

# MAKE BIODIVERSITY VISIBLE AND TASTEABLE!

Welcome to our „Streuobstwiese“!



**Добре дошли в нашата овощна градина! • Bienvenue dans notre verger! • Bienvenidas a nuestra huerta tradicional! • Биздин жемиш багыбызга кош келиниздер! • Welkom op onze traditionele boomgaard! • Szivesen látott öreg gyümölcsfák rétén! • Добро пожаловать в наш фруктовый сад!**



# “Diversity of apples, diversity of people”

## Protecting traditional apple orchards, protecting cultural diversity

WECF is developing three mobile exhibitions, together with Partners in Germany, Poland and Ukraine, funded by the EU within the framework of the EU-Core Environmental program.

In many rural regions a special kind of orchards, so called “strewing fruit meadows” (Streuobstwiesen) were a formative landscape element at the outskirts of villages. But these traditional orchards are disappearing at an alarming rate in a lot of European regions.

In Germany, for example, this type of habitat belongs to the category „highly endangered“. In previous decades many of the long stemmed orchards have already been chopped



down to the benefit of low stemmed intensive fruit plantations. Nowadays they often get in the way of „the expansion of settlement areas or are not well kept and renewed due to their low economic relevance.“ „As a result the, for many regions typical orchard belts around the villages, disappear.“ (such the German Federal Nature Conservation Agency).

The Polish rural landscape was also characterised by blooming fruit trees with high stems, which had been cultivated for nearly 400 years. Today, this landscape is vanishing while the old trees are cut down because they are in the way, suffer from diseases or bear fruit different from the ones sold in stores. Traditional home orchards are replaced by mass produced varieties of the low growing fruit trees. New generations of farmers do neither follow the tradition of grafting the old varieties onto the new trees nor the tradition of processing the fruits of local cultivated varieties.

The common goal therefore is, to create understanding on the negative effects on biodiversity as well

as on cultural landscapes through the loss of traditional fruit orchards. Especially raising interest of individual owners of strewing fruit meadows, for protecting their traditional orchards and bring new perspectives to the rural regions by involving the local communities in creating and maintaining markets for traditional apple sorts, is important.

Another intention of this project is to support regional initiatives, like the “Landcare Association” in Ebersberg/Germany, which is also the German partner in this project and to share information and experiences about protecting ‘strewing fruit meadows’ for example by marketing natural products like “Strewing Meadow Juice”. The object of these activities is to promote the development of “Landcare Associations” in other EU and EECCA countries.



This first ready-made German version, shows for example the special conditions in the district of Ebersberg (east of Munich/Upper Bavaria) and the special activities of the regionally working Landcare Association Ebersberg (Landchaftspflegeverband Ebersberg), concerning the protection of the habitat „Streuobstwiese“.

The next steps are to develop a Polish and Ukrainian version, based on the German example, but adjusted to the particular local conditions. All exhibitions will be shown at public events in town-halls, supermarkets, schools and international conferences in Germany, Poland and Ukraine.



# WECF - Women in Europe for a Common Future: Moving People for a World in Balance

## **Mission:**

WECF strives for a Healthy Environment for All. We use women's potential in balancing the environment, health and economy. WECF's activities are based on its partner's individual visions and needs. Therefore WECF implements solutions locally and influences policy internationally.



## **Members:**

WECF is a network of women's and environment organisations in 37 countries of which 32 are in the EU and EECCA region. Since 1994, the network is supported by the foundation WECF, based in Utrecht, which manages the network, projects and finances. The network is comprised of a total of 108 members, of which 83

are organisations and 25 individual members from 32 countries in the EU and EECCA region.

## **Why Women?**

Certainly our conviction is, "we need two eyes to see straight!", as it is the same with men and women: we need both their views equally to achieve a world in balance. We however know, that although women's experience and capacities are essential, their views are often under-represented in policy processes. Therefore WECF encourages women to participate in decision-making. Women are



also differently affected by environmental health factors and more often bear the burden of looking after diseased family members.

## **WECF root:**

The 'Earth Summit' in Rio de

Janeiro in 1992 - a follow-up of the UN report 'Our Common Future' - gathered many enthusiastic and active European women working for sustainable development. During the Earth Summit the representatives from Europe agreed to start cooperation as a new network organisation: Women in Europe for a Common Future - officially registered in 1994.

WECF long term goals to reach the over-arching goal, being: Safe Chemicals for All. Safe Water and Sanitation for All. Safe Energy for All. Safe Food production & rural development for All.

## **WECF's four strategies:**

Capacity Building & Awareness Raising.  
Advocacy and Policy Recommendations.  
Implementing Solutions, Demonstrating Alternatives.  
Gender: increasing women's participation in policy making and implementation.

