

A look at the scene

The Albanian environmental NGO electronic network called 'Jehona' was established at the end of 2001. Its name refers to an ancient way of communicating with others from a distance using mouth horns. Run by a working group of five NGO representatives, Jehona plans to implement a variety of activities, ranging from training seminars through periodic NGO meetings to creating an on-line NGO yellow pages.

Environmental NGOs from all entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina are active in communicating through the EkoMrezaBiH mailing list. (The name is the abbreviation of "Bosnia and Herzegovina's Environmental Network".) Besides sharing information that ranges from environmental issues to funding alerts, NGOs plan even closer on-line collaboration in the future. This includes launching a Web site with environmental and NGO news, organizing study tours to experienced partner networks and holding training seminars on editing on-line news.

Established in 1998, the Bulgarian network, BlueLink, is one of the more experienced networks of the region. Working with a full-time staff of three people and closely following the needs of the NGOs they serve, BlueLink is a virtual meeting place of NGOs to exchange information and to "obtain information about domestic and international environmental news, events, campaigns, activities and projects". The network offers its members Web servi-

ces, mailing lists, training programmes, help with media relations, consulting services and implements various demand-driven projects. Please visit the network on-line at www.bluelink.net.

By building on experience gained in non-electronic networks such as Green Phone and Green Forum, Croatia's environmental NGOs are in the process of finding the best ways to work together through the Internet. The main means of on-line communication is a mailing list called "Krug", which is open to all interested NGOs. Network members are also looking into ways to cooperate and learn from the experience of ZamirNet, Croatia's well-established network for NGOs in the social movement.

Formal networking activities in FYR Macedonia started with the establishment of the 'Eko.Net' working group at the beginning of 2001. It has already set up its Web site at www.eko.net.mk, including information such as environmental news, address lists and environmental links. The network offers its members on-line publishing services and organizes training seminars.

As you can read on their Web site, the Romanian network, "StrawberryNet provides various services such as Web publishing applications, personalised discussion lists, support for actions and campaigns, Web hosting, domain names and e-mail addresses". Launched in 1994, StrawberryNet has accumulated significant experience since its establishment. At the beginning it focused

mainly on providing electronic network access services and then gradually evolved into a content-oriented network. Please find their portal Web site on-line at www.ngo.ro.

Similar to the previously mentioned countries, environmental NGOs in Yugoslavia are also in the progress of building the country's environmental NGO network, called 'Volvox' (the philosophy comes from the unicellular algae living exclusively as a colony). It has already hosted a number of computer and network seminars, and is planning to further increase the knowledge and capacity of its members by organising training seminars as well as fund raising for computer hardware. Future plans also include the launch of an on-line portal that will provide a wide range of environmental and organisational information.

Established in February 2002, the Kosovar network chose 'Sharri.Net' as its name, denoting a cross-border mountain range between Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia. Governed by three working groups (Strategic Network Working Group, a Technical and a Content Working Group) the network joins the forces of participating NGOs by providing access to computer hardware, setting up e-mail mailing lists, editing an electronic newsletter, organizing training seminars and launching a portal Web site. Network meetings take place in the NGO Internet Cafe of the REC's Kosovo Field Office.

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