



European Community of Consumer Cooperatives

Communauté européenne des coopératives de consommateurs

Climate Change

And Consumer Co-operatives:

Taking the challenge forward



Report 2010

*Working in partnership with Consumer Co-operatives Worldwide (CCW)
Part of the International Co-operative Alliance*

www.ccw.coop



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Printed on EU Eco-Label Recycled paper



FOREWORD

Consumer co-operatives acknowledge that fighting the climate change threat is one of the major challenges of the 21st century and that they have a very important role to play as responsible socio-economic actors.

The co-operative business model is very well suited to engage in this fight because it is based on ethical values such as democratic management, intergenerational solidarity, concern for the community, equity and fairness.

This report presents a vast number of initiatives that Euro Coop members have developed in 2009 to tackle climate change and represents the first follow-up report on the commitments voluntarily taken by them in the framework of the project “Consumer co-operatives and Climate Change: taking the challenge forward”.

The report illustrates the quality, quantity and diversity of actions undertaken by European consumer co-operatives. Nevertheless, there are many more initiatives that were not possible to include, due to lack of resources, information or space.

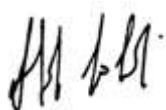
Some of the tools used by consumer co-operatives are also available to other companies and types of businesses but others are specific to the co-operative business model. Our aim is to set an example and be at the forefront of this combat and hope that others can follow. But it is also an internal challenge to make more progress and improve our actions. In the next report we are certain we will be able to illustrate that we have succeeded in doing so.

This report only covers initiatives developed by European consumer co-operatives members of Euro Coop but it has been done in the framework of Consumer Co-operatives Worldwide (CCW) and we hope to integrate in the future concrete examples of initiatives developed by consumer co-operatives in other parts of the globe.

This work is also integrated with the work of the wider co-operative movement and these examples have contributed to the project “ACT!” which integrates the examples of other co-operative sectors. There is still a huge potential of integration between different co-operative sectors such as housing, energy, banking and others, that would allow even more important results. Consumer co-operatives will remain committed to develop further these intersectoral links within the co-operative movement.

Finally, a word of appreciation is due to Euro Coop’s Sustainability Working Group and its secretariat for the preparation of this report. A job well done.

Enjoy your reading!



Aldo Soldi
Euro Coop President



Anne Santamäki
CCW President

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ENHANCING SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION

2009 has seen an **increased effort** by consumer co-operatives to source **more goods bearing sustainability certifications** in the areas of

- ✓ Ecological production;
- ✓ Sustainable fishing;
- ✓ Organic farming;
- ✓ Sustainable managed forests;
- ✓ Local sourcing.

Improvement in all these areas is critical to combat Climate Change. In this process, consumer co-operatives own brands products confirmed to be an important tool to strengthen environmental criteria and induce the desired change in consumer co-operative members' behaviour.

BOOSTING ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

Eco friendly products are products that do not harm or drastically limit impacts on the environment whether in their production, use or disposal phase. The sourcing of eco-friendly products is therefore an important step in protecting the environment as well as in bringing about change in daily consumption patterns. Consumer co-operatives have since long understood that if no attempts are made to switch to green alternatives now, very soon we will be surrounded by the pollution and toxins caused by producing, using and disposing these non-green items. In order to take up this challenge, consumer co-operatives have deployed a wide range of initiatives in 2009, the most significant of which are listed here below.

To begin with, last year the Italian Coop launched the “**vivi verde**” (literally “live green”) **line of eco-friendly products**, which merges **ecological** (many of them Ecolabel certified) and **organic products** for a total of around **400 own-brand items**. Coop Italy also decided to **eliminate from the products of this line the use of tropical fats and flavouring agents**, even natural ones.



The line includes also:

- ✓ Disposable dishes and glasses produced with biodegradable maize plastic;
- ✓ Rechargeable batteries;
- ✓ Bulk detergents.

Along with this eco-friendly line, Coop Italy launched an **initiative addressed to all its Italian own-brand suppliers** called **“Coop for Kyoto”**. This project foresees the stipulation of voluntary agreements aimed at reducing greenhouse gases as foreseen by the Kyoto Protocol. The elaboration of the data of 2008 highlighted an increase of production efficiency of 9.2% and savings of almost 18,000 tones of CO2.

From its side, Coop Norway has kept on:

- ✓ Eco-labelling all own-brand low-energy light bulbs;
- ✓ Selling them at discounted prices to consumer-members.

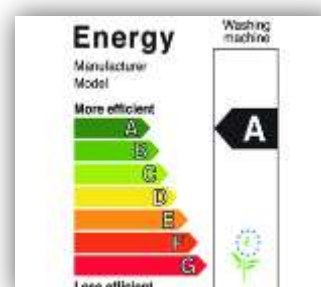
In Finland, the S Group increased the sales of **energy saving light bulbs (CFL)** which passed from 300,000 units in 2008 to 550,000 in 2009.

At the same time Coop Sweden, Coop Denmark, the S Group and Coop Norway worked to jointly develop a project aimed at calculating carbon emissions on the own-brand Coop Änglamark products. The initiative was carried out in cooperation with their suppliers. The four retailers were and still are also working to develop a tool to calculate emissions on other products as well as measures to reduce products' emissions.

In addition to that, the Swedish consumer co-operatives kept on guaranteeing carbon neutral deliverance of direct marketing activities through off-setting mechanisms. They also carried out several discussions with eco-labelling organisations about how to incorporate carbon foot-printing criteria in eco-label ones. They worked in particular with KRAV (a Swedish association gathering farmers, processors, trade and also consumer, environmental and animal welfare organisations to develop organic farming criteria) and other food retail federations on the same issue. In absolute terms, the Swedish Group reduced emissions of greenhouse gases by more than 6% in 2009 in comparison to the previous year, which if inflation-adjusted, corresponds to a reduction of 9.5%.

As regards the Euro Coop UK member, the Co-operative Group, it is on track with:

- ✓ The commitment undertook in 2007 to stock white goods rated “A” or above following the EU energy labelling system;
- ✓ The **phasing-out of tungsten incandescent light bulbs** in the Co-operative Food's stores by the end of 2010.



