

## ELCA Newsletter December 2010

### Expert excursion to Chelsea Flower Show

The working group of companies is planning a one-day expert excursion for interested members to the [Chelsea Flower Show 2011](#) in London on May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

We would like to ask interested members of the working group to apply for the excursion by means of the added [form](#) at the ELCA office by January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

### In planning: ELCA Workshop in Brussels on Mai 24<sup>th</sup>, 2011 in Brussels

The ELCA wants to create a platform for scientists from all over Europe with their first research workshop in Brussels on Tuesday, May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2011 in the Committee of the Regions of the European Union.

Research focuses concerning the topics Green and Health, Green and respirable dust and City climatology as well as biodiversity in European cities will be presented; furthermore research gaps will be shown and suggestions for new forwarding research activities will be worked out. Research concerning the importance of green in the city is to provide contributions to the solution of the big challenges of our time with regard to the sector of environment.

The working fields of the industry of gardening and landscaping depend on scientific results to be able to provide possible solutions according to the latest state of science and technology.

Target group of the research workshop are scientist, representatives of the EU commission, associations from all over Europe, members of the European Parliament and of national parliaments, committee of regions, representatives of economy, foundations and organisations, that deal with a green sustainable development of cities.

Kindly note this date in your calendar.

### ELCA-Requests concerning the 8. EU-Research Frame Programme 2014 – 2020

Promoting research all about green on a European level.

The European Landscape Contractors Association pleads for the European Union to increasingly plan for increased research activities concerning "green matters" and to provide sufficient financial means in their "8. EU-Research Frame Programme 2014 – 2020". ELCA-president Emmanuel Mony sees the necessity to get reliable facts on the positive effect of green on the environment – including climate change – and on people's health. Apart from other industries the gardening and landscaping industry would depend on such research results, too.

Mony explained: "The experts concerning green-including building can provide essential contributions to an economy which not only conserves resources but is also environmental friendly and competitive." These are just the fields the European Union wanted to support with the respective focuses of their Europe 2020-Concept. In this connection it would be important to improve the chances for application-oriented projects.

The research results would allow on the one hand the deduction of direct successes for the economy – among others for gardening and landscaping. On the other hand indirect economic successes could be expected, too – regarding stress relief concerning the health system, but also due to a decrease of environmental burdens and environmental catastrophes (floods) and not at least due to less destruction of plants (better, adapted vegetation).

### Award: "Silver Landscape" for Antoine Berger

Antoine Berger from Kilchberg (Switzerland) was awarded with the ["Silver Landscape"](#) for his extraordinary merits concerning the development of gardening, landscaping and

sports ground building in Europe. The Federal Association for gardening, landscaping and sports ground building presented the award to the former president of the European Landscape Contractors Association (ELCA) on the occasion of the "GaLaBau 2010", the 19. international expert exhibition "Urban Green and Free Areas - Planning – Building – Maintaining".

The Swiss gardening and landscaping entrepreneur Berger (56) was ELCA president for nine years and decisively influenced the successful development of the European Landscape Contractors Association during his term of office (April 2001 to June 2010) with his extraordinary honorary commitment. In 2000 the ELCA had eleven national member associations – under the leadership of Antoine Berger it turned into one of the European associations with most members, representing the interests of by now more than 80,000 gardening and landscaping companies all over Europe.

### **Berger elected Chairman of the ELCA-working group of companies**

In summer 2010 [Antoine Berger](#) was elected chairman of the ELCA-working group of companies. At present the committee includes about 350 representatives of member companies from the 22 national associations organized in ELCA and from gardening and landscaping companies from nine non-European countries.

At present ELCA has 22 national associations among its full members: Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Finland, France, Greece, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain, The Czech Republic and Hungary. Since the end of 2009 the European Arboricultural Council (EAC) European has been an extraordinary member of ELCA. The associated ELCA members outside Europe include China, Japan, Canada and the United States of America.

For more information concerning ELCA see: [www.elca.info](http://www.elca.info)

### **International ELCA-Trend Prize "Building with Green" for two Czech projects**

In 2010 the European Landscape Contractors Association (ELCA) awarded the international trend prize "Building with Green" to two equally important but nevertheless very different extraordinary historic green sites in the Czech Republic. On the occasion of the 19. international expert exhibition "Urban Green and Free Areas - Planning – Building – Maintaining GaLaBau 2010" in Nuremberg Antoine Berger, president of the working group of companies of the European Landscape Contractors Association pointed out the two awarded historic gardens in the Czech Republic

Berger announced: "The winners of the international ELCA trend prize 2010 are the reconstructed historic monastery gardens in of the [Klostergärten in Litomyšl](#) and the garden of [Villa Müller in Prag](#). As organisation granting the international trend prize we are convinced of the landscaping-related qualities of both historic gardens in the Czech Republic"

### **Singapore: "A City in a Garden"**

On the occasion of the International Skyrise Greenery Conference 2010, which took place in Singapore in November, new technical developments and possible fields of application of green roofs were presented. Well-known experts on greening of roofs and walls discussed with architects, planners, executing companies and those making decisions in industry and politics on the development potential of greened roofs. Dr Michael Henze gave a presentation on the structure, development and perspectives of gardening, landscaping and sports ground building in view of roof greening in Europe.

The Skyrise Greenery Conference provided a remarkable theoretical and practical [expert programme concerning the greening of buildings](#). During the conference almost 500 participants from all over the world could get information on greening of roofs and walls during the congress; apart from that they could make interesting contacts and have expert discussions. One of the highlights certainly was the "Technical Tour", an expert

excursion to very impressive green buildings in the city of Singapore.

