

Council Meeting at Galgafarm, Galgaheviz, Hungary July 1st / 2nd & 8th 2005

Council members: Mari Hollander, Andy Langford, Achim Ecker,
Inci Gokmen, Geza Varga

Staff members: Jonathan Dawson, Ina Meyer-Stoll, Kasimir Reichmuth,
Deniz Dincel

Agenda issues:

- 1.) Jonathan: Report from the EC visit, Grant 2006 *advice*
- 2.) Ina: Budget 2005 (review of 2004)
- 3.) Ina: 2 full membership approvals and membership update
- 4.) Ina: Agenda for the GA, responsibilities
- 5.) Ina: Staff payments for 2005 and various scenarios for GEN-E
- 6.) Raising membership fees (according to size of EV?)
- 7.) Strategy discussion GEN-E
- 8.) Jonathan: Report GEN int., election of a new board member
- 9.) Events 2005: WEEC Turin, GEN+10 and more?

1) Jonathan: Report from the EC, Grant 2006

At Green Week in Brussels (end of May 05) Jonathan had the chance to talk to Stefan Welin who is the technical responsible for the programme that funded GEN-Europe so far. (DG Environment)

Asked why our application failed he suggested to look from this perspective that we received three out of four applications funded which is not bad.

Organisations like us not working in one specific field do not have the same person monitoring the process, but get controlled by different ones which makes the process more difficult because they don't know GEN.

The second reason for failure was that as a networking organisation we are not specifically working on implementation of the EU policies but serving our own members and working in our own fields.

Stefan Welin says organisations which work more in a specific field (like renewable energy) often score higher in the evaluation process.

Jonathan proposes we could go more specific in studying the EU policies.

Rather than topping this work to what we're already doing we should include members who are already going this direction like Folkecentre or CAT.

Finally this funding programme runs out in 2006, but it will be quite probably followed by another similar one, as S. Welin says even better funded.

To Ina, Stefan said that last year all funding proposals were accepted while this year 7 were rejected.

Geza proposes to strive at the level of Friends of the Earth, WWF and others. We should study their strategies.

What's the outcome if we go EU policy? A lot of investment with little outcome? We should search a way in which a small investment yields a large achievement. (Andy)

2.) Budget 2005 (2004)

Ina explains the budget we run at the moment. Without knowing the amount of balance we will get for the 04 grant we have roughly 12,000 Euro on our accounts, with maybe 5,000 Euro for office costs coming further this year. The council approves the budget. The budget will be spent completely by the end of 2005. The council also reviewed the already audited budget of 2004

3.) Membership applications:

EV Svanholm, DK: with pleasure accepted!

Viverde, Austria: postponed to the end of GA (after their presentation)

4.) Responsibilities at the GA:

Mari: payments for food & accommodation

Deniz: selling books, collecting membership fees

Kasimir: Internet access, technical support

Achim: coordinator of presentations

Gabor: accommodation of guests

Inci: coordinator of morning celebrations

Ina/ Jonathan: overall coordinator of GA

Geza: eco-tour/ local Hungarian event

5.) Various financial scenarios & staff payments

There are different possible scenarios we see for the financial future of GEN-E, the best is no. 1) to find a donor for the year 2005 and to get the next EU grant in 2006. Another possibility is no. 2) where GEN-E is funded in 2006 by the EU with a new grant. A third possibility is we don't get the grant in 2006 and survive with little money and receive a new grant by the EU in 2007. All this is open, so far no donor is in sight.

1) a) donor 05 b) EU grant 2006

2) a) - b) EU grant 2006

3) a) - b) EU grant 2007

Staff payments for 2005 are not realistic as the balance from the grant 04 will be needed to repay private loans.

Gabriele comments her difficulty with continuing to work under these circumstances and decides to leave GA.

Kasimir agrees to continue his work on a voluntary base but with very limited time in the case without funding and at least in 2005.

Ina says she will continue with her work in 2005 but without funding will only finish up 05 administrating work in 2006 (till February).

Jonathan will certainly continue to work voluntarily in 05 and maybe on, but is not willing to include administrative work, but to focus on representative work and email.

A non funded GEN could be organised like a bioregional movement with a manual how to organise a GA and email lists. We also might be successful with the fundraising.

At the GA we will ask what is the value of GEN to members? What is a member willing to give for it? (Travel refunds, membership fees, accommodation costs...).

6.) Raising Membership fees &

7.) Strategy discussion about: Values and values added, Proposed GEN Community currency/ Fund earning, enterprises, encourage strengthening national networks

- GEN-Europe could go like an enterprise model to earn it's own funding. There are other organisations like GEN typically funded by philanthropists or government bodies.
- Raising the full membership fees keeping Ecorates to 100 Euro or more, as the organisation should be able to give more value to the network.
- Membership fees could be 10 Euro per person living in an EV and Ecorates.
- Andy proposes to use a travel pool as a model instead of our refunds.
- If GEN goes enterprise maybe we will lose members but we will get independent from donors and funders, from the paternalistic model of receiving grants.

Entrepreneur organisation GEN-Europe (Andy):

- Time: action and research to develop an social entrepreneurial perspective and proposal what to do
- Building a faculty of Entrepreneurs in EVS and using it to teach more EV members in how to think entrepreneur. I.e. Real Estate consultancy, Education (accreditation through Gaia University (IMCA, Revans University) for Bachelor, Masters and Doctorate).

- Proposal to use the expert/tutored model to go entrepreneurial.

