

Annual Report of the Clean Air Action Group (Hungary) about the year 2001

The Clean Air Action Group is a National Environment Protection Association with 116 member organizations. It carries out environmental activities, independent of party politics, to promote a sustainable development which is based on solidarity and which preserves the endowments and favourable traditions of the country.

Our main fields of activity are:

- environmental awareness raising, information, representation of interests;
- contribution to the work of the Parliament, the ministries and other state agencies, commenting on and/or initiating professional policy programs and drafts of legal regulations;
- preparation of analyses and statements of opinion, promoting the implementation of the National Environmental Protection Program and the international, mainly EU, environmental protection principles;
- support of local environmental protection initiatives, contribution to the work of local governments, encouraging citizens' participation in the decision-making.

Reform of the state budget – We prepare recommendations for shaping an eco-social market economy which can be competitive in the European Union as well. Taxes should not burden wages, innovation and creativity, but environment pollution, and they should stimulate the saving of materials and energy. Subsidizing gravely polluting activities from public money should be stopped.

Project leader: András Lukács

Our activities are: gathering domestic and foreign information, data processing, compiling studies and statements, elaborating recommendations for the modification of legal regulations, giving information to the general public.

- Main fields of activities in the year 2001 were: taxation of motor vehicle fuels, natural gas and electricity, petition for the revision of an international agreement on road goods transportation, proposal package for soil protection, fuel tourism, environmental protection criteria of specific and project supports, operation of the Environmental Protection Fund, subsidies detrimental from the point of view of environment protection.
- We have prepared the first version of our recommendations to the state budget of the year 2003 (approximately 300 pages).
- The Clean Air Action Group provides the secretary (Zoltán Szabó) and two members (András Lukács and Lázár Pavics) of the State Budget Working Group of the Parliament's Environmental Protection Committee, which held its meetings monthly-bimonthly.
- We participate actively in the campaign of the European Environmental Bureau for the green fiscal reform.

Preparation of the EU accession – Our aim is to adopt from the practice of the EU the stricter environmental protection regulations ensuring mutual advantages, while preserving our natural and cultural endowments by moderating the deforming effects of the market.

Project leader: András Lukács

Our activities: exchanges of experience (primarily through electronic channels, but in many cases in personal meetings and foreign trips), comparison of foreign practices, recommendations to adopt regulations.

As a member organization of the European Federation for Transport and Environment (T&E), of the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) and of the Climate Network Europe (CNE), we actively participated in the work of these international associations.

We closely co-operate with the Austrian VCÖ (Verkehrsklub Österreich), the German FÖS (Förderverein für den Ökologischen Steuerreform), the Polish INE (Institute of Sustainable Development), the Czech ITDP Office (member organization of the Institute for Transport and Development Policy based in New York), as well as with numerous other organizations.

We held discussions regularly with officials of the European Commission. We participated in the regular meeting of the environmental NGOs of the candidate countries and the competent officials of the EU.

We gave several lectures in Hungary and abroad (among others in Budapest for representatives of the European Parliament, and in Brussels on the occasion of the Green Week).

Built environment and protection of green areas – with special regard to handling conflicts that came up in connection with some green areas, underground garages, high-rise buildings, commercial facilities and office buildings.

Project leader: Mária Schnier

Our activities: Evaluating from the aspect of the environment the developments in Budapest, in the districts of the capital and in other settlements of the agglomeration of Budapest; supporting the interests of residents and the work of local organizations, participating in the meetings of the City Operation Committee of the Budapest Municipality and in the meetings of the Development Committee of the Local Government of District XI of Budapest (commenting on metropolitan and district draft regulations and re-zoning); organizing public forums.

- In the capital and in the neighbouring settlements we commented in 74 cases on planned regulations and/or individual projects.
- We participated regularly in the conciliatory negotiations organized by the Budapest Metropolitan Chief Architect's Office for various issues, as well as in negotiations in connection with draft regulations of the dynamically developing Districts XI and XIII.
- We actively participated in the commenting procedures of the impact assessment of major planned metropolitan establishments.
- Together with the Environmental Management and Law Association (EMLA), Dr. Dezső Radó (President of the Experts' Board of CAAG until his death in September 2001) prepared the draft amendment of the government decree on the protection of trees, which was discussed and approved by the National Environment Protection Council as well.

