

GSN Best Practice Competition 2008



Application form

Applicant

Organisation, country	Stowarzyszenie Ekologiczno-Kulturalne Klub Gaja, Poland
Name, surname	Jacek Bożek (President)
Headline of best practice initiative	"Adopt a River" - The Active Education Programme

Description of best practice initiative

<p>Describe the basis of your best practice initiative (why, what, when, where; budget in EUR).</p> <p>The programme for ecological education "Adopt a River" was introduced as a pilot activity in the project "How to Save a River"; it was implemented in 2005, and is still carried on. It is a national programme on water, especially rivers and their importance. It is based on the activities of local communities, in particular children and youth, in co-operation with various institutions, such as local governments, public administration, non-governmental organisations i business enterprises.</p> <p>The project "Adopt a River" brought about the adoption of 280 rivers, streams, brooks and Baltic Sea all over Poland, and establishing Partnerships for the rivers Wilkowka, Walborka, Przemsza, and Parseta. The programme is directed at all types of educational institutions: schools, kindergartens, day-care centres, after-school circles, community centres, as well as institutions and organisations interested in water management and the conservation of rivers and river valleys. In 2006, several thousand people took part in the programme "Adopt a River".</p> <p>Standard example - Agreement for rivers</p> <p>As part of the programme Agreement for Parseta was reached. It exemplifies the co-operation of educational institutions, local governments, and business enterprises for the protection of rivers.</p> <p>The Agreement was signed by Dygowo and Goscino districts, Land Reclamation and Water Devices Authority in West Pomerania Area, educational institutions, such as Food Economy School Complex, School Complex and Secondary School in Goscino, Forest Inspectorate in Goscino, K.W.S. "Salomo", Troton Company, and Klub Gaja.</p> <p>The Parseta River was under protection.</p> <p>Budget for 2006 - 2007 : 80 850 EUR</p> <p>Budget for 2008 : We have 23 000 EUR and we apply for 59 000 EUR more</p>

<p>What was the main objective of the initiative and what were the results obtained (please quantify)?</p> <p>River valleys rank among the most important ecological corridors; they are also places where human activities concentrate and cultural monuments abound. It is vital that while using water resources local communities see and understand the dependencies between the river and its basin, and also the river and the sea which is its destination.</p> <p>On 18 January 2008 Klub Gaja and The Fisheries Secretariat (FISH) from Sweden has signed a letter of agreement regarding the cooperation in the project "Adopt a river". The main aim of our cooperation is to raise societal awareness about protection of waterways and river valleys, and sustainable use of water resources in Poland. The collaboration between both organizations consists arrangement of actions associated with cooperation and exchange of experiences, where information and knowledge is shared between the two organizations. In 2008, protection of rivers and the Baltic Sea will be the main theme during this project. Within this framework, however, educational information about protection of Baltic fish, migratory fish species and sustainable fisheries will be presented. In northern Poland, focus will be given to the Baltic Sea cod; in the southern region, salmon will be given priority. The final aim in this area of the project is to increase awareness about fish protection and the need for sustainable fisheries.</p> <p>Realized and planned activities are planned trough 2008:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1/ produce and distribute information material to 4,000 schools across Poland.2/ school lectures about rivers, fish and Baltic Sea.3/ World Water Day 22 March events were organized by schools across Poland.4/ Baltic Sea Day 8 June will mark the beginning of street events held in 5 towns, including happening about "the Gold fish" and press conference.5/ a newsletter is distributed to schools 4 times a year, giving updates on what is happening in this project.6/ A website is developed which serves as a window to the project. It is continually updated about the campaign,

presentations, meetings, press conferences, street presentations, etc.

What type of media did you use (TV, radio, print, electronic)? Why this choice of media?

