

Romanian Environmental News

No.003

Published 03 August 2008

[go to contents](#)

Welcome to REN 3. REN now is essential reading if you want to keep up with what is happening in the environmental sector in Romania. In this edition of REN we focus on the important role played by volunteers in the environmental sector and how you can find the right volunteers to get your organisation moving.

REN has been accused of being anti-capitalist. If capitalist means making money without having any concerns regarding the long-term consequences of your activities then REN is anti-capitalist. The market system does not take the planet into consideration, unless people and governments force it to take notice. We have one planet; finite resources; a rapidly growing population; vanishing marine life; and a climate dangerously out of equilibrium almost certainly due to the pollution created by humans. If these are the inevitable effects of capitalism then REN is anti-capitalist. Products have shorter and shorter lifespans. Computers have to be replaced every few years, cars likewise. It seems to be more and more common for houses also to be replaced at more and more regular intervals. If this is capitalism then REN is anti-capitalist. It is more and more difficult to get something repaired and frequently the response is, 'it's cheaper to buy a new one'. How did this all come about and just what is its effect on the planet and us, the consumers, is brilliantly told in the twenty minute video, 'The Story of Stuff' <http://www.storyofstuff.com/>. Click on *consumption* at the top of the video screen to get to the heart of what is so wrong with consumerism. REN is not the only one worried by over-consumption see [Consumerism](#)

Campaigns for a better fairer world are now appearing on the internet daily. At <http://www.global-mindshift.org/> you can give your support to protect the planet.

Escaping from the consumerist society we live in and reducing our dependence on fossil fuel based energy is the aim of the Transition Towns movement. Begun in Ireland by Rob Hopkins it is now centred in Totnes a town in south west England. Sixty four towns in the UK, six in Australia, five in New Zealand, one in Ireland and even two in the USA (see [Boulder going local](#)) are now included in the official list of Transition Towns. See [REN article](#)

Being a bureaucratic society, enormous amounts of paper are consumed in Romania. I do not believe there is any other country in the world with so many photocopiers per head of population. Our accountant has informed us that every bank transaction made by our company requires a printout for the *contabil* to do the accounts. In the so-called electronic age this is ridiculous. Paper production consumes large amounts of timber and uses dangerous chemicals which pollute rivers. You can actively work to reduce the amount of paper you use. Visit the website www.shrinkpaper.org and pledge to cut your use of paper. Note that you should tick things you do already, as well as ideas you might see which you haven't thought of. You can add your own ideas too!

Plastic is another commodity you should remove from your life. See [Plastic death](#)
Just how difficult it is to live without plastic can be found on the BBC news [A month without plastic](#)

Some REN subscribers received an email regarding our article on dogs in the last issue. [Read more about this](#)

About REN

Romanian Environmental Newsletter campaigns for a sustainable, ethical, equitable future for Romania.

REN welcomes contributions from all in any of our four languages: English, Romanian, Hungarian and German. Articles should not be too long. Links can be given to websites for those who want to read more.

REN is published quarterly. Next publishing date October 31st 2008

Contact REN

This edition of REN has been put together by **Douglas Mcfarlane**, who takes full responsibility for the content. All unsigned content is my responsibility alone. Our other contributors are, **Steven Hermans** from Rijmenam, Belgium, **Noelle Nightingale**, Peace Corps worker from Octavian Goga high school, Huedin, **Sara Meaker** from Low Impact Living Transilvania, **Ramona Dumincioiu** from InfOMG-Romania. All summaries and translations into Romanian and Hungarian are by **Adela Varga**.

Contents:

Transition Towns: Romania goes in wrong direction

Volunteers Can Get Things Moving

Volunteer Organisations

Peace Corps in Romania

A Volunteer's story

Consumerism Under Attack

Romanian News

Rosia Montana Campaign Continues

New Guest House in R. Montana

Legal Campaign Against Polluting Factory requires support

Press Reports:Environmental News in Romanian and World Press

Cycle News

Article on benefits of cycling

Critical Mass in Romania

Finally Dogs

Organisations: Contact details for environmentally friendly organisations

Transition Towns Looking to the Future

On the official website we get the following

If we collectively plan and act early enough there's every likelihood that we can create a way of living that's significantly more connected, more vibrant and more in touch with our environment than the oil-addicted treadmill that we find ourselves on today.