Regional development policy – Issues of housing policy, brown fields, urban sprawl, and sustainable land use based on solidarity.

Project leader: Erzsébet Beliczay

Our activities: participation in the preparation of decisions, influencing decision-makers for the following aims:

- revitalizing brown fields
- enhancement of the network of tenement flats (mobility)
- support of the renovation of buildings (energy saving, stopping urban sprawl)
- approval of the Act on the Regional Planning Scheme of the Budapest Agglomeration (protection of green areas, infrastructure, transport)
- modification of the Act on Local Governments and the rules of procedure concerning regional planning

We expressed our views on the national and regional development concepts (Ottó Herman Plan, National Development Plan, National Territorial Planning Scheme, SAPRI report, presentation about eco-tourism).

On the 11th National Meeting of Environment and Nature Protection Organizations (Vác, April) we participated in the preparation and arrangement of the plenary meeting about stopping urban sprawl, and we held a section meeting as well.

We organized an international round-table dialogue under the title „Revitalizing brown fields” (Budapest, October) with the participation of representatives of the OECD, the ITDP Prague, five Hungarian ministries, the Budapest Municipality, as well as of planners and investors.

Transport policy - The aim of our activities is to reduce the detrimental environmental effects of transport, to put into practice a more equitable sharing of charges in the field of transport, to ensure more support for public transport and transportation on railways, and to implement measures to reduce traffic.

Project leader: András Lukács

Our activities:

- initiatives, awareness raising, preparation of statements of opinion with a view to reducing the social costs of transport (primarily in the sphere of railway transportation, public transport and road developments)
- conciliatory negotiations to promote the construction of the M0 motorway's eastern section
- support to set up the Budapest Transport Association
- surveys on the impacts of the construction of M0, M3 and other motorways
- commenting on the Transport Development Plan of Budapest
- participation in the preparatory studies concerning the development of suburban railways

Energy policy - Our activities were focused on improving energy efficiency, enhancing energy saving, improving air quality, strengthening the energy-saving attitude of the population and the branches of economy.

Project leader: Erzsébet Beliczay

Our activities: awareness raising, preparation of statements of opinion (commenting on the bill on electric energy, and on other draft legal regulations), membership in the Energy Interest Reconciliation Council and participation in the Industrial Energy Consumers' Association, participation in events, raising public awareness of the real costs of energy. We laid special emphasis on the following subjects:

- promoting energy saving of flats and budgetary establishments (supporting renovation of buildings and modernization of heating)
- enhancing the competitiveness of district heating, working for the recognition of the positive externalities of cogeneration (CHP)
- reducing energy consumption through direct and indirect interventions (public transport, keeping under control the sprawl of settlements, ecological buildings)
- selection of energy types in conformity with the endowments (district heating, renewable energies)

Environmental conflicts brought to law

- Protest at the State Attorney's Office:
 - against the subsequent approval by the Budapest Metropolitan Assembly to form a construction area from the Csalitos area in Csepel District
- Petitions to the Constitutional Court:
 - for the annulment of the reclassifications in Appendix No. 10 and 21 of the Re-zoning Decree No. 39/2001. approved by the Budapest Metropolitan Assembly
 - because of the postponement of raising (proportionately to the rate of inflation) the tax of fuels
 - because of the sum of money appropriated for the construction of motorway M3 in the Act on the State Budget
- Lawsuits before the court:
 - in connection with road No. 322,
 - the northern bridge of motorway M0,
 - the Káposztásmegyer junction of motorway M0.

Environmental protection education, PR, noted days – maintaining relations with governmental, professional and non-governmental organizations.

