

TESTS II -project, Activity 7

International meeting II - back to back with permaculture and urban gardening event

Report

By GEN-Finland / Suomen kestävän elämäntavan yhteisöt ry SKEY

BEN meeting II and EKOKESTIT event in Koroinen, Turku, Finland 5.-7.9.2014

The BEN meeting II/ 2015 and the public event called Ekokestit (“Eco-feast”) were organized by *GEN-Finland*, the network organization of ecovillages. The BEN-meeting took place on Friday, on the Fifth of September, and the two-day public event was at the weekend. The venue of both was Koroinen, an old small farm near Turku city center. An NGO called *Elävän kulttuurin Koroinen ry – EKK* (“Culturally living Koroinen”) works there and is specialized among other things in permaculture and natural materials. EKK was GEN-Finland’s main partner in organizing Ekokestit event.

BEN-meeting

Extended BEN board meeting started at 12:00 and lasted about five hours. “Extended“ meant that not only the board members were invited but two participants from each BEN country and some extra members of GEN-Finland. There were 17 participants (in the meeting) who focused on the progress of the TESTS II-project and planning the future of Baltic Ecovillage Network.

Some BEN representatives came only for the weekend. Altogether there were 15 BEN representatives from 8 countries outside of Finland. (See the list of meeting participants attached.)

EKOKESTIT – the event of sustainable life-style and urban food production

The two-day public event included workshops, presentations and activities about permaculture, urban gardening and different kinds of sustainable life-style issues. There was also a small market in the yard where local food and handicrafts were sold. (See the detailed program on the next page.) The BEN representatives stayed at Koroinen the whole weekend, thus part of the program was held in English. The day-program was directed both to the ecovillage activists and to the general public. On Saturday evening there was an international gathering concerning networking for ecovillagers.

About 100 people participated in the daytime activities on Saturday and about 60 on Sunday. (There was no registration for the visitors.) The public consisted of representatives from ecovillages and NGOs, gardeners and farmers, experts, students and persons interested in sustainable lifestyle issues. The aims of the event were achieved: to promote urban gardening and permaculture ideas and practices to wider public, to strengthen the networks of permaculture and ecovillage activists and to attract public interest in the sustainable lifestyle issues.

There was one article about Ekokestit in a local newspaper and advertisements on GEN-Finland’s and EKK’s websites before the event. Stories and photos about the event were published on GEN-Finland’s and BEN’s websites afterwards. See the links and attachments at the end of the report.

The advertisement and the program of EKOKESTIT-event published on GEN-Finland's and EKK's websites (translated into English afterwards)

EKOKESTIT-event in Koroinen, Turku 6.-7.9.2014

The themes of the event:

ECOLOGICAL WAY OF LIVING - SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION -
URBAN AGRICULTURE - PERMACULTURE - COMMUNALITY - SELF-SUFFICIENCY

workshops - bulletins - presentations - discussions - working together - guests from ecovillages in Finland and other countries - products from ecovillages and close by - music - a cafe ...

Sat 6.9. at 12 - 18 & Sun 7.9. at 12 - 16

Address: Koroinen, Koroistentie 2, Turku

WELCOME to the inspiring event! Free admission!

Organizers: GEN Finland (Suomen kestävä elämäntavan yhteisöt SKEY ry), Baltic Ecovillage Network BEN, Elävän kulttuurin Koroinen ry [NGO], Mikä kestää? Ry [NGO]

EKOKESTIT PROGRAM

Both days: Luomukassi-shop [organic and local food] and Cafe Koroinen open

Sat 6.9. at 12:00 – 18:00

Throughout the day:

On sale products from ecovillages and nearby, for example: honey, tea, chocolate, kompucha-drink, bread, pollen products, smoothie, handicrafts...

Introducing the equipment for cultivation, eco-building (Luomura Association Mikko Tuononen), photos of urban farming...

