



Green Week focus on communication

This year, the topic chosen by the DG Environment for Green Week was biodiversity. With 22 sessions and workshops and an exhibition with 78 stands the event drew a daily crowd of up to 1500 people.

When the time arrived to sum up conclusions at the closing session, one focus point re-emerged again and again: The importance of effective communication. However important it is that experts gather to share knowledge and experience, the real challenge lies in making the public care and act. For this, one speaker stressed, we need help from professional communicators in order to get our message right and use the right communication tools.

Passing the message

One session during Green Week was in fact dedicated to a discussion of how to best deliver the message of biodiversity to the man in the street. Here professional communicators shared their experience describing campaigns that had actually succeeded in getting the public actively involved. One speaker, Mr. Jim Burt of English Nature described the problem of many campaigns: "The problem is that they try to persuade people, and it doesn't work. People feel first and think second. Therefore, one has to understand the needs of the audience and connect to people through their interests".

Five action points

The facilitator of the session, Ms Aminda Leigh, editorial consultant for National Geographic Italy, concluded by summing up five action points to make environmental communication work:

- Talk to people in language they understand and avoid being sad and boring
- Organise inspirational events to make the public want to be involved
- Get celebrities involved to attract attention
- Be creative and use new technologies
- Connect with people's local reality

Read more about the sessions and conclusions of Green Week 2006 at

www.greenweek.europa.eu

This newsflash is issued by the EECN which is DG Environment's support structure for European Environmental Communication Networks.

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