Project leader: Ágnes Hajtman

Programs and events, setting up information stands, playhouse, quiz shows, preparation of leaflets etc., especially in connection with the following events:

- Earth Day (22nd April - in the Budapest City Park)
- Flower exhibition (Buda Department of the St. Stephen University)
- „Civiliáda” (National Exposition of NGOs - Budapest)
- National Meeting of Environment and Nature Protection NGOs
- European Car-Free Day (22nd September)
- Environmental protection lectures and classes in primary and secondary schools, as well as at universities and colleges.

Information, counselling and interest protection

Information Office (1114 Budapest, Ulászló u. 15., Telephone hot-line: 8:30-17:30)

Head of Office: Péter Lenkei

Besides questions that could be answered immediately, 365 registered complaints, announcements and information requests arrived, mainly from the region of Middle Hungary. Out of these, 65 issues needed a more complex approach and work to handle, and/or we acted as representatives of the complainants in their cases before the competent authorities. In some cases we performed surveys on the spot, participated in public hearings, formulated petitions, and made announcements on behalf of complainants who did not want their names to be mentioned. The information was given by the Head of Office, by the Board of the Clean Air Action Group and by members of the Board of Experts of the CAAG directly or through the Head of Office. The number of requests arriving through the Internet increased significantly, and by the end of the year their share reached 40%. The proportion of requests by phone is somewhat larger than that. It happened only in less than 5% of the inquiries that we were unable to give an answer on the merits of the case. Out of the issues arriving to our office, nearly 80 cases were connected to air pollution, 45 cases to chopping down trees, 30 cases to transport and about the same number of cases to shopping malls and other investments damaging urban environment.

Relations with member organizations and other NGOs, individual members and civil groups requesting support

Project leader: Judit J. Halász

The number of our member organizations rose to 116 in the year 2001. For the last ten years we have been holding regular biweekly open meetings to discuss current environmental protection problems and to exchange experience; from time to time we invite officials of the ministries, and development and planning specialists for evening debates (Transport Concept of Budapest, further sections of motorway M0, assessment of the transport situation in the agglomeration, Regional Planning Scheme of the Budapest Agglomeration, air quality regulations, etc.). The meetings are held on Fridays from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the Podmaniczky Hall of the Budapest City Protection Society, Budapest VI., Eötvös u. 10.

We co-operated with national and local governmental agencies in the national ragweed campaign. We participated in the events and programs of our member organizations and of other NGOs and civil groups. At the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development and at other ministries we promoted various conciliatory negotiations, and urged the preparation of a government proposal and the amendment of the Act on State Budget.

Editing the monthly LÉLEGZET („Breath”)

Editor-in-chief: Klára Mikola

The magazine is published in 3500 copies. It was quoted on numerous occasions in other newspapers and journals (for example in the most widely read national daily „Népszabadság”), and from time to time radio and television news were also broadcast on the basis of articles published in our monthly.

Permanent columns: EU accession (supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), green state budget reform, transport policy, protection of trees and green areas, reports on the activities of the Clean Air Action Group.

The LÉLEGZET can also be read on our homepage at www.lelegzet.hu.

Media relations

Responsible: András Lukács

- We had a permanent weekly program in the Civil Radio and the Fiksz Radio (conversations are conducted by Ágnes Hajtman and Klára Mikola, respectively).
- Our articles appeared on several occasions in the magazine „Budapesti Piac” which is distributed free to all households in Budapest.
- We appeared on more than 400 occasions (not counting the LÉLEGZET) in television, radio and the printed press (news, articles, interviews, etc.).
- We regularly send press releases to the Hungarian News Agency (MTI) and to many press organs.

