



Annual report 2005

focus

association for sustainable development

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Focus Association for Sustainable Development Annual Report 2005

► What is Focus?

Focus Association for Sustainable Development is a voluntary, independent, non-governmental and non-profit association. Everyone who supports the statutes can become a member.

Membership is voluntary.

► Our aim

Our aim is to change the behaviour of the people towards a more environmentally and socially responsible life with the enhancement of understanding and awareness. We actively work to improve the natural and social environment.

► Fields of activity

Focus covers the fields of:

- climate change
- energy (renewables, efficiency, nuclear)
- transport
- environmental fiscal reform
- sustainable consumption

Another interesting year passed in which we executed many projects, met numerous people concerned with degradation of the planet, took part in many processes, were present at many events, upgraded the web page... In the following report for 2005 we summarize our activities of the past year.

In 2005 we started with, finished or continued with the following projects:

Changing habits, not climate!

The project was focused on the problem of climate change. The man made climate change is the biggest single threat the planet is facing. The European Union is well aware of the problem and is therefore one of the leading forces in fight against climate change. Currently the discussion on the EU level is concentrated on the so called 'post 2012' debate. With entering the EU Slovenia accepted the EU policy on climate change, but it does not play a proactive role in the field of climate change. Slovenian public, as well as politicians, is not properly informed about the dangers of the changing climate and therefore there is also no real political will in Slovenia to start playing the proactive role on this field.

The aim of the project was to raise awareness and inform the public about climate change, its causes and solutions and through the public create the political pressure for Slovenian government to start working actively on the climate change problem. The aim was achieved through the following specific objectives:

- Designing the exhibition on climate change, leaflet and petition
- Visiting 4 Slovenian towns and two music festivals with the exhibition
- Collecting the signatures of the petition for active fight against climate change
- Executing a training for young activists on climate change
- Organizing a public debate on the future actions against climate change
- Participating in international activities

Through the project the following outputs were produced:

Manual on climate change Publication is informative. It includes the themes: climate change, its causes, solutions, political efforts and a list of additional references. It was designed for young environmental activists, but can also be used for wider public.

Training for young activists One day workshop informed the young people about the climate change problem (why the climate is changing, solutions for the climate and the international efforts and other policies). Apart from theoretical knowledge the workshop provided the participants also with some practical skills needed in awareness raising actions – street action and communicating with the media.

Exhibition An exhibition containing the following topics was produced: causes of climate change, its effects, solutions for the problem, EU efforts, the situation in Slovenia and what each of us can do to limit the impacts to the climate. The exhibition presents the topics with the pictures and text on 10 placards. In virtual version the exhibition was posted on the web page.

Leaflet, sticker, placard, bag and quiz As accompanying materials for the exhibition the leaflet, sticker, poster, bag and quiz were produced. The leaflet has informative nature and is designed for wider public. The sticker is calling upon people to act climate friendly. It contains the web page address of Focus where people can find tips on how to reduce their impacts on climate. The quiz was design to test the knowledge gained during the exhibition visit. The bag was also used for awareness raising and as a prize for taking part in the quiz. The aim of the poster was to inform the public about the exhibition visit in their town.

Exhibition tour Between May and October the exhibition visited 8 Slovenian towns (Ljubljana, Maribor, Celje, Novo mesto, Murska Sobota, Koper, Ptuj and Mojstrana), and two music festivals (Rock Otočec and Soča Reggae Riversplash). The exhibition was informing wider public and young people about the climate change problem. At the exhibition the leaflets were being distributed and signature of the petition collected. The aim of the exhibition tour was to raise awareness among people on climate change.



Petition The petition was formed for Slovenians to call upon their government to start actively addressing the climate change problem. The petition is asking the government to execute the independent assessment of the GHG reduction potentials, to accept the target of – 30% reduction of GHG by 2020, to actively lobby for the -30 % target on the EU level as the overall European target and to assess how to reach the long-term reduction target of – 80% by 2050. The petition was signed by 2570 people. The petition showed to the government that people want the active approach towards the climate change problem.

Conference Where to after Kyoto? The conference was organized on the 25 October 2005. The introductory speeches presented the background of the current situation in the framework of which the so called post 2012 debate is going on (policy of Slovenia and EU, the scientific view). In the second part of the conference it was established that the most important steps to be taken in the future are looking for the alternatives of consumption society, promotion of the climate friendly lifestyles and reduced energy use. The conference gathered participant from many different fields.