In addition to that, the Group continued the project started in 2008 to **develop a new software tool** (known as the **‘Ready-Reckoner’**), in partnership with Manchester University, which will **allow the carbon footprints of products to be investigated more quickly and easily than a full PAS 2050 analysis**. The tool aims to contribute significantly to The Co-operative Food's **sustainable sourcing policies**, by enabling fast, accurate decision-making around the climate change impacts of food and non-food products.

In Romania, Centrocoop started using and selling **only economical fluorescent light bulbs** and carried out important discussions with all its business partners in order to **start supplying a wide range of**

ecological products whereas in Bulgaria CCU renovated more than **600 co-operative shops** and all of them are now **equipped with energy-saving lights units**.

PRESERVING THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT

*Seas and oceans cover over 50% of the territory of the European Union stretching from the Arctic, through the Baltic, Atlantic, Mediterranean and the Black Sea. They are a **major source of food, employment and economic income** and a **potential supply of** as yet unknown **mineral and biological resources**. But the **marine environment is under threat** – primarily from **over-exploitation**, the **intensification of human activities** and the **effects of Climate Change**. The challenge for the future will be to **ensure that we can continue to benefit from this precious resource, whilst protecting it for future generations**. Consumer co-operatives are active in this area and **strive to reduce their impacts on the marine environment** through a wide series of actions.*

For example, the Italian Coop is taking part in two projects aimed at safeguarding marine resources and promoting ecologically and socially sustainable fishing policies:

- ✓ The Friends of the Sea and
- ✓ The **Dolphin Safe project**, for the protection of dolphins during the tuna fishing.



At the same time, the Swedish Kooperativa Förbundet (KF) launched a **new strategy for preserving marine resources**. This includes:

- ✓ A “**green-list**” for **fish species that are not endangered**, which proves to be a very useful tool for buyers as well;
- ✓ Targets for the sale of sustainably sourced fish.

In this regard, KF is on track with the commitment undertaken to increase the sale of MSC and other sustainability-labelled fish products (e.g. KRAV) to 30% of the total sales for the category by 2012. Also, KF and Coop Sweden organise every year the Änglamark Prize, i.e. an award aimed at promoting and raising public awareness about pioneering initiatives in the food sustainability area. In 2009 the theme of this award, which in 2010 will celebrate its 10th anniversary, was “sustainable fishery”.



As to the Finnish S Group, in autumn 2009 it established **new criteria for responsible fish procurement and selection of sold fish products**. To fulfil these procurement criteria, grocery stores and chain restaurants complied with the **IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) red list** for endangered, vulnerable or overexploited species. Seeking to promote an environmental-friendly approach, **the S Group does not accept the use of harmful fishing methods, such as dynamite or toxic substances fishing techniques**. In addition to that, the S Group expects to increase its range of eco-labelled own brand fish products.

SOURCING MORE PRODUCTS FROM ORGANIC FARMING



Organic farming can be seen as tangible effort to create a more sustainable development. At the core of the organic philosophy lies a ban on the use of synthetic fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides. That means adopting other techniques to nourish crops and protect the soil, such as growing 'cover crops' between seasons to prevent erosion and to restore organic matter. The organic movement also encompasses such tenets as animal welfare, energy efficiency, social justice and the idea of farms growing produce for local communities. Also, action to raise soil carbon levels through more widespread adoption of organic farming practices and grass-based and mixed farming systems can make a significant and immediate contribution to greenhouse gas mitigation and thereby appreciably contribute to fight Climate Change effects. Being consumer co-operatives for various aspects in line with the principles on which organic farming is based, they actively encourage the supply of organic products and often sell them at discounted prices.

Along with the example illustrated above of the 'vivi verde' line launched by the Italian Coop, in 2009 Coop Norway has kept on **granting discounts to consumer-members on organic fruit and vegetables**.

From its side, the Swedish Kooperativa Förbundet (KF) is on track to **increase the percentage of organic food products sales** from 6% of the total sales in 2008 to 10% by 2012. Also, it introduced a new range of **own brand organic fresh meat (Änglamark)**. In addition to that, **all Coop Sweden stores are since 2009 KRAV-certified**, this meaning that they fulfill various requirements with regard to **organic products** spacing from **providing education to employees** to **giving product information to consumers** (product range availability, handling of non-packaged organic products etc).



A MORE SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY MANAGEMENT

About 32 million acres of forestland are lost every year to logging and agricultural conversion. And during the next four decades the human population is expected to grow putting even greater pressure on forests around the world. These statistics prove that it is **of the utmost importance to manage our remaining natural resources wisely**. When they originate from well-managed land, **forest products are renewable resources**, and we can all benefit from them in numerous ways. But if these resources are harvested and traded improperly, they can be damaged or disappear entirely and right along with them goes the future of the world's plants, animals and people as well as our economic well-being. Consumer co-operatives have understood this capital challenge and strive to establish a **supply chain that is transparent** thereby demonstrating further commitment to sustainability

In this area, in 2009 **Coop Denmark has adopted a 100% Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) strategy on kitchen ware and furniture.** In co-operation with an NGO, FDB has supported the implementation of a project in Honduras aimed at protecting **the rainforest and provide development opportunities for the locals living in there.** Entire villages were FSC certified and the harvested timber processed into chopping boards and transformed into consumer goods then sold in the Coop shops.

As to the UK Co-operative Group, it reported that it purchased 30,800 m³ of timber products in 2009 (2008: 33,200 m³). During 2009, once again, **all wood products it sold were of known origin and there was credible evidence of legal harvesting.** Of these:

- ✓ 93% (2008: 67%) was supported by the FSC certification;
- ✓ A further 6% was sourced from recycled post-consumer waste (2008: 3%);
- ✓ 1% was known, legal-source virgin material, such as PEFC.



On the Italian side, back in 2001 Coop Italy started selling only **own brand products based on cellulose** (handkerchiefs, napkins, toilet paper etc) **bearing an FSC certification.** From 2009 these products have the **FSC “Mixed Sources” label** which identifies products manufactured with a mixture of FSC-certified material, recycled material, and controlled material.

