

Environment Liaison Center International Organizational Profile

The Environment Liaison Centre International (ELCI) is a global coalition of more than 800 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working on issues of environment and sustainable development in more than 80 countries. The ELCI secretariat is located in Nairobi, Kenya. <http://www.elci.org>

ELCI was established in 1974 as a membership organization with the aim of strengthening communication and co-operation between NGOs and local communities, providing liaison between NGOs and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), helping to strengthen environmental NGO and local community capacities in developing countries and encouraging the advisory role of environmental NGOs through the organs of the United Nations.

In all its activities, ELCI seeks to strengthen the quality and effective dissemination of information for environmental policy-making and management, to improve access to environmental information for the public at the national, regional and international levels, and to increase access to environmental justice through opening and widening of the door for civil society voices.

At the international level, ELCI serves as a neutral facilitator of civil society, focusing on the process of opening doors for NGO voices. It has served in an NGO facilitation role in numerous international environmental processes, such as during the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 and is currently one of three coordinating NGOs for the NGO Major Groups in the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) process.

Specific processes in which ELCI plays an NGO facilitation role include the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), in collaboration with Third World Network (TWN) and the Northern Alliance for Sustainability (ANPED); and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in collaboration with the UNCCD Secretariat; and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in collaboration with the CBD Alliance.

Activities, Achievements & Projects

ELCI activities are concentrated in five thematic areas: forests, water, energy, agriculture, and environmental governance. For each thematic area, a variety of approaches and projects are implemented. These are based at the local, national, and regional levels, with cross-cutting initiatives concentrated at international fora.

ELCI focuses on the local-global linkages, especially with those initiatives that bring policy or ideas to the grassroots levels or 'on the ground' case studies or lessons learned to the decision-making people. The main aspects of this work are communication, information generation, and dissemination aimed at environmental conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

Other recent and ongoing activities include the following:

The Information Exchange Mechanisms project has conducted a participatory review of the information and communication needs of NGOs in eight countries in Eastern and Southern Africa.

Public Access to Environmental Information, Decision making, and Justice in Kenya is a project aiming to increase the role of civil society in promoting good environmental governance and sustainable development in Kenya. In an effort to implement principle 10 of Agenda 21, ELCI undertook to build capacity and create awareness among NGOs, CBOs, and individuals in Kenya concerning the existence of the recently enacted Environmental Management and Co-ordinations Act of 1999, which enhances participation in environmental protection and management by communities.

The main goal of this project is to assist communities in identifying how environmental problems may be addressed by the Act. As of May 2003, Four community guides on Environmental Issues (**With financial support from Royal Netherlands Embassy & HIVOS for the reprint**) had been developed based on different ecological regions of the country and several paralegals in different regions had been trained. Since access to justice has been a major issue, the project has also trained lawyers, district commissioners, district committee members, and other stakeholders across the country, to enhance environmental justice.

In the Biodiversity and Civil Society project, ELCI has been the co-coordinator both of the biodiversity caucus within the WSSD and at the CSD and of the NGO community around the CBD. For the WSSD, ELCI worked with the NGOs to craft a statement which was distributed to delegates in the official plenary session on biodiversity on the first day of the summit. ELCI also facilitated the NGO input into the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD in the Hague in 2002. To enhance NGO participation, ELCI, with partners, has been producing a daily newsletter called *ECO* that facilitates a common voice for civil society; this was also used as a lobbying tool.

For the **Phasing Out Leaded Fuel Campaign**, ELCI co-coordinated civil society initiative to advocate a rapid phasing out of leaded fuel in the Eastern African region and to increase public awareness of the issues and the options to vote through the marketplace for a speedy transition. ELCI is encouraging and pushing both governments and the private sector to accelerate the phasing out of lead in gasoline.

In the **Forest Campaign and Forest Certification Programme**, ELCI, as a member of the Kenya Forest Working Group, has been working with stakeholders on a campaign directed at stopping the government of Kenya from destroying over 170,000 hectares of forest. ELCI campaigned aggressively to get the government to reverse its decision. With its partners it also filed a court case and an injunction to prevent the government from taking further action. The government of Kenya has recently reversed its decision. ELCI is also the regional focus for Eastern Africa for forest certification. It promotes regional capacity building in the field of forest certification and is working with the consultant group ETC-East Africa. ELCI co-operates closely with the **IUCN** to facilitate the active participation of civil society in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) programme.

Advocacy Behavior Change and Communication/Jaboya Project

In March 2003, IFH, together with Environment Liaison Centre International, produced a report that documents the results of a study on sexual and reproductive health and environmental issues affecting the people of Lake Victoria region in Kenya. The report endeavors to identify interventions that could be taken to reduce the rate of HIV infection among young people aged 13-40 years old, and to mitigate the negative environmental trends in the region. The study comprised of literature reviews, open-ended interviews and focused

group discussions.