The programme "Adopt a River" was covered in the following media:

press - Rzeczpospolita, Gazeta Wyborcza, Trybuna, Dziennik Zachodni, Kronika Beskidzka, Zwierciadło, Wędkarski Świat, Wegetariański Świat, Gazeta Kołobrzaska, Głos Koszaliński, Express, Głos Pomorza, Lakiernik;
radio - Radio Bis, Radio Eska, Radio Katowice, Radio Bielsko;
television - TVP1, Kanał E, local TVP3 Katowice, cable tv Bielsko;
Internet - www.klubgaja.pl

Educational materials accompanying the programme "Adopt a River" were published and mailed to 3500 recipients in 2006/2007: - a set of 3 posters "Adopt a River", 3500 copies of each poster;

- a leaflet "Adopt a River", 15 000 copies;
- publication "Adopt a River", 4000 copies;
- editing web page www.klubgaja.pl;
- 9 posters to the exhibition "How We Adopted the Rivers", 3500 copies of each poster.

We choose press, radio and television to inform people about the programme and to get them involved. Those media are basic to pay attention for such activities. The new way to get to wide public is internet, in this century almost everyone has computer and access to internet so it's another way to spread the information about the programme.

We published posters, leaflet and publication "Adopt a River" - educational-informational materials for the active education programme "Adopt a River".

Who was the target group?

Immediate target organizations:

- local governments, Regional Water Management Authorities, Provincial Authorities for Land Reclamation and Water Facilities, environmental protection agencies, non-governmental organizations, businesses - 500 actors (according to Klub Gaja database)
- education facilities, including kindergartens, primary schools, junior high schools, on-site education centres – 4,000 facilities throughout the country (Klub Gaja database)

Intermediate target group:

- general public – via media coverage in relation to the World Rivers Day and World Water Day, as well as Klub Gaja's broad co-operation with media concerning environment protection (on average, 20 media releases a month) reaching a few dozen thousand to several million recipients (depending on the medium: press, radio, television).

What were the main messages?

When we are talking about adopting a river we mean assuming a role of its guardian and extending care to it, and also understanding global interrelations and connections between rivers and seas.

The programme will include, among other actions, cleaning the river and its banks, special classes dedicated to the protection of rivers and the Baltic Sea, outdoor activities and excursions, quest for the sources, research and monitoring of the water purity, identifying riparian plant species, learning about migratory fish species, learning the history and geography of the river and sea, naming yet unnamed brooks, organizing arts, literature and photography competitions, plays and exhibitions, establishing covenants for the river and the Baltic Sea.

Who were the partners? Did you involve other institutions/ministries/agencies/NGOs?

Strategic partners in 2006/2007

Troton - ;
AquaStress -

Partners in 2006/2007

Provincial Land Reclamation and Water Devices Authority in Lodz; Regional Water Management Authority in Gliwice; Institute of Engineering and Water Management in Cracow, Local Council in Goscino, Local Council in Wilkowice.

Partners in 2008

Minister of Environment

Regional Water Management Authorities, Land Reclamation and Water Devices Authorities, educational institutions, institutions of higher learning, local governments, business enterprises

Project partners:

co-operation with government agencies to build partnership for rivers:

adopting the Przemsza - Cracow Polytechnical University Water Engineering and Management Institute and Regional Authority for Water Management in Gliwice;

adopting the Parsęta – Gościno Borough Office,

adopting the Wilkówka and Biała rivers – Wilkowice Borough Office;

and for the Czarna Bielina and Wolbórka rivers - Provincial Authority of Land Improvement and Water Facilities in Łódź.

Civil Society participation:

Parents' Councils, local communities, non-governmental organizations, local authorities – village headpersons, village administrators, town mayors, aldermen, representatives of village, borough, county, and provincial governments, borough and town office Departments of Education and Depts. of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Environmental Education Centres, Municipal Water Supply and Sanitation Utilities, Regional Boards of Water Management, Provincial Authorities for Land Improvement and Water Facilities, Food Management School Complex, Gościno School Complex and Junior High School, Lasz Państwowe (National Forests) Gościno District Forestry Management, K.W.S. „Salomo”, Troton company and Klub Gaja. Care was extended to the Parsęta river.

Who financed the activities, amount of finances?

