

## A retrospective view on EcoSan Club's awareness raising activities

*This paper provides an overview on EcoSan Club events and publications over the last 10 years.*

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### Abstract

The main activities of the EcoSan Club are the promotion of Ecological Sanitation (EcoSan) principles and provision of information. Over the last 10 years different awareness raising activities have been organised and coordinated. This paper provides an overview on these activities. One of the activities is SHIT HAPPENS, a series of events on EcoSan taking place since the year 2000. So far 7 events have been organized. Another event was the exhibition "Sanitation is Dignity", which had a stopover in Vienna, at the Campus of the University of Vienna in September 2007. Also different publications have been produced, like the "Sustainable Sanitation Practice" (SSP) journal. SSP is published quarterly since the fall of 2009 and provides high quality information on practical experiences with available sustainable sanitation systems.

### SHIT HAPPENS

SHIT HAPPENS stands for a series of events on the topic of Ecological Sanitation (EcoSan), which have been taking place since the year 2000. Over the years a variety of topics have been dealt with, from projects in East Africa to sanitation in the mountains in Austria. Invited speakers have been from numerous countries including Germany, Kenya and the Philippines. The focus was on a number of topics, from very general events on the concept of Ecological Sanitation to specific solutions for alpine huts. All events have been organized in cooperation of EcoSan

Club and the Institute of Sanitary Engineering at BOKU University in Vienna where most of the events took place. The best-attended event was the one in the year 2006, "SHIT HAPPENS IV – Resource-oriented wastewater systems: a possibility for alpine regions?" with nearly 100 students and participants.

Detailed information on the different events is available at <http://www.ecosan.at/events>. A short overview on all SHIT HAPPENS events is summarised in the following:

### Main activities:

#### Events:

- SHIT HAPPENS: 7 events since the year 2000.
- A full day workshop for architects and planners on resources-oriented wastewater systems on 16.09.2004, at Kommunalkredit Austria KG, Vienna.
- „Sanitation is Dignity – Where would you hide?": Exhibition from 25.–30.09.2007 at the Campus of the University of Vienna.

#### Publications:

- Müllegger, E., Lechner, M. (2004): Ecological Sanitation – a sustainable approach to the future. Austrian Development Agency, Vienna, Austria.
- Langergraber, G. and Müllegger, E. (2005): Ecological sanitation - A way to solve global sanitation problems? *Environ Int* 31(3), 433-444.
- Müllegger, E., Lechner, M., (2008): Solutions in Sanitation – Planning principles. Austrian Development Agency, Vienna, Austria.
- EcoSan Club (since fall 2009): Sustainable Sanitation Practice. <http://www.ecosan.at/ssp>

Title:	SHIT HAPPENS I – Ecological Sanitation
Date and Place:	15.06.2000, BOKU University, Vienna
Invited guests:	Uno Windblad (Swedish Development Cooperation), Andreas Knapp and Helmut Jung (BOKU University)
Topic:	The general concept of Ecological Sanitation and experiences from China, Vietnam and Mexico were presented.

Title:	SHIT HAPPENS und wohin damit?
Date and Place:	11.12.2002, BOKU University, Vienna
Invited guests:	Christine Werner (Deutsche Gesellschaft für technische Zusammenarbeit, GTZ); Erich Kaschka (Posch & Partner GmbH-Ingenieur-Gemeinschaft), Andreas Knapp (The World Bank/Water and Sanitation Program – Africa)
Topic:	The concept of Ecological Sanitation and experiences from East Africa, Kosovo and Austria were presented.

Title:	SHIT HAPPENS III
Date and Place:	15.12.2004, BOKU University, Vienna
Invited guests:	Helmut Jung (BOKU University), Markus Lechner (EcoSan Club), Elke Müllegger (BOKU University, EcoSan Club), Gert de Bruijne (WASTE, Netherlands).
Topic:	The brochure “Ecological Sanitation – a sustainable approach to the future” as well as sustainable sanitation projects in East Africa were presented. Gert de Bruijne presented the film „The Human Excreta Index“.

Title:	SHIT HAPPENS IV – Resource-oriented wastewater systems: a possibility for alpine regions?”
Date and Place:	07.12.2006, BOKU University, Vienna
Invited guests:	Peter Kapelari (Österreichischer Alpenverein), Gunnar Amor (TB Amor), Christian Gschnitzer (Hüttenwirt der Bettelwurfhütte), Wolfgang Becker (Universität Innsbruck).
Topic:	The invited guests presented the specific problems remote huts in the Alps are faced with and introduced sustainable sanitation solutions which have been implemented in Tyrolenne Mountains.



Figures 1 (top & bottom): Bettelwurfhütte in Tyrol, equipped with a urine diverting toilet system (Pictures: Gunnar Amor).