We also published **Glossary of useful terms from the climate change area** and a brochure **Summary of the scientific findings and policy measures**. The glossary contains translations and explanations of the most used English terms from the climate change field. It was prepared in cooperation with Slovenian E-Forum. The aim of the brochure was to prepare the background for discussions on post 2012 debate. The brochure presents the scientific background, policies of EU and Slovenia and financial aspect of climate change.

Handing over the signatures of the petition to the minister Podobnik The signatures were handed over on 6 placards, which also shortly summarize the exhibition. Minister and the government were called upon to implement the demands of the petition.

The campaign was successful. People were interested in the exhibition. Their reactions were positive and it was noticed that people are concerned about climate change. We assess that the project positively contributed to the better awareness about climate change. In many cases people were asking for additional materials about climate change issue. Apart from that the media also took an extensive interest in the project and therefore the public was also informed through media. The project was financed by European Union – DG Education and Culture, Dutch Embassy in Slovenia, Bureau for informing of RS and Municipality of Koper. The conference Where to after Kyoto was additionally financed by Ecological Fund of RS.

Renewable sources of energy for local authorities

Most of the energy used nowadays is produced from fossil fuels, which are exploited much faster than they can be reproduced. Fossil fuels are non – renewable sources and will be finished with over consumption. But fossil fuels have more negative impacts: burning of fossil fuels causes pollution and other environmental, social and economical problems. Due to our dependency to energy we need renewable sources of energy, which are accessible and environmental friendly. Renewable sources of energy are gaining more and more support on national and international level. For Slovenia the use of renewables is one of the ways for achieving the Kyoto goals. Although many policies and measures for renewables support were implemented in Slovenia the situation has not been improved significantly. The local communities in many cases do not understand the benefits of the use of renewables, due to lack of information and knowledge.

The aim of the project Renewable sources of energy for local communities was to inform the representatives of local authorities and communities about the benefits of renewables and stimulating the use of renewables in local communities. 6 regional workshops were executed (Sežana, Murska Sobota, Maribor, Celje, Kranj and Novo mesto). The workshops covered the issues of renewables (importance of RES, legal framework, financing of the RES projects, examples of good practice). Each workshop gathered approximately 30 participants, mainly representatives of municipalities and local communities and businesses. The workshops were organized in cooperation with regional development agencies, Ministry for Economy, Ministry for Agriculture and Food and Agency for Efficient use and Renewable energy. In general the feedback from workshops was positive, which is also why still months after the end of the project people are still contacting Focus for help with finding different information and data about renewables.

During the project the publication was produced – Future is renewable! This in short summarizes the reasons for the use of renewable sources, describes different types of renewables and gives examples of good practice and useful information. Similar topics are contained on the web page www.prihodnostjeobnovljiva.org which also includes news and events alert. Also prepared was The Analysis of alternative ways of financing the RES projects with the purpose to stimulate private investing into RES projects and that way include people and business into RES promotion. The project was financially supported by UK Embassy in Slovenia.



Sustainably mobile!

Currently the GHG emissions in Slovenia are still growing, despite of different policy measures. Particularly overwhelming is the growth of emissions from transport due to lack of efficient measures.

While the EU is building the basis for the sustainable mobility Slovenia has mainly developed the planes for highway tracks and has not developed alternative ways of mobility. The reason lies in the strong preference of citizens to use the car and therefore their need for highways. Because we believe such situation should be changed we executed the project Sustainably mobile! The aim of the project was to change the perception of mobility.

The aim of the project was to influence the acceptance of the mobility of the people, namely seeing the car as the most favorable means of transport to accepting other types of transport (public transport, cycling etc.). Through the campaign we wished to informed people about the impacts of traffic to the environment and inform them about forms of sustainable transport. The project started with elaborating the background. Short document was prepared which was dealing with most essential points of the problem of using the car. It was prepared on the basis of already existing documents and was used for the work of the expert for communications and designing the web page.

