

Slovakia National Cleaner Production Centre

Case study in Good Organization, Management and Governance Practices

The Slovak National Cleaner Production Centre is composed of a non-profit organization and a business enterprise thereby enabling the centre to work effectively in delivering value-adding services to businesses and acting as a public advocate for Cleaner Production, while at the same time retaining the added value from close collaboration and joint efforts.

CENTRE IN BRIEF

The Slovak NCPC was established in 1994, originally as part of the National Industrial Association, and then as a separate not-for-profit independent civic association. The work of the Centre was supervised by a Steering Committee, comprised by representatives of the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Economy, representatives from the industry association, UNIDO, UNEP, the Slovak-Norwegian Cleaner Production programme, members of civil society and other major donors. As the country's legal framework for NGOs changed, it excluded government representatives to be members of organs of not-for-profit organizations. At the recommendation of auditors, the legal form of the Organization was changed in 2002 to a private company Ltd. (SCPC Ltd.) owned by its employees. In 2008, the not-for-profit branch was re-established as PROVENTUS, in the legal form of a public charity. SCPC and PROVENTUS operate closely together to deliver both commercial and not-for-profit services, and are together commonly known as the Slovak National Cleaner Production Centre (NCPC).

The combined annual turnover of both organizations varied in recent years from EUR 350,000 to 600,000. The SCPC Ltd. is privately owned by former and present employees. The directors have been Mr. Anton Blazej until 1995, Ms. Viera Feckova from January 1996 until May 2009 and Mr. Frantisek Kvinta since then. As for PROVENTUS, the chairman of the organization is Professor Marián Peciar of the Slovak Technical University, and the Board members are Viera Šimkovicová, consultant; Michal Kravčík,

NGO representative, holder of Goldman environmental prize and 2 SASAKAWA environmental prizes. The current director of PROVENTUS is Mr. Tomas Laurinc. The average number of Slovak NCPC staff during recent years has been approximately 10 people, with a peak of 19 people in 2005.

Extensive experience was developed in chemicals and pharmaceuticals, machinery, automotive, pulp and paper, food processing, bio-fuel production sites, wood products, renewable energies, office management, services providers, energy generation and distribution (gas and electricity), etc. The unique niche for the Slovak NCPC covers all sectors applying mechanical, physical and chemical processes; using chemicals and solvents; requiring integrated view and in-depth understanding of processes, specific health, safety and environment (HSE) as well as chemical issues. These sectors correspond to the most 'difficult' ones and those directly concerned by legal aspects (such as persistent organic pollutants (POPs), Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH)). The Slovak NCPC is active in all life cycle stages of installations – from very early stages of investment preparation and selection of site for future operations, throughout construction, start-up, operation, modifications, shut down and decommissioning.

STRATEGY

The motto for PROVENTUS and the SCPC Ltd. is: The cheapest solution is solving a problem that has never emerged.

ABOUT THESE CASE STUDIES SERIES

The Joint UNIDO-UNEP Programme on Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production (RECP) aims at improving the resource productivity and environmental performance of businesses and other organizations in developing and transition countries. The Programme is implemented in partnership with a network of National Cleaner Production Centres (NCPCs) that have currently been established in over 40 countries. This case study series documents how NCPCs have been set up and are being managed and governed in their respective national contexts. They illustrate the accompanying Primer on Good Organization, Management and Governance Practices for RECP Service Providers.

The Slovak NCPC, through both organisations, strives permanently to be the leader in practical and effective protection of environment and management of industrial risks. It promotes, implements, and supports proactive preventive approaches in solving industrial pollution problems in Slovakia and abroad. The emphasis is on systematic and integral approach in everyday practices and operations of clients, i.e. flexibility and high value for client; professionalism of staff; awareness of leading edge developments; high quality of services, advice, research, and other project activities; legal compliance; transparency and good governance.

AUTONOMY

Both legal bodies of the Slovak NCPC are fully autonomous. The independence of PROVENTUS from the SCPC Ltd. is assured through the Board, and independent book keeping and accounting. Both organizations share staff, to the extent required by projects, in a fully accountable manner.