Title:	SHIT HAPPENS V – kein Klo, also Wo?
Date and Place:	27.09.2007, Campus of the University of Vienna
Invited guests:	Markus Lechner (EcoSan Club), Martin Regelsberger (AEE Intec), Hans Schattauer (African Development Bank), Marie-France Chevron (Institut für Kultur- und Sozialanthropologie, Universität Wien), Catherine Mwangi (KWAHO, Kenia), Dan Lapid (Centre for Advanced Philippine Studies)
Topic:	This event took place as part of the exhibition „Sanitation is dignity“. The invited experts discussed questions like: What does it mean for the people to have insufficient or no access to sanitation infrastructure? Which problems are people faced with? Who can solutions look like? How is the situation in Austria?

Title:	SHIT HAPPENS VI – Sustainable Sanitation in praxis, a journey through East-Africa
Date and Place:	10.12.2008, Afro Asian Institute (AAI) Vienna
Invited guests:	Stefan Jung (EcoSan Club), Elke Müllegger (EcoSan Club), Franz Höllhuber, Hans Schattauer (Austrian Development Agency).
Topic:	This event took place on occasion of the „International Year of Sanitation 08“. Projects, which are aiming to improve the sanitation infrastructure in East African cities, were presented as well as the brochure „Solutions in Sanitation - Planning Principles“.

Title:	SHIT HAPPENS 12 - Sustainable implementation of water and sanitation project in Africa and Europe - experiences from the last 10 years
Date and Place:	31.10.2012, BOKU University, Vienna
Invited guests:	Martin Wafler (Seecon), Elisabeth Freiburger and Elke Müllegger (EcoSan Club), Markus Lechner (EcoSan Club)
Topic:	Shit Happens 12 celebrated the 10 years anniversary of the EcoSan Club. The focus of the event is the implementation of sustainable sanitation projects in Africa and Europe.

### Resource-oriented wastewater systems – planning and implementation of ecological oriented sanitation concepts

The workshop on „Kreislauforientierte Abwassersysteme - Planung und Ausführung von ökologisch orientierten Sanitärkonzepten“ on 16.09.2004 was hosted by Kommunalkredit Austria AG in Vienna. It was well attended with over 40 participants from a broad range of disciplines, from authorities, engineering offices and universities. The brisance of the topic was clearly defined with the focus of discussion firmly concentrated on Austria and Germany. Animated discussions followed the presentations and filled the coffee breaks.

The programme was divided into two main areas: i) Theory and ii) practical implementation. Both blocks concentrated on wastewater management, with the emphasis on the possible contribution of architecture to ecological sanitary concepts. It was clearly stated that for architecture function alone was not the only focal point. A balance between function and effect must also occur, and it was acknowledged that composition and design can play a huge role in ensuring acceptance. Both these themes are often largely neglected in the technical planning of sanitary concepts.

The documents presented in the conference (contributions and presentations) are available at: <http://www.ecosan.at/events>.

## Sanitation is Dignity – Where would you hide?

“Where Would You Hide?” is a travelling exhibition, which has been touring prominent public places, conferences and museums since 2006. From 25-30 September 2007 the exhibition was on display in Vienna, at the Campus of the University of Vienna.

*“Crowds of children helped to break the toilet taboo in Vienna.*

*What started as a side-programme to the exhibition quickly became the key attraction of the event. A puppet theatre and educational activities for children drew more school and pre-school groups than we had ever expected. And the happy bustle of the youngsters (Figure 2) convinced older passer-bys to also stop and watch.*

*Newspapers announced that locals could come to have their picture taken to be transformed into a figure and thereby become part of the travelling exhibition. The children's open approach to this basic human need provided a great example for the adults and encouraged many supporters to participate in the competition (pants up!). By the end of the week the campaign had two new “orange squatters”. Another new figure was provided by eight year old Birgit's excellent drawing.” (German Toilet Organisation, 2009).*

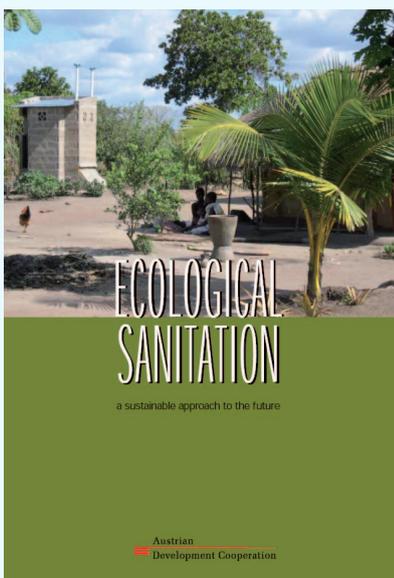
The event was made possible with support from the Austrian Development Agency. Further support was provided by CWS, Catholic Children's Movement (Dreikönigsaktion) and BOKU University.

