



Volume 1, January 2000

News from the Global Ecovillage Network

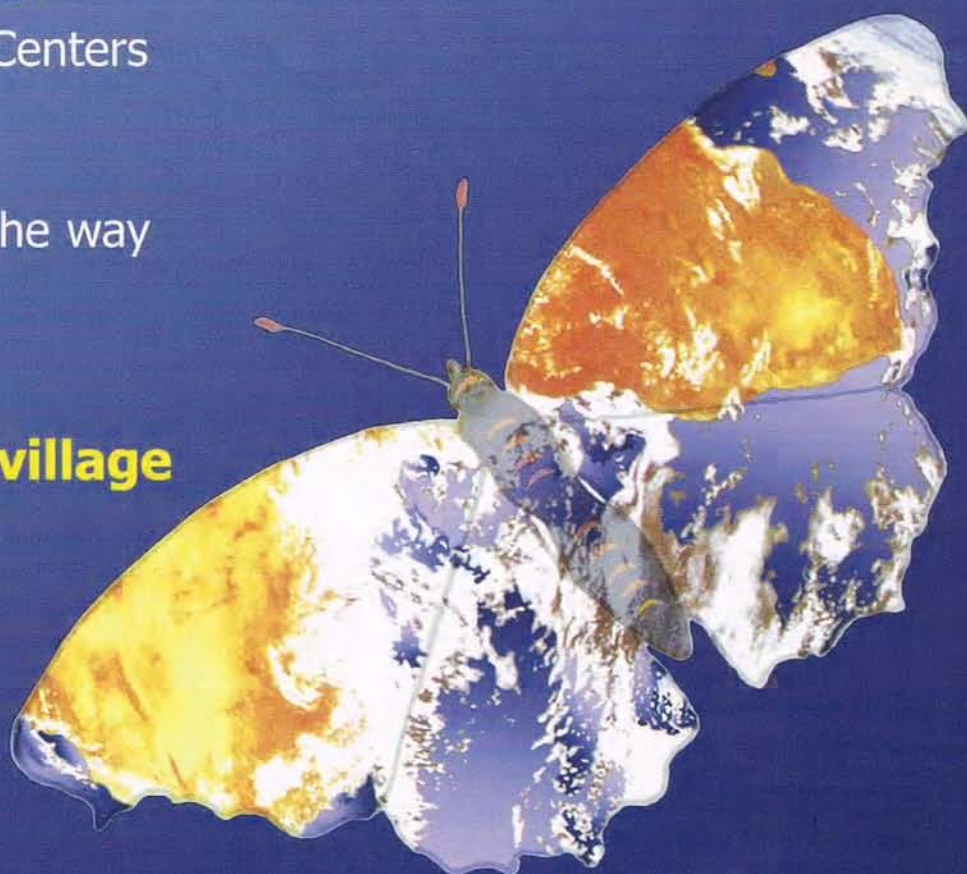
Ecovillage Millennium

From Global to Local
Towards green economics

Ecovillage Education
Living and Learning Centers

Expo 2000
Lebensgarten leads the way

**Stories from Ecovillage
Pioneers Around
the World**





Council of GEN-Europe in 1998, at the GEN-Europe Assembly in Torri Superiore. From left to right: Christina De Wilde; Agnieszka Komoch; Declan Kennedy; Demet Irkli; Lucilla Borio (now GEN-Europe Coordinator); Silke Hagmaier.

GEN's First Chairman Retires

Declan Kennedy

I have been a part of the development that led to the Global Ecovillage Network in the early 1990's - the representative of my own community: the ecovillage of Lebensgarten Steyerberg in northern Germany. After the Findhorn Conference in October 1995, I committed myself to a four-hour-a-day job to get the European secretariat of GEN started. This developed very quickly to a 14 hour-a-day occupation and although it was sometimes pretty heavy going and often too much travelling, I never felt burnt out - as I had the support of so many friends in the movement, both in Europe and overseas. It was a great experience and I never would have missed it. However, I decided to live by my principle that the best teacher is the one who makes himself redundant - and so I retired in July this year as I reached the young age of 65 years. My commitment to GEN-Europe terminated in October as an interim election of the Council took place in Hocamköy, Turkey and to the GEN International Board at their meeting in Sri Lanka in November 1999.

So what happens now? What do I do with my new found freedom? No pushy meetings, no unfinished reports, no checking of budgets and no assistance to budding ecovillage networks - I had helped 14 of them to get off the ground before Christmas of 1998. Well, I am not under-employed, to make a conservative statement. My calendar is full, still - but now with

things I want to do and not with events I feel I have to attend. First and foremost, I am taking it easier, taking care of my body and my soul and my relationship to my wife and my community. Then, EXPO 2000 - the world fair in Hannover - is coming up soon, and Lebensgarten is a registered Worldwide Project. This means a lot of building and re-building on and about our communal spaces, the Great Hall, the large Terrace etc. Work camps and working bees almost every month if not more often. I am also finding time to paint, to improvise on the piano and record some of the best pieces, and to follow up on my hobbies of Geomancy & Feng Shui, to delve into things like Intuition and to balance it out with my Ratio, to make a weekend seminar of it passing it on to others. I also teach Ecovillage Design and Permaculture in my community and abroad, e.g. in

Norway and the Netherlands. Above all, I have time to look within and to find my own healing points, my blockages and my spiritual routes - and I have time to dance. I celebrated my 65th birthday with between 30 and 90 people, depending on the time of day or night, during 48 hours of dancing and poetry. This has helped me to find again who I am and what I want to do with the next 30 years.

Thanks to Declan

Ross Jackson

We would like to honor and thank Declan Kennedy for his leadership role as the first chairman of GEN in the period since the Findhorn meeting in October 1995. His enthusiasm and professionalism has been a great asset to the movement, not to mention all the joy his dancing has brought to us all. He is the incarnation of the ecovillage spirit. We wish him all the best in his next project, Lebensgarten's participation in the Hannover 2000 World Fair (see article page 16).

Wish for the New Millennium

Declan Kennedy

My wish for the new millennium is for people to realise that their thoughts create their situations, their sicknesses and their health, their sorrows and their joys, their wars and their peace. And that every thought is an energy. All we need to do is discipline our thoughts. Each person takes on this responsibility. Thinking positively and with love can create heaven on Earth.



Declan Kennedy (center front) inspiring a group of people with his usual gusto in the meeting hall at Fjordvang, Denmark.