Sources of funding 2006/2007

- National Fund for Environment Protection and Water Management – 232,495 zł - 02-673 Warszawa, ul. Konstruktorska 3A, tel 022 459 00 00 , fax: 459 01 01, email fundusz@nfosigw.gov. pl

- Voivodship Fund for Environment Protection and Water Management in Katowice – 42,400 zł - Katowice, ul. Plebiscytowa 19, tel.: 032 60 32 200, fax.: 032 251 04 06, biuro@wfosigw.katowice.pl

Sources of funding 2008

- The Fisheries Secretariat (2008) - 20 000 Euro

- Global Gree Grant (2008) - 3 000 Euro

- We apply for 59 000 Euro to Fundusz Inicjatyw Obywatelskich

Did you experience any specific difficulties during the action that could be learned from?

- Working with rivers in Poland is difficult, because of Polish law (rivers are administrated by different institutions then the areas by which the rivers flow) .
- Awareness about the river and water problems is very low.
- The interest of grant institutions to fund this kind of projects is very low

Did you receive any feedback after your activities? Did you carry out an evaluation of the results and if yes, what was the outcome?

The project resulted in actions taken by children and young people from schools nationwide to protect rivers and river valleys as well as creating Partnerships for the Rivers Parsęta, Wilkówka, Wolburka and Przemsza. Along with the young people, we adopted 280 rivers, streams, brooks, and ponds throughout the country, and even the Baltic Sea! In 2007, 30 thousand people took part in the "Adopt a River" programme .

Measurable results:

the publication of the newsletter "Współodczuwanie": 4 issues in 4,000 copies each,
 „Adopt a River” leaflet in 15,000 copies,
 a set of 3 „Adopt a River” educational posters in 3,500 copies each, totalling 10,500 copies.
 Also, „Adopt a River Report” was published in 4,000 copies,

"Adopt a River" exhibition – circulation 9 x 3,500 copies, totalling 31,500 copies,
 educational-informational materials were mailed out to 3,500 schools as well as 500 organizations working to protect rivers and partners. The "Adopt a River" exhibition was displayed in three towns: Katowice, Kołobrzeg, and Wilkowice; another one is scheduled for Tomaszów Mazowiecki. The openings included 2 lectures each, and, in Katowice, a „How to Save a River” film show followed by a discussion of global risks of natural resources running short and climate changes.

We received reports and photos from schools, which had realised activities during the programme and show us how many rivers were adopted.

Is any follow-up or duplication of this experience foreseen?

Our 19 years' experience of conducting educational programmes show that the recurring character of the programme is crucial so we want to continue the river adopting programme in the 2008/2009 school year, emphasizing the connection between our rivers and the Baltic.

Year by year the new schools want to join the programme, also the local governments (e.g Local Council in Limanowa) and non-governmental organisation like ecoclubs in Poland.

Building partnerships for rivers and the Baltic Sea

The key activity under the programme is creating a "Partnership for Rivers" aiming to integrate different stakeholders and water users around actions to protect rivers and the sea. To raise the participants' awareness of the river significance, of connections and relationships around water, rivers and sea, we find it important to invite participation of the biggest possible group of river users, e.g. local authorities, government agencies managing water resources (Regional Authorities of Water Management, Provincial Authorities for Land Improvement and Water Facilities), local businesses, non-governmental organizations (Polish Angling Union), educational facilities including primary and junior high schools. Such action conforms the guidelines of the Water Framework Directive which posits the necessity of community participation.

Why do you consider that your proposal should be selected as the best practice initiative of the year?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Building partnership for rivers and the Baltic Sea is very innovative in Poland- Our programme has all-Polish and international range. We try to involved in the programme different bodies like schools, local communities, local goverments, water management institutions, bussines, also the international partners to protect the Baltic Sea.- In our programme we use many art forms such as theatre, happenings and graffiti-street art to raise awarness among the public.

Please feel free to attach any printed material, photos etc.

Send your application to EECN_secretariat@cowi.com by 1 June 2008