## **WECF's guiding Principles:**

From projects to politics, from local to global. Practical, innovative and cost-effective solutions.

Strengthening decentralized structures, local & regional markets, self responsible civil societies. Interrelated transfer of knowledge and capacities between West and East. Striving for dialogue multi-stakeholder facilitation.

## **WECF's Vision:**

By 2020, WECF is to be one of the best operating networks working 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, present and future generations.





# Landcare Associations in Germany: Bridging the gap between Man and Nature



*"Landcare plays an important part in the economic development of regions. An intact landscape is important for the recreation of local populations and it attracts investors. The better a region preserves its specific natural features, the more value is added."*

Josef Göppel  
Member of the Bundestag  
(German National Parliament)  
Chairman of Landcare Associations  
in Germany



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The cultivation of Europe for centuries has led to diverse landscapes in the countryside with mountain-meadows, poor-soil pastures, hedgerows and orchards. Unless continually managed by farmers, these areas will be left under fallow or revert back to forests. The endangered flora and fauna that have adapted to these extensive farmland habitats would disappear, and the regions would lose their attraction both to investors and tourists. As farmers want to earn money from their hard work, the tourism industry wants to sell a magnificent landscape, conservationists want to secure plants and animals, most Landcare Associations (LCA's) now bring regional stakeholders together to coordinate their various interests.

The organisational form of the single association is a registered non-profit organisation serving public interest, within its board each interest group is equally represented. The board is elected by the members and advised by an panel of experts. As an umbrella organization the German Association for Landcare or DVL was formed, representing all LCA's at the national level - the Federal Government and 16 State Governments. The DVL became a hub for information, and supports the formation of new LCA's.

LCA's partners are on one hand the communities, as in Germany they have a great influence on land management issues. They play an important role as members of the local LCA and help finance LCA activities. On the other hand LCAs are also encouraging and supporting individual farmers to take advantage of applicable agri-environment schemes.

Initially, Landcare projects evolved for example from planting trees or hedges and grass cutting, to maintaining diverse cultivated landscapes. Later, a new strategy was developed to promote sustainable management of extensive land-use systems, by helping farmers market their quality products, such as apple juice and lamb-meat.

Key Principles of landcare associations are: Parity, which means, each participating interest group is equally represented in the board

of LCAs. This balanced structure enhances trust amongst the different groups and is responsible for the success of LCA's. They further rely on voluntary participation, where it is found crucial for long-term success and sustainability. As LCAs act upon the request of landowners, its strength lies, - where official competence and regulation find their limit. Also regional connection is relevant. Hence, LCAs considers regional differences of the habitats and focuses on the preservation of specific landscapes.

Last but not least the funding. LCA activities are supported to varying degrees by local communities and regional governments. Additional revenues are also generated from membership fees.





## The richness of our man-made landscape: "The Noah's Ark" orchard

The 'Streuobstwiese', an orchard or literally a 'scattered-fruit-field', is the traditional form of fruit growing: a varied collection of mostly long-stemmed apple-, pear- or cherry trees of different age all together on one field, with lots of different types. Thus, these orchards offer a great genetic diversity as opposed to fruit plantations where many short-stemmed trees of only one apple type are growing.



These *Streuobstwiesen* are mostly situated at the outskirts of villages and the farming is done in harmony with the natural surroundings: They can serve for growing fruits without using pesticides, as a meadow for hay, a pasture for cattle, arable land or simply as a garden.



The *Streuobstwiesen*, with their versatile and natural usage, belong to the most diverse biotopes in Central Europe, inhabited by almost 5.000 animal and plant varieties.

Old orchards especially - with woodpecker holes in the trunks and dead stems - are simultaneously a natural habitat, refuge and hunting ground for protected birds such as the red-backed shrike and

the little owl, for nocturnal rodents like the edible dormouse, bats and many insects. Dozens of wild bees types nest in the dead wood of the fruit trees.

The speciose, little manured pastures and meadows, with a spread of plant and flower varieties not only offer animals a generous meal but the colourful beauty is also a pleasure to behold.





# The Landcare Association: An alliance for nature

The German Landcare Associations made it their mission to protect natural- and man-made landscapes.



Since 1992, farmers, nature conservation groups and local politicians equally decide in the board of the Landcare Association Ebersberg (Landschaftspflegeverband Ebersberg e.V.) which projects they will support, in order to sustain the beauty and richness of Upper Bavaria.

Success stories are the protection of butterflies, such as Scarce Heath and Scarce Copper, protection of mosses, such as the re-naturation of the "Brucker Moss" or the restoration of springs and brooks to their natural state.



All projects of the management are based on expert planning and run in cooperation with a range of partners: landowners, farmers, nature conservationists and government officials.