The next step of the project was to design the communication strategy and communicating the project idea to other actors. On the basis of the described actions the leaflet was designed which was informing the drivers of the cars about the adverse impacts of transport and was listing the alternatives. The leaflet was designed in two versions; one version was made only for Ljubljana, and the second for other cities and towns. The towns where the action was implemented were selected from the list of participants in the EU mobility week. About the selected location Focus consulted the AMZS (network of motorized vehicle drivers) where we also got instruction on which locations in selected town to distribute the leaflets. In some cases the municipalities were helping with the execution of the action. The leaflets were being distributed in Ljubljana, Maribor, Celje, Koper, Nova Gorica and Novo mesto. During tree days (19, 20 and 21 September) we reached at least 60 000 car drivers which travel daily to bigger cities for work or school and informed them about the mobility week action and its purpose, adverse effects of driving the car and possibilities for using other means of transport. In the framework of the project the web portal was establish (www.izstopi-iz-kolone.net), which contains information on sustainable mobility. The content of the web page contains the following topics: what is sustainable mobility, reasons and motivation for using the bicycle and public transport services, links to other important web pages and others. The e-card was designed and posted on the web portal as well.

The entire action was relatively visible, but the assessment of the action showed that the leaflet had little effect on the peoples' behavior. The leaflet was read mostly by young people therefore next time the action should be implemented in a way that it would reach all age groups equally.

The action was co financed by Ministry for Environment and Spatial planning.

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying a page from 'fokus.si'. The main content is a leaflet titled 'USTAVI KONJE' (Stop the Horses). The leaflet discusses the impact of car traffic on the environment and suggests alternatives like cycling and public transport. Below the leaflet is a table with data. To the right of the browser window is a green circular graphic with the text 'IZSTOPI IZ KOLONE' and icons of a car, a bicycle, and a person walking.

Waste prevention (Slovenia-Hungary)

Waste prevention legislation is a part of EU legislation but there is a big gap between written principles and implementation in practice, as well in the new member states such as Slovenia and Hungary. The aim of the project was to encourage the implementation of the number one principle of EU waste policy – waste prevention. In the framework of the project the guidelines for better inclusion of waste prevention in the strategic documents and programs on national and regional level for the period from 2007 – 2013 were prepared. For successful protection of the environment and ending the link between economic growth and waste growth it is necessary to transpose the waste prevention principles and EU policies into practice on national and regional levels. The aim of the project was to implement EU waste prevention principle in practice on national, regional and local level and inclusion of the principle into strategies and policies of Slovenia and Hungary, especially into the future programs and project in the field of waste management.

The leading organization of the project was Hungarian Humusz, in Slovenia the implementation was supported by Umanotera and Focus. The following activities were executed:

► **Study tour Slovenia - Hungary:** The study tour was executed at the end of May 2005. 20 people participated, 11 from Slovenia and 9 from Hungary. The aim of the study tour was to show good examples of waste management and waste prevention in Slovenia and Hungary and to exchange the experiences of the participants. It was concluded that good examples of waste prevention are difficult to find both in Slovenia and Hungary, therefore most showed examples were about waste treatment. Nevertheless the study tour was educating and the participants were satisfied.



- **Workshop Policies and measures of waste prevention:** The workshop was executed the 25 May 2005. The aim of the workshop was to elaborate a list of obstacles and needs on the waste prevention in Slovenia. 11 participants were present. As a result the list of obstacles and needs was composed (SWOT analysis).
 - **International conference:** Conference was executed in June 2005 in Budapest. Many experts and even politicians from international arena were present at the conference.
 - **Public debate about waste – No waste is good waste:** Because we wished to attract experts, representatives of the government and interested public we decided to organize the debate in cooperation with National Council of Slovenia. The debate was successful although it was on certain moments narrowly focused on waste incinerators.
 - **Publication Waste prevention and reduction in Slovenia:** Publication contains analysis of Slovenian waste prevention policies and policies of EU as well as good practice examples. The publication was prepared in cooperation with Umanotera and independent expert Albin Keuc.
- Project was financially supported by European Union - Phare Access Program 2002.