A second activity of the Italian Coop aimed at managing forest in a sustainable way regards **palm oil**, whose increasing demand at international level caused a wild deforestation of the Indonesian peat bogs to turn them into plantations. Since 2006 Coop Italy decided to carry out different actions to counter this havoc and **in 2009 it decided to ask its suppliers to stop the supply of palm oil from Indonesia until there will be concrete guarantees about the sustainable management of the palm cultivation.**



In Sweden, during 2009 KF continued its collaboration with the **Vi Skogen Agroforestry Programme** so to implement **carbon off-setting projects in East Africa.** Through this programme, small farmers are also given a compensation for the services of ecosystem maintenance.

On the Finnish side, at the S Group all tropical wood furniture, which in 2009 amounted to 66 references, bears the FSC certification. In addition to that, S Group’s Kodin Terra, Prisma and S-Rautamarket chains are no longer selling parquet made of tropical tree species. Tropical tree species have accounted for about 10 per cent of S Group’s parquet sales.

As to Coop Norway, its approach to tropical timber has been for several years to **phase out it from all timber goods and replace it either with other timber products or other materials.** In addition to that, Coop Norway adopts a **100% FSC-strategy.** Coop Norway has been considered “**best in class**” in different surveys on tropical timber on the Norwegian market. Throughout the years, **it kept a close dialogue with the NGO “Rainforest Alliance”,** which is specialized in tropical forestry issues.

Finally, also the Spanish Eroski is since a long time engaged in the area of sustainable timber sourcing. Its **garden furniture is in fact all FSC certified as it is the paper used in its stationery section**. It is then in Eroski's goals for the near future to FSC certify also all household goods.

INCREASE IN LOCALLY SOURCED FOOD

*Food transported across the world burns up a lot of fossil fuel and contributes to global warming. The rise in "Food miles" - the total distance in miles the food item is transported from field to plate – has led to increases in the environmental, social and economic burdens associated with transport. These include carbon dioxide emissions, air pollution, congestion, accidents and noise. **Technological advances are surely welcomed** to reduce such impacts and make food travelling more environmentally sustainable. In the meanwhile, **sourcing food more locally can be seen as a suitable action to limit environmental harm caused by food travelling long distances**. Consumer co-operatives are active on this front and, added to the fact that they are locally rooted enterprises, have undertaken a series of measures to encourage the supply and sale of locally grown foods.*

For example, in 2009 the Co-operative Food's **Local Sourcing team** has kept on meeting and working alongside small local suppliers and food agencies to source local produce. The Co-operative is one of the UK's largest farmers and grows and sells a range of products in the '**Grown by us**' range.



At the same time, Coop Sweden launched a **broader range of regional and local food products** which are collected in the stores under the label "**Food from the region**". Through this line, Coop guarantees that:

- ✓ The products are quality assured;
- ✓ The content is locally produced;
- ✓ The smaller producers reach high quality standards.

The sales of "Food from the region" increased in 2009 by 36 percent within the Grocery retail group.

In Finland, **more than 80 % of daily consumer products sold by the S Group are sourced from Finnish suppliers**. Generally, one medium sized co-operative sources products from almost 300 local suppliers.

IMPLEMENTING WASTE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

During 2009, consumer co-operatives gathered in Euro Coop have pursued:

- ✓ An active waste minimisation policy;
- ✓ An enhanced prevention activity.

Reuse and **recycling** resulted to be more and more at the core of Euro Coop members' action and also a lot of attention was increasingly devoted to how to **appropriately treat and dispose waste** also with reference to food.

FURTHER PROMOTING THE “REDUCE, RE-USE AND RECYCLE” APPROACH

*“Reduce, reuse and recycle”, the three R's for waste management from packaging, are effective measures that serve as **alternatives to undifferentiated disposal of waste in landfills**. Today, several options are available to handle the waste that we produce and it is a precise responsibility of the whole society to take care of discarded goods in order to effectively preserve the environment in which we are living. Consumer co-operatives are more and more attentive to this key aspect and committed to work on it even more intensively.*

In this area, for more than 10 years now **Coop Italy** has been **changing the packaging in line with the so-called “3R”,** (“risparmio, riutilizzo and riciclo”) **strategy**, which stands for:

- ✓ Reducing the use of raw material at the production stage;
- ✓ Re-use bottles and containers thanks to the recharges and the sale of bulk products;
- ✓ Use recycled materials instead of virgin ones.



Other tools which consumer co-operatives often kept on using in 2009 to promote separate collection and minimise waste are:

- ✓ The indication on the label of the disposal of the packaging (Coop Italy, Coop Norway);
- ✓ Deposit schemes for beverage packaging (S Group, Coop Norway).

On the Swedish side, during 2009 the KF was on track with the undertaken commitment to **increase the amount of recycled waste from stores and warehouses by 10% to 2010.**

As regards the Co-operative Group in the UK, it has been a signatory to the **Courtauld Commitment since 2005**, which seeks to:

- ✓ Design-out packaging waste growth;
- ✓ Deliver absolute reductions in packaging waste.

In addition to that, the Group signed an agreement with 500 own-brand suppliers to reduce own-brand packaging 15% by 2010 based on 2006 levels and reached such target already in 2009, i.e. one year ahead of schedule. Finally, the Group was on track to respect the commitment undertaken to send less than 50% of total waste to landfill by 2013.

In Slovakia, Coop Jednota worked in co-operation with **ENVI-PAK**, a company authorised to provide licences to use the registered trademark “**Green Dot**”. The “Green Dot” symbol, which COOP Jednota applies on the packaging of its private label products, is used to:

- ✓ Express support within the cooperative sector for **waste recycling**;
- ✓ Educate consumers in this respect. COOP Jednota is also actively involved in recycling waste packaging material used in the distribution of goods to its stores.



On the Portuguese side, during 2009 FENACOOOP and COOPLISBOA continued **collecting in shops, bring to distribution centres and from here to recycling facilities paper, cardboard, glass and plastic**. This last action includes the collection of covers of soft plastic and it is carried out in the framework of the campaign “**Have a cover to indifference**”, which allowed a recycling of 64.000Kg since the beginning of the project in July 2007.

