



GEN and the Club of Budapest's World Wisdom Council



May East, GEN's Director of International relations, has been invited to join the Club of Budapest's World Wisdom Council.

This is a very prestigious body whose aim is to 'champion the joint interest of all humans and all life on this planet, informing people so that they can move toward a world where they can live in peace with each other and in harmony with nature.' May

is now part of the circle of WWC Ambassadors.

For further information, contact May East at: mayeast@findhorn.org

Members of the Council include Hafsat Abiola, Lybert Angaangaq, Peter Gabriel, Ashok Gangadean, Jane Goodall, Hazel Henderson, Ervin Laszlo, Wangari Maathai, Elisabet Sahtouris and Masami Saionji.

Sarvodaya, Sri Lanka to Launch New Ecovillage

As we were putting together these pages GEN it was announced that the Sri Lankan NGO, Sarvodaya, was to launch a new ecovillage initiative that aimed to be ready in 2008. This coincides with the organisation's 50th anniversary. Sarvodaya's Director, Dr Vinya Ariyaratne, said that the aim is to create a settlement that will combine the cultural and spiritual strength of Sri Lanka with the needs of modern village life.

The project is being supported by GENOA. Their co-director, Lloyd Williams, said that such

a project if successful, could be an example which would have an effect throughout Asia and may help slow the worrying drift from rural areas to cities: "If the expectations of villagers in terms of health, education and work can be met, the need for migration would be much reduced".

Of course, with the devastating impact of the recent tsunami, plans may have been affected. If you turn to our news section on page 31 you will find details of a relief programme: www.sarvodaya.org

Auroville of India Wins 'Green Oscar'

The much celebrated Indian ecovillage, Auroville (located in the South East, near Chennai, Madras) has just won one of this year's Ashden Awards for Sustainable Energy (basically the Green Oscars).

These awards are extremely prestigious and this year the presentation was made by

HRH Prince Charles.

Auroville's award was made primarily to mark the community's achievements in the field of reforestation and renewable energy.

For further information, please contact Marti Mueller at: marti@auroville.org.in and visit the site www.auroville.org

Grishino Ecovillage in Russia Reconnects with its Cultural Roots

In June, Grishino ecovillage hosted its first folk camp, through which participants reconnected with the depth of culture of their Russian ancestors.

The camp worked according to the old Russian tradition, 'Toloka', that involves communal work parties undertaking projects in the community gardens and houses during the day; and dance and song, including traditional Russian 'horovod' dances in the evening.

During the week, those

participating in the camp learned how to make traditional costumes and crafts. The folk camp was especially important in helping the community to strengthen its ties with the local people. Some of these are old people who still remember the dances and traditions of their youth with which they were happy to share with the younger people.

For further information, contact Vasudeva on [@grishino](https://www.instagram.com/grishino) or visit: www.grishino.ecology.net.ru



NEWS IN BRIEF

GEN FIGURES AT ACTION LEARNING WORKSHOP IN TOKYO, JAPAN

GEN representatives Max Lindegger and Lloyd Williams participated in the recent six-day forum 'International Workshop on Action Learning: Lessons from the Field', hosted by the Faculty of Policy Studies at Tokyo's Chuo University.

Solutions for Sustainable Living



Their workshop on Ecovillages, 'Ecological Solutions for Sustainable Living', and the presentation, 'EUREKA! Connecting Theory to Practice' were very well attended, and auger well for a more mainstream acceptance of Ecovillage Education.

NEW ECOVILLAGE TRAINING CENTRE OPENS IN SOUTHERN SENEGAL

COLUFIFA, the network of around 250 ecovillages in the Casamanse region of southern Senegal has just opened a new training centre, called Centre International de Formation Agro-Pastoral du Colufifa (CIFAPAC).



The Centre aims to provide training in various aspects of community development, ecotourism, traditional medicine and food production and processing (with an especially strong focus on sesame). Facilities also exist at the centre to host students from other parts of Senegal and overseas.