Publications in the year 2001

(the list does not contain the articles published in the LÉLEGZET and other writings that appeared in the press)

- Beliczay, Erzsébet: About the Energy - As Seen by an Environmentalist. Supplementary textbook of the School Program „Save!” (Environment Management Institute, manuscript)
- Beliczay, Erzsébet: Should We Play with Fire? (Belügyi Szemle /Review of the Interior/, 2001/3.)
- Beliczay, Erzsébet: Are We to Stop Urban Sprawl? (Belügyi Szemle /Review of the Interior/, 2001/8.)
- Beliczay, Erzsébet - Lukács, András: Practicability of Modern Fixed-Track Systems in the Railway and Road Railway Network of Budapest and its Surroundings, Chapter on Environmental Protection (Study of the Közlekedés Kft. /Transport Ltd./)
- J. Halász, Judit (ed.): Authorities, Institutions and Non-Government Organizations Dealing with Weed Control in Hungary
- Lukács, András: The EU Enlargement Process and Transport - the Case of Hungary
- Pavics, Lázár - Lukács, András: Energy, Environment, Society - with Special Regard to International Relations
- Pavics, Lázár - Lukács, András: Eco-Social Reform of the State Budget
- Dr. Radó, Dezső: The Role of Flora in Environmental Protection (published by the Green Interest Foundation and the Clean Air Action Group)

**Annual Financial Statement of the Clean Air Action Group National Environment
Protection Association about the Year 2001**

Simplified balance of the year 2001 and result calculation on the 31.12.2001.

Simplified balance

Item	HUF
Assets	
Bank + cash	7303996
Receivables	4428102
Total	11732098
Liabilities	
Financial result	4609636
Short-term liabilities	1483212
Property	5639250
Total	11732098

Result calculation

Item	HUF 1000
Incomes	
Income for main activity	35897
Expenses	
Salaries	5660
Taxes	2752
Redemption of taxes of former years	3092
Other expenses	21002
Expenditure (interest for delay to the Tax and Financial Auditing Office)	264
Investment	237
Result for main activity	2890
Business result	2196
Business expenses	477
Result before taxation	1719
Corporate tax liabilities	0
Result after taxation	1719
Result of the organization's activities	4609

**Specification of supports and incomes received by the Clean Air Action Group
in the year 2001***

Source of income	Aim of support	HUF 1000
Hungarian Parliament	Operation	400
Ministry of the Environment (State Environment Protection Fund)	Green budget, Improved public transport, Empowering for public participation, Assisting the activities of member organizations, LÉLEGZET („Breath”) monthly magazine, Internet home page	15510
Local governments	European Car-Free Day	34
Public Foundation for a Nature and Society-Friendly Development	Green budget	2000
NGOs (Hungarian Traffic Club, Ökotárs)	Operation, energy tender	6254
Rockefeller Brothers Fund	Urban sprawl	8432
World Bank Small Grants	Environmental counselling to the population, strengthening public participation	500
Embassy of the Netherlands	European Car-Free Day	300
Sum received from 1% of personal income tax		1270
Membership fees		303
Business incomes (studies, publications)		2196
Other incomes (cost refund of civil services, reimbursement of travelling expenses)		771
Interest incomes		123
<i>Support and income in total</i>		38093

Specification of other expenses of the Clean Air Action Group in the year 2001

Item	HUF
Experts' fees	2019183
Support for Hungarian organizations	6833400
Membership fees in other organizations	63852
Phone, fax	2568060
Printing cost	173463
Travelling expenses	1061313
Season tickets, car cost refund	832156
Office rent, public utility costs	2851236
Stationery	649221
Post	309278
Books and journals	434085
Conference cost	509981
Cost of civil services	469971
Meal tickets	147000
Representation cost	113531
Banking costs	142556
Broad-sheet cost	28865
Other expenses	1794737
<i>Total</i>	21001888

* One computer, won in the tender of the Széchenyi Plan, appears in the analytical register, since accounting of physical assets received „without value” is not possible in cash-flow type bookkeeping systems.

The Annual Report was unanimously accepted by the General Meeting of the Clean Air Action Group on 26th of April 2002.