### **Maintaining Collection of Seeds and Plants in Pawlowsk**

The ELCA supports the maintenance of the collection of seeds and plants in Pawlowsk near Saint Petersburg. Since the biggest European collection of soft fruit kinds is endangered by the planned building of a settlement of luxury flats. In a respective resolution to Prime Minister Vladimir Putin ELCA president Emmanuel Mony presented reasons, why the collection of several thousand fruit bushes and fruit trees must be kept and why the work of this important institution must be continued.

Mony explained: "With regard to gardening and landscaping the species of soft fruit as well as other bushes, trees and shrubs significantly support the biodiversity in gardens and in public green areas. Furthermore the innumerable species of economic plants in Pawlowsk – among them more than 1,000 kinds of strawberries alone – are of considerable importance for production gardening, plant breeding and of course for human alimentation."

The ELCA president pointed out: "In view of this correct and important focussing on the protection of species ELCA cannot understand at all, that the collection of seeds and plants in Pawlowsk is to be replaced by a settlement of luxury flats." It is incomprehensible for ELCA that such an important institute has to make room for mainly economic interests.

### **In Cooperation with ELCA: Skill enhancement seminars in Japan**

#### Design and maintenance of Japanese gardens

In close cooperation with the European Landscape Contractors Association (ELCA) the well known Japanese gardening, landscaping company Kosugi Zohen Co. Ltd. from Tokyo once again offers [skill enhancement seminars in Japan next year](#). In February interested participants may gain a lot of knowledge and above all practical experience regarding "Japanese Garden Design"

and / or the "Maintenance of Japanese gardens" on site in Japan, in the city of Atami (near Tokyo).

#### Information / Application

Information and detailed leaflets concerning the seminar "Japanese Garden Design in Practice" and the seminar "Maintenance of Japanese Plants and Japanese Gardens" are available at the ELCA office or directly from the organizer (seminar leader: Andreas Hamacher, E-Mail: [hamacher@kosugi-zohen.co.jp](mailto:hamacher@kosugi-zohen.co.jp), telephone: +81-80-3154-0040) or in the internet under: [http://kosugi-zohen.co.jp/seminar\\_top.htm](http://kosugi-zohen.co.jp/seminar_top.htm).

### **Consultation regarding the EU-strategy concerning invasive species**

The ELCA has applied for the participation in an consultation meeting of the EU commission regarding the EU-strategy concerning invasive species. The first meeting took place in Brussels in September 2010. Next year, too, there will be more meetings concerning this topic.

At present there is no suitable tool on EU level to institute proceedings against invasive species. In 2011 the EU commission wants to promote a strategy concerning non resident invasive species. The target of the consultation is to get a representative picture off he positions and opinions off he relevant stakeholders concerning the future strategy.

### **Barrier-free Cities 2011**

Being barrier free is a comprehensive EU-concept, which aims at the avoidance of barriers, which cause problems for disabled people when they deal with products, services and infrastructure under the same condition as in case of non-disabled people. Accessibility of building infrastructure, traffic, services and information and communication technology (IKT) are of essential meaning for disabled people who want to exercise their rights and to participate in the society unrestrictedly. Gardening, landscaping and sports ground building can participate here, too.

The commission commits itself to realize the convention by concrete activities in various areas of politics.

### Biodiversity

The European commission has started a [Biodiversity platform](#), which introduces an exchange of knowledge and information concerning the topic of biodiversity. In a first step ELCA has applied for this platform. Apart from that the ELCA recently participated in the Green Week in Brussels in June 2010 concerning the topic biodiversity. In autumn the EU commission wants to present their plans, how to stop the decrease of biodiversity by 2050.

### EU-Green book concerning Value Added Tax

At the beginning of December 2010 The European Commission presented their [Green book concerning the future of Value Added Tax](#) (VAT). To begin with the book presents the question whether the principles of the present VAT system must be revised and whether products and services should be taxed in their country of origin or in their country of destiny. Furthermore the green book deals with certain aspects, which over the years have become a focus of criticism.

Questions are, for example, whether reduced tax rates are still topical, whether the provisions for input tax deduction are sufficiently neutral, how the system can be made safe against cheating, and how VAT causes administration work can be reduced.

For a long time ELCA has advocated for fair conditions of competitions for all those involved in competition, that provide services on the market with regard to building with green and with regard to the maintenance of green areas. This especially applies to the tax privileges for companies of agriculture and forestry in the frame of the discussion on laws on reduced sales tax. The tax-privileged competitors of agricultural companies enjoy much better starting conditions with regard to the business with new design

and renovation, but above all regarding maintenance of outside areas.

The green book is meant to start a comprehensive debate and the consultation will not be limited to the topics mentioned at the beginning. Those participating are encouraged to mention all aspects, of which they think that they may be of importance for the future of the value added tax.

The commission calls upon all those interested to participate in the public consultation by May 31<sup>st</sup>. 2011. Under consideration of the results of the consultation the commission will explain their priorities concerning the future value added tax system in a note by end of 2011.

### Dates

April 27th, 2011  
Meeting of the board on Malta

April 28th, to May 1st, 2011  
[Expert excursion to Malta](#)

May 24th, 2011  
Research workshop in Brussels

May 27th, 2011  
Expert excursion to the [Chelsea Flower Show](#)

October 5th to 8th, 2011  
[WorldSkills in London](#)

October 6th 2011  
Meeting of the board in London

December 6th, to 8th, 2011  
Expert exhibition [Paysalia in Lyon](#)