At the same time, the Norwegian consumer co-operative started to develop an **outlet management model** aimed at **increasing recycling** and **improving waste management practices** in distribution centres and points of sale. In Finland, the **S Group outlets had in 2009 238 recycling stations, where customers could take their sorted, recyclable package fractions**. The S Group also took part in a national project whose aim was to improve recycling facilities for consumers.

TOWARDS THE END OF THE SINGLE-USE CARRIER BAG ERA

One specific aspect on which there has been in 2009 a compact action of Euro Coop members regards the reduction and substitution of single use plastic carrier bags. Such bags represent less than 1% of household waste but they are considered by many to be an icon of a "throwaway society" and contribute to visible litter. As it is a precise mission of consumer co-operatives to educate their consumer members to a more sustainable living, it was therefore natural that many actions were concentrated on this measure



With the objective of eliminating disposable plastic bags, Coop Italy in 2009 kept on proposing to its consumer members many alternatives: **reusable bags in different materials** (cotton, jute, bags produced using Fair Trade coffee bags...) and **biodegradable plastic bags** that can be also used for the separated waste collection at home. Coop Norway and the Co-operative Group in the UK also offered a wide range of **degradable bags** and **"bags for life"** and so it did the S Group in Finland, which also sells **particular bags made for 60% of recycled plastic**. The Co-operative Group also met the target to reduce the number of free single use carriers by 50% by May 2009.

Centrocoop in Romania also kept on **producing and selling biodegradable bags** and ESEL-SPOLP LTD in Cyprus introduced **reusable bags made of recycled cotton cloth**. From its side, the Union of Czech and Moravian consumer co-operatives also offered to consumers **jute instead of plastic bags** and in Bulgaria CCU signed a **high level Memorandum of Understanding** with the Sri-Lanka consumer cooperatives to develop future forms of cooperation which also foresee the **production of reusable shopping bags**.

In Slovakia, towards the end of 2008, the Board of COOP Jednota approved the use of new carrier bags within the COOP Group and **since the first half of 2009, only environmentally-friendly bags have been used within the organisation**. As the bags are manufactured from **oxo-biodegradable materials**, which break down firstly by being exposed to heat and light and then by the work of micro-organisms, they have no detrimental impact on the environment. Coop Jednota also kept on offering to its consumer members a choice of **paper and multi-use jute bags**.

ENHANCED AWARENESS AND ACTION ON FOOD WASTE

*Food waste is a growing issue, and the disposal of it is controversial, given increased food prices and the resources required. Consumer perception is that food waste, being entirely organic matter, simply rots down into the ground where it does no environmental harm. This is not the case. Sent to landfill, rotting food produces methane, a greenhouse gas 25 times more potent than CO₂. **Changing consumer attitudes is therefore key to reducing the amount of food waste that goes to landfill.** Consumer co-operatives are aware of this issue and are continuously seeking to reduce the amount of food waste produced in their stores*

In this respect, for example the Swedish KF in 2009 was on track to **decrease the physical destruction of goods including food waste**, in terms of sale value, **by 10% to 2010**. At the same time, the Finnish S Group grocery further reduced in 2009 its food waste losses by 14% compared to 2007, in terms of weight. The Group has also put in place a policy to minimise food waste by **discount actions and optimized purchase orders**.



Also the Italian Coop promoted the “**Buon fine**” (“Good end”) **project** which **aims at recovering unsold food products which are still edible and donate them to people in need**. This project, which is carried out at national level, is managed locally by the co-operatives and involves 349 shops, 1,161 associations and 100,000 people who received free goods so far for a total of 2,344,475 Kg.

A MORE SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

Transportation of goods as well as consumers and staff access to stores has a significant impact on the environment. Furthermore, goods occasionally cover long distances before being displayed on the shelves. Consumer co-operatives pursue a range of initiatives to optimise transport efficiency and sustainability, such as inter-modality, lowering impacts of individual modes, investing in new technologies and co-operating with key supply chain partners.



In this area, during 2009 Coop Italy kept on pursuing its policy, launched in 2004, of **rationalizing goods transportation by:**

- ✓ Optimizing the supply;
- ✓ Guarantying full loaded vehicles.

At the same time, Coop Norway continued to **increase distribution during nights and times of day with less traffic**, in order to reduce traffic jams and local emissions.

On the Swedish side, Coop Sweden introduced in 2009 a new intermodal logistic system, where long distance transports to terminals are done by trains instead of lorries. Calculations show that the transfer of supplier shipments to rail in 2009, compared with unchanged freight by truck, reduced GHG emissions by about 6,500 tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO₂-e), calculated over a full year.

In Finland, Inex Partners, S Group's grocery and consumer good procurements and logistic companies, audited transport companies for the second time. Inex has created tools for the **systematic collection of consumption data and the calculation of carbon dioxide emissions**. 2009 was the first year when emissions from all domestic and international road transports subject to Inex contracts were calculated. The information was collected in co-operation with the transport companies in order to receive accurate data for the calculation of emissions. **In 2009, the emissions totalled 43 637 tonnes.**

In the UK, the Co-operative Group kept the pace to respect the commitment undertaken to **reduce CO₂ emissions from the distribution fleet by 15% by 2013 based on 2005 levels** whereas the Swedish consumer co-operative was on track to **reduce energy-consumption per m² and diesel consumption in its transports by 10% to 2010 and by 30% to 2020.**

In Hungary, the regional consumer co-operatives kept on actively co-operating with suppliers to optimise transport in order to reduce both costs and carbon footprint.

BOOSTING EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION TO EMPLOYEES AND CONSUMER-MEMBERS

Education, training and information to employees and consumer-members are strategic areas of action for consumer co-operatives. These kind of enterprises in fact distinguish themselves from other private retailers because they are owned by consumer-members who have a say as regards the strategic management of the co-operative. An active and aware consumer-member is therefore key for a successful implementation of all sustainability policies. For this reason, also in 2009 many activities were carried out by Euro Coop members in this area.