Planned budget of the Clean Air Action Group for the year 2002

Incomes

Item	HUF 1000
Remaining on 1 st January 2001	7304
Hungarian Parliament	760
Ministry of the Environment (Environment Protection Fund)	16000
Local governments	200
Hungarian grants and support	3300
Foreign support	10000
Membership fees	500
Interests	200
Business income	2000
Total incomes	40264

Expenses

Item	HUF 1000
1. Personal expenses	6168
2. Personal expenses taxes	3960
3. Total material costs	2970
3.1. Stationery, broad-sheet	1500
3.2. Furniture, equipment and parts	500
3.3. Maintenance cost (water, electricity, gas)	320
3.4. Consumable supply cost	500
3.5. Other	150
4. Material type services costs	7630
4.1. Travelling expenses	1000
4.2. Participation cost of events and conferences	350
4.3. Rental fees	50
4.4. Maintenance, repair and service cost	350
4.5. Post	800
4.6. Phone	3600
4.7. Copying, photocopying	80
4.8. Books, subscriptions for newspapers	510
4.9. Publication editing and printing cost	150
4.10. Cost of civil service	360
4.11. Representation	200
4.12. Banking cost	120
4.13. Other	60
5. Total cost of non-material type services	14410
5.1. Rental fees	3600
5.2. Advertising fees	70
5.3. Membership fees	100
5.4. Training	500
5.5. Fees of contractors and sub-contractors	270
5.6. Support for other organizations	9500
5.7. Organization improvement	300
5.8. Other	70
6. Investment	2000
7. Reserve	3126
Total expenses	40264

Work plan of the Clean Air Action Group for the year 2002

I. General

1. We will work continuously for the implementation of the goals formulated in the statement „Expectations of Environment and Nature Protection NGOs towards the Government of the Republic of Hungary between 2002 and 2006 in order to Ensure Protection of the Environment and a Sustainable Development”, accepted unanimously by the 12th National Meeting of Environment and Nature Protection NGOs held in Szarvas, in February 2002.
1. We will improve our information activities towards the population, the media and the decision-makers. Within this area it is a priority task that our monthly magazine “Lélegzet” (Breath) assists readers in finding orientation in environmental issues. Main target groups of the magazine are the media, students of higher education institutions, politicians, middle-level managers of the business sphere, experts specialized in environmental protection issues, as well as NGOs.
2. We will keep holding our meetings every other week.
3. We will significantly increase the number of our members.
4. We will improve our co-operation with other Hungarian environment and nature protection organizations, and with other NGOs.
5. We will enhance co-operation with foreign environment and nature protection NGOs, especially with movements operating within the EU.
6. We will maintain constant relations with officials of the relevant ministries and authorities.
7. We will keep regular connection with the concerned EU institutions.
8. We will pay special attention to questions of public health and environmental sanitation.
9. We will lay emphasis on finding possible solutions to public sanitation problems caused by allergenic weeds.
10. We will organize professional and other events to encourage the exchange of opinions and information.
11. At least once a year we will call together the plenary meeting of the CAAG Experts’ Board.
12. With the help of our member organizations we will keep monitoring the environment protection programs of local governments, as well as the planning and implementation thereof.
13. We will maintain and operate our Environmental Advisory Office.
14. We will provide professional assistance for the implementation of environmental educational and school programs.
15. We will ensure economic and financial counselling for our member organizations.
16. We will lay strong emphasis on organizational development questions.

II. State budget and taxation system

1. We will continue our professional and information providing work in order to make the state budget and taxation system more environment-friendly.
2. Based on the analysis of the state budget of 2001-2002 we will prepare our alternative state budget proposals for the year 2003.
3. We will prepare a new publication for the general public about the green budget reform.
4. We will continuously monitor the use of the Environment Protection Fund Target Tasks and make suggestions if necessary.
5. We will closely co-operate with those Hungarian and foreign organizations and individuals who work for the green state budget reform.
6. We will continue to participate in the campaign of the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) for the environmental protection financial reform.