The protection of the 'Streuobstwiese', a traditional type of orchard, led also to international cooperation. WECF - a network of women's- and environmental organisations from over 30 countries - enabled contact with partners from Poland and Ukraine and made mutual exchanges and the financing of this exposition possible.



Traditional orchards in the rural district of Ebersberg are situated at the outskirts of villages and often have to give way to houses or roads. With the loss of each *Streuobstwiese*, a piece of beauty, scenery, diversity and knowledge is lost. That is why the Landschaftspflegeverband Ebersberg e.V. finances the maintenance and planting of new trees. But that alone is not enough. To maintain these orchards, the trees need

regular pruning, the meadows need to be mown and the fruit need to be collected by hand. To support this labour-intensive work, the Landschaftspflegeverband Ebersberg e.V. promotes the regional sale of apple juice from these orchards and keeps the public in the picture in many ways.





# Use diversity - taste diversity: How many apple sorts do you still know?

Can you imagine that ‚Schafsnase‘ (sheep nose) is the name of an apple. Did you know that in 1900 there were still 1.000 different types of apples?



Since 1998, the Landschaftspflegeverband Ebersberg e.V. and the regional initiative EBERSBERGER LAND e.V. have dedicated themselves to bring fruit juice from traditional orchards in the markets. They initiated and coordinated an apple juice project where more than 30 old apple sorts were used - from more than 200 farmers. The purchase of the apples through the UNSER LAND GmbH supports the farmers in maintaining their orchards.

Nowadays, old varieties with beautiful names like 'Flamed Cardinal', 'Gloria Mundi' or 'Gold Parmäne' are rare. Now, there are only a handful of apple sorts left in the markets.



The GmbH buys the apples, let them press and delivers the juice, with the label EBERSBERGER LAND Obstgarten, to the grocery stores. The variety of apple types, the

absence of pesticides and the production without any additives gives the juice its characteristic taste. Everybody who buys it, helps sustain our traditional orchards.





## We protect what we love: Experiencing and valuing diversity

The understanding of the value of traditional orchards has often been lost. The Landschaftspflegeverband Ebersberg e.V. aims to show people the beauty and richness of the traditional orchards. The wide range of activities focuses mainly on experiencing - for all ages, at the country side or in the city.



The younger children experience nature, the more they become intrigued by its spirit. In a playful way, pupils of the Comeniusschool in Grafing got to know and got to learn the value of the natural environment of traditional orchards in a 'Green Classroom'.



The experience of the apple harvest was the source of inspiration for this masterpiece of a young painter.



During the 'Bundesgartenschau' (National Garden Expo) in Munich, nature was brought to the city. Everybody enjoyed the apple juice, made out of apples from the traditional orchards.

Young and old forgot the world around them, while putting together 'apple-dolls' - with original results.



The harvest-festival at the Moarhof in Witting was a sparkling celebration with almost 1.000 visitors. Also guests from Munich enjoyed the different kinds of apples and the home-made pies.





## A small paradise preserved: People and their traditional orchards

The apples from the apple juice of EBERSBERGER LAND all come from the traditional orchards of the region Ebersberg. We would like to introduce a few owners and their orchard. For example Angelika Abinger from Bruck: The yearly collection of the apples for the juice takes place at the farm of the family Abinger. Also apples from their own trees are used. All but one sort. Angelika Abinger especially loves this type for its fragrant. From these few precious apples, she bakes apple pies or she gives them away to her friends.



Josefine Müller tells us about her own orchard: "My father has planted and maintained it. At the attic I found a family picture from 1941. The whole family Schwaiger came together in the orchard to have their picture taken, because, well, life always took place at the orchard."

Her husband Erich Müller also remembers: "In former days in Hessen, the municipal apples were sold right from the tree. For us, the Müller-lads, the apples from the large, high-stemmed trees were left, the ones that nobody liked to pick."



The farm owned by Egid Huber in Balkam lies in the middle of an orchard: "This year the apples are ripe very early. I am glad that the harvest already started at the beginning of September. Last Saturday I delivered almost 1.000 kilos of apples to Bruck. Tomorrow I will have my truck full again. But my Rose apples I keep for myself to eat."



Peter Freundl describes the orchard of his family in Nebelberg: "Most of the trees in our orchard are old high-stemmed trees. Two freestanding walnut- and cherry trees grow at the top of the hill. Downhill grow many apple-, pear- and damson- trees. The elder, near the former henhouse, has now black and heavy berries. Sometimes calves graze at the steep hill. It is a small paradise that remained."

His mother, who planted the orchard together with her husband, adds: "During spring the damson- and cherry-trees blossomed beautifully. Everything we planted has always grown very well. This

year we have so many damsons, I am already eating damson pie for days."





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