To begin with, in Italy the local consumer co-operative carried out an educational campaign called **“Risparmia le Energie”** (“Save Energies”), which involved 1,500 consumer-member families all over the country with the aim of **informing and raising awareness about the topics of climate change and energy efficiency**. The final objectives of the campaign were to:

- ✓ Change daily habits and consumption patterns of this community;
- ✓ Educate the participants to a responsible consumption.

The information was conveyed through an *ad hoc* website¹. The project was supported by the **Minister for the Environment and Economic Development**, the **National Council of Consumers and Users**, **Legambiente** (Italian environmental NGO member of the European Environmental Bureau), **WWF and Greenpeace**. Coop Italy also continued publishing in its own **consumer magazine, website and leaflets advice on energy efficiency and climate change**. In addition to that, it developed **teaching material for schools** and organised **special training for consumer members in some co-operatives**.

In the UK, the Co-operative Group continued publishing the **member magazine “Re:act”**, which contains articles and information on how their members can take action to **prevent climate change and become involved in campaigns**. This publication is edited twice a year and **is circulated to the Group’s 350,000 active members across the UK**.



On the Nordic side, Coop Norway published a **“Coop's label guide”**² to **orient consumers in the “label jungle” of environmental, organic, health, nutrition and fair trade labels**. In Sweden, the local consumer

¹ <http://www.risparmialenergie.e-coop.it>

² <http://www.coop.no/ncms.aspx?id=98E32B8E-9594-4544-9FA7-D3DB29E373E7&mEx=21034&tmid=21034>

co-operative continued on providing in its magazine “**Mersmak**”³ (literally “More taste”) information about **energy efficiency measures that its consumer-members can easily undertake**. This magazine has an **ecological profile** based on **cooperative values** and provides members with information related to **food, health and sustainable lifestyle**.

Also, the Swedish consumer co-operative launched the initiative “**The energy-hunt**”, i.e. a project among employees to **decrease energy consumption through changing working habits**. This added to the educational activities which it carried out in the framework of the above-mentioned **KRAV-certification of all stores**, which implies providing **education to employees regarding organic production**. Finally, the Swedish consumer co-operative produced consumer information leaflets on sustainable consumption issues, such as “**Climate and food**”, “**Organic and Fair trade production**”, “**Reducing Food waste**”.



The Finnish S Group also issues a monthly magazine, which is distributed, to **1.8 million consumer-members**. Through such publication as well as through its internet website⁴, it provides a lot of information about **how to minimise energy consumption and which products, available in its outlets, can serve to this purpose**. In 2009, the guidebook dedicated to responsible consumption was also published on this website. From its side, the Danish FDB launched a “**Climate Cook book**”, with the aim to help the consumer to **eat climate friendly dishes**. The book was sold in the Coop shops.

In the Iberian Peninsula, the Eroski cooperative, member of the consumer cooperatives’ federation of the Basque Country which is in turn partner of Hispacoop, potentiated the section in its **website** dedicated to the **saving of energy in consumers’ households**, called “**Ahorra Energía**”⁵. Thanks to this website, consumers are able to:



- ✓ Know through an *ad hoc* calculator how much CO2 is emitted in their houses;
- ✓ Know how to reduce their carbon footprint. Also, this section includes useful information about sustainability practices in general.

In November 2009, the same Hispacoop organized a **Congress about energy and consumer rights**, in which was held a section on **energy efficiency and sustainability**.

During 2009, the Portuguese FENACOOOP carried out a cycle of lectures called “**Tips for saving**”, which involved consumers who are social care beneficiaries with the aim of informing and raising awareness about the **topics of energy efficiency**. This initiative was supported by the Social Care Institute.

3 <http://www.coop.se/mersmak>

4 <http://www.yhteishyva.fi>

5 <http://www.eroski.es/es/ahorraenergia>

As regards Coop Hungary, in regular activities targeted at consumer-members - passed in recent years from 50 000 to more than 300 000 - a **special space was devoted to the importance of environment protection and action against Climate Change**, with a focus to **daily actions which can be easily implemented like the re-use of shopping bags**.

In Cyprus, ESEL-SPOLP LTD published in 2009 a brochure for its customers with instructions on how to save energy and water whereas in Bulgaria the CCU Training Centre “INTELCOOP” trained employees on Climate Change issues. The Euro Coop project: “Climate Change and Consumer Cooperatives: Taking the Challenge forward” was one of the topics enlisted in the CCU Training program so to spread best practices from other European cooperative organisations and enhance action on Climate Change countering measures.

From its side, the Union of Czech and Moravian consumer co-operatives kept on producing during 2009 a monthly report for member organisations in which **new developments about EU as well as Czech environmental initiatives** were illustrated. Finally, in Rumania in the cooperative societies’ general assemblies, **Centrocoop always put as a distinctive point “Climate Change issues” so to inform all members about this most topical subject**.

IMPROVING SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING

*Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) reports represent useful tools to communicate to employees, customers and the general public about the activities that enterprises carry out in the sustainability area. Such instrument, whose popularity is growing over time, is known by consumer co-operatives since years and, in some cases, since decades. The fact that **social and environmental sustainability stays at the very core of the consumer co-operative philosophy** makes therefore such reports particularly suitable to be adopted by consumer co-operatives*

The Swedish, Norwegian, Finnish, Danish, British, Spanish and Italian consumer co-operatives publish a **sustainability report every year**. In Sweden they publish it since 1987 and Coop Norway got in 2009 a **Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) certification** for its sustainability report. The Co-operative Group sustainability report is also prepared in accordance with the **Global Reporting Initiative’s G3 Sustainability Reporting Guidelines**.



IMPROVING ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN BUILDINGS

*Buildings have direct environmental impacts, ranging from the **use of raw materials** for their construction and renovation to **the consumption of natural resources**, like water and fossil fuels, and the **emission of harmful substances**. They are therefore a **major area of concern** in which consumer co-operatives are acting and in which they are always more committed to act in the future. Research and innovation in this field is continuously advancing and **in 2009 significant progress was made to reduce the overall environmental impact of consumer co-operatives' buildings***

On the Nordic side, Coop Norway started in 2009 a **5-year energy saving project**. The plan, which is partly funded by the Norwegian government, is **aimed at saving at least 38.000.000 kWh** by the end of 2014 and is involving several hundred stores as well as all Coop Norway distributions centres. Also, Coop Norway pursued the policy to:

- ✓ Swan-label every new outlet;
- ✓ Install energy monitoring and management equipment;
- ✓ Continuously replace inefficient lightning-equipment with low-energy lightning equipment in every outlet.