<http://transitiontowns.org/Main/HomePage>

The simple message is that 'life after oil' will not be a disaster. We know that we will reach [peak oil](#) one day and this is likely to be sooner rather than later. It seems reasonable that the earlier we plan for this event the less the shock will be when it actually happens. The lower our energy requirements, the less distance we travel to work, the more local our food supply is, the less we will be affected by variations in oil prices and availability.

Once again Romania is going in the wrong direction. More goods are being imported from distant places than ever before. People are taking out large bank loans to buy their first car or a bigger model that consumes more petrol. Housing is moving further and further away from places of work.

One of the main arguments of the transition towns movement is that not only will we survive peak oil, but that life afterwards will be more pleasant. Romanians may complain about how unpleasant it is to live in a Ceausescu concrete block, but they seldom reflect on the advantages of actually living this way. As someone who has lived in both a high-rise block in Romania and a suburban situation in Britain I feel more able than others to see the better aspects.

In a UK suburban situation many people do not even know what their neighbour looks like. They keep different hours, get into their car in their garage, drive miles to work, never go to the local bar (most local bars closed down years ago) as they cannot drink alcohol and drive their car. They very seldom sit in their garden, most of which has been consumed by the extension they have built onto their house, and anyway they have grown a very tall, thick hedge so that no one can see in. Many have actually built another house to sell in their garden, as money is more important than fresh air and free leisure activities. Large houses with six or seven rooms may have only a single occupant. Large, poorly insulated houses consume enormous amounts of energy. Many live in fear of their neighbours as not knowing someone you can easily start imagining they are somehow evil. In a suburb with widely dispersed houses there is a low population density and no obvious places to put bus stops. Public transport is infrequent or non-existent.

There is much more community and social interaction in an apartment block (without an underground car park!). People meet in the lifts, on the stairs, outside and in the local bar. As there are a lot of people living in a small area it is easy to provide a frequent and efficient public transport system. The potential for fruitful social interaction and helping your neighbours is enormous. Obviously much has to be done to improve living conditions and energy efficiency of blocks, but basically it is a much more energy efficient and social way of life and surprisingly pleasant when compared to life in the suburbs. The situation of the UK today is what awaits Romania if the Western lifestyle takes hold.

A report in the Guardian newspaper in the UK describes what a mass meeting (more than 1 in 10 of the population attended) at the transition town of Lampeter in Wales decided:

the crowd in Lampeter were considering what they would like to happen - a ban on advertising that encourages consumption; turning the local supermarket into a giant allotment - and what they could they could actually do - install a community wind turbine; encourage low-energy buildings using sheep's wool for insulation; swap skills.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2007/apr/07/communities.oilandpetrol>

In case you don't know an *allotment* is a large area full of small gardens for people who live in apartments, but who want to have a garden. Isn't it ironic that at this very moment a Romanian garden is probably being concreted over to provide parking space for a supermarket?

Which town will be the first in Romania to stop the current Romanian 'transition' to more energy use, more spread out housing, more cars and less public transport and a less cohesive society?

Put Transition Towns into your web browser search and find out lots more.

[return to table of contents](#)

Volunteers For the Environment

Wondering how you can get your environmental organisation, organic farm, or sustainable business moving, but don't have too much money? Have you thought about getting a volunteer? Volunteers do not only work in the social and care sectors of society. There are now thousands of volunteers around the world helping out in the environmental sector. These men and women wish to live on a planet which takes better care of its natural environment and are prepared to give time and labour to help you make it happen. Volunteers will work with you to help you realise your ambitions.

REN 2 highlighted WWOOF volunteers <http://www.woof.ro/>. There are also other organisations you can check out. It is difficult to find out how to register your program on [Go Abroad](#) but if you scroll to the bottom of the page at the right hand corner there is a button add/edit your program. Click on this link to [go straight to new account page](#)

You can find out which organisations in Romania accept volunteers at www.volunteerabroad.com Another organisation which actually has a Romanian branch is SCI. SCI organises workcamps for groups of volunteers of around 10 people. You can find out more at www.sci.ro/workcamps

Noelle Nightingale writes about Peace Corps volunteers working for the Environment in Romania. **Peace Corps Romania Environmental Program**

If you've spent any length of time working in the Romanian non-profit world, you may have come across a Peace Corps volunteer. Peace Corps volunteers can be found living and working in nearly every county throughout Romania, in schools, city halls, small businesses, and both governmental and non-governmental organizations. The Peace Corps, a United States government agency, is both a cultural exchange and a development program; it was created in 1961 by former U.S. president John F. Kennedy, and currently operates in 73 countries. It has operated in Romania since 1991.

There are approximately 140 Peace Corps Volunteers now serving in Romania, and approximately 20% of these work in the environmental sector. Peace Corps' environmental program aims to support local communities and organizations in their work to raise environmental awareness, and to protect and improve the environment.

Read on for profiles of two Peace Corps Romania volunteers and their host organizations.

Doug Knight, Cluj Napoca

Peace Corps volunteer Doug Knight has been in Romania since February 2007. He works with Clubul Montan Apuseni (The Apuseni Mountain Club) in Cluj Napoca, assisting them in their efforts to develop eco-tourism packages and provide nature education to children from the Apuseni mountain region. Doug's role with Clubul Montan Apuseni is to help the organization with fundraising, grantwriting, and development of eco-tourism packages. He also collaborates with Ecouri Verzi (Green Echoes), another Cluj-based organization, to develop both green spaces throughout Cluj Napoca, and environmental education programs for youth. Other projects Doug has been involved in as a Peace Corps volunteer have been the founding and development of the WWOOF network in Romania, writing environmental education lesson plans for other Peace Corps volunteers, and helping to network several environmental NGOs in Cluj Napoca as they develop into a strong community.

Ed Klaunig, Agnita

Ed Klaunig, a Peace Corps volunteer in Agnita, has been in Romania since February 2007. He works with the Local Action Group (LAG). LAG is currently working to access the EU's Rural Development structural funds (LEADER), in order to plan and implement large scale rural development in its micro-region (in eastern Sibiu county). The organization is a collaborative effort among local activists and stakeholders who represent the various interests of the micro-region. LAG attempts to include members who represent the diverse make-up of the area, including women, people of different ages, different ethnicities, and different religions. During his time in Romania, Ed has also helped to establish WWOOF Romania, and is currently working to strengthen the organization, attract more Romanian farmers willing to host volunteers, and generally promote WWOOF throughout Romania.

For more info about Peace Corps Romania, or to apply for a volunteer, please visit www.peacecorps.ro

Pentru a citi broșura în limba română despre programul de mediu al Peace Corps în România, consultați această adresă:

http://www.peacecorps.ro/Programs/ENV/ENV_Webversion_brochure/PCENVA4.htm

[return to table of contents](#)

A Volunteer's Experience

Steven Hermans Volunteered at Low Impact Living Transilvania (LILT) for 3 Weeks in June. Here is his account of his how he spent his time.

Volunteering for Sara and Douglas has been an extremely rewarding experience for me. I was very happy here and enjoyed every day. It didn't take long for the house in Huedin to feel like a home to me. But it's the house in Domoș I fell in love with. Not only for the village atmosphere and the wonderful people who live there, but for the charming old building itself and especially the garden. I saw it growing and transforming and I was proud that some of it was my work. We didn't spend much time in Aluniș, but I think that house has the same potential. So, what is so great about LILT? It is a chance to explore and live a lifestyle that is long lost in industrialised nations like the one I come from. You get the chance to meet some of the wonderful Kalotaszeg people and learn about their traditions, and how and why to live a low impact life. I learned a lot about organic gardening and the local fauna and flora and I grew confident in building and gardening, things I had little experience in up until now. Most importantly, we had a lot of fun. Working and living intersect and overlap - philosophical discussions while weeding, planning for the next day over dinner - so I never felt I was actually working; everything is just life, what you do, and it feels good and purposeful. To give an idea, here are some of the things I did in the three weeks I spent with Douglas and Sara: I made 3 plant beds and planted and sowed different vegetables, staked and strung up beans and tomatoes, did weeding, went to the film festival in Cluj, fixed a toilet door, built a temporary bathroom, dug a toilet, helped a neighbour turning her hay, made a lot of salads, tested soil for earth building and fixed some holes in the floor with earth, sickled and scythed large areas of wild garden, etc. In conclusion, I had a wonderful time and can recommend everyone interested in exploring this kind of lifestyle a stay in Huedin. For myself, the future might show that this has been a life-changing experience, affirming the ideas I already had and inspiring me to be active and live according to my convictions.

