

Report on the

**Study Tour for Macedonian members  
to Austria  
on Public Awareness in Environmental Issues**

15 – 22 November 2003

Service Contract Identification number: GOPA/CMEPP/SC/WG5

Consultant: *ZINKE ENVIRONMENT CONSULTING FOR CEE, VIENNA*  
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November 2003

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# Introduction

## **CMEPP**

The European Union (EU) is funding a 18 months project “*Strengthening the Capacity of the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning*” (CMEPP). The project is allocated to the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (MEPP) in Skopje, FYR Macedonia. The project contains three components with the following targets:

- (1) to adapt environmental legislation to Community Aquis,
- (2) to raise environmental awareness, improve communication and environmental monitoring with data management;
- (3) provide training programmes' according to training needs assessment.

In general there is a strong appreciation of nature among the general public in Macedonia. However, a general low level of awareness of the actual environmental pollution and degradation and its causes can be stated. Most people are not aware that their individual behavior has an impact on the environment and how they could contribute to improve environmental sustainability. This gives clear view for the need of further improvement of the public environmental awareness rising.

Whilst other donor organisations have been involved in rising environmental awareness, analysis of existing and planned support suggests that there is further need of increasing the level of the environmental awareness among the stakeholders involved in dealing with environmental issues. Certain programmes and projects financed by other organizations and donors are Component 2 of the Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme for Southeast Europe and individual projects financed by international organizations and institutions.

## **Objectives of the Study Tour**

Main objective was to providing to 5-7 members a visit a number of experts at various public and private institutions in Austria, on the topic of Raising Environmental Awareness and Environmental Communication between different stakeholders.

The study tour in form of seminar styled meetings and on-site visits should provide the Macedonian participants with

1. hands-on experience in raising public environmental awareness,
2. more skills by exchanging knowledge between the Austrian and Macedonian expert(s),
3. best practices from short-term awareness activities demonstrated during the study tour,
4. ability to report “lessons learnt” to the other members of WG 5,
5. widened professional networks,
6. achieved knowledge for their future work in Macedonia

Austria, and in particular Vienna, have been chosen as the destination for this present study tour, for the following reasons: Austria has a long and outstanding experience record with environmental awareness raising and a high level of environmental

education and monitoring. Vienna advertises itself as the model city for environment. As the capital it hosts both federal and provincial/municipal authorities which have to prepare the conditions (legally, institutionally, financially) and realize environment-benign behaviour of all stakeholders (consumers, industry, public institutions etc.). This is influenced and complemented by the activities of environmental NGOs, which have an impressive list of success stories and largely good cooperation with government institutions. At EU level, Austria is a front runner of environmental awareness.

Therefore institutions of different political level and function were visited in order to learn from their experiences, and to evaluate which information would be most useful for the Macedonian context. The tour was organized in such a way that all relevant institutions and organizations could be reached in a short time period.

### **Participants from Macedonia**

1. Mrs. **Svetlana Gjorgjeva**, head of the MEIC (Macedonian Environmental Information Center) at the MEPP (Ministry of Environment & Physical Planning)
2. Mrs. **Angelina Jovanovic**, advisor of the MEPP at the Macedonian Environmental Fund
3. Ms. **Tanja Mihova**, environmental engineer, Ecologists' Movement of Macedonia (EMM), an umbrella environmental NGO
4. Ms. **Biljana Mileva**, Junior Communication/Data Expert, CMEPP\*
5. Mrs. **Violeta Dimovska**, MTV (Macedonian national TV)
6. Ms. **Slagjana Nastevska**, environment journalist, MIA (Macedonian Information Agency)
7. Ms. **Vaska Atanasova**, Media and PR Junior Expert, CMEPP\*

\* CMEPP: EU project "*Strengthening the Capacity of the Ministry of Environment & Physical Planning*"

### **Short description of the tour**

The tour went as planned with minor adaptations for the side-programme according to weather and wishes of participants:

After the welcome meeting right after the group's arrival in Vienna, the tour started with a visit to the national park Danube floodplains (environment education and visitor information services). On Day 2, experts from three departments of the Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management were met. Day 3 started with a visit at the office of the NGO Greenpeace in Central and Eastern Europe (international campaigning) and ended with a visit of the separate waste collection site of the Vienna city authorities. On Day 4, two other municipal departments were visited (water engineering: visit of river restoration site; press and information service: coordination of communal public communication campaigns), followed by the visit of an Austrian NGO (Global 2000: national campaigns). In the evening, the group went by car to lake Neusiedl. Day 5 started with a visit of the information centre of the national park Lake Neusiedl (local people and visitor information) and continued with a visit of the WWF station (nature education programmes for young people). This day ended with a concluding seminar where the participants presented their impressions and suggested which gained knowledge

they want to transfer into concrete environmental education and communication activities in the coming year.  
In the evenings and at the end of the tour the participants used the opportunity to study the historic and tourist sites of Vienna.

