



# ECOLOGISTS WITHOUT BORDERS

## For a world without waste



# Facts about Slovenia



Capital: Ljubljana / Area: 20,273 km<sup>2</sup> / Population: 2,061,085

The country contains 24,000 animal species, accounting for 1% of the world's organisms despite its small size (0.004% of the Earth's surface area). Around 12.5% of the territory is protected with different protection categories, and 35.5% within the Natura 2000 ecological network. Slovenia is the third most forested country in Europe, with 58.5% of the territory covered by forests.

## Slovenia without waste is not an illusion

In the past few years, Slovenians managed to recycle **55% of their municipal solid waste**, some communities even **up to 80%**. Some local communities in Europe recycle and compost over 90% of their waste - or very close to zero. Such incentives are becoming a part of EU development strategies, which set the goal of a totally recycling society, a circular economy and the efficient use of natural resources. With our help, the first **six Slovenian municipalities decided to follow the path towards Zero Waste**.

## Our vision: the world without waste

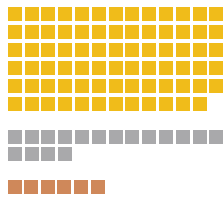
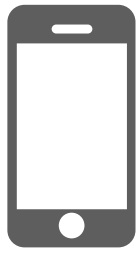
In a society without waste, landfills and incinerators will become unnecessary because by using eco design producers will make sure that we'll be able to **separately collect all materials** in waste and return them to **technological or natural cycles** without any risks. New forms of services will develop, such as product leasing and repair, together with responsible consumption.

## Our mission: together we can move frontiers faster

Every train is made of a set of wagons, but they need an engine to pull them to their destination. From our 'Let's Cleanup Slovenia' campaigns we learned that the most effective drive for a change is a movement which starts with connecting a large number of individuals. Connecting is done by engine which leads the movement to their common goal.

Our mission is **activation, motivation and cooperation** of individuals, communities, policy makers, industry, businesses and researchers in the area of an efficient use of natural resources with the aim to reduce costs, preserve energy and create new green jobs. We educate and build opportunities for waste prevention, separate collection, recycling and composting of materials in waste.

## Waste and efficient resource use — recycling of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE)



1,41 € gold

0,32 € silver

0,11 € copper

39 <b>Y</b> 88.90584 itrij	57 <b>La</b> 138.90547 lantan	59 <b>Pr</b> 140.90766 prazeodim	60 <b>Nd</b> 144.242 neodim
63 <b>Eu</b> 151.964 evropij	64 <b>Gd</b> 157.25 gadolinij	65 <b>Tb</b> 158.92535 terbij	66 <b>Dy</b> 162.500 disprozij

Each iPhone 5 contains 1.41 € worth of gold, 0.32 € of silver and 0.11 € of copper. This may not seem much, but there are over 45 million on the market. There is 324-times more gold in a ton of discarded iPhones than in gold ore from the mines of Yarinacocha (Peru). These mines are located in the upper Amazon river shed and are connected with illegal activities. Between 30 and 40 tons of mercury is annually discharged from them without supervision. Besides precious metals, the phones contain rare minerals: yttrium, lanthanum, praseodymium, neodymium, europium, gadolinium, terbium and dysprosium. They are used in minute quantities of which we recycle less than a percent. More than 90 percent of rare earth metals are extracted in China. WEEE is one of the fastest growing waste streams in the EU and is expected to breach 12 million tons by 2020. We separately collected only 36% of WEEE in Slovenia in 2012.

## Our path

**Ecologists without Borders** is an association (NGO or Charity) which grew from **two 'Let's Cleanup Slovenia' campaigns** that are still considered **the largest volunteers events** in the history of the nation. We managed to **connect 280.000** (or 14% of population) of individuals, businesses, NGOs, Slovenian army, police, municipalities, and even President's office, who later decorated our association with the order of merit. During the campaigns, we set up a **registry with over 13.000 illegal dumpsites** in Slovenia.



We collected over **15,600 m<sup>3</sup>** (over 6 Olympic swimming pools) or **4,500 tons** of waste; **2800** illegal dumpsites were cleaned, **1400** of them completely rehabilitated. **Hundreds of kilometres** of paths and roads were cleaned along the way.

After 2012, we decided not to carry on with organizing 'Let's Cleanup Slovenia' because the measures which would prevent illegal dumpsites are still not in place. We didn't send the right message with cleanup actions. Instead, we started dealing with **waste at its source** and this has since been our focus. We will continue to warn about unresolved problems and that wise waste management is a creator of **business opportunities and jobs**, while at the same time **preserving natural resources** and contributing to **global societal fairness**.

# Ecologists without Borders prevent, collect and recycle waste

## Zero Waste Slovenia

In February 2014 we became a **national organization** of the Zero Waste Europe network of organisations and municipalities on the way to zero waste and started to promote the concept. By now **6 municipalities** have joined the network and several others expressed their intention to follow. We are active in developing the Zero waste movement on the European level and in the process of adopting the **Circular Economy bundle**. Our aim is to adopt Zero Waste strategy on the national level.



