



## Bagnaia Wins Ecovillage Excellence Award

The 2008 Award for European Ecovillage Excellence has been won by the Italian ecovillage, la Commune di Bagnaia.

Bagnaia was created in 1979 and is based on egalitarian principles, with a shared economy, no leader, consensus decision-making, eco-sustainability and political solidarity. Commune members take part in local protests and they have organised



Commune members with award.

peace building meetings between Israelis and Palestinians.

Bagnaia's Farm is an important resource for schools and groups participating in the 'Educational Farms' project and it collaborates in the conservation of seeds.

During the last year, a major ecobuilding project has been completed. The renovation of a shed into apartments was achieved using vegetable fibres for insulation, local wood for carpentry, local 'cotto' tiles for flooring, solar-chimneys for passive ventilation and natural lighting, high-efficiency heating floor (wood-burner powered), wide windowing for passive solar heating.

Keep abreast of this project by visiting [www.ecovillaggi.it/rive/bagnaia/informazioni.html](http://www.ecovillaggi.it/rive/bagnaia/informazioni.html)

## Tibetan Monks Initiate Self Reliance



Tibetan Monks enjoy composting at their community in Nalanda, India.

Food Security continues to be a major challenge for many communities in the global South.

On a recent trip to India, coordinator of Global Ecovillage Network Oceania & Asia (GENOA), Max Lindegger (the respected teacher and designer of ecological communities and sustainable systems), visited Nalanda, a Tibetan Buddhist community of about 50 or so monks aged between 5 and 85 years.

Max looked at a number of design issues relating to food self reliance. In agriculture soil

improvement forms an integral role for successful cropping and one aspect of the project was to learn about composting.

There was no shortage of raw materials and willing hands and feet. With a flick and twist of their robes to convert to 'working attire' all of the monks joined in to create a large compost pile.

GENOA hope such initiatives will help start a successful food production venture at Nalanda and at other communities.

For more info, contact [robin@ecologicalsolutions.com.au](mailto:robin@ecologicalsolutions.com.au)

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**Israel: Lotan**  
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[www.kibbutzlotan.com](http://www.kibbutzlotan.com)

**India: Living Routes, Auroville**  
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[www.livingroutes.org](http://www.livingroutes.org)

**Thailand: Wongsanit Ashram**  
5 January 2009 – 4 February 2009  
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**Portugal: Tamera**  
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## Peace Pilgrimage

In October 2008 around 500 people took part in a third pilgrimage, led by Sabine Lichtenfels of Tamera ecovillage in Portugal, through Colombia's rainforest to the Peace Community San José de Apartadó.

This pilgrimage is part of the Global Campus Initiative, a global education programme that supports a future without war.

Teachers from peace centres globally will share their knowledge of solar technology, nonviolent resistance, ecology, health care, community, as well as the arts.

For more information view: [www.grace-pilgrimage.com](http://www.grace-pilgrimage.com)

## Bangladesh Ecovillage

The Bangladesh Association for Sustainable Development has launched ecovillages in the neighbouring twin villages (Banishanta-Andhermanic) at Dacope in Khulna District.

At the heart of the project is the dissemination of 'ecosan' (ecological sanitation) technology and practice. This enables villagers to use human waste as organic fertiliser to enrich their soil.

The ecovillages cover 3.5km<sup>2</sup> beside the Poshur River, close to the world's largest mangrove forest. They will involve 22 families, with 136 members.

For info, contact Boniface Gomes, [basd@bdcom.net](mailto:basd@bdcom.net)



## Senegal Grows Rice

Fund-raising efforts during and following GEN-Europe's annual gathering at Sieben Linden ecovillage, Germany, succeeded in raising €700 for the GEN Senegal (GENSEN) programme.

This will permit GENSEN to offer the new SRI (System of Rice Intensification) training to about 15 rice growing ecovillages in the Casamance region in the South of Senegal. The SRI method, developed by Prof. Norman Uphoff at Cornell University in the US, increases rice yields up to 150% while saving on inputs.

The Senegal government is introducing the SRI method in the Senegal River Valley, in the north of the country, as part of the second rice planting season. GENSEN will have the privilege of introducing it in the south of the country.

Villages participating in the programme will send participants to a demonstration village where they will assist the farmers in planting a 64m<sup>2</sup> demonstration plot beside a 64m<sup>2</sup> comparison plot planted using conventional methods. The participants will then return to their villages to replicate this test of the effectiveness of the method.