Mr Alexander Zinke  
November 2003

## **Welcome dinner with Mr. Alexander Zinke, study tour organiser and facilitator Introduction to the Training**

Date: 15 November 2003, restaurant in Vienna

Right upon arrival from the airport and check in at pension Christina, this meeting served for getting to know each other and to give additional information on the training objective, contents and logistic arrangements; further, agreement on some financial questions was made.

## **Excursion into National park Danube Floodplains with Mr. Christian Diry, Guide**

Topic: Visitor management (awareness raising programmes)

Date: 16 November 2003 (all day), near Vienna

Mr Christian Diry first introduced the national park and its history (established after public protests against the Hainburg hydro dam). The group then stopped at various sites:

- **NP entrance at Großenzersdorf:** School education camp of the city of Vienna. Presentation of the visitor information and guiding facilities.
- **Eckartsau:** National park station for young people (province of Lower Austria) with laboratory and education equipment. Information about the NP's programme for various visitor groups
- **Orth/Donau:** The only access to the river in this section with intensive tourist pressure (restaurant, ferry, parking). Example of a guided tour to river islands (river morphology, endangered species, navigation/bed regulation, forestry).
- **NP restaurant in Orth:** Typical Danube lunch, NP promotion by tourism entrepreneurs (hotels, restaurants etc.).

## **Meeting at Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management – section environmental policy**

Topic: Ministry's communication strategies and tools regarding environmental policies

Date: 17 November 2003 (all day), Ministry in Vienna

Mr **Beysteiner** (EU policy department) chaired the session and gave background information on legal responsibilities in Austria and tasks of the ministry at national and international level. After the meeting he provided via e-mail (distributed by the consultant) an overview of contacts to the Ministry and the UBA (Federal Environment Agency)

Mr **Schiffhuber** (PR department) informed about a new waste management campaign (manual for information multipliers in Austrian provinces), supporting the implementation of the new waste law in 2004-2008.

Ms **Paumann** gave and distributed a presentation on "Raising public awareness in environmental issues – NGOs as partners". She explained several examples of joint events.

Mr **Iwaniewicz** complemented this with environmental education programmes that were developed (partly by NGOs) over the years and are supported by this ministry.

### **Ministry section on water management**

Ms **Brandstetter** (PR officer of the department) presented their communication strategy by using the example of the campaign of the year of freshwater 2003, which she developed together with a PR company, resulting in hundreds of activities throughout the year (budget of € 1.5 mio.). In addition to addressing the internet page and a hotline, she distributed a box with the various awareness raising tools (labels, brochures, paper, stickers, invitations to events etc.) and explained how they were used and what impact they had on the different target groups.

### **Ministry section on nature conservation**

Mr **Sigmund** presented the biodiversity campaigns of recent years (Living Rivers, Living Waters, Ecology in Urban Areas, Water and Wetland Days), which were all developed and conducted jointly with Austrian NGOs.

Ms **Hasler** presented the cooperation with the 6 national parks which are partly subordinated to the provinces but 50% financed by the federal government (total: € 22 mio.). Awareness raising is one of key task of NPs. She also showed a short promotion video about Austrian NPs.

### **Meeting at Greenpeace in Central and Eastern Europe with Mr Herwig Schuster, chemist and toxics campaigner**

Topic: Campaigns on water pollution (Hungary, Romania) and health risks (Austria)

Date: 18 November 2003 (morning), Greenpeace office

Mr Schuster gave background information on the global goals and the international and national activities as well as on fundraising (annual budget of € 7 mio.; 100% privately donated). He presented their 6 present campaigns and priority regions (yet not covering Macedonia). Examples were the Clean Water campaign in Hungary/Romania (on industrial pollution and local people awareness raising) and the new health products campaign in Austria (public pressure against chemical companies to stop using a prohibited hazardous agent in baby cream and tooth paste). Schuster provided various brochures and also explained their fundraising strategies.

