



ECO-COMMUNITY GREENS THE ROOF-TOPS OF SEVILLE

A community in the centre of the Spanish city of Seville has succeeded in converting the roof-top of one of the city-centre buildings into a beautiful organic garden.

The project, launched three years ago following a series of neighbourhood meetings, has given birth to a garden created from recycled materials, including bathtubs, polystyrene boxes, tiles, baskets, and anything able to hold plants.

The terrace has turned into a green space where natural processes are recreated at a small scale; with a basic water recycling system, tubs with fish and water plants, ingenious devices indicating the humidity of the soil, and an edible garden. The space has been transformed into a shared aerial

oasis where neighbours and visitors get together for meals, parties and cultural activities.

The soul of the project is Luciano Furcas (*above*), pioneer in permaculture and global ecological design in Spain. He lives in a tiny shed integrated in the terrace-garden, looking after the place and acting as co-ordinator for the project. Luciano talks about the project as a poetic metaphor of the typical Andalucian house, where the interior patio symbolizes the trunk of a tree, its terrace, the top of the tree, and the clothes that the neighbours hang in the sun, the leaves.



The attempt is to activate the branches, representing the people

living in the house, and to give them a continuity, in the creation and maintenance of the terrace-garden, which in turn recycles and profits from the humidity of the clothes-leaves drying in the sun.

It aims is to re-teach the relationship between the trunk-patio, branches-neighbours, leaves-clothes and plants as a function.

The expected climax is the integral use of the building; the patio as a cultural space open to the public, the edible terrace-garden for the use of neighbours and as a demonstrative space for natural processes and for the recuperation of edible plant seeds.

For further information, contact Luciano at: luciano.furcas@hotmail.com

Nigeria To Launch Its First Ecovillage

Finally, after much research, preparatory activities and planning meetings, Odi is on the point of becoming Nigeria's first official ecovillage.

Project co-ordinator, Gordon Abiama, has proudly announced November 30 2004 as the day when the ribbons will be cut, adding that the array of guests that will hopefully grace the occasion will include Nigeria's Vice President, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, the Bayelsa State Governor, legislators, the diplomatic community, representatives of international organizations and agencies including the UNDP, USAID, the Earth Rights Institute and the Global Ecovillage Network as well as the entire Odi community.

Already, says Gordon Abiama, Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Science and Technology has agreed in principle to help with the construction of the Centre's buildings as its contribution.

There are also several partnership plans in the pipeline in the areas of renewable energy, health and agriculture.

For further information, contact Gordon Abiama at: gordonabiama@hotmail.com

'Change the World' Builds North-South Bridges

Oslo-based ecovillage organisation, Change The World, has launched an impressive programme of activities for 2005 including tours for those interested in ecovillages and global justice to both Latin America and West Africa.

The idea is to have a rolling school with Scandinavians, other Europeans and local people, where people get to know local projects and solu-

tions to various challenges for a more sustainable way of life.

The organisation wishes to make possible some South/South exchanges in the near future, involving exchanges of ecovillagers in Africa and Latin America. They are also organising various workshops and courses on permaculture and ecovillage development to take place in Colombia, Bolivia and Chile during the first

semester 2005. The organisation is open to working other countries as well.

Change the World is also working together with local administrations involved in Local Agenda 21 projects in Norway and organises various courses, workshops and conferences on the theme of ecovillages. During the summer of 2004, it was invited to present the ecovillage concept

and way of life at the 'Energy Planning of Environment' post-graduate degree course at the International Summer School at the University of Oslo.

Change the World is participating in the Norwegian Social Forum in October in Oslo where it is offering a seminar about ecovillages.

For further details, please contact Claudio Madaune ecoaldeasnsa@ecovillage.org

NEWS IN BRIEF

COMMUNITY CURRENCY LAUNCHED IN ZIMBABWE
Tandi Community in Rusape will be the first pilot community in Zimbabwe to pioneer the use of a community currency – the Tandis Hour – at the end of 2004. Artist, Pam Pedersen, has designed the currency (comprising three different notes) which beautifully depicts rural Zimbabwean scenes and motifs.



Marianne Knuth, of the Kufunda ecovillage that helped with the creation of the scheme, is very excited about its potential impact: "If we are able to successfully launch the currency, we believe that we will be able to stimulate the local economy by encouraging local trade and exchange." For further details, please contact Marianne at: marianne@kufunda.org

ROUNDHOUSE PHONE TREE. In the latest assault on the eco-designers in Welsh ecovillage, Brithdir Mawr, Pembrokeshire National Park Authority is threatening an injunction for the demolition of Tony Wrench's roundhouse. If they do the roundhouse may be under threat of forced demolition immediately.

