



# ASSOCIATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT MILIEUKONTAKT MACEDONIA

**Milieukontakt Macedonia** is a non-profit, civil society organization supporting the initiatives of the civil society organizations on environment, nature and sustainable development.

Milieukontakt Macedonia is registered in 2012 as a result of the 12 years of successful implementation of Milieukontakt International programs in Macedonia. "A strong, visible, professional, self-sustainable environmental CSO movement based on the principles of democracy and openness" is our vision. This means a movement that has a high visibility in society, is able to raise public awareness and is capable of playing an important role in policy- and decision-making processes, on a local, national and international level.

## OUR MISSION AND APPROACH

**Milieukontakt** initiates partnerships to improve the quality of life by enhancing people's participation in the development of environmentally sustainable societies.

Milieukontakt cooperates with international partners because environmental problems do not stop at borders. Many of the current environmental challenges are worldwide. On the local level people can be supported and learn from the experiences of others working in other parts of the world with the same problems. Milieukontakt connects people, organizations, and networks that deal with the same challenges and want to cooperate towards enhancing people's participation in defining their own future. Milieukontakt provides people with the means and skills to actually use the possibilities for participation, including training, (legal) advice, assistance and seed financing. Participatory decision-making processes are essential in these partnerships. Milieukontakt focuses on the research and development of tools for participatory learning, decision-making, and project implementation.

## OUR STRENGTHS LIE IN

the application of methodologies to involve people in decision making and implementation processes  
capacity building through mobilization of participants' knowledge and skills in training sessions  
advise and coaching of networks for sustainable development

## KEY AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Capacity building;  
Networking and linking people and organizations;  
Public participation in the decision making process;  
Joining different sectors;  
Solving environmental problems;  
Development of public campaign on environmental issues;  
Supporting democratization and EU accession process;

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## OUR SERVICES

We achieve high quality results by organizing capacity development and stakeholder involvement in projects on community development, climate change, persistent organic pollutants, water management, and civil society development. We use highly innovative participative methods for effective and sustainable decision making and can reach and directly involve local citizens and work easily with authorities, business or civil society. Our partners appreciate us for our success in work directly with local citizens and high level decision makers in the governments.

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## SOLVING ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

THE THREE MAIN PILLARS OF ALL OUR PROJECTS ARE:

The capacity building and the involvement of citizens pillars of the Milieukontakt activities are meant to help building a sustainable society and specifically to help preventing and solving environmental problems. Solving environmental problems is the third of our pillar activities. Milieukontakt connects the three pillars in the conviction that you cannot do one without the other. Realization of a sustainable society needs involvement of citizens and capacities of skilled experts. Although in some of our projects the solution of environmental problems is prior to the other two pillars. Below you find some of the recent examples of solving environmental problems of Milieukontakt Macedonia.

## INVOLVING CITIZENS

MKI network achieves high quality results by organizing stakeholder involvement in projects. Innovative participative methods are used for effective and sustainable decision making and can reach and directly involve local citizens. Network members can easily work with authorities, business or civil society. We have direct access to social political networks and know member countries' specific laws, regulations, cultural aspects, civil society, environment and local networks in the countries.

## BUILDING CAPACITIES

Being an environmentalist means life-long learning, and that is what makes it so interesting! To be effective, an environmental movement requires a certain set of skills that is not easily learned at school or university. Environmentalists have to know about the wide range of subjects covered by 'the environment'. Energy, climate change, waste, water management, sanitation, chemicals, and agriculture are some of the issues with totally different content. You also have to keep up with developments in scientific and political circles. These days, it is all about climate change and what it will or will not bring in the future. You have to keep your knowledge up-to-date to be a partner with governments and other stakeholders. Besides this knowledge on global issues, you have to know what is going on in your country, region, town or village to be effective in your actions. This means that environmentalists are constantly learning and adapting scientific knowledge to their own day-to-day work. They have to be able to translate this knowledge into policy and action. Communication skills are essential, as are legal expertise and negotiating skills. You sometimes have to go to court or negotiate if you cannot reach your goals in any other way. There are many, many other areas in which environmentalists have to train themselves to be effective, like being a good manager, planner, project leader, professional, and knowing how to get all the work financed. These are all reasons why 'building capacities' is one of the three main pillars of the work of Milieukontakt for which we have formulated outcomes for 2015.