In addition to that, they kept on introducing **CO2-based refrigeration appliances** to substitute refrigeration based on ozone-layer depleting substances.

In Sweden, they introduced **new energy-efficient pilot stores** which are **able to reduce energy-consumption** by up to 50% thanks to:

- ✓ Heat recovery systems;
- ✓ The exploitation of daylight for lightning;
- ✓ The use of doors and locks on all refrigerators and freezers.

In Denmark, the local consumer co-operative calculated its carbon footprint for all its shops and in nine shops energy saving possibilities were tested. The test was a success which showed great energy savings potential and it will be applied to all shops with the aim to reduce energy consumption by 10 % in 2012.

In Finland, the S Group whose **aim is to improve through various means energy efficiency by on average 2% each year until 2015**, kept on ripening the fruits of the investment it made in the period 1995-2006 in **heat recovery systems** as well as in **new electrical technologies** (e.g. night covers for cold units, low-energy lightening, heat pumps etc.). In the outlets in which these new systems were installed, the Group was able to **save up to 60% in heating and 25% in electricity in comparison to outlets in which they were not**.

In 2009, the S Group also installed:

- ✓ **Carbon dioxide based refrigeration appliances** (completely in the sale grocery store at Lintuvaara and partially in the S-market grocery store at Söderkulla);
- ✓ Ammonia based refrigeration appliances (Kilo logistic centre).

Also, the co-operative Society Arina decided to use state-of-the-art integrated refrigeration and **HVAC technology** in its new outlets. In addition to that, **for the first time in Finland, all hotels belonging to the Radisson Blu Hotels & Resorts hotel chain, have been awarded the Nordic Ecolabel (The Swan label)**, recognizing their excellent environmental performances.

In Italy, the area of the eco-efficiency in buildings presented in 2009 a very interesting landscape. The state-of-the-art included:

- ✓ **1 EMAS-registered shop;**
- ✓ 211 “Green light” registered points of sale, in which 3 million kWh were saved during the whole year for a total of almost a million and a half of tonnes of CO₂;
- ✓ 35 shops and 2 parking areas which used light signs with LED technology;
- ✓ 6 shops using LED technology for accent lighting;
- ✓ 17 shops connected to district heating;
- ✓ 29 shops using solar panels for the production of hot water;
- ✓ 160 shops featuring condensing boilers;
- ✓ 27 shops featuring high-efficiency refrigerating plants;
- ✓ 90 shops featuring closed freezers.



Furthermore, Coop Italy concluded in 2009 the ‘Coop for Kyoto’ project, which saw the voluntary compliance from coop brand suppliers to the Kyoto objectives for the reduction of CO₂ emissions and to other actions for the reduction of energy consumption. Since the launch of the project in 2006 and until 2008 the emission index diminished from 0,194 CO₂/Kg to 0,182 with a 63% improvement of the production plants in terms of efficiency.

By the end of 2009, the British Co-operative Group had reduced energy consumption across the business by 12% compared to 2006 levels. This progress means that it is on track to meet its target to reduce energy consumption by 20% by 2010 and by 25% by 2012 (based on 2006 levels). The Group also kept the pace in reducing greenhouse gas emissions from refrigeration with the aim of realising a 20% reduction by 2011 based on 2007 levels. Finally, in 2009, 700 stores were refitted with more energy-efficient HFC units, with a further 650 stores planned for refit in 2010.

In Portugal, COOPLISBOA replaced in their shops the manually managed starters for fluorescent lamps with electronic ones, thereby reducing by about 30% store energy consumption for lighting. Furthermore, it implemented effective heat recovery systems based on thermal energy.

At the same time, in Cyprus ESEL-SPOLP LTD started introducing **eco gas R 134a for its refrigerating systems** and **used the heating of the refrigerating systems' compressors to heat a shop of 3000 m2**. The Slovak COOP Jednota Group continued in 2009 the process of modernising its retail outlets through the **replacement of the old refrigeration and freezer units with new low energy consumption models** whereas the Union of Czech and Moravian Consumer Co-operatives completed the refurbishment of the Union's headquarters, which now feature **new windows allowing consistent energy savings**.

Finally, in Bulgaria the regional Plovdiv cooperative union applied through the EC SAPARD project to obtain funding for the **replacement of its greenhouses' building coverage from glass to polycarbonate panels**. In such greenhouses, also **heating system has changed from diesel-based to gas-based ones**.

DEVELOPING RENEWABLE ENERGIES

Renewable energy is energy generated from natural resources — such as sunlight, wind, water, tides and geothermal heat — which are naturally replenished. Renewable energy technologies range from solar power, wind power, hydroelectricity/micro hydro, biomass and biofuels for transportation. **Energy sourced from renewable energies has been since a long time a priority for several consumer co-operatives gathered in Euro Coop because it adds on the efforts made to preserve the Environment thus helping to fight Climate Change.** In 2009 the use of such kind of energies was further strengthened so to follow and even to go beyond European Commission targets set for year 2020

In this area, in November 2009 Coop Italy inaugurated the new non-food logistic centre in Prato (Tuscany), which is served by a photovoltaic plant of 2,895 kW (the biggest covering one building) producing 3,200,000 kWh of electricity and using a whole series of environmentally friendly



techniques: condensing boilers, floor heating, luminosity probes to control the fluorescent lamps etc. Coop Italy investment in this centre was of 100 million euro and it is meant to restock 1400 outlets throughout Italy handling around 730,000 m³ of goods with a value of about 670 million euro every year. In 2009 the Italian consumer co-operatives could count already on 45 photovoltaic plants in shops, offices and distribution centres with a power of 10,300 kW and a yearly production of around 12 million kWh, which means 6,400 tonnes of not-emitted CO₂ in the

atmosphere. As it has already been said, 29 shops use solar panel for the production of hot water; furthermore, 36 million kWh from hydroelectric plants were used, which correspond to 3,9% of the total annual consumption.