Community currency:

- An idea coming in relation with Bernhard Litaer. In Brazil he developed a type of educational currency (vouchers), using a kind of revolving funds used by the students to finance the university.
- Thinking of a community currency, thinking of the services and goods that EVs can offer we can avoid currency differences of different countries. A LETS system inside GEN-Europe EVs.
- Andy recommends thorough research even though and especially because the LET's in GEN is a good idea.
- Geza reports on the sustainable holiday in Europe.

8.) Report on GEN international and election of a new board member

- Jonathan reports about activities at board level, which is a little quiet over the last period, apart from May East at UNITAR level, Rob Wheeler etc. GENIS activities.
- Candidates for the GEN board position: Andy Langford, Ismael Diallo as a candidate for Africa. Decision postponed after the GA and after Ismael could respond.

Links to Permaculture movement and other organisations

- IPC meeting after 9 years (Andy and Achim participated), is closer connected to the Ecovillage concept, and more Ecovillages are now linked with Permaculture.

9.) Upcoming events 2005

- WEEC3 - 3rd WORLD ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CONGRESS October 5 2005, in Turin. Lucilla, Massimo, Andy Langford and representatives from BEN will offer workshops.
- GEN+10 in Findhorn in the first week of October. GEN-E will support Ina in her participation with about 400 Euros.
- European Social Forum will be in 2006 in *Athens* in Greece. Participation depends on the financial situation of GEN-E in 2006.

Council minutes after GA 05, July 8th

Agenda:

1. GA report and financial overview of GA
2. Election of the new GEN board member
3. Criteria for GEN-Europe endorsement
4. Membership application from Viverde, Austria
5. Budget overview 2005/2006
6. Next steps

1.) GA report and financial overview of GA

- Jonathan put together an report of the GA, and will circulate it by email. Kasimir will put it online when available. DONE!
- Financial overview GA: The costs for the GA 2005 are about 7000 Euros, which is ok. See attachment for details.
- Ina's lost GEN money: GEN-E will cover the loss. THANK YOU!

2.) Election of the new GEN *international* board member:

Lucilla's offer is accepted. (see her email:).

"I have a proposal to make. How about having the Council elect the new representative and establish a transition time of six months between me and her / him, so that I can hand over the information and guarantee a smooth change of guard? In this perspective, we would both be in the l-dir list, I would hold the vote until, say, Dec.31, then the new rep. would take the vote from Jan. 1, already knowing what we the Board is talking about. Probably reassuring for a newcomer.

In fact, I think this would make sense for all transitions, especially if we are smart enough to stagger them and not create a "traffic jam" in the list. N'est pas, Hugs Lucilla"

Andy and Ismael both offer to be elected. Andy releases his candidacy in favour of Ismael, and proposes there might be another representative from Europe on the board to give Africa it's own space. Ismael Diallo gets consensus to be the second representative for GEN-Europe/Middle East/Africa and accepts the vote. *Thank you and Welcome Ismael!*

3.) Criteria for GEN-Europe endorsement

Gaia University is asking GEN-Europe for endorsement. Accepted!

A short description of the Gaia University concept will be circulated to the council email list soon. DONE

The council set up a list of criteria for requests for endorsements by GEN-E:

Criteria for projects:

- Submits a written description of the project with its request for endorsement
- Is aligned to the purpose and ideals of GEN- Europe and benefits the world.
- Informs how the project will benefit GEN – Europe
- Endorsement by GEN –Europe supports the achievement of the project's goals
- Project could not damage GEN-E -/ as in risk assessment/ due diligence
- Project is or becomes a member of GEN-E

4.) Application for Full membership from Viverde/Austria :

The council discussed about the size of an ecovillage, what should be the minimum number of permanent residents? Right now in Viverde there are just 3 people living at the place.

Achim is mandated to draft letter to explain our view saying that GEN-E is looking forward to the full membership when 8-10 members are living on the site.

Still no clear decision has been taken about the minimum size of an EV!

5.) Budget overview 2005/2006:

The council went through the budget for 2005 – it seems plausible that the whole budget will be spent by December 05!

Priorities:

- We need the coming EC balance to cover all of Jonathan and Achim's loans;
- Is there any symbolic payment to staff, as the staff wished in January 2005 – and they have kept hourly sheets. Yes, if there is a relevant sum left.
- We need to make a budget/business plan to ensure the GA 2006 can happen; the total sum of membership fees may go up to 3000 euros;

6.) Next Steps:

Gear up for the proposal to EU – JD has 7 weeks to work on it and will include policy contacts that we can develop with CAT, Folkecentre, Concreais etc.. The proposal has to be sent to Brussels at the end of September.

Gabriele's replacement: Deniz offered to take over the info@gen-europe.org work, about 4-5 hours a week.

Ina took over the membership administration.

Raising the membership fees:

After a thorough discussion the council came to the following proposal concerning the raising of the full membership fees:

A sliding scale between 100 Euros minimum and 600 Euros max. according to the size of the ecovillage – each member is asked to estimate itself and to pay in January 2006. Negotiations are possible if 100 Euros could not be afforded, member makes an offer. We keep the system to pay in ecorates. Agreed with consensus!

In the end the council reviewed the minutes from Turkey, where 4 levels of membership have been outlined :

- Full and pure ecovillages
- Aspiring new initiatives
- Individuals who support
- Bioregional networks/ social enterprises

Again, no decision has been taken concerning new levels of membership, should be discussed further by emails.