Steven

[return to table of contents](#)

Consumerism under attack around world

It is not only REN that is worried by the effects of consumerism.

Pope hits out at consumer culture

Pope Benedict XVI has attacked popular culture and consumerism in a formal address to tens of thousands of young Roman Catholics. The pontiff also warned that natural resources were being squandered, in the speech in Sydney, Australia. "Our world has grown weary of greed, exploitation and division, of the tedium of false idols and piecemeal responses, and the pain of false promises," he told the crowd. There were numerous signs something was amiss in modern society, the pontiff said. He spoke of "scars which mark the surface of our earth - erosion, deforestation, the squandering of the world's mineral and ocean resources in order to fuel an insatiable consumption". See BBC News report [Pope hits out at consumer culture](#)

Food waste on 'staggering' scale

People are needlessly throwing away 3.6m tonnes of food each year in England and Wales, research suggests. The Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP) found that salad, fruit and bread were most commonly wasted and 60% of all dumped food was untouched. The study analysed the waste disposed of by 2,138 households. The study found that £9bn of avoidable food waste was disposed of in England and Wales each year. It is mostly food that could have been consumed if it had been better stored or managed, or had not been left uneaten on a plate. Environment Minister Joan Ruddock said the findings were "staggering" at a time of global food shortages and WRAP added it was an environmental issue. [See BBC news report](#)

Plastic Death

An Island of discarded plastic the size of Texas is floating in the Pacific Ocean. The negative effects on marine life and seabirds is enormous.

It seemed unbelievable, but I never found a clear spot. In the week it took to cross the subtropical high, no matter what time of day I looked, plastic debris was floating everywhere: bottles, bottle caps, wrappers, fragments. See [Trashed Pacific](#)

Ren Says: There is really nothing which can be said about this. Consumerism is destroying our planet.

[return to table of contents](#)

NEWS: Romania

Pressure on Gabriel Resources Continues

Alburnus Maior the organisation fighting to stop the destruction of Rosia Montana and the surrounding area if a large open cast mine goes ahead is continuing to keep the pressure on Gabriel Resources the Canadian mining company involved. Alburnus Maior has written an open letter to Thomas Kaplan, a large investor in Gabriel Resources, who also is the main financial backing behind an NGO called 'Pantera', a global wild cat conservation group. Through his company, 'Electrum', Thomas Kaplan owns over 14% of Gabriel Resources. He is executive chairman and co-director with three others, including world famous cat biologist Dr. Alan Rabinowitz, of the

Panthera Foundation. Mr. Kaplan has been quoted as saying:

"It is my privilege that I can apply the lessons I have learned in other fields, and indeed the important contacts that my professional life affords me, to drive a highly aggressive environmental agenda. The opportunity to fund and reward those who have given their lives to the pursuit of preserving the big cats and, equally importantly, the habitats and eco-systems which sustain them, is the closing of a virtuous circle that began in my youth."

In their letter Alburnus Maior point out the the Apuseni Mountains are one of the last strongholds of the European lynx and that the mining operations could lead to its disappearance in the area. The letter ends with these words:

We commend you on your environmental and conservation leadership. However, financial support for a project such as Rosia Montana is clearly incompatible with such an environmental agenda. We urge you to disassociate yourself with a project that clearly stands contrary to environmental and social principles, by selling your stake in Gabriel Resources.

REN says however important the environment is to T. Kaplan, the opportunity to make a financial killing is obviously greater. Only when we put the environment firmly before profit can we hope to create a more planet friendly society.

[return to table of contents](#)

New Guest House in Rosia Montana

Another successful project in Rosia Montana is the La Gruber guest house, which will be opening later this month. Stephanie from Alburnus Maior writes:

In late August we will launch our first pilot project at Rosia Montana. The guest house in the centre of Rosia Montana has bunk beds, a self catering kitchen and wireless internet access. Traditional breakfast and laundry services will also be available. The project was entirely funded by individual donations.