III. Transport

1. We will organize a campaign to improve public transportation in Budapest. We will urge that the money proposed for the planned 4th metro line and for major road investments should rather be spent on the efficient operation, maintenance and renovation of the existing public transport network.
2. We will continue our campaign to improve railway transportation.
3. We will expedite that an increasing volume of transit transport should be placed from road to the railways.
4. We will prepare a study about the environmental protection aspects of EU accession in the field of transportation.
5. We will monitor the activities of the Parliament, the government, the local authorities and the regional development councils in the field of transport, and we will express our views and work out recommendations in questions involving environmental protection.
6. We will promote stronger public participation in decisions related to transport. Within this we will participate in interest reconciliation discussions with the Ministry of Transport, and we will encourage restarting the work of the Budapest Transport Forum, in which we wish to participate actively.
7. We will pay greater attention to the protection of green areas, especially to flora damages caused by transport vehicles.
8. We will continue our information activities in order to make the external costs of transport known, and we will expedite that these should gradually be built into the prices.
9. We will continue our activities in order to reduce urban car traffic, and within that especially to introduce parking regulations and 30km/h speed limit zones, as well as to improve in general the conditions for pedestrian traffic.
10. We will improve our co-operation with bicycle organizations in order to improve the conditions of cycling.
11. Co-operating internationally we will make efforts to attain that the development of railways be given preference instead of constructing new motorways in Hungary.
12. By attracting public attention and through awareness raising we strive to restrict the fragmenting and landscape destroying effects of road constructions, with special regard to the motorways M0, M3 and M7.

13. We will monitor the regional development policies of the government and the local authorities with special attention to the development of transport. We will evaluate the results on a continuous basis, and will forward our comments and suggestions to those concerned.
14. We will urge that transport and environment protection Technical Directives be elaborated for the planning of shopping malls, petrol stations, underground garages and other establishments attracting a lot of traffic.
15. We will actively participate in the organization and arrangement of the European Car-Free Day's events in Budapest and in the country.
16. We will extend and intensify our international relations, especially with the European Federation for Transport and Environment and its member organizations, as well as with other environmental protection organizations dealing with transport.
17. We will urge the immediate revision of the concept about the development of regional airports.

IV. Regional development, building and construction

1. We will continue our commenting work regarding the regulatory plans and other developments of local governments.
1. We will urge the amendment of the Act on Local Governments, with special regard to the modification of financing and the regulation of land use.
1. We will pursue our program connected with the revitalization of brown fields. We will assist co-operation between local governments, businesses and local residents. We will support setting up central funds needed for the revitalization.
1. We will promote the elaboration of a system of economic incentives contributing to sustainable regional development.
1. We will express our opinion about the proposed texts and/or amendments of the National Development Plan, the Budapest Urban Building Frame Regulation, the Budapest Development Concept, the National Environment Protection Program and the Széchenyi Plan, as well as about other drafts of plans, focusing on the aspect of sustainable development.
1. We will continue our encouraging and awareness raising activities to promote the renovation of the existing stock of buildings.
1. We will support and propagate the activities of local governments putting into practice the principles of sustainability. We will assist them in their efforts to raise the funds needed for that aim.
1. We will support local NGOs and civil organizations striving for a better environment.
1. We will initiate a dialogue between businesses and local communities, as well as local governments to promote environmentally sound developments. We will support voluntary agreements furthering environment protection.
1. We will make intensive efforts so that the new local governments to be elected in 2002 perform their activities in accordance with the requirements of environmental protection and of sustainable development. Within this sphere we will pay special attention to the local governments of Budapest.

V. Energy

- 1 . We will continue our professional and information activities with special regard to energy prices and the enhancement of energy efficiency. Our main objective is to ensure that energy prices and the different state funds jointly motivate energy saving.
- 2 . We will promote CHP.
- 3 . We will encourage stronger public participation in decisions concerning energy policy. Within that we will keep participating actively in the work of the Energy Interest Representative Council, and in the interest reconciliation work going on at the Ministry of Economy.
- 4 . We will promote the implementation of government resolution No. 2206/2000. on climate protection.
- 5 . We will monitor the major energy policy developments of the EU: the endeavours to introduce a uniform energy tax, the trade of rights connected to environmental pollution, and the energy liberalization.