

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2010, 9.30-17.00  
The Open University



**(April 2008-Sept 2010)**

[www.ceecec.net](http://www.ceecec.net)

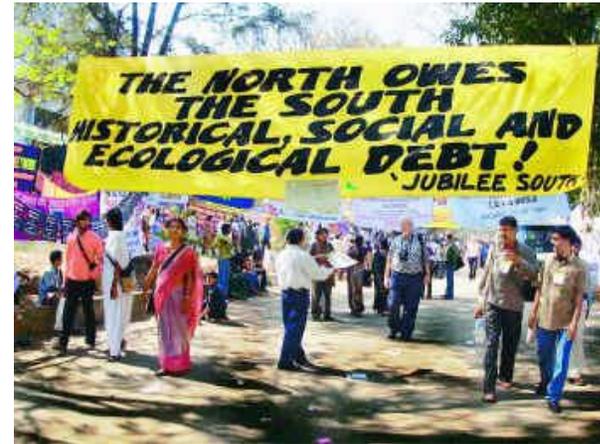
**(and introducing the EJOLT project)**

Teaching and learning  
ecological economics with civil  
society organizations



# From Science to Activism

- Environmental NGOs, networks increasingly using concepts from Ecological Economics, Political Ecology
  - EROI,
  - Material flows
  - Ecologically unequal exchange
  - Environmental justice
  - Carrying capacity
  - Resilience
  - GDP of the poor



## From Activism to Science:

- More importantly, NGOs and networks sometimes develop new concepts useful to / scrutinized by research
  - ecological debt
  - food sovereignty

Via Campesina: Sustainable peasant agriculture cools down the earth



# CEECEC: Ecological Economics with NGOs

## Civil Society Engagement with Ecological Economics.

- FP7 SiS funded (2008-2010), the project developed out of dissatisfaction with distance between academic ecological economics, and "activist knowledge" and needs of environmental Non-Government Organizations
- Case study approach: Ecological Economics taught / learned through a **two-way exchange** b/w CSOs and researchers
- NGOs (8/14) chose case studies, (most of immediate relevance) for teaching/learning materials development (Handbook and Course).
  - water management, mining, waste, forestry, protected area management - based on CSO needs and interests.
- Co-operative (Stirling 2006)/ Collaborative / Action(Reason and Bradbury / Partnership (Frankham 2009) / Participatory.....

## *Civil Society Organizations*

- Centre for Science and Environment, **India**
- Centre pour l'Environnement et le Développement, **Cameroon**
- Acción Ecológica, **Ecuador**
- Ecological Society Endemit, **Serbia**
- A Sud - Ecologia e Cooperazione, **Italy**
- Vlaams Overleg Duurzame Ontwikkeling, **Belgium** (Flanders)
- SUNCE, Association for Nature, Environment and Sustainable Development, **Croatia**
- Instituto Rede Brasileira Agroflorestal, **Brazil**

## *Research Institutions*

- **ICTA, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain**
- IFF, Universitaet Klagenfurt, **Austria**
- GEPAMA, Universidad de Buenos Aires, **Argentina**
- Ecoman, New University of Lisbon, **Portugal**
- Université Libre de Bruxelles, **Belgium**
- SERI Nachhaltigkeitsforschungs und Kommunikations GmbH, **Austria**

# OLD CONTACTS

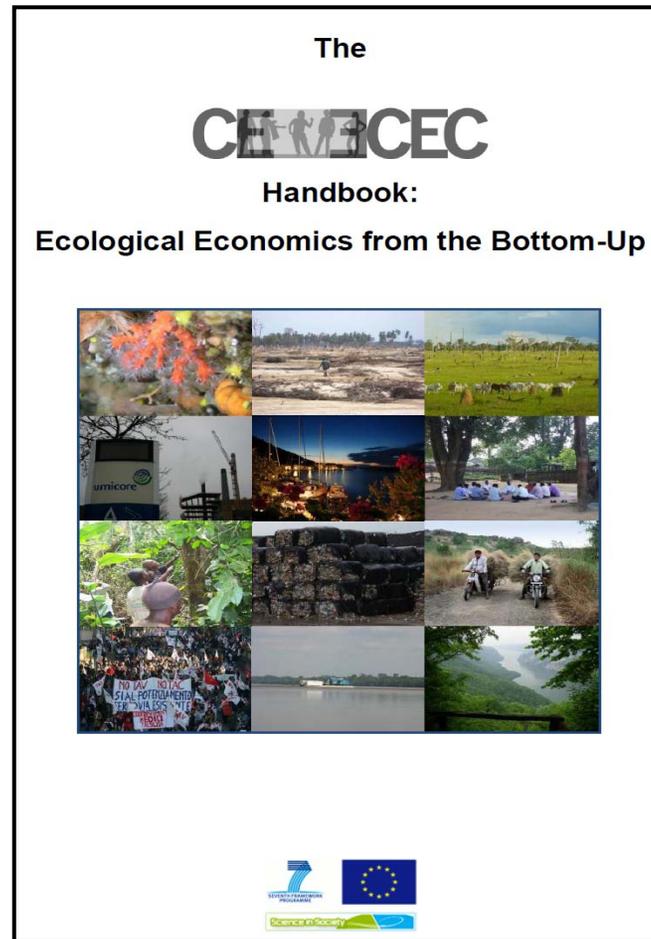
- CSE in India (Sunita Narain)
- Acción Ecológica from Ecuador
- CED-FOEI in Cameroon , meetings of FoE, of Oilwatch
- VODO, Leida Rijnhout, on ecological debt...

IT IS *EASY* TO WORK WITH CSOs

# Outputs

- Outreach: “Live Ecological Economics Sessions with CSOs” (Kenya, Rome, Ljubljana)
- Reports:
  - Identification of Key Issues and Topics for Sustainability Policy Research
  - Opportunities for EcoEco / CSO collaboration in the Balkan Region
  - Mapping and Assessment of CSO Use of Ecoeco Concepts and Tools (forthcoming)
  - **Blueprint for CSO/Ecoeco collaboration (based on case study development processes, incl workshops)**

# Outputs cont'd



<http://www.ceecec.net/handbook>

## Outputs Cont'd

- Online CEECEC Course  
(<http://www.ceecec.net/online-course/>)
  - based on case studies
  - ran from April-July 2010
- 25 Students taking the course
  - mostly members of NGOs but also university students, public administrators.
- 12 lectures prepared and held by 12 tutors

# Course Feedback

- “The course is very **valuable for activists** as it provided a lot **new knowledge and ideas** how environmental conflicts can be described, assessed, addressed and potentially solved.... giving a completely **different perspective of development, resources use, neocolonialism, disaster capitalism, growth reflecting on values and rationalism.**
- “... I hope you can **continue with the course so that other activists and people in general can be empowered.** I would love to see more of these considerations being used in **Brussels politics where the logic of neo-liberal economics** is still the rule (because of lack of serious alternative).”
- “...degrowth, ecological debt, ecosystem services, GDP of the poor, incommensurability of values, political ecology, post-normal science ... are just a few which I think I will be using in my future writings and work in NGOs.”

## • Challenges

- geographical
- linguistic
- cultural
- mismatched expectations
- facilitation

## • Opportunities

- Process development
- Co-production of knowledge
- Improved research (relevance and credibility)
- Broaden discourse on sustainability

# Benefits

- **To CSOs**

- new research competencies
- Enlarged networks
- Bringing together of activists, policy makers and researchers
- High quality data
- New proposals and publications
- Build capacities of smaller NGOs

- **To researchers**

- New audiences and issues
- Exposure to activist knowledge
- Longer term relationships
- Understanding of real-life issues and CSOs
- Different logics and institutional frameworks
- Reflect on role of science and generation of solutions to problems

# Prospects for Teaching and Learning Ecological Economics and other Sustainability Sciences with Civil Society Organizations in the New EJOLT Project (2010-2013)