Renewable sources of energy and NGOs

In Slovenia the interest for the use of renewables is growing but at the same time there is growing resistance of nature conservation organizations and local initiatives towards the RES utilization projects. We believe that if the project is to utilize the renewable sources of energy that does not mean we should ignore other aspects of a project such as negative environmental and nature impacts which is a case in many situations. But at the same time that does not mean we should start a 'holy war' against every wind energy and biomass project either. That is the reason why we want to initiate a wider discussion among Slovenian NGOs about the acceptance of RES projects. We want to include environmental, nature conservation and sustainable development organizations as well as local initiatives into a structural discussion to agree on criteria for the use of RES in Slovenia. Together we would like to produce a set of criteria (environmental, social and economic) under which a RES utilization project would be acceptable for all and also a set of criteria for the procedures for such projects. The described results are to be reached through a process which will consist of several workshops where participants will be able to express their views and try to understand the differences and find common agreeable points. The output of the projects will be a declaration, containing standards for RES projects which can be used by investors, policy makers as well as consumers when deciding about buying green electricity. So far the basis for the project was developed and the process of the project outlined with the partners (Slovenian E-Forum, REC Slovenia). The project will continue into the first half of 2006. The project is financially supported by UK Embassy in Slovenia, USA Embassy and REC Slovenia.

Other activities

Apart from project activities Focus also had the following activities hereafter shortly presented:

Environmental center In 2004 six Slovenian NGOs formed so called 'environmental center' to strengthen their cooperation and to solve their infrastructure problems. In 2005 the project was continued, namely with looking for suitable offices. The work program was produced and an agreement about relationships among members was formed. At the end of the year the letter was sent to the minister for environment, asking for more help with realizing the promises to establish such a center.

Post-2012 debate Under a contract of European Commission the German organization Ecologic started to execute an international capacity building project for governments of new member states on climate change issues. Focus contributed to the projects with following: commenting the workshop programs, preparing parts of the content of the background papers, making the lists of invitees for events and commenting the draft of the publication which will serve as a background for opening conference in January 2006 in Warsaw.

Student arena 2005 In 2005 Focus coordinated participation of four NGOs at Student arena 2005. At the arena Focus was presenting its publications, gathering signatures for the petition for safer climate, organizing quiz, informing about the possibilities of working in NGO, sharing information, playing movie from Carbon Dinosaur tour (Friends of the Earth) and presenting the Climate tour pictures.



Cooperation on the NCSA project Focus participated in the process with regular participation at climate and cross cutting workshops and commenting drafts of Issue profiles.

Web page improvements Focus web page was renewed and regularly maintained to make it user friendly and efficient (www.focus-ngo.org). The web page was upgraded with information on the following themes: climate, energy, transport, environmental fiscal reform and sustainable consumption. Items 'news' and 'actions' were also added.

Preparation of e-news updates on climate change in English The aim of this activity is to disseminate gathered and digested news on climate change to NGO across Europe and by doing that support informing of NGOs. The news update is sent to more than 120 NGOs. In 2005 48 issues of updates were prepared (once a week, usually on Mondays, 4-5 issues per month).

Coalition for sustainable transport policy Focus was one of the initiators of the Coalition for sustainable transport policy which aim is to ensure sustainable transport policy in Slovenia. So far the background of results of unsuitable transport policy in Slovenia and a critic of new resolution on transport policy were compiled. At the beginning of 2006 the alternative transport policy will be produced.

Monitoring Focus was actively following the creation of policies and measures. As NGO Focus contributed to seven on-line consultations of European Union (biomass, aviation, energy, urban environment, post 2012 debate, emissions trading), wrote four calls for minister for environment for support of certain demands at spring and autumn council of environmental ministers of EU, issued press releases about spring and autumn council of environmental ministers of EU, participating at tree meetings of Slovenian climate committee, participated at the public debate about renewables in the parliament and at more than 60 meetings and events cooperating with different actors in the environment arena. The member of Focus was elected a member of Slovenian climate committee as a representative of NGOs and web page for NGO participation in climate committee was designed (<http://www.focus-ngo.org/index.php?node=138>).