To find out more go to Rosia Montana website and follow links *alternatives-pilot projects*
[Rosia Montana](#)

[return to table of contents](#)

Campaign against Formaldehyde Plant in Sebes Seeks Funding.

The Centre for the Development of Environmental Resources'(CIDRM) is seeking finances to continue its lawsuits against the Kronospan formaldehyde plant in Sebes. **Ramona Dumnicioiu** reports on CIDRM.

Apart from the "Save Rosia Montana" campaign, CIDRM is closely involved in a series of other campaigns in Romania, working in partnership with other NGOs or assisting the efforts of directly affected citizens. These include the campaign against the plans of multinational, 'Kronospan,' to expand their industrial installation which produces formaldehyde, in the town of Sebes (Alba County); the campaign against the development of an open cast limestone mine and adjacent lime factory in the picturesque village of Geomal(Alba County); assistance on environmental law issues for the campaign against an Italian mining company's proposal to open a sienite mine in the village of Ditrau (Harghita County); assistance on environmental law issues against the plans of the local authorities to combat floods by regularizing the banks of Cris river in Oradea city (Bihor County) etc.

CIDRM's lawyers count amongst the best environmental lawyers in the country and the NGO has secured important legal precedents all over Romania. CIDRM was also a partner of InfOMG in the "The National Information Tour on the risks of Genetically Modified Organisms."

To date the CIDRM team which includes its lawyers has carried out all its activities on a pro-bono basis in order to show the NGO's expertise and capacity. The NGO now needs funding due to the increasing amount of cases and campaigns needing support. In particular, CIDRM urgently requires funding to continue its work against the Kronospan formaldehyde plant in Sebes. The environmental authorities in Alba county have been weak in enforcing legal provisions despite overwhelming local opposition to the plant. CIDRM therefore seeks to increase the pressure on the local authorities by increasing public awareness, public participation, access to information and justice for the citizens of Sebes city who will be directly affected by the production of formaldehyde on an industrial scale. Formaldehyde is a chemical listed as highly cancerous by the World Health Organization. Many people are already aware of the pollution and public health problems in Sebes, due to the activity of Kronospan's wood processing factory, which is very visible from the road, as you drive from Alba to Sibiu.

CIDRM recently submitted a project proposal for co-funding to the Environmental Partnership Foundation. It was approved and CIDRM now needs to secure the remaining amount (7.657 EUR or 12.013 USD) in order to implement the project. To find out more about the campaign and how to give financial assistance email CIDRM at cidrm.cluj@gmail.com

[return to table of contents](#)

What's in the Press

Compiled by Sara Meaker

About Romania

The Times UK 18th May

Ron Liddle raves about his recent eco friendly, family holiday in Transylvania. He describes the abundant wild life and the sustainable lifestyle that the many smallholders still have here. He is entranced by the region's incredible history. He stayed at one of Count Kalnoky's guest houses in Miklosvar, (See [Transylvanian Castle](#)) and travelled part of his journey here by train (from Budapest).

For whole article, see <http://www.timesonline.co.uk>

Adevarul Tuesday 22nd June

Travelling from Bucharest to the Black Sea coast means many delays which the authorities are trying to resolve. The congestion is due to speed limits and a lack of turning spaces. The solutions are to restrict heavy goods vehicles travelling on this route at weekends, and to publicise an alternative route to take. The ultimate solution will be to use the 'Motorway to the Sun' soon to be built. Building roads is how problems of congestion are being solved all over Romania.

REN asks why the authorities are not considering more sustainable solutions such as improved public transport/car sharing. In the long term, what happens when these new roads become congested?

Evenimentul Zilei 30th June

In Brasov nearly 100 cyclists took part in a demonstration to raise awareness about the lack of cycle lanes in the town. There is only one cycle lane in Brasov; it is one hundred metres long and runs

along the pavement in front of the town hall.