In Finland, the energy company St1 Oy and SOK established a joint venture, TuuliWatti Oy, for **industrial production of wind power**. TuuliWatti's first wind power plant (3 MW) has been generating electricity since November 2009 in Tahkoluoto, Pori. TuuliWatti Oy's wind power park projects were launched in 2009 with project development of five sites and related wind measurements. In 2010, the number of sites to be developed will increase to eight. According to the S Group's plans, **by 2020 20% of the electricity used by the Group will be generated by renewable energy, such as wind power, produced by the Group's own plants. The Kilo logistics centre invested in energy efficiency by renewing the heating system in the dry-products warehouse.**



In the UK, the Co-operative Group sources 98% of its energy from renewable sources. In 2009, the Group:

- ✓ Negotiated contracts to supply green energy to 22 independent co-operative organisations;
- ✓ Kept on investing in wind farm developments and on-site generation schemes (New Mills);
- ✓ Continued to implement the Green Energy for Schools (GEFS) programme, which enables schools across the UK to install solar panels at no cost. By September 2009, over 160 GEFS installations were completed.

In Spain, the electric Cooperative “San Francisco de Asís” (Enercoop Group), as a member of the electric consumer cooperatives’ federation of the Valencia Community, a partner of Hispacoop, launched in 2009 a **project consisting of one of the largest photovoltaic solar orchards in Europe**. Called “**The Realengo**”, this installation is located in Crevillente (Alicante, Spain) and **generates an annual output of more than 9 million kWh**, thereby avoiding the emission of 8,500 tonnes of CO₂ per year, 196 tons of sulphur and 29 tonnes of oxygen from nitrogen.



The Union of Czech and Moravian Consumer Co-operatives adopted in 2009 two projects on **photovoltaic energy**. The first one regards the **installation of photovoltaic panels in shops** whereas the second in the 12 secondary schools that the Union owns in the whole country. **Solar panels were also installed in the Union’s headquarters in Prague**. From its side, COOP Jednota Slovakia has designed several projects aimed at reducing energy consumption within its group. One among those involves the **research of potential ways to use solar energy within the retail units**.

Finally, Coop Hungary continued investing in **heat recovery systems**, gradually installing **energy-saving cooling** systems in all stores and reducing heating in unused premises whereas in Bulgaria the CCU Balneo Complex “Zdrave” and SPA Centre “Bankya” were fully heated by **solar panels**.

FURTHERING CAMPAIGNING

Campaigning is an essential tool to spread awareness about Climate Change and the urgency to deploy co-ordinated actions at all societal levels in order to fight it effectively. This instrument therefore adds on to the several activities carried out on a daily basis by consumer co-operatives in the domain of information and education to employees and consumer-members

During 2009, the Italian consumer cooperation carried out together with Legambiente, i.e. an Italian environmental NGO member of the European Environmental Bureau, a **campaign to gradually eliminate plastic bags**. In alternative, it offered:

- ✓ Propylene reusable bags;
- ✓ Reusable cotton bags;
- ✓ Jute bags obtained from Fair Trade coffee bags from Brazil, Honduras, Nicaragua and Vietnam;
- ✓ Trolley reusable bags or biodegradable bags for the collection of organic waste.

In the UK, the Co-operative Group actively participated in a campaign involving **Oxfam** and the **Stop Climate Chaos Coalition** which culminated in a massive march through London called '**The Wave**'⁶. In addition to that, it carried out a **campaign for the feed-in tariff** in the UK and delivered **several events in the framework of the 'Love Food, Hate Waste' campaign**, i.e. an initiative aimed at support **reduction in household food waste**.



On the Nordic side, as mentioned before Sweden continued its collaboration with the **Vi Skogen Agroforestry Programme** so to implement carbon off-setting projects in East Africa. In Norway, the local consumer co-operative carried out a **campaign to promote the use of eco-labelled reusable bags**. Since July 2008 **more than half a million bags were distributed** (given away or sold). This initiative has led to the **reduction of the total sale of conventional plastic bags by approximately 20% in Coop Norway's discount outlets**. Also, Coop Norway engaged in a **governmental initiative to fight Climate Change**.

In Finland, the S Group participated in the "Peloton" project. The initiative was aimed to reduce energy consumption needs of the Finnish population and to translate its existing positive environmental attitudes into daily actions. The project was led by "Demos Finland", i.e. Finland's only independent think tank, and financed by Sitra, the Finnish Innovation Fund. In the Peloton workshop arranged in 2009 as part of the Energy Programme, professionals from the hardware

⁶ <http://www.co-operative.coop/ethicsinaction/takeaction/thewave/>

business developed ideas for energy-saving operating models for customers. The S Group also took part in a national project whose aim was to improve recycling facilities for consumers.

At the same time, in 2009 Coop Denmark developed its 1-4- 40 plan (1 plan, 4 areas, 40 actions), in which Climate Change was one of the intervention areas, and campaigned to raise awareness about it. Another example is that Coop Denmark carried out a “climate week”, in which it focused on promoting climate friendly products in the shop. Also, FDB developed and promoted a leaflet that illustrates how to eat in a climate-friendly way.

In Spain, Hispacoop participated in the citizen platform **“Coalición Clima”** (“Climate Coalition”). This movement was created in September 2008 and included **30 ecologist, development and consumer organizations as well as workers’ unions**. All of them formed a **platform of representation of civil society aware of the need to fight against global warming through citizen action and political pressure**. “Coalición Clima” prepared a **“Decalogue”**, which included **commitments of civil society about the fight against Climate Change**. Such Decalogue was **presented to the Spanish Congress of Deputies in 2009**.



In addition to that, Hispacoop took part in 2009 in several awareness and mobilization acts, such as the demonstration in Madrid in occasion of the **“Earth day”** (25th April 2009) and the demonstration **“Gobiernos: Compromisos con el Clima ¡Ya!”** (“Governments: Engagements for Climate, now!”), also held in Madrid in occasion of the **“Day of world action against Climate Change”** (12th December 2009). Also, it supported the **petition to reach an ambitious agreement in Copenhagen Summit** through the international campaign **“Tcktcktck”**⁷.