## Environmental Justice Organizations, Liabilities and Trade

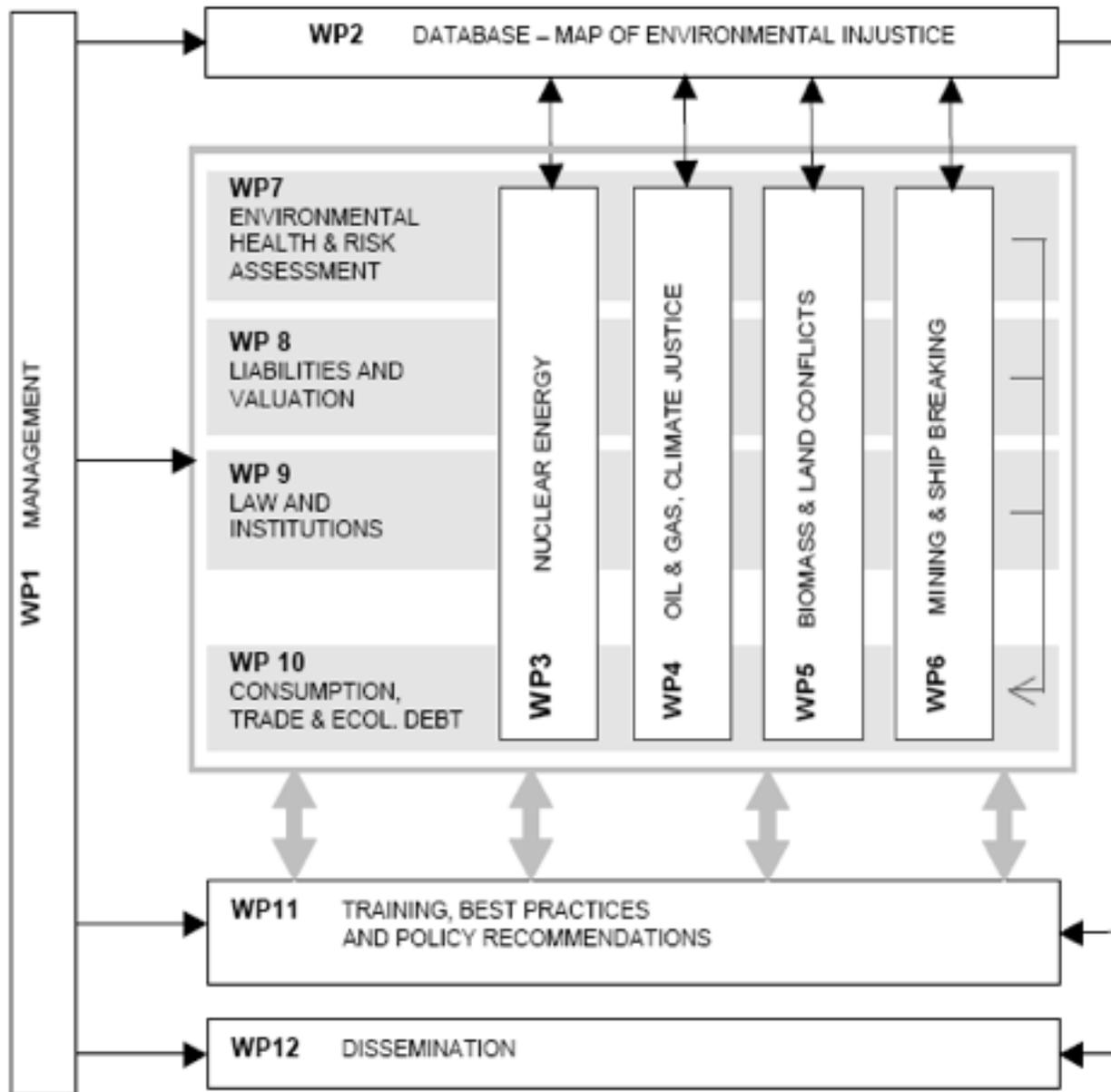
- Building on CEECEC, another FP7 Science-in-Society project (over 3 M €) was approved recently, with 23 organizations, also to be coordinated by ICTA-UAB
- Built on partnership between research organizations, think-tanks, independent laboratories and EJOs, with participation of government and corporate actors, and media organizations

# EJOLT partners

- Institut de Ciència i Tecnologia Ambientals, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain
- Centre for Civil Society (CCS) Durban, South Africa
- A Sud CDCA Italy
- ToxicsWatch Alliance - India
- Sozial Ökologie Institut - University of Klagenfurt (IFF) Austria
- Focus Association for Sustainable Development (FOCUS) Slovenia
- Fundação Oswaldo Cruz (FIOCRUZ) Brazil
- World Rainforest Movement (WRM) Uruguay
- Acción Ecológica & OCMAL - Ecuador
- Citizens for Justice (CFJ) Malawi
- Earthlife Namibia (ELN) Namibia
- Environmental Rights Action - Oilwatch (ERA) Nigeria
- Northern Alliance for Sustainability (ANPED) Belgium
- Nature Kenya (NK) Kenya
- Lund University, Sweden
- Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Tarragona, Spain
- Boğaziçi University, Turkey
- Business and Human Rights. London, United Kingdom
- Za Zemiata (ZZ) Bulgaria
- Sustainable Europe Research Institute (SERI) Germany
- Université de Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines (UVSQ) France
- Genetic Resources Action International (GRAIN) Spain
- Commission de Recherche et d'Information Indépendantes sur la Radioactivité (CRIIRAD) France

# The EJOLT project

- Environmental Justice Organizations (EJOs) are NGOs involved locally, nationally or globally in conflicts over:
  - unequal distribution of environmental entitlements, burdens of pollution, uneven access to natural resources and services.
- Not “wilderness conservationism”, but “environmentalism of the poor”
  - defence of environment to ensure livelihoods of those directly involved in resource extraction and waste disposal conflicts.



# The EJOLT project

Geared to two key issues of immediate interest to society:

- Which are the causes of the increasing ecological distribution conflicts at different scales?
- How to turn such conflicts into forces for environmental sustainability?

# Opening of issues of sustainability to civil society perspectives

- Sustainability, NOT Sustainable Development
- FoEI and Ecological Debt
- Via Campesina and Climate Change
- French and Italian social movements for Economic Degrowth
  - This movement claims different ancestors, among whom N. Georgescu-Roegen (1906-94), founding father of ecological economics, author of *The entropy law and the economic process* (1971).

# Thank You!