Evenimentul Zilei 30th June

An optional class, 'The Ecology of the Delta Dunare' can be taken in Junior schools (Gymnasium) from the beginning of the next academic year. 'Salvati Delta' and 'Mai Mult Verde', in collaboration with the Minister of the Environment and Education, launched the project, 'Cartea Dunarii Albastre' on 29th June. The pilot project will involve five hundred students and twenty two teachers from all the schools in the region. The hope is that the young people will become a valuable resource and will go on to educate others they come into contact with regarding the waters and ecosystems of the Delta.

Faalia 4th July

Reports on a small milk and cheese factory in the 'comuna' of Iclod, Oltenia called Picolact. This region is well known for its dairy production. The factory was set up in 1998 in the courtyard of a local smallholder. They have recently moved into a modern dairy kept to EU standards. The boss Darius Patrus heads a team of 25 workers Faalia reports all have good work conditions.

Monitorul de Cluj 4th July

By 2015 Romanian needs to have 20% of its land certified Bio. Now only 1% of the land is Organic. Marion Cioceanu from Asociatiei Operatorilor din Agricultura Ecologica Bio Romania says that the farmers need to receive the subsidies for conversion as they do in the rest of the EU. Another representative from Bio Romania has said that this year will be a record for production of bio wheat and peas (4 ton/hectare). This association is directing its comments directly to the Ministry of Agriculture. Their motive is that Romanian children and the sick have a right to healthy, organic local food. At the moment 95% of organic production is exported; and costs double the price of non-organic counterparts in supermarkets.

REN believes it is better to buy local food rather than Organic (if this means imports). Support your local market, those in your community and not foreign owned supermarkets/imported goods.

Gardianul Transilvania 4th July

The Train system is in crisis according to a survey conducted by Price Waterhouse and McKinsey's on CFR. CFR Departments, responsible for train infrastructure, transportation of goods, and of people, are all in financial chaos. They are not restructuring the costs, and the management is not efficient. Stefan Roseanu of AFER (Asociatiei Industriei Feroviare din Romania) says that train travel is chronically underfunded and that this is a political issue where rail infrastructure is not made into something reliable, efficient and attractive.

REN Says: It appears car manufacturers have a loud voice in Romanian ministries. Across Western Europe fast rail lines are being built to relieve pressure on roads, reduce the impact of travel on climate change, and create a modern, fast, safe transport system. Once again Romania is applying failed 20th century solutions and not modern 21st century solutions.

Adevarul Verde 22nd July

A survey carried out by Naturaland found that less than 1% of Romanians eat eco certified food, and that these eco-shoppers are middle class between the ages of 26 and 39. The reason for the small figure is high costs of such food and availability. Romania is an exporter of raw materials for eco certified food, but by the time the finished products return, they are four times more expensive than products produced in Romania.

Adevarul Verde 22nd July

Sorin Adam Matei argues against a notable Romanian Professor's anti capitalist stand made in

1990. This professor of history and sociology asked why anyone would need more than one type of Salami. Matei believes we need a variety of everything to cater for the ever increasing range of tastes/individualism in the world. He suggests that Capitalism doesn't always get it right in predicting the needs of the consumer, but that on the whole capitalism and consumerism make for an interesting life.

REN Says 'an interesting life' that is destroying our planet, of which there is only one.

Ziua 2nd August

Bears are to be culled in Brasov. This announcement comes after another person was killed on 1st August by a bear 500 metres from the city centre. There is a whole list of recent fatalities caused by bears entering the city for food.

REN Says. Aren't bears coming into the city because their natural environment and food source is being destroyed? Is the rubbish being regularly removed, and efficiently disposed off, so as not to attract bears or other animals? In Yellowstone park in the USA removing all rubbish (ie food for hungry bears) has led to a massive reduction in bear attacks on humans. Aren't bears a protected species? Why did the killing of a girl by a wild dog several months ago in Romania (again a fatality among a whole list of recent fatalities), not provoke a similar outcry?

About the Rest of the World

Richmond Informer 6th June (UK)

Kingston University's Clare McCormack heads the team of researchers who have created the first wind up compost toilet. Winding aerates the waste before a pipe transports the waste to a collection point. Aerating dries the waste very quickly which means it turns into a dry compost, and can be used to fertilise the garden.

Adevarul Verde 24th June

East Germany has built the largest photovoltaic power station in the world. It covers an area of 200 football pitches and produces 40 megawatts at full capacity.