Publications that we issued or helped to prepare

- ▶ Manuals Future is renewable and Changing the habits, not the climate!
- ▶ Leaflets Show that you care!, Sustainably mobile!
- ▶ Publication Waste prevention and reduction in Slovenia
- ▶ Sticker and poster Show that you care!
- ▶ Brochure Summary of scientific findings and policy measures
- ▶ Glossary of useful climate change terms
- ▶ Assessment of 1st National Allocation Plan in ETS (for CAN Europe)

Cooperation

Sustainable development can only be achieved through cooperation with different stakeholders. In 2005 Focus strived to cooperate with all important actors and organizations. In Slovenia we were cooperating with the following organizations, institutions and individuals: Umanotera, Slovenian Foundation for Sustainable Development, Slovenian E-Forum, Institute for Sustainable Development, Alliance Biodar, Botanic Association of Slovenia, oikos Ljubljana, Regional environmental center (REC Slovenia); Ministry for Environment and Spatial planning, Agency of RS for efficient use and renewable energy, Regional development agencies Divača, Sežana, Mura, Maribor, Celje, Kranj and Novo mesto, Ministry for economics, Ministry for agriculture and food, Ecological Fund of RS, UK Embassy in Ljubljana, Albin Keuc, Igor Medjugorac, Zoran Smiljanič, Neja Penca, Igor Hotko, Maja Miklič, Jure Vetršek, Matej Delakorda, organizars of Soča Raggae Riversplash festival, organizers of Rock Otočec, Robert Križanič/Loesje, Mateja Medvešek, Renato Rjavec, Matej Rutar, Dolores Šebat, Ozren Skodrič, Stanka Lamut.

On the international level Focus was mostly active within Climate Action Network Europe. Focus also cooperated with the following organizations: Agree.net, Climate Action Network Central and Eastern Europe, European Environmental Bureau, Friends of the Earth, WWF European Policy Office, Green Action, Energy club, Centre for Transport and Energy, World Carfree Network, Ecologic, Humusz, Hnuti Duha and CURES.

Membership Focus is a member of the following coalitions, organizations and networks: Coalition for sustainable wasre management, Coalition for better NEP, Coalition for Volovja reber, Environmental Center, Climate Action Network Central and Eastern Europe, Climate Action Network Europe, Agree.net., Citizens United for Renewable Energy and Sustainability.

Participation in meetings

Dialogue is equally important as participation. In 2005 Focus was present at numerous meetings, debates, round tables, consultations and other events. At around 100 events where Focus members were present Focus was meeting different stakeholder groups, partners and individuals. The most important events in 2005 were: meeting with the minister for environment and spatial planning about environmental center, co operating in the NCSA process, participation at the meetings of Slovenian climate committee, annual assemblies of CAN Europe, meeting of the EEB working group on waste, participation at the Young Leaders Congress, participation at Student arena, participation at the 9th discussion about the future of Slovenia, the 1st public debate about national development program and COP11/MOP1 meeting.

Media work

Focus regularly sends announcements and press releases to the media, and at the request of media prepares comments and provides information. The aim of this activity is to inform the public about different issues of environmental protection. In 2005 Focus issued 10 press releases and more than 10 announcements for public (for regional media), organized 3 press conferences, prepared the scenario for children's TV program about climate change, was a guest in several TV and radio programs, helped students with thesis, updated the media data base and regularly updated web page. The result was regular presence in media (newspapers, TV, radio, web pages, e-news etc); we tracked over 50 media coverages of our activities.



Development of the Association

Members and their activities The membership of Focus grew in 2005. To motivate the members Focus organized several meetings for members, regularly updated them about its activities and developments on the national and international level. At the end of the year Focus organized the New Year's party for members.

Visibility of Focus The visibility of Focus was improved by renewing the web page and by preparing an up to date power point presentation about Focus. Focus also started using new image of publications and other materials that was designed in 2004. We were present at Student arena 2005. Change habits, not climate! campaign brought Focus closer to the public and contributed to better recognition of the organization. A production of a short film about Focus activities was started which will be used for promotion of work in NGO.

Transparency As we demand transparency from governmental institutions, we also try to work transparent. Transparency was guaranteed by regular updating of the web page, informing the public about the activities and issuing press releases. The annual report is also a tool for guaranteeing transparency of the work of Focus.

Financial support

Activities of Focus in 2005 were financially supported by the following institutions: UK Embassy in Ljubljana, European Commission – DG Education and Culture, Umanotera, Dutch Embassy, Ministry for Environment and Spatial planning, Office for Informing of RS, Climate Action Network Europe, US Embassy, Ecological Fund of RS and Municipality of Koper. At the moment the finances of 2005 are still being processed, but preliminary estimation shows that the annual turnover for 2005 was over 50 000 EUR.

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