### **Visit of the Separate Waste Collection Site of the City authorities' waste management department (Ms Panoza)**

Topic: Improvement of municipal waste collection

Date: 18 November 2003 (afternoon), waste centre Rautenweg

Ms Panoza introduced the waste management of the city and explained the development of communication and awareness raising methods the city has applied over the years to successfully serve the citizens and improve their waste collection and separation (waste advisors, info buses, personal visits, leaflets etc.). Examples like posters, toy animal ("waste monster") and toy cans were distributed to participants. The group then visited one of the 17 collection sites of the city where all waste that cannot be put by citizens into the regular separate waste cans in their neighbourhood can be disposed free of charge at these sites.

**Excursion to a river restoration site of the City authorities' water engineering department (Ms Goldschmidt, Mr Blöschl, Mr Fellingner)**

Topic: Improvement of urban river beds to restore biodiversity and recreation areas

Date: 19 November 2003 (morning), construction office Kledering

Ms Goldschmidt and her colleagues first presented the problems of formerly "developed" urban rivers, which lack natural features and were heavily polluted. The ongoing sewage collection and river bed restoration programme (budget: € 400 mio.) of Vienna upgrades the sewage collector system and re-establishes ecology and flood retention as well as local recreation and nature experience in urban river areas. It includes the largest EU Life project, which will serve as a model for the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive. Info centres, organised local district events, leaflets and cooperation with local neighbours, schools and university students are part of their successful awareness raising work. The group then visited a stretch of the Liesing creek that is presently under re-construction to discuss practical aspects.

**Meeting at City authorities' Press and Information Service, Ms Rumpf**

Topic: Strategies of Communal public communication and information campaigns

Date: 19 November 2003 (noon), city hall

A short visit at the city hall allowed the group to get acquainted with the city's PR department strategies. Ms Rumpf showed numerous examples of information and awareness raising activities and their present effort to reform the public visiting card of the city by securing a corporate identity (one logo, same design) for all 70 municipal departments with their 65,000 staff. The internet contact is today one key tool for all their communication and multiple services ("e-government").

**Meeting with the NGO Global 2000, Mr Andreas Baur, PR officer**

Topic: National campaigns on environment, including food quality

Date: 19 November 2003 (afternoon), Global 2000 office

This former grass root NGO has become one of the most important NGOs in Austria (budget: € 2.4 mio.; 35 staff) and runs a number of different campaigns. It is 90% supported by private donors while 10% of funds comes from government and private companies. This NGO focuses on changing consumer behaviour and cooperates with a big supermarket chain as well as a daily newspaper and municipal authorities in monitoring chemical residues in vegetables and fruits (advertising shops offering residue-free products). On climate change they cooperate with the government and do a school education programme but also put pressure on the oil industry.

The group travelled in the evening from Vienna one hour by minibus south-west to the border with Hungary where it stayed overnight in an traditional-stile but elegant country inn. The next morning, the study tour began with a:

### **Visit of the information centre of the national park Lake Neusiedl, vice-director Alois Lang**

Topic: National park and visitor management,

Date: 20 November 2003 (morning), NP visitor centre

Mr Lang first took the group outside the building onto a view tower where he explained the steppe character of the landscape; he pointed at the lake with its extended reed beds and soda lakes as well as at the agricultural activities (today mainly vineyards). In the multi-functional centre and later during his presentation he explained the special ownership situation (1,200 private owners, no state land), resulting in a contracted compensation system (€ 2.2 mio./year). The NP is supervised by several boards that strongly involve local people and associations. The NP managers through their communication activities have developed an excellent image for the NP region, making it a most attractive destination for nature tourists who secure an important part of the local economy. Today, this long-years tourism region intensively uses the NP for its modern, international marketing, which has a special setting with the adjacent transfrontier NP on Hungarian side.

The visit concluded with a short excursion to the lake shore where various tourist facilities are concentrated (swimming, boat cruises, parking), thus reducing pressure from the core nature zones of the NP.

### **Visit of the WWF station Seewinkelhof, headed by Bernhard Kohler**

Topic: Nature experience and school education programmes

Date: 20 November 2003 (noon), WWF station

Mr Kohler explained the changed function of the WWF station, which started in the 1960s by lobbying for nature protection and changed its function after the establishment of the NP centre in 1994. Since then, focus is on education programmes (1-5 days) for school classes (70%) and adults (teachers, local stakeholders). Kohler explained the various programmes, the education manual and training they developed, and he guided the group around the house to explain the education tools and technical features of the house (solar power, compost toilets). During a walk to one of the soda lakes, the group became fascinated about bird watching and nature education.

