

Delegation from the Dutch Embassy in Warsaw visits a pilot community in Smilovichy (Belarus), among the project "Developing multi-stakeholder cooperation in the areas of water, waste and energy efficiency in Belarus"

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On the 18<sup>th</sup> of June 2009 a visit took place in the village of Smilovichy, a community among the project "Developing multi-stakeholder cooperation in the areas of water, waste and energy efficiency in Belarus". It is a joint project between WECF and Ecoproject Partnership, financed by MATRA program of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Participants were : Mr. Krop, Dutch ambassador in Warsaw , Mr. Verheijden, the 1<sup>st</sup> secretary of the Dutch Embassy in Warsaw, Yulia Yablonskaia, Executive Director of Ecoproject Partnership, Natalia Andreenko, project coordinator from Ecoproject Partnership and Bistra Mihaylova, project leader for Belarus from WECF.

The visit was carried out in the school of Smilovichy where the project team works with teachers and children in the field of water monitoring, energy and waste. Children have measured the nitrate concentration in 70 wells (used for drinking purposes) in a neighbourhood without centralized drinking water supply and have prepared a map according to the obtained results. The map and the results were presented to the local authorities in Smilovichy, based on that information, a decision from the authorities has been made to give priority to providing with central water supply the neighbourhoods of Smilovichy where it does not exist at the moment (and where the water samples were taken from).

The results and the map were presented at district competition of school projects and won the 1<sup>st</sup> prize. The school got an invitation to present it at a new competition among schools on national level.

Ecoproject together with the village authorities have placed the map in the school, as well as in public places in the centre of the village.

	
Information board in the school	The map is placed in the centre of the village

Ecoproject Partnership continues working with the school in Smilovichy and the next step is to replace the existing paper insulation of the windows in the classrooms (which was not so effective, but due to lack of another one was used in the school) with an appropriate window insulation which can be found at the moment on the Belarussian market.

The second place of the visit was in a household where a urine diverting toilet was built together with Stefan Degneer(WECP) in June 2008. To the participants were explained the advantages of the new urine diverting toilet in comparison with the old pit latrine. The family described in detail the construction phase, the way the nutrients are re-used after emptying the containers and how they keep the toilet in good condition.

Mr. Krop wished success to the further activities of Ecoproject and WECF in this village and in the rest of the 9 communities where the project is taking place. He hopes that this model can serve as an example for replication of other communities with similar problems in Belarus and Eastern Europe.

	
Discussion for the quality of the old pit latrine which the family was using before constructing the urine diverting toilet (behind)	Natalia Andreenko (Ecoproject) in a discussion with Mr. Krop about the benefits of the new toilet.
	
Outside view of the toilet	The library in Smilovichy, a section for educational brochures related to Ecosan and sustainability

More information on the MATRA project in Belarus and the latest news about the project can be found at [\*\*Belarus - Citizens Involvement\*\*](#)

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