UNEP/WUPPERTAL INSTITUTE COLLABORATING CENTRE ON SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

What role can civil society play to encourage sustainable consumption patterns in the CEE region?

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Outline of the presentation

- Introduction
- CSO involvement in SC - why it is important?
- The role of CSOs in CEE region - barriers and opportunities
- Two new projects on CSO involvement
  - Inform and Engage: CSO Platform on SCP
  - Engage nd Pilot: Civil Society and Research Community Partnering for SCP
- Conclusions ans recommendations

Definition of key words

Sustainable consumption

Sustainable consumption gives consumers the opportunity to consume products and services that meet their needs in an efficient and effective way, while minimizing the negative environmental, social and economic impact. The ultimate goal of sustainable consumption is to improve quality of life for all consumers in our and future generations, while minimizing associated environmental impacts. (UNEP, 2005)

Civil society organisation

Any legal entity that is non-governmental, not-for-profit, not representing commercial interests and pursuing a common purpose in the public interest. This definition includes traditional citizen and community groups, environmental and social lobby groups, religious organisations, human rights groups, health groups, women's groups, youth and student organisations etc. (CSCP, 2008)

The CEE region

- Albania
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Czech Republic
- Estonia
- Hungary
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Macedonia
- Montenegro
- Poland
- Romania
- Serbia
- Slovakia
- Slovenia

(OECD, 2008)

Consumer's space of action & Levels of CSO activities

The potential role of CSOs in SC

At the moment, civil society organisations aren't participating very actively in the high-level sustainable consumption and production policy processes and reseach, even though their participation is considered to be crucial in the implementation of ambitious sustainability strategies.

Source: CSCP

Current CSO practices towards SCP in CEE region (Anped 2007)

CEE-countries	Number of areas where action had been taken (5 = top score)	Number of areas where action had been announced (5 = top score)
Bulgaria	3	1
Czech Republic	3	0
Hungary	5	1
Latvia	4	0
Romania	0	2
Serbia	1	1
Ukraine	2	1
Other countries	**Number of areas where action had been taken**	**Number of areas where action had bee n announced (5 = top score)**
Belgium	5	4
Germany	5	0
USA	5	0
Norway	2	0

Barriers and opportunities for action towards SCP

Barriers
- Lack of proper and stable funding
- Lack of knowledge
- Lack of efficient dialogue between different stakeholders

Opportunities
- Good networks with local actors, close to consumers
- Good examples:
  - Hungarian Network for Sustainable Production and Consumption
  - Greening the Trade Network

Stages of CSO involvement in SC (inspired by Smith, 1994)

Two Recent FP7 Projects on Civil Societies Role Towards SCP (Stages 1,2 & 3)

Civil Society Organizations Platform on Sustainable Consumption & Production (CSO Platform on SCP)

Objective	To provide a dialogue platform that can give CSOs a space for identifying research needs and influencing political decisions on SCP.
Scope	It will focus on major impact areas of food and drink, housing and mobility that are responsible for 70% of environmental damage in the EU.
Activities	• Base line report (overview of trends, drivers, impacts within high impact consumption areas, as well as an overview of current CSO activities backed up by interviews, innovative and creative action areas towards SCP) • Launch conference (13-14 October 2008), Impact area workshops (mid of February 2009), Closing Conference, Strategic Summary Workshop for Policy Feedback • Online dialogue platform
Partners	• UNEP/Wuppertal Institute Centre on SCP (CSCP) • Regional Environmental Centre (REC) • Centre for Sustainable Design (CfSD)

CSO Platform on SCP Project timeline

The focus of the CSO platform in SCP project

CSO Platform on SCP Get engaged!

Civil Society and Research Community Partnering for SCP

Objective	To create partnerships between civil society organisations and their stakeholders (especially research community) to increase their involvement in SC(P) research.
Scope	To provide new insights for increasing efficiency of policy strategies, assessment tools and indicators for SCP through small-scale exploratory actions.
Major Activities	• State of the art review (in three core areas policy strategies, assessment tools and indicators) **- Kick of November 2008!** • Survey to identify gaps of knowledge • Setting-up of national networks lead by civil society focal points (acquiring of new partners with financial support) • Capacity-building workshops on three core areas • Exploratory actions/small-scale projects within three core areas • Match-making between research institutions & CSOs and announcing partnerships at the closing conference

Structure of the Civil Society and Research Community Partnering for SCP project

1. Taking stock & identifying gaps

Research Arena
- Scientific Community
- Industry

CSO Arena
- social NGOs
- environmental NGOs

Identify knowledge gaps & need for new insights

2. Filling the Gap in 3 Focus Areas

FA 1: Indicators | FA 2: Assessment Tools | FA 3: Policy Strategies

Guidance & Exploratory actions between the research community and the CSOs in the given focus areas

3. Creating partnerships

Creation of partnerships between CSOs and research community

Civil Society and Research Community Partnering for SCP Why to get involved?

Why should your civil society organisation get involved?

Three possible levels of engagement:

Partners	High	Medium	Low
cscp, ANPED, SERI, SEI, WWF	• Receive project funding to work on policy strategies, indicators and/or assessment tools for SCP; • Become a project partner to work with leading SCP experts; • Become national focal point to set-up a national network on SCP.	• Build capacity in three core issues of SCP research; • Receive funding for travel & accomodation; • Share best practices; • Establish own SCP network.	• Get familiar with core issues of SCP research; • Join capacity building workshops; • Observe the process & get new contacts.

Conclusions

- Civil society has a major role in SCP
- Involvement of CSOs in CEE region is limited
- Four stages: Inform, Engage, Pilot, Multiply
- CSO platform project: stages 1 and 2
- CSO partnering project: stages 2 and 3
- Multiplying would be crucial to become real partners, and at times leaders, for change towards SCP

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Thank you for your attention!

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Theoretical background

Informal institutions

Consumption is profoundly a social phenomenon, so social action is needed to change the informal institutions constraining consumers' behaviour

Informal institutions
Formal institutions
consumer

The role of CSOs?

Formal institutions

Also formal institutions define consumers' *space of action.* This means that also the framework set by governments and business actors needs to be changed.

Inform and engage: The CSO platform

A short description of the project