From October this year for every 20m² of building in the town of Marburg, a photovoltaic panel will be compulsory. Each panel costs cost 5000 Euros. Anyone not complying will be fined 1000 Euros.

Adevarul Verde 22nd July

Abu Dhabi in the Arab Emirates will built a zero emission city by 2016 for 50,000 residents, and 1,500 companies. Transport will be public and solar powered; water will be cleaned by desalination and after use, recycled in irrigation . For more information see [Masdar Abu Dhabi](#)

REN says Masdar is planned to be a zero-emissions waste free city. Why are initiatives like this not springing up all over Romania?

Adevarul Verde 22nd July

Russia wants to become more energy efficient by 2020. Plans are being discussed to reduce energy consumption by 40%. The Russian authorities are looking favourably on alternative energy investments.

Complete articles can be found at the following sites www.adevarul.ro, www.expres.ro, www.ziarulfaclia.ro, www.monitorulcj.ro, www.gardianul.ro/transilvania, www.ziua.ro

Is Romania finally waking up to the advantages of travelling by bike.

This is taken from an article (02/07) in Transilvanian Express listing the benefits of cycling

Este un mijloc de transport modern, de viitor, tot mai utilizat in statele dezvoltate din UE si din alte zone ale lumii. Are un potential de utilizare foarte mare in Romania, dar inca destul de putin valorificat. Este benefica economiei, putand crea noi locuri de munca, dezvolta noi structuri de productie si servicii specifice, implica investitii si clienti externi, promoveaza tehnologii moderne si atrage dezvoltare economica durabila a unor zone sau sectoare. "Bicicleta este benefica social, din punctul de vedere al integrarii si armoniei, atenuand perceptia discrepantelor si inegalitatii (intre sofer si pieton, posesor de vehicul foarte scump sau foarte ieftin, intre cine conduce si cine e doar pasager etc.). Ea usureaza mobilitatea si a celor dezavantajati, promovand contactul intre oameni, facilitand interactiunea si incluziunea sociala, dialogul si relatiile interumane intr-o masura mult mai mare decat in cazul deplasarii cu autoturisme", explica Radu Mititean, presedintele Federatiei Biciclistilor din Romania (din cadrul Clubului de Cicloturism NAPOCA). Federatia organizeaza anual, incepand cu 2002, conferinte de cicloturism si promovarea bicicletei, in cadrul carora se poarta discutii si se adopta decizii comune, cum ar fi documentele de pozitie, propuneri legislative etc., de catre organizatiile implicate in promovarea bicicletei ca mijloc de transport cu rol utilitar si recreativ. Urmatoarea conferinta va avea loc la Bucuresti, la inceputul lunii octombrie 2008 ("Pro Velo VII"). [See article in Transilvanian Express](#)

Critical Mass

There are now a number of critical mass cycle rides in Romania. They are listed on Wikipedia Romania as:

[Wikipedia: Romania](#)

- [Brasov \(w\)](#), we meet every last Friday of the month at 18:30 at Civic Center of the city. On 30th of May 2008 we celebrated on 2 wheels the first year of Critical Mass in Brasov! You can find photos and information here [DirtBike.ro](#)
- [Bucuresti \(w\)](#), we meet in Tineretului park, the entrance of Șincai High School [Map](#), on the last Friday of every month at 6.00pm (see [Bucuresti Critical Mass site](#)).
- [Cluj \(w\)](#), last Saturday of every month at 5.00pm, we meet in the Skate Park behind the main post office, [hp critical mass cluj](#)
- [Ploiesti \(w\)](#), we meet in Tineretului Park, near the statue of Mihai Viteazul, on the last Friday of every month at 5.00pm.
- [Timisoara \(w\)](#), last Friday of every month at 6.00pm, we meet in front of the Timisoara Orthodox Cathedral.