Short presentations from 12:00 to 13:30:

- BEN Baltic Ecovillage Network / Karl Randau
- Urban gardening and eco-oases in the city (case study from Riga) / Mihai Hodrea
- Start Where You Are, do what you can: how to start a sustainable food business in home-scale? Experiences from Estonia / Liina Järviste
- Local economy and ethical banking / Marika Lohi
- Organic tourism and landraces / Terhi Arell
- Haist kukkanen -Project (Urban gardening project from Tampere city)/ Heikki Attila
- Permateachers EPT project / Outi Tuomela
- Earth-water-fire-air elements in sustainable life / Veli Martin Keitel

Workshops

- 13:00-15:00 Folk wind instruments / Minna Hokka
- 13:30-14:30 Edible mushroom cultivation / Jouni Issakainen -Herkkuruokaa puusta [Food from wood] -project, the Turku University of Applied Sciences
- 15:00-15:30 Didgeridoo / Ifik
- 15:30-16:30 Whittling school and performance "Fable Whittling" / Joel Nokelainen

15:00-18:00 Open Space [simultaneous workshops and discussions about issues which participants raise up]

For example:

- Earth-water-fire-air elements in sustainable life / Veli Martin Keitel
- The Peace Bridge and roots / Kai Vaara
- Transition Island Project / Alan Pael Bjerre (Denmark)
- To defend the community rights in the world today and the North-South co-operation/ Ville-Veikko Hirvelä
- Future of the Baltic Ecovillage Network / Representatives of the Baltic Ecovillage Network
- Permacultural community / Milka Keihäs

Additionally: Music, nearby hiking, archery...

Sun 7.9. at 12:00-16:00

12-14 Community Housing Date / Johanna Kerovuori *

12-15 Mushroom picking trip / Pekka Räsänen

13-14 Performance "Fable Whittling" / Joel Nokelainen

14-15 Discussion: Are we allowed to be optimistic about the future of the world? / Veli Martin Keitel

*** *Community Housing Date***

Johanna Kerovuori tells: "Community housing dates are organized because it is difficult to find the nice house and similar minded people at the same time. Even more difficult is to find a group of people to start cohousing or ecovillage project. There were about thirty people participating the date at Koroinen.

First there were "fast dates" with discussions to get people warm. Then we draw two axes on the ground, which described different dimensions of community housing, for example countryside - city center, rental - private owned. People had to choose their positions in the diagram to recognize their own preferences and to find the similar minded persons.

Afterwards the participants told: "This made me really think about how I situate myself on the axes..." "A lot of different people, a lot of opportunities." "It was nice that this was not just a lecture, but I was able to participate." "My dreams came more clear and now I want to make them true!"

Links

The advertisements of Ekokestit-event:

- <http://koroinen.org/ajankohtaista/> (EKK)
- <http://rihmasto.fi/node/988> (GEN-Finland)
- <http://www.minnahokka.com/ajankohtaista/ekokestit-turussa-6-7-9.html> (Minna Hokka)
- <http://www.yhteisoasuminen.fi/index.php/item/102-lahde-treffille> (Johanna Kerovuori)

Ekokestit-event in Facebook:

- BEN: www.facebook.com/BalticEcovillageNetwork > BEN extended board meeting (a lot of photos from the meeting and the event).
- Luomumatkailuyhdistys - Eceat Suomi ry
- Hyvät Uutiset
- Perinnepata
- Yhteisöasumistreffit
- and many private persons' Facebook sites

The story about Ekokestit on GEN-Finland's web site:

- <http://rihmasto.fi/node/990>

Ekokestit in a local newspaper:

- <http://turkulainen.ly.prod.wunder.io/artikkeli/235481-ekokesteilta-saa-tietoa-ruuasta-ja-ekorakentamisesta>

Ekokestit in a blog of a newspaper:

- <http://koti.ts.fi/juurutus/ekologisen-elaman-keskus-aurajoen-rannalla/>

Attachments

- 1) The list of the BEN meeting participants
- 2) The Ekokestit advertisement that was disseminated e.g. to cafe's and libraries in Turku.
- 3) Photos by Outi Tuomela