

English Version Rundbrief Oktober 2009

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Isn't it amazing how the time flies by ?

Dear members of Oekologisch Wirtschaften (OW),

We wish to give you a short overview of what has been going on since this year's annual meeting on Pellworm.

Last year there was still the question of what we could be expecting of the newly elected local council, elected in May 2008, with regard to the objectives of OW. There had been informational meetings on rural development programmes for Schleswig-Holstein ("Regionen Aktiv") before, shared with mayor Klaus Jensen. Working groups on various subjects had been formed by the end of 2007. Their chief aim was to develop new joint projects and to find a more intense cooperation with the local organizations and initiatives on Pellworm.

Since the new local council started work a new open-mindedness can clearly be felt. They are much more ready to discuss the questions of sustainable development on the island, questions that have long been brought up by OW. This has made it possible for all local organizations and interested individuals to take a greater share in the development of projects for the future of Pellworm. The board of OW is convinced that we should take the favourable opportunity to invite a great number of Pellworm citizens and guests and ask them to cooperate with us.

A new spirit of cooperation beyond the interests of political parties and organization has developed. It is mainly a result of the activity of the working group energy initiated by Uwe Kurzke.

All those who have committed themselves to the field of renewable energies work in this group. It has met regularly and the members have been busy working on a revaluation of the energy concept proposed by OW about 10 years ago. The exciting part about the strategy of this working group is that they don't negotiate about their individual interests. Instead they are ready to reconcile their concerns for the development of Pellworm in joint action.

The local council supports the reassessment of the energy concept and there has already been an invitation of tenders. There were 3 tenders and Synergiekomm, a company that has been working on Pellworm since midyear was awarded the contract.

The survey is financed by the local authority and by the rural development programmes. It is to be finished by the end of 2009.

It's the objective of this survey to work out a kind of master plan for the further development of the use of renewable energy. It is meant to serve as guideline or orientation for the members of the local authority when they have to make decisions in this sector.

Some progress has also been made on the agricultural sector.

On 17 November 08 the dairy farmers on Pellworm initiated a workshop, titled "Is the conversion to organic production an alternative for the dairy farmers on Pellworm?"

"Naturland" and "Die Gläserne Meierei" presented the chances that eco dairy farming and marketing would give to Pellworm. At the moment all dairy farmers must find out about all sorts of alternatives because the present owner of the dairy terminates his contract with the farmers on 31 December 09. The price paid for delivered conventional milk has reached a historical low of under 20 cent while 30 cent are paid for organic milk in some German regions.

More than once the managing director of the "Gläserne Meierei" as well as Steffen Reese, former secretary of OW and present secretary of "Naturland" have discussed the possibilities of reversion to organic dairy farming and the conditions for cooperation with interested farmers.

3 dairy farmers have since then decided to convert to organic dairy farming and to complete a contract with the "Gläserne Meierei".

The "Gläserne Meierei" co-operative is one of the biggest German organic dairies. Since 2001 it has exclusively processed organic milk – mainly from north-east Germany into various organic dairy products.

Detailed information on the workshop in November was published in De Pellwormer on 22 December 09. Steffen Reese has offered to those who are interested to have another look into the possible ways of better processing and more effective marketing of the milk from Pellworm.

Silke Zetl has done the rounds and asked the farmers' union and the farmers who practise ecological farming to sign the declaration that Pellworm must remain free of genetic modified organisms (GMO). Most farmers seem to be willing to work without GMO, although (but) some signatures are still missing.

If Pellworm was only partly free of genetically engineered products Bio farmers and beekeepers would have a problem because you can't avoid unwanted contamination through pollen, in particular through corn and rape pollen.

Since the informational meeting about the possibilities of promotion within the framework of "Aktivregionen" Doris Ohrt has taken care that Pellworm is represented in the workgroup "Aktivregionen".

A new regional manager, Frau Büttner, has now been employed. She is responsible for the north Frisian region Uthlande and started work on Föhr in February 2009.

As Doris, as a representative of the NGO's on Pellworm, and Klaus Jensen, as a representative of the local government body, are on our side we can claim the support of this advisory office. They will help us to develop our projects that we began to discuss last year (e.g. energy concepts, tourism, measures taken to secure our livelihood, etc.)

We want you, the members of OW, to be able to get the latest information about the development of our projects. So we have started to work on a new layout for our website. Anne Zetl is very busy working on this subject. The plan is to finish the new website by autumn this year.

We look forward to your contributions – your ideas and suggestions – as soon as the website is online.

But above all we will be happy (But we will be even happier..) if you visit our website regularly. There you will easily find all the minutes (reports, records) and important news. (You will easily find...in our new website)

Hannes Lorenzen has livened up connections between Pellworm and the international networks and projects. You could read a report on the activities of Forum Synergies and the international networks.

Forum Synergies (www.forum-synergies.eu) offers many interesting contacts with actual projects in Europe, in which sustainable development concepts are realised. Between 9 October and 11 October there will be a new international meeting, initiated by Forum Synergies in the region of Wendland near Lüneburg.

With regard to projects in education or further education (energy academy, soft tourism, local marketing, training of artists) you can discover many interesting initiatives on other islands and communities. Joint excursions like the class trips we made in school may be a good way of enjoying community and at the same time of clearly reviving our Pellworm associations.

Forward-looking Pellworm has been discovered by television.

Engagement in sustainable development has been given priority for many, many years. At the beginning of the 80s the first proving ground for wind power stations existed in the place where the solar power station and the sewage plant are today. More than 20 years ago the biggest solar power station was built on Pellworm.

We could go on listing projects of a sustainable character.

It's surprising that the great commitment that the island of Pellworm has shown in sustainable projects has attracted so little attention on the other side of the dyke. Husum-Wind, meanwhile the biggest fair for wind-power generation has up to now ignored Pellworm to the greatest possible extent.

In the meantime things seem to have changed a bit. Early this summer a television team from Korea came to Pellworm. They studied the various forms of sustainable power generation intensively. Based on their knowledge a film was produced. It will be shown on Korean TV in autumn this year.

The NDR, too, have announced their visit to Pellworm. In a detailed programme they want to inform about the environmentally beneficial production of energy, its development, the energy conceptions initiated by OW and the integral way of looking at things that's involved.