REN Says: You can see even more advantages of using a bicycle in the picture at this site (need to scroll down to see picture) <http://www.sustainedmagazine.com/>

[return to table of contents](#)

Finally Dogs

Following the article in REN 2 regarding the killing of a child by feral dogs some subscribers were sent a response to this article by **Claudiu Iosim** (animedarad@yahoo.com). As REN is sent out in batches many of you did not receive this. A few extracts are included below. If you wish to read the full letter please email a request to editor_ren@operamail.com. We asked Claudiu to write an article for REN, but unfortunately he does not have the time at the moment. You can find out more

about the charity that Claudiu represents at <http://www.animed.ro/arad/animed.php>

Extracts from letter (we have not corrected language errors)

..... of course the child's parents and the land owner are the ones to blame. the children are to blame as well. probably no one ever told you how cruel children can be towards stray dogs and stray cats. we know

..... after that, let's analyze those dogs as well. who says those were stray dogs? I bet you those were "their" dogs. meaning they kept them there, they "fed" them, they let them breed and they hit them with everything they got: feet, stones, wood and so on. 6. the number of people bitten every year by dogs ... again, a big mistake. I was bitten by a owned dog once and went to the hospital for those shots. they wrote in a form my name, address, age, ID number and the fact that I was bitten by a dog. they never write down on that form if those dogs are owned or stray. they just mark dog bite. every now and then someone from the media calls the hospital and ask for that number and then writes a terrifying article about the huge number of people that were bitten by dogs, without mentioning how many of those dogs had in fact an owner and were not strays at all.

[return to table of contents](#)

REN Needs you

To be successful REN requires to have all the news about events and actions organised by all the NGOs and companies across Romania, which put the health of the planet and the welfare of all before profit or gain. We need longer articles (maximum two pages in font 12 REN reserves the right to edit articles and correct typing and language) preferably with links to websites where those interested can find out more information.

WE NEED YOU. We accept articles in English, Romanian, Hungarian, and German. If you want people who speak your language who do not speak English to read some of the articles in REN 3, please translate the article and publish it somewhere else. If you send it to us it will appear in the next edition of REN. REN 4 will be published on October 31st. You can start by translating the above request so that it will appear in all our languages in REN 4. The list of organisations below is very short. We need your up-to-date current contact and information details. They will appear in REN 4.

Contact REN Email: editor_ren@operamail.com

[return to table of contents](#)

ORGANISATIONS



Association of Ecotourism in Romania
Asociația de Ecoturism din România (AER)
OP 1, CP 210
Brașov 500500
Tel/Fax: +40 368 441084
Mobil: +40 728 974801
Email: eco-romania@gmail.com
Web: www.eco-romania.ro

Clubul de Ecologie și Turism MOLDAVIA

PO BOX 50-1 cod 5725 Pașcani-România
Tel.(Fax) 40-32-762267 Email: cetmoldavia@hotmail.com
Motto: "Ad virginem redeuntem"
"Să ne întoarcem la natură"

S.C. Low Impact Living Transylvania S.R.L

LILTrans exists to attract downsizers and environmentalists from Western Europe to come and live in the Kalotaszeg region around Huedin, Judetul Cluj. liltransyl.co.uk

I · N · T · B · A · U

International Network for Traditional Building, Architecture & Urbanism
PATRON: HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES

INTBAU is a world wide organisation dedicated to the support of traditional building, the maintenance of local character and the creation of better places to live. We are creating an active network of individuals and institutions who design, make, maintain, study or enjoy traditional building, architecture and places. <http://www.intbau.org/index.htm>



The Mihai Eminescu Trust is dedicated to the conservation and regeneration of villages and communes in Transylvania and the Maramures, two of the most unspoilt regions of Europe. <http://www.mihaieminescutrust.org/>



Change Rosia Montana's fate! The 'Save Rosia Montana' campaign needs your help to stop what if developed would be a catastrophic mining development. They need you to stop Europe's largest open cast cyanide leach gold mine from happening. http://www.rosiamontana.ro/index_en.shtml

<http://www.reactieinlant.ro/>

Reactie in Lant este o campanie de promovare a bicicletei ca mijloc privilegiat de transport in oras.

In cadrul campaniei avem o serie de marsuri pe bicicleta. Marsul din fiecare ultima Sambata din luna este intitulat **Critical Mass**.

[return to table of contents](#)

Contact REN Email: editor_ren@operamail.com

Address: REN, Douglas Mcfarlane, Oficiul postal 1, CP2, Huedin, Jud. Cluj, Romania.

Tel: (Romania) 0264 351150 or mobile (Romania only)0751792593