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work in progress</td>
<td>184.863</td>
<td>222.097</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other debtors</td>
<td>42.084</td>
<td>24.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank and savings accountants/cash</td>
<td>1.544.540</td>
<td>1.143.594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Current Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.122.495</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.483.502</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Liabilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants received in advance</td>
<td>1645.163</td>
<td>1.097.345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other creditors</td>
<td>422.018</td>
<td>329.527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accruals</td>
<td>24.404</td>
<td>24.495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity reserve</td>
<td>30.910</td>
<td>32.135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Current Liabilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.122.495</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.483.502</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Continue to reserve</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance as per 31 December 2006</td>
<td>32.135</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Added in 2007 to income and expenditure</td>
<td>-1.225</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance as per 31 December 2007</strong></td>
<td><strong>30.910</strong></td>
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</table>

Obligations, not shown in the balance: WECF pays an officerent of € 33.000 per year and has a contract for 5 years running from August 2004.
WECF income and expenditure account for the fiscal year ending 31 Dec. in Euro

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2006</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grants Cooperation Eastern Europe/Central Asia</td>
<td>1,686,217</td>
<td>1,258,067</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants European Policy Programme</td>
<td>305,170</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants Environmental Programme</td>
<td>289,148</td>
<td>188,977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contributions from private foundations</td>
<td>114,153</td>
<td>143,781</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial income</td>
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<td>1,475</td>
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</table>

**Total Income**: 2,394,688 1,592,300

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project implementation, materials, consumables</td>
<td>1,877,458</td>
<td>1,250,166</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operating charges</td>
<td>178,708</td>
<td>123,028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff costs</td>
<td>336,903</td>
<td>214,433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>643</td>
<td>2,238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial costs</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>--</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extraordinary charges</td>
<td>1,589</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Added to continuity reserve</td>
<td>-/-1,225</td>
<td>2,435</td>
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</table>

**Total Expenditure**: 2,394,688 1,592,300
Observations of the Board of Directors

Financial year 2007

The financial year 2007 was another one of steady growth, with an increase of 66% compared to 2006. WECF is in a process of further optimizing its administrative processes, including quality management and project monitoring and evaluation, for which it made a number of investments in software, hardware and personnel. After a one year break, WECF obtained again funding for its overall workplan from the European Commission DG Environment, which allowed to strengthen the European policy activities as well as the network activities, such as the WECF general members meeting at the Environment for Europe policy conference in Belgrade, in October. The EU support also allowed to launch WECF new awareness raising tool “Nesting,” a website targeting young parents on how to create a healthy and safe environment for their new born child. The “Nesting” website was launched simultaneously in 6 European languages, Hungarian, Greek, Dutch, German, French and English. In the 3rd year of the project “Realizing our Potential” – financed by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, WECF also finalized another MATRA programme project in Bulgaria, where more than 50,000 citizens visited the project websites, and more than 3,000 people in rural communities improved their local environment by composting programmes and installation of ecological sanitation systems, with a strong involvement of school children and local communities. Another new MATRA programme project started in Moldova, Democratization of Dniester river basin governance, contributing to cross border cooperation between the Moldova, Ukrainian and Transdniestria regions along the Dniester river. The French Fondation Ensemble granted a 3-year 300,000 Euro grant to WECF and its partners in Romania, Bulgaria and Ukraine, to improve school and household sanitation, a major challenge in rural areas, which needs cooperation from all sectors. A donation by Hewlett Packard was used to continue health, hygiene and cooking courses for Roma women in Prislop, a poor Settlement near Sibiu, Romania. A donation by Polo Ralph Lauren Germany was used for support of the water and sanitation improvement projects. The Dutch water organization Aqua for Dniester river basin governance, contributing to cross border cooperation between the Moldova, Ukrainian and Transdniestria regions along the Dniester river. The French Fondation Ensemble granted a 3-year 300,000 Euro grant to WECF and its partners in Romania, Bulgaria and Ukraine, to improve school and household sanitation, a major challenge in rural areas, which needs cooperation from all sectors. A donation by Hewlett Packard was used to continue health, hygiene and cooking courses for Roma women in Prislop, a poor Settlement near Sibiu, Romania. A donation by Polo Ralph Lauren Germany was used for support of the water and sanitation improvement projects. 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Outlook 2008

WECF’s budget for 2008 amounts to 3,4 million Euros, once again an increase of 70%. WECF will continue investing in its organisational development and will continue expanding its automated project monitoring and evaluation system. In 2008, WECF starts its 3-year “Empowerment and Local Action” (ELA) programme with over 30 partners in 10 countries, which contributes to reaching the Millennium Development Goal number 7 on Sustainable Development. WECF has applied for funding with German, French and EU programmes for co-funding to the ELA programme, in particular for expansion of its capacity building and implementation activities in the area of renewable energy and energy saving, but also for increased cooperation on environment and health with partners in Kazakhstan and Russia and for the expansion of the “Nesting” programme to 6 new European countries. WECF opens a third office, after the office in Munich, the office in Annemasse, France, will be opened in 2008 to allow additional fundraising from French donors, as well as advocacy projects and partnerships with French authorities, NGOs, scientists and the private sector.

Sascha Gabizon
Executive Director WECF
WECF is a network of women’s and environmental organizations 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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