More information on the “Sanitation is dignity” campaign is available at <http://www.sanitation-is-dignity.org>.



Figure 3: Children help to break the toilet taboo in Vienna (Picture: Elke Müllegger).

## Publications



Author: Müllegger, E. and Lechner, M.  
 Publisher: Austrian Development Agency  
 Year: 2004

Link: <http://www.ecosan.at/info/publications>

### Ecological Sanitation – a sustainable approach to the future

The brochure “Ecological Sanitation – a sustainable approach to the future” provides an overview on the concept of ecological sanitation. It includes also two examples of EcoSan Programmes of the Austrian Development Cooperation from Uganda and Mozambique.

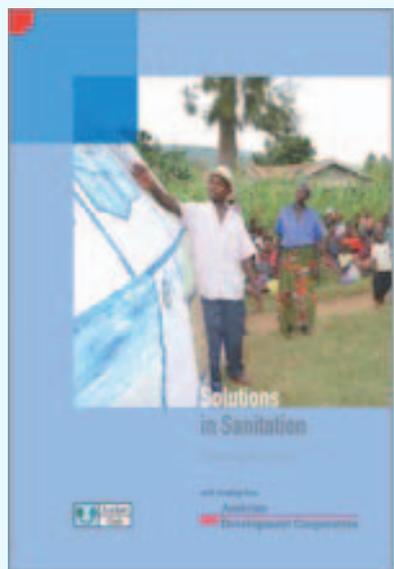


Author: Langergraber, G. and Müllegger, E.  
 Publisher: Elsevier Ltd., Environment International  
 Volume 31, Issue 3, April 2005, Pages 433-444  
 Year: 2005

Link: <http://www.ecosan.at/info/publications>

### Ecological sanitation - A way to solve global sanitation problems?

The paper „Ecological sanitation - A way to solve global sanitation problems?“ presents an introduction to EcoSan principles and concepts including re-use aspects (available nutrients and occurring risks), and case studies of EcoSan concepts in both industrialized and developing countries.



Author: Müllegger, E., Lechner, M. and EcoSan Club  
 Publisher: Austrian Development Agency  
 Year: 2008

Link: <http://www.ecosan.at/info/publications>

### Solutions in Sanitation – Planning principles

Within the framework of the International Year of Sanitation 2008 the purpose of the brochure “Solutions in Sanitation – Planning Principles” was to inform about the Austrian Development Cooperation’s approaches, strategies, priorities and direction in the area of sustainable sanitation. Therefore this brochure addressed policy makers, programmers and implementers alike.

„The Austrian Development Cooperation supports the International Year of Sanitation to strengthen the dialogue and interaction between institutions and people, working towards the achievement of the MDG sanitation target.“ (Öppinger-Walchshofer, B., 2008).

## Sustainable Sanitation Practice

With Sustainable Sanitation Practice (SSP) EcoSan Club aims to make available high quality information on practical experiences with available sustainable sanitation systems. SSP should fill a gap that we have identified in the last few years in which sustainable sanitation has become an important issue that is discussed among many disciplines. For SSP a sanitation system is sustainable when it is not only economically viable, socially acceptable and technically and institutionally appropriate, but it should also protect the environment and the natural resources. SSP is therefore fully in line with SuSanA, the Sustainable Sanitation Alliance ([www.susana.org](http://www.susana.org)).

The SSP journal has been published quarterly since October 2009 and is available for download free from: <http://www.ecosan.at/ssp>.

### References

German Toilet Organisation (2009): Children – the best toilet advocates. <http://www.sanitation-is-dignity.org/node/76> (date of visit: 4.1.2012).

Langergraber, G., Müllegger, E. (2005): Ecological sanitation - A way to solve global sanitation problems? *Environ Int* 31(3), 433-444.

Müllegger, E., Lechner, M. (2004): Ecological Sanitation – a sustainable approach to the future. Austrian Development Agency, Vienna, Austria.

Müllegger, E., Lechner, M., EcoSan Club (2008): Solutions in Sanitation – Planning principles. Austrian Development Agency, Vienna, Austria.

**Table 1: Thematic topics of the first 9 issues of the SSP journal**

Issue 1	Oct 2009	Greywater - Treatment and reuse
Issue 2	Jan 2010	Operation & Maintenance
Issue 3	Apr 2010	Use of Urine
Issue 4	Jul 2010	The ROSA project
Issue 5	Oct 2010	Sanitation as a Business
Issue 6	Jan 2011	Toilets
Issue 7	Apr 2011	Planning tools
Issue 8	Jul 2011	Solutions for mountain regions
Issue 9	Oct 2011	Biogas systems



**Figure 3: Title pages of the first 9 issues of the SSP journal**

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