The group also much enjoyed the tasty organic lunch and drinks that was served as a buffet by a local farmers woman.

### **Concluding workshop, Alexander Zinke (tour facilitator)**

Topic: Summary of study tour and reflection of implications for work in Macedonia,

Date: 20 November 2003 (late afternoon), WWF station

Mr Zinke summarised the different study tour subjects, after the group was receiving over 15 different expert presentations during the 5 tour days.

He then asked each participant to give her individual and personal comments on what she found most interesting and useful.

In a second round, the group was asked to write down what kind of activities they found most useful to be done now in Macedonia and, possibly, which partner should

be involved in this. The group came up with a long and impressive list of ideas, which reflected their multiple impressions and strengthened motivation. The results were jointly discussed and revised. The group leader, Ms Atanasova, took the results back home and promised to distribute them among all participants.

Mr Zinke concluded that he found the training really successful, and he thanked all participants for their active interest and excellent questions and comments. Due to the fact that the group extended the session of this day and thus allowed an early completion of the training, the following day focused on the return to their accommodation in Vienna (Pallotti house) Vienna and individual sightseeing.

### **Farewell dinner**

Date: 21 November 2003 (evening), Vienna-Hietzing

The study tour ended at a typical Viennese heurigen restaurant (a wine pub with waltz music and traditional food), nearby the Schönbrunn park. The group thanked Mr Zinke for his excellent organisation and guidance and invited him to Macedonia.

## Consultant's Evaluation

The study tour was running very well: Nearly all local experts were well prepared for the group and provided very useful technical information.

All participants actively contributed to lively discussions and to the good meeting atmosphere that was also praised by local experts later on.

The study tour consultant guided and facilitated each programme part and secured full understanding of participants (e.g. provision of background and complementing information on the various technical issues). He also transported the participants to all tour sites (via minibus and public transport) and secured meeting breaks, catering and side programmes.

Study Tour Topics	Not so good ☹	Good ☺	Very good 😊
Excursion Danube Floodplains national park			4
Ministry for Life – communication of environmental policy		3	
Ministry for Life – communication of water management			5
Ministry for Life – communication of nature conservation		3	
Greenpeace in Central and Eastern Europe			4
City authorities Vienna: waste management			4
City authorities Vienna: water engineering			4
City authorities Vienna: Press & Info Service			4
NGO Global 2000	2		
Visitor centre National Park Lake Neusiedl			5
WWF station Seewinkelhof			5
Concluding seminar		3	
Tour arrangement (Hotels, timing, etc)			5
Transport			5
<b>Overall rating</b>			<b>4</b>

Points: 1 bad, 5 excellent

**Mr. Alexander Zinke**  
**November 2003**

## Final Programme

Date	Time	Location/ Organization	Mandate of organization	Contact persons (phone no. +43-1-...)	Topics for discussion	Objectives
<b>Saturday 15 Nov.</b>	19:10 taxi  20:00	Arrival at Vienna airport (from Budapest MA 6808) Ride to pension Christina in city Welcome dinner		Alexander Zinke (-9241196; mob: -699-1924 1199)	--  Training programme (content and logistics)	--  Get to know each other, feed back on programme
<b>Sunday 16 Nov.</b>	9:00 -16:30 incl. lunch	<i>Trip by rented car</i> into Danube Floodplains national park Guided visit (car and a walk)	Management of a protected area close to a big city; awareness raising about the benefits of nature conservation	Christian Diry -699-1261 2253	Infrastructure and programmes for various visitor types; (nature conservation and management, biodiversity, values of nature) communication with people living next to a protected area	Awareness rai- sing and environ- mental education of urban and local people
<b>Monday 17 Nov.</b>	9:30- 11:30  12:00 13:00  15:00	Austrian Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management ( <i>Stubenbastei, room 450</i> )  lunch Ministry – water management section ( <i>Marxerg., room 126</i> )  Ministry – nature conservation section ( <i>Stubenbastei, room 139</i> )	Environmental policy and implementation in Austria  Water management in Austria  Austrian biodiversity management	F.Schiffhuber (information dep.) -71100-5083 R. Paumann + P. Iwanie- wicz (envir. policy dep.: - 2341; -1610)  Susanne Brandstetter (-71100-7123) ViktoriaHasler G. Sigmund (-51522-1416)	Communication strategies and tools of the ministry on environmental policies (on international, EU, national levels); Media work; environment information service for citizens; Environmental education  Campaign of the year of freshwater 2003 and its communication strategy  Awareness raising about biodiversity protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gvmt. commu- nication of envir. issues</li> <li>▪ Developing environmental awareness + education</li> <li>▪ Communication with NGOs</li> <li>▪ communication about natural resources management, international cooperation</li> </ul>