For further information, visit: [www.gensenegal.org](http://www.gensenegal.org)



*A team plant rice in Senegal.*

## Mainstream Ecovillage



*Rammed earth house, Currumbin.*

Could it be the time for ecovillages to become desirable alternatives for mainstream families?

The internationally acclaimed The Ecovillage at Currumbin, Queensland, Australia, is about to launch the third and final part of the development. The first two stages had sales of more than A\$25m.

Developer Chris Walton, of Landmatters spent 13 years planning and creating the ecovillage as a benchmark of sustainable living for the 21st Century. It is located within world heritage rainforests, has its own water and wastewater supply-treatment systems, grid-connected solar power, edible landscapes, permaculture and waste minimisation, and recycling.

In 2008 The Ecovillage at Currumbin won the award for the world's best environmental development and it also had one of its homes named as the Green Smart Building of the Year.

For further information, visit: [www.theecovillage.com.au](http://www.theecovillage.com.au)

## GEN Secretariat Moves

The GEN-Europe secretariat is set to move. After five years of service, Ina Meyer-Stoll at ZEGG and Jonathan Dawson at Findhorn are to hand over the headquarters to a new team, based at Sieben Linden ecovillage, Germany, with support from Damanhur.

After eight years current webmaster Kasimir Reichmuth is also standing down.

Details will be announced in the next issue of *PM*.

## Sieben Linden Ecovillage Builds Future

Sieben Linden is an Ecovillage in the Northeast of Germany, between Hamburg and Berlin.

It was set-up in 1997, on a site which only had a derelict building and which was surrounded by agricultural and forestry monoculture. 80 adults and 30 children set-up a social ecological model settlement designed for up to 300 people. A huge diversity of people have been drawn to the site over the years. They have developed the landscape, buildings, gardens, and deciduous woodland. There is a lively community culture and seminar centre to promote education for sustainability.

During the last 12 months Sieben Linden has built a sauna and started two new strawbale buildings, raising the total number to seven. They probably have the highest density of different style strawbale dwellings, plus the biggest one ('Strohpolis' 3 storeys, 500m<sup>2</sup> living area), in Europe.



*The 'big' Strohpolis strawbale house.*

This summer GEN Europe held their general assembly at Sieben Linden, and there have been visits from the media.

Last autumn they bought land next to what they already own (community members are also members in this cooperative, there is no privately owned land). They now have 44ha of woodland, 22ha of agricultural land, 3ha of organic vegetable garden, a fruit tree nursery, 2ha of meadows plus 7ha of building land.

For more information, view: [www.oekodorf7linden.de](http://www.oekodorf7linden.de)

## Tibet Stone In Tamera Ecovillage



*Happy faces at Tamera ecovillage.*

The stone circle of Tamera, a piece of spiritual art at the heart of the Tamera ecovillage, has a new stone.

This year's Summer University, saw a delegation of three Lamas, Tibetan exile monks from Dharamsallah, inaugurate a stone

for Tibet, in order for the Tamera community, and guests, to deepen their cooperation with this nation.

Lama Jampal Gyaltso, Lama Chemey Wangdak and Lama Gelk Khedup had come to get training in solar energy skills for Tibetans. Lama Jampal said "100,000 Tibetans are living in exile in India. We are building autonomous villages and need to learn about decentralised solar energy systems. We are very pleased about what we saw here and the will for peace which so many young people express here."

## Egyptian Ecovillage

Egypt's Set El Hossn Training Centre has won a 2008 Global Best Award. The Awards celebrate outstanding business, education and community organisation.

Set El Hassn is a sustainable development centre that provides training in a wide range of areas, including organic agriculture, livestock rearing, computers and community building.

For info, contact Samia Daniel [sdswelwanes@yahoo.com](mailto:sdswelwanes@yahoo.com)

## Greenpeace Work

Greenpeace and Damanhur have begun a collaboration on measuring sea pollution levels in the Mediterranean.

A Damanhurian team, including biologist Melusine Acanto, participate in the analysis of the water samples. One of the Greenpeace crew, Simona, is a friend of Damanhur, and will return to share her experiences.

For more info, contact Macaco Tamerice [macaco@damanhur.it](mailto:macaco@damanhur.it)

### SUBMISSIONS

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