On the Portuguese side, as mentioned above during 2009 FENACOOOP and COOPLISBOA participated in the campaign **“Have a cover to indifference”**, aimed at **raising awareness about recycling**, and developed together with the support of the Social Care Institute the lectures **“Tips for saving”**, intended to raise awareness about the **topics of energy efficiency**.

Finally, in the Czech Republic the Union of Czech and Moravian consumer co-operatives promoted through **TV commercials** the **substitution of plastic bags with reusable jute ones** whereas in Romania Centrocoup presented its **interest about the Climate Change subject in all official meetings that it held with the Rumanian Government**.

⁷ <http://tcktcktck.org/>

RAISING POLITICAL AWARENESS AT EU LEVEL

During 2009, Euro Coop developed several initiatives to profile at EU level the efforts carried out by its members in tackling Climate Change as well as to promote the exchange of information and best practices at internal level

To begin with, on 31st March 2009 Euro Coop organised the conference: **“Time to Commit! Consumer Cooperatives Actions against Climate Change”**⁸, which saw the participation of EU Institutions’ representatives as well as other relevant stakeholders of the EU arena. In such occasion, Euro Coop launched the project to which this document is the first follow-up, i.e. **“Climate Change and Consumer Cooperatives: Taking the Challenge Forward”**, a work which was finalised and followed-up by the Euro Coop Environmental Policy Working Group (EPWG) during the three meetings it has regularly held during the year (March, June and October 2009). Thanks to this project, Euro Coop also became on 8th October 2009 **Official Partner of the Sustainable Energy Europe Campaign (SEEC)**⁹, a European Commission (EC) initiative conceived in the framework of the Intelligent Energy Europe programme.



After that, Euro Coop joined on 6th May 2009 as a founding member the **European Food Sustainable Consumption and Production Round Table (SCP RT)**¹⁰, i.e. an initiative which followed-up to the 2008 adoption by the EC of the SCP/SIP Package. All along the year, Euro Coop has participated in and given regular input to the SCP RT Steering Committee as well as to the work of its WGs on Environmental Information Tools (WG2), Continuous Environmental Improvement (WG3) and International initiatives and other aspects of sustainability (WG4). Euro Coop has also been nominated Vice

Co-Chair of WG2 and WG3.

During 2009 Euro Coop also continued its collaboration with the **Transatlantic Consumer Dialogue (TACD) Climate Change Working Group**. In such framework, it actively contributed to the drafting of the resolutions on climate change and eco-design, which were finally adopted during the TACD 10th Annual Meeting held in Brussels from 8th to 10th June at the presence of both EU and US government representatives.

Successively, in June 2009, on the occasion of the elections for the renewal of the European Parliament (EP), Euro Coop put forward a thorough **memorandum**¹¹ listing its **priorities for the Environmental and Ethical policy**. The document, which was sent to all candidates Members of the

8 http://www.eurocoop.coop/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=105%3Aeuro-coop-launches-the-project-qclimate-change-and-consumer-cooperatives-taking-the-challenge-forwardq&catid=46&Itemid=183&lang=en

9 <http://www.sustenergy.org/tpl/page.cfm?pageName=home>

10 <http://www.food-scp.eu/>

11 http://www.eurocoop.coop/dmdocuments/publication_report/Euelections2009.pdf

European Parliament for the term 2009 - 2014, stressed among others the **importance for the new EP to lead the way against Climate Change**, support the **implementation of the Renewable Energy Directive** and the **drive towards enforced energy efficiency**, **act against unsustainable patterns of consumption and production** and **boost organic farming**.

On 22nd of October, **Euro Coop has also officially joined the European Retailers' Environmental Programme (REAP)**¹². Despite becoming official member only at that time, Euro Coop has been an observer member since the launch of this exercise on 3rd March 2009 and has since then actively contributed to its functioning.



On the side of political representation towards the EU institutions, Euro Coop was active regarding the **A-G energy labelling dossier** by supporting its maintenance because of its simplicity and wide recognition by EU consumers¹³. Also, it kept on working on the **Eco-label issue** and contributed to the EP debate in this regard by issuing a vote recommendation for the EP ENVI committee taking place on 17th February 2009. In that occasion, it spoke out against undue label proliferation and against the extension of the Community Eco-label to food¹⁴.

At wider co-operative level, Euro Coop **collaborated on a regular basis with the Co-operatives Europe's ACT! project**, both by exchanging information and best practices and promoting its activities. In particular, it has actively supported through its website and various means of internal communication to its members the **petition to demand a "Fair, Ambitious and Binding agreement at the December 2009 Copenhagen Climate Conference"**¹⁵.

Against this background and as a means of concrete commitment, Euro Coop finally continued to collaborate in 2009 with the Belgian NGO initiative "CompenCO2"¹⁶ to offset the CO2 produced by its staff when travelling. Through this initiative, it kept on submitting quarterly reports to CompenCO2 for calculation and later payment.

¹² http://www.eurocoop.coop/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=85%3Aeuro-coop-joins-the-european-retailers-environmental-programme&catid=46%3Aenvironmental-policy&Itemid=183&lang=en

¹³ http://www.eurocoop.coop/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=116%3Aeuro-coop-response-to-the-ec-proposals-to-revise-ag-energy-label-with-regard-to-household-refrigeration-appliances&catid=41%3Aenvironmental-policy&Itemid=193&lang=en

¹⁴ http://www.eurocoop.coop/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=118%3Aeuropean-parliament-envi-committee-vote-on-eco-label&catid=41%3Aenvironmental-policy&Itemid=193&lang=en

¹⁵ <http://www.actonclimate.coop/home.aspx>

¹⁶ <http://www.compenco2.be>

Picture of the Euro Coop Sustainability Policy Working Group, taken on the roof of Coop Italy's non-food logistic centre located in Prato (Tuscany, Italy). The roof features the biggest Italian photovoltaic covering.



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Consumer Co-operatives Worldwide (CCW) is a sectoral organisation of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) which brings together consumer co-operatives within the ICA membership.

www.ccw.coop