Campaigners to save Tony's world famous home have set up a telephone hotline in response. Anyone who wants to be notified should the building come under threat again should join the phone tree. Call 01460 249 204 or write to Chapter 7, The Potato Store, Flaxdrayton Farm, South Petherton, Somerset, TA13 5LR, England.

Peace Village Initiative for the Middle East Launched at Tamera Ecovillage

The Portuguese Ecovillage, Tamera, has launched the Peace Village Project 'Middle East' as an integral part of the Healing Biotope project. The Village builds on peace work that Tamera has been researching and working on for many years. A special focus has been given to bringing together Israelis, Palestinians and other Europeans through theatre, music, networking journeys to Israel/Palestine, and intensive peace camps.

The Peace Village will represent a model for creating a viable alternative to conflict, especially in the Middle East. The aim is to create a community in which conflict resolution will become 'superfluous' through uniting people on a higher level of interest common to all: survival of human kind. New solutions for creating ecological sustainability (in terms of technology,

education etc.) will be developed in parallel with new ways of building trust, truthful communication, social structures, friendship and sexuality.

Tamera's 2005 summer university, attended by guests from Israel and Palestine, laid down important foundations for the new Peace Village. For the first time, people from the Middle-East have now committed themselves fully to the project. A highlight was the coming together of an Israeli reserve soldier and a young Palestinian former Intifadah fighter resulting in their firm decision to leave military service and to quit throwing stones, building friendship instead.

Shalom and Salam Peace Village Project Tamera, IGF. For further information, please contact Kate Bunney: klbunney.igf@tamera.org

FINDHORN CONTRIBUTES TO GM BREAKTHROUGH

Good news from the north of Scotland – the councils governing the Highlands and Moray, where the Findhorn ecovillage is based, have declared the area a GM-free zone. This follows over three years of protests and activities involving members of Findhorn, the local Friends of the Earth group and other allies. Activities included a vigil at a field where GM trials were taking place on the nearby Black Isle and the gathering of over 8,000 signatures for a petition demanding the farm-scale evaluations be stopped. When this proved unsuccessful, community members joined with other local residents in a six-weeks series of actions which damaged over two-thirds of the crops. In the course of the campaign, 27 people were arrested.

As a result, the Scottish Executive withdrew from the 3rd year of trials on the Black

Isle, while maintaining trials elsewhere, where protests had not been so persistent. At the beginning of 2004, Highland council declared itself a GM-free zone, joining the "Network of GM-free zones in Europe" (www.foeurope.org/GMOs/gmofree). In May, Moray followed suit.

The campaign has contributed to developments on the GM-front in the UK. In March 2004, the Scottish Executive gave partial support to the Welsh Assembly's call for the blocking of an application from biotech giant Bayer to grow Chardon LL GM maize. This resulted in UK Environment Minister Margaret Beckett deciding that biotech companies would be required to enter a dialogue on who would be liable if GM crops caused environmental or economic damage. Shortly after this announcement, Bayer withdrew its application.

ECOVILLAGE MEETING IN FRANCE

Around 40 people from France, Senegal, Switzerland, Denmark and Scotland (some living in ecovillages, others interested by the idea) participated in a fascinating 3-day meeting in the Cevennes, South-West France in August.

The meeting included presentations from existing ecovillage initiatives – including Carapa ecovillage in the Cevennes, the Colufifa network of villages in Senegal, Epidaure ecovillage in Switzerland and the Findhorn Foundation Community in Scotland.



Presentations were also given on the networking magazine *Passerelle Eco*, on GEN-Europe and on an on-going campaign to rid the South of France of GM crops. There were, in addition, several workshops, on subjects including composting, dry-stone walls and community supported agriculture.

An open meeting during the get-together, drew 80 people, many from local communities, for a general question and answer session on ecovillages. Indeed, the whole event was officially opened by the mayor of the local town, St. Jean du Gard: there is much interest locally in the ecovillage concept and the local communities have been radicalised by a long and successful campaign of resistance against proposals for the construction of a dam. The venue of the meeting, La Borie Noble, previously designated to be under the waters of the dam is now a fascinating and impressive centre for ecological demonstration and education.

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