African Civil Society Network On Water and Sanitation (ANEW)

The Africa Civil Society Network on Water (ANEW) is a regional networking body established from a commitment to contributing to water resource management and sustainable provision of water and sanitation services in African.

ANEW was conceived from an appreciation of the critical role of civil society organizations (CSO) in the region's successful realization of the 2015 Millennium Development Goals on water and sanitation, and the WSSD international targets on water resource management. The Network was established to meet the need expressed for a regional forum for CSO coordination and involvement in debates and information exchange that would enable the region influence policy decisions and strategies.

ANEW membership is free and open to all civil society organizations working in Africa and who are involved in sustainable water management, water supply and sanitation. As ANEW membership is restricted to CSO, individual members of the public are not eligible to join. Members have access to the secretariat products that have been furnished by fellow members such as good practices, case studies, reports and other publications as well as events and training calendars. In turn, members are required to share their products with the secretariat, participate in ANEW initiatives, discussions and polls.

Kenya Organic Agriculture Network (KOAN) <http://www.koan.co.ke>

Kenya Organic Agriculture Network (KOAN) is the National Coordinating Body for organic agriculture activities in Kenya. KOAN emerged from a consultative process where organic practitioners agreed to come and work together to achieve the synergy required developing the organic sub sector.

KOAN was formed to coordinate, facilitate and provide leadership and professional services to all stakeholders in the organic agriculture industry in Kenya. It aims at developing and promoting local and export markets, supporting development of affordable local certification capacity, creating awareness of the benefits of organic agriculture, developing guidelines for national organic agriculture policies and lobbying for their implementation.

KOAN seeks to promote the organic movement in Kenya, to evolve and become a highly beneficial and integral industry with direct impacts on environment and social economic status. It is organized into five sub committees namely: Production, Training, Certification and Standards setting, Marketing, Promotion, and Lobbying, Advocacy and Networking and has a Steering Committee/Board of 14 members.

East Africa Forest Certification Initiative (EAFCI)

Forest Certification is a process by which stakeholders agree and commit themselves to maintaining defined forest management standards, as verified by independent certifying bodies duly accredited nationally and internationally. Essentially, the process entails verification by an independent certifying body that a forest is managed according to agreed ecological, economic and social criteria. Forest certification has rapidly evolved in the last decade as a market-based "soft" policy instrument for promoting sustainable forest management, which relies on assessing and monitoring of set standards, criteria and indicators to demonstrate progress.

ELCI & the East Africa Forest Certification Initiative

Although the region is not richly endowed with forest resources as some other parts of Africa, the existing forests play vital ecological, economic and livelihood roles which the countries have fully recognized and resolved to strengthen. All the countries in the region have reviewed their national forest programmes with considerable emphasis being given to adoption of sustainable forest management approaches and all the countries have in principle, committed themselves to the transition to the current status of forest mismanagement to sustainable forest management (SFM). Although there is awareness on the need to develop criteria and indicators (C & I) for sustainable forest management, the countries are yet to develop and adopt their (C & I) for management of their forest as would be required for their national certification schemes.

It was against this background that three development agencies supported an initiative in the year 2002 on capacity building for forest certification in Eastern African countries. ELCI was requested to serve as a regional focal point.

Publications

Ecoforum (four times a year)

Kilimohai (four times a year) the KOAN Newsletter on Organic Agriculture

ELCI publishes ECOFORUM, a flag-ship quarterly magazine that highlights environmental and sustainable development issues in an interactive manner, emphasizing the positive actions of individuals and organizations in taking charge of their lives and environment. ECOFORUM aims to stimulate debate and provoke people to adopt a positive outlook to matters of the environment and natural resource management. Other ELCI products include posters, thematic video documentaries on water, HIV/AIDs and the environment, waste management, wildlife, mining, quarrying and livestock/pastoralist related land issues.

Executive Director: Mr. Tanveer Arif
Tel: +92 300 8277101

email: tanveera@elci.org

Coordinator Jaboya Project: Kennedy Orwa

email: kennedyo@elci.org

Coordinator KOAN: Eustace Kiarri

email: koansecretariat@elci.org

KOAN Technical Advisor: Suzy Wren

email: organic@africaonline.co.ke

Organic Consumer Awareness Advisor: John Scully

email: scully@elci.org

Editor Ecoforum: Samuel Waweru

email: wawerus@elci.org

Finance & Admin: Stephen Ng'an'ga

email: stephenn@elci.org

Membership Coordinator: Peter Simi

email: peters@elci.org

Number of Staff: 15

Board Members

Chairman: Mr. Cyril Ritchie (Switzerland)

Treasurer: Rajen Awotar (Mauritius)

Raouf Dabbas (Jordan)

Bob Phelps (Australia)

Liliana Hisas (Argentina)

Dianne Dillonridgley (USA)

Mirian Vilela (Costa Rica)

Stephen Law (South Africa)

Physical Location: ICIPE Complex Duduville Kasarani Road, Kasarani