Date	Time	Location/ Organization	Mandate of organization	Contact persons (phone no. +43-1-...)	Topics for discussion	Objectives
<b>Tuesday</b> <b>18 Nov.</b>	9:00 – 11:00	Greenpeace in Central and Eastern Europe  <i>Go to car rental in Vienna-Erdberg</i>	International environ- mental NGO running public awareness- raising campaigns in Central and Eastern Europe	Herwig Schuster (-5454580- 41)	Development of the NGO (national/intl. campaigns) Clean Water Tour 2002 (cam- paign in Slovakia, Hungary and Romania to inform local people about water pollution and health risks as well as lobby industries)	NGO strategies to address environ- mental problems in Austria and CEE countries
	13:00 – 16:00	City authorities Vienna, Waste Management Dept. MA 48 Disposal site Rautenweg <i>(via excursion by car)</i>	Communal environ- mental policy and implementation, here: Waste Management	Fr. Panoza, -664-8267023; - 58817-96071 Ing. Späth	Waste collection systems (prevent, recycle, re-use actions); Awareness raising activities	Change of consumer behaviour (waste production)
<b>Wednesday</b> <b>19 Nov.</b>	9:00 – 11:00	City authorities Vienna: Water engineering department MA 45 <i>(Kledering)</i>	Here: Urban river management (example Liesing creek)	Gerhard Blöschl -4000-96505 Ulrike Goldschmidt	Awareness raising about restoration of urban rivers (for recreation, flood protection and biodiversity restoration)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish urban nature experience</li> <li>▪ Improve river management</li> </ul>
	12:00 – 12:30	City authorities Vienna: Press and Info Service MA 53 <i>(city hall, gate 3)</i>	Here: Information service of citizens, companies, visitors	Waltraud Rumpl 4000-81378	Communal campaigns	Integrated public information
	14:00	Global 2000	National environmental NGO (Austrian member of Friends of the Earth)	Andreas Baur (-8125730)	Monitoring and lobbying for environmental protection (especially energy, water, agriculture, food products). Development of the NGO from grass roots to major player	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ NGO lobbying strategies related to government politics</li> <li>▪ Changing con- sumer behaviour</li> <li>▪ Communication strategies</li> </ul>

Date	Time	Location/ Organization	Mandate of organization	Contact persons (phone no. +43-1-...)	Topics for discussion	Objectives
	18:00	Car trip to pension "Johanneszeche" at NP Neusiedl (ca. 1 hour)	02175-2335 Florianig. 10, Illmitz Hr. Tauber			
<b>Thursday 20 Nov.</b>	9:00	National Park Lake Neusiedl ( <i>presentation and excursion to visit park and visitor facilities</i> )	Nature and visitor management	Alois Lang (vice- director: -2175-3442)	Visitor and education programs for local people and tourists  Communication with land owners to go for nature- supportive farming and eco- tourism;	Awareness raising of rural people and tourists; Fostering new eco- nomic perspectives (nature tourism); cooperation between farmers and park managers
	12:00	WWF station Seewinkelhof	Nature education programmes for youth groups	Bernhard Kohler (-48817)	Design and results of school class environment education programmes	Learning about nature processes at school age
	15:00	Seminar room of the WWF station	Wrapping up of training results  Conclusion of training	Alexander Zinke	Summary of training lessons; Discussion of results Discussion of implications for Macedonia	Evaluation and reflection
<b>Friday 21 Nov.</b>	9:00	Trip to Vienna (lunch and accommodation in "Pallotti House")		Alexander Zinke	Sightseeing and individual visits	
<b>Saturday 22 Nov.</b>	08:30 taxi	Return to airport (flight no. MA 6803 at 10:25)		Alexander Zinke		