ECOVILLAGE DESIGNERS' CONFERENCE AT CRYSTAL WATERS

The first Ecovillage Designers' Conference was held at Crystal Waters in Queensland, Australia, from November 13 to 15, 2004. The Conference attracted participants from Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Bangladesh, Slovenia, the USA, Uruguay and Switzerland.

Speakers presented papers on topics ranging from 'green sewerage options' to 'legal innovations' and 'social processes in ecovillages', each with a relevance to ecovillages.

Organized by EcoLogical Solutions and GENOA Inc the conference received approval from participants, offering the opportunity for networking and discussions. Participants from the Americas and Europe said they wanted to see similar gatherings in those regions and agreed on the need for more ecovillage design education. For further details and for proceedings of the Conference, contact Max Lindegger, email: office@ecologicalsolutions.com.au

ITALIAN - CROATION ECOVILLAGE EXCHANGE

Two trainers from the Italian ecovillage Torri Superiore have undertaken an ecovillage training course for colleagues in Croatia under the BEN (Balkan Ecovillage Network) Project. This project is coordinated by the Green Network of Alternative Groups and receives financial assistance from Europe Aid (Regional Environmental Centre for Central & Eastern Europe), and GEN-Europe.

The course was very well received and a first meeting of ecovillage activists in Croatia is scheduled in February, when the launch of BEN and the creation of a LETS (Local Exchange Trading System) will be discussed.

IBERIAN ECOVILLAGE NETWORK MEETS AT BIOCULTURA FAIR



The Iberian Ecovillage Network (RIE) met on November 6th at the Alternative Living Fair BIOCULTURA to discuss organizational issues and a location for next year's RIE encounter.

There were nearly 30 people present, some coming from ecovillages (e.g. Lakabe), and ecovillage initiatives (e.g. Jardines de Acuاريو), others representing various groups and associations (Selba, Ecotopia Foundation, Nueva Tierra Foundation, La Osa, Red de Permacultura del Sureste, etc.) and other interested individuals.

The basic questions of what the RIE is, what does it need, and where does it want to go

were brought up. A working group was therefore created to gather existing information on ecovillage initiatives in Spain and their needs and to work on a model for organizing the network. Ecotopia Foundation proposed to organize next years RIE encounter in Extremadura if no other proposals came forward.

Recently a Portuguese association has put forward a proposal to organize the event. This possibility is currently being discussed; it may be a golden opportunity for the Spanish and Portuguese networks to start working together.

For further details, contact Maria on maria@ecotopia.es

GEN AT 2nd WORLD URBAN FORUM

GEN was represented at the 2nd WUF in Barcelona by its Director of International Relations, May East. The Forum was designed as an inclusive and dynamic forum to stimulate discussion and reflection on a wide range of issues concerning rapid urbanization.

GEN, in partnership with UNITAR's CIFAL Network, held a networking session, 'Sustainable Cities and Villages'. This explored how to improve the performance of the CIFAL Network, a network of international centres that delivers training to local authorities in the creation of sustainable villages and cities. Participants explored how they could tailor training sessions to the local context and how over the next years we would work in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. For further information, contact May at mayeast@findhorn.org

EGYPTIAN ECOVILLAGE PROMOTES 'SLOW FOOD'

A team from the Tammr Henna ecovillage in Egypt participated in the Terra Madre Slow Food Conference. The team presented Tammr Henna as an example of sustainable ecovillage development devoted to protecting biodiversity and celebrating its connection with food and the land.

Tammr Henna is adapting the Slow Food concept to the Middle-Eastern cultural context and is exploring the establishment of a Slow Food restaurant.

Special oriental recipes are being collected to help preserve traditional cuisine that is coming under threat as a result of westernisation. The project will also include health and nutrition education, classes in cookery and on the spiritual dimensions of food. Various food festivals are also planned, including an olive festival and a great Spring feast.