»A clever person solves a problem. A wise person avoids it.«

## Tekstilnica saves waste textiles

Up until recently, separate collection of waste textiles was the exception rather than the norm, and it mainly ended up on landfills or in incinerators. Through clothes exchanges Tekstilnica enabled at least some to be reused. **Second hand clothing** is not a taboo anymore and more and more people follow our tips for reducing overconsumption and mishandling of used textiles. The **exchanges in Ljubljana** have become a regular monthly event that is attended by around **100 people**. Our goal is to spread them throughout the country.



## Slovenia without food waste

The Statistics Bureau estimates that over **149,000 tons of food waste** are annually generated in Slovenia, the majority of which is kitchen waste. Food waste is generated along the entire food supply chain. By building the **national platform 'Slovenia without food waste'**, we've connected fragmented and unconnected stakeholders from farms to stores. We are committed to a common goal: to reduce the amount of food waste.



## Healthy kids in cloth diapers

A single child produces **874 kg of waste single use nappies**, which in Slovenia means around **20,000 ton of waste or 2 million Euros of costs** for landfilling. Our goal is to promote the use and dissolve myths about cloth nappies among parents and kindergartens. We enraptured **Vrtec Vrhnika kindergarten** for their use, connected Slovenian producers, MW companies and NGOs, and together visited foreign cloth nappies best practices, social enterprises that are winning over kindergartens fast.



## Circular Economy Conference

Together with the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning and SVRK, we organised the **"Circular Economy Conference: Opportunities and Challenges"** at the start of November 2015. **23 trendsetting speakers** presented best circular economy practices from the EU and Slovenia. They ranged from leading policy setting experts to those that demonstrated that a transition to new economic models is viable and already happening through new successful business practices. Over **400 people attended** the conference, the gist of circular economy spread further through many media outlets and new ideas and partnerships were formed.



## Plastic bag? No, thank you!

Each citizen of Slovenia uses around **150 plastic bags each year**. After **30 minutes** of their use, most of them end up in mixed waste. The European Parliament recently prescribed measures for reducing their use, which also Slovenia will have to implement. We started a new campaign promoting use of reusable bags. Our webshop now offers also **washable bags for produce**.



»The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth. In many parts of the planet, the elderly lament that once beautiful landscapes are now covered with rubbish. Industrial waste and chemical products utilized in cities and agricultural areas can lead to bioaccumulation in the organisms of the local population, even when levels of toxins in those places are low. Frequently no measures are taken until after people's health has been irreversibly affected.«

**Pope Francis, Encyclical on care for our common home, June 2015**

## We share our knowledge

We helped establish the **'Let's do it Mediterranean'** campaigns and are among 112 countries connected through the "Let's do it!" movement.

We participated in the process of **adoption legislation and programs** on European, national and local levels. Several **students** gained skills and experiences working or volunteering for our association. We carried out **7 environmental issue lectures** for schools and **5 workshops** on making useful items out of waste for different age groups. We screened Trashed to students from **17 middle schools**.

We maintain a central **'Ekologi brez meja'** website, **Facebook pages** 'Ekologi brez meja', 'Tekstilnica' (textiles), 'Zdrave ritke' (cloth nappies), **Facebook group** 'Volk sit, koza cela' (food waste), **Twitter profile** @ocistimo, **YouTube** ocistimo and web pages of specific projects. We regularly publish news and articles about waste management. The **e-magazine Čist-e-novice** is being published monthly, with the scope of **10,000 readers**.

**552 news articles** were published about our activities between July 2014 and July 2015 (277 on the web, 169 in print, 80 on radio and 26 on TV).



# Together we can move frontiers faster: you can add your wagon

»We need to help Ecologists Without Borders to take root in the minds of everyone on Earth. Especially the residents of our beautiful, small and vulnerable country need to be conscious of how important their mission is. Let's be environmentally aware, active and help as best as we can – for our own and our children's good. «

**Mojmir Sepe, composer and conductor**

Ecologists Without Borders believe in transforming piles of useless trash to resources for our economy, creating new, local jobs, and at the same time making sure we pass a healthy environment to our children. This is a doable goal, which has already been proven by many individuals, businesses and local communities on a global level that decided to **follow the Zero Waste way**.

**To reach this aim, we need two things:**

- **to believe that this is possible, and**
- **your support which will make sure the engine and the wagons reach their destination.**

We invite you to join our [fundraising campaign](#). We'll be happy to present further **donation or sponsorship** possibilities if you send us an e-mail: [info@ocistimo.si](mailto:info@ocistimo.si)

You can donate directly to our account. In case you need a donation agreement, you can find it [here](#).

**Društvo Ekologi brez meja  
(Ecologists without Borders Association)  
Grablovičeva 52, 1000 Ljubljana  
IBAN: SI56 0201 0025 8264 309  
SWIFT: LJBAS12X  
Code: CHAR**

Our association is registered charity according to Slovenian and EU legislation and has a separate, elite status of "working in the public good in the area of environmental protection".

## Board members

Urša Zgojznik,  
President



Jaka Kranjc,  
Secretary General



Erika Oblak,  
Member



# In 2015, our association was supported by:

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## Project financing from public funds

more than **50.000 EUR:** Evropski socialni sklad in Ministrstvo za delo, družino, socialne zadeve in enake možnosti, Norveški mehanizem



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We also want to thank many individual donors and volunteers who believe in our projects.