

**An evaluation of the first international workshop of the
"European Network for Experiences with Sustainable Development"**

**From 2-4 May 1996 in Wulkow (Domespace)
Uses for and conclusions from the Network meeting**

1. General Evaluation

The fact that Wulkow was selected as the conference site for the Network's first international seminar is, on the one hand, a confirmation of the results obtained thus far by the "Ökospeicher group" project in Wulkow. On the other hand, these high expectations have led us to present our results and experiences to participants with expertise from similar initiatives. We are presenting them in practical form as a critical summary of what we have achieved and the problems we have faced.

In the forefront of the presentation the following themes - as central concerns of our project - have been selected for discussion in the context of the Network meeting :

- Local market : How can the villagers, particularly those who are new to the area, and the surrounding region, become more involved in the local economy and market vents ?
- Conflict management : How can conflicts within the group and its relation to a specific group of the villagers be solved constructively, and how can conflicts be transformed into potential for the development of joint changes ?

The very preparation of the exchange of experiences led to a deepening of our vision of the problem. Experiences and proposals received from other participants and facilitators during the seminar gave us many pointers for dealing with these problems in the future.

The combining of the Network meeting with Vitaregio day brought us both advantages and disadvantages. The specialist seminar "Local economy" on 4 May fitted well thematically into the overall programme and was thus a source of enrichment for the workshop participants. However, we were extremely busy with the preparation for Vitaregio day and this meant a lot of disturbance (telephone calls, organisational aspects to be sorted out), which in turn meant that, to some extent, our attention was distracted from the workshop themes.