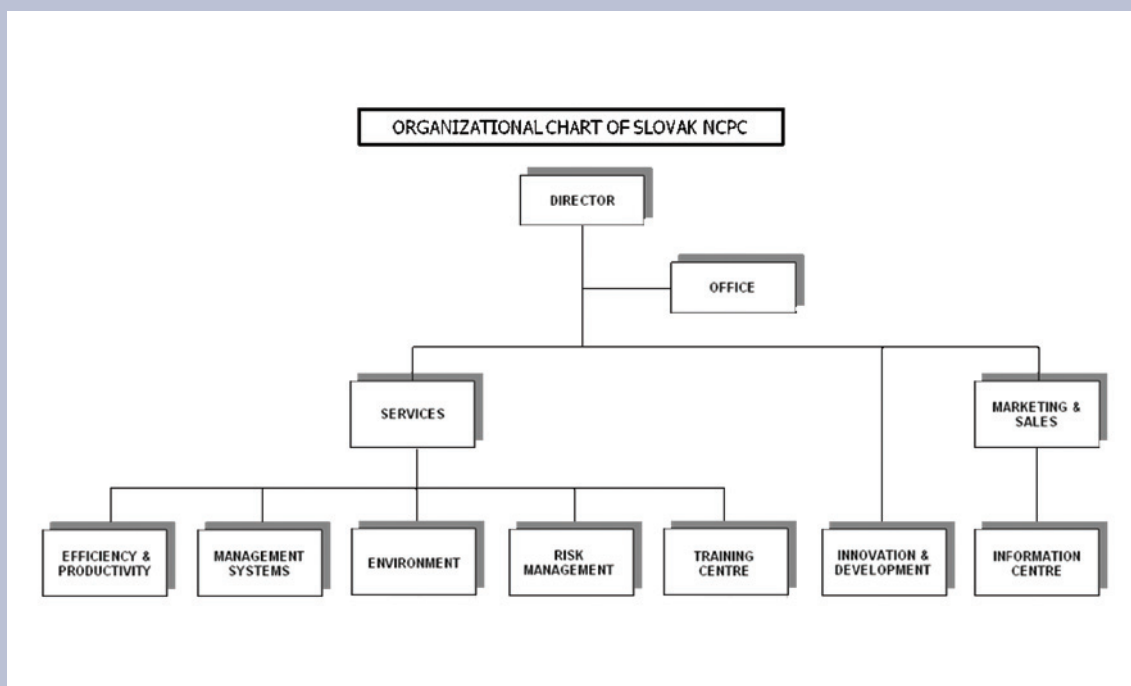
The SCPC Ltd. being a private and independent professional organization cooperates extensively with national and international industrial and service providing companies, consultancies, Government and ministries, municipalities, academia, NGOs, and all other interested and

involved parties in Slovakia and abroad. The Slovak NCPC is a member not only of the UNIDO/UNEP network, but also of PREPARE (European Cleaner Production Network) and ASPEK (Association for Industrial Ecology in Slovakia).

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Except administrative and part time maintenance staff, all are professionals in a particular area related to cleaner production (CP). In the Slovak NCPC, there are environmental management graduates, process and safety engineers, a mechanical engineer, an electrical engineer, chemical engineers, and a geographer. Typically, one person focuses on several instruments (see graph below). Responsibilities for instruments are allocated to the particular units.

The detailed costs and incomes are allocated to cost centres in the accounting system. The internal documentation system traces down all direct costs to the particular cost centres; the working time of personnel is also traced down. Financial transparency is a pre-condition to obtain projects financed by public resources. For example, any application for an EU grant requires audited accounting. The audits, bookkeeping, personnel agenda including salaries, social, health and pension insurance are outsourced to external companies.





The Slovak NCPC owns premises, 3 cars, all necessary office equipment (app. 10 notebooks, 8 computers including file server, mail server and web server, printers, colour printers for A4, A3 formats, copy machines, scanners, 8 mobiles, etc.), project related equipment (infrared camera, device for remote temperature control, special equipment measuring electrical characteristics, several cameras, some more are under consideration). All the property and personnel are fully insured. The Slovak NCPC has a liability insurance cover of EUR 350,000.

BUSINESS

The Slovak NCPC is active in all sectors related to environmental management, health and safety risks of production, e.g. CP including energy efficiency and renewable energies, environment protection, environmental impact assessment (EIA), integrated pