



THE PRINCE OF WALES
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS
LEADERS FORUM



The Business of Enterprise

Meeting the challenge of economic development
through business and community partnerships

Oil company promotes "Clean Business" in Poland

Large company:	BP Poland A subsidiary of BP Amoco, a global oil company
Local enterprises:	Small and medium enterprises
Intermediaries:	Polish Environmental Partnership Foundation (PEPF), Groundwork An environmental not-for-profit organisation based in the town of Blackburn in the UK
Location:	Poland

Impact of initiative	Developing supply chains	x
	Building local community	x
	Supporting marginalised groups	

Drivers for action

- Poland's full participation in the European and wider international economy required the addressing of environmental, workplace and community impact issues.
- Large international companies investing in Poland were bringing the knowledge and technology necessary for improvement, but a way had to be found to enable small and medium enterprises to improve their performance in such areas as environmental impact and labour standards.
- The Government of Poland needed the foundation of a well-ordered business sector to support its application for membership in the European Union.
- Poland lacked a tradition of business/community partnerships.

Business link

- In 1998 the *Czysty Biznes* (Clean Business) programme was set up to run for 8 years as a partnership between BP Poland, the Polish Environmental Partnership Foundation (PEPF) and Groundwork.
- The programme provides a mechanism for participating companies to improve their business and environmental performance, in partnership with other companies, local governments and community groups, and

for the private sector in Poland to play a more proactive role in shaping government-led economic and commercial reforms.

- The programme also enables some of Poland's 2.3 million small and medium enterprises to engage with large companies, thereby building their skills and capacity to participate in sometimes-complex supply chains.
- Community organisations can use the programme as a vehicle for ensuring that their concerns and interests are heard.

Nature of support

- BP Poland made a long-term financial commitment of US\$2.3 million, spread over the 8 years of the programme, enabling additional funding to be secured: BP Poland's first US\$1 million invested leveraged a further US\$1 million from the UK Government and the European Union Phare Fund.
- BP Poland actively encouraged other large companies in Poland to join the initiative.
- PEPF designed and implemented the programme, and manages day-to-day operations through a network of coordinators and partners from business, local government and NGOs.

- Groundwork assisted PEPF in building capacity to deliver the *Czysty Biznes* programme and to exercise quality control.
 - Throughout Poland, local *Czysty Biznes* clubs have been established, which small and medium enterprises can join for a small annual subscription, so they can access expertise to improve their business performance without incurring expensive consultancy costs.
 - An Environmental Information Centre has been established in Krakow to maintain and disseminate information on environmental issues and to respond to practical questions through a helpline.
 - By transferring knowledge, skills and technology from large companies and other organisations, the programme offers practical and cost-effective solutions to small and medium enterprises to reduce their environmental impact – for example:
 - Regular environmental health checks and audits
 - Advice on implementing environmental improvements
 - Information on the latest technology and changes in legislative requirements, through a weekly “business and environment” news service
 - Training workshops and seminars
 - Customised guidance on technological innovation and financing opportunities
 - Contact and dialogue with environmental authorities, non-governmental organisations and companies committed to environmental improvement
 - Opportunities for participation in collective action with other companies on environmental projects.
 - For small and medium enterprises that are ready to progress to more advanced performance, a team of environmental management specialists can deliver, for a fee, more specialised services such as the implementation of systems to ISO 9000 and 14001 standards.
 - The programme emphasises self-help and seeks to demonstrate that improvements can be best achieved through the enthusiastic and knowledgeable actions of company employees, who then take these practices back to their communities.
- Outcomes**
- The programme now operates in 60 cities and towns in Poland.
 - Some 250 companies, employing 15,500 people, participate in the programme.
 - The Environmental Information Centre has responded to requests for help from around 12,500 businesses.
 - More than 35 workshops have been held on a wide range of business, environmental and regulatory topics.
 - Nine companies are now putting in place the necessary environmental systems to enable them to achieve ISO 14001 certification.
 - Local enterprises has been able to accomplish the following:
 - Make more efficient use of their resources, thereby cutting costs
 - Reduce waste and pollution
 - Achieve compliance with environmental, health and safety regulations, and adapt to European Union standards
 - Access up-to-date technology
 - Develop business links – such as participation in supply chains – with large companies that place a premium on environmental performance and continuous business improvement
 - Encourage and motivate their employees to take action on health, safety and environmental issues
 - Safeguard jobs, provide opportunities for staff development and improve capacity to recruit.
 - An independent survey of participating companies found that 75% now actively monitor costs for energy, water, effluent and waste, and around 80% recognised that the

programme had given them the opportunity to modernise their operations.

- In 2000, the Academy for Development of Philanthropy in Poland and the National Forum for Non-Governmental Initiatives named BP Poland "Benefactor of the Year", in recognition of its support for *Czysty Biznes*.
- The programme's plans include the spread of *Czysty Biznes* clubs, each with a membership of 100-120 companies, to all major cities and towns in Poland by 2005, and the establishment of satellite clubs to serve smaller surrounding communities.
- With the backing of the UK Government, the programme's partners have agreed to help with the launch of a similar initiative in Romania.

* Lessons learned

- Selecting partners with complementary skills and clearly defined roles and responsibilities can produce an impact far beyond the individual capacity of each.
- Large companies that are prepared to act as patrons or "champions" of an initiative can attract and encourage support and participation from other large companies.
- The transfer of knowledge, skills and technology from large companies, within the framework of sound business practices, enables small and medium enterprises to operate more competitively, expand their business and reduce their costs.
- Corporate financial support can leverage additional funding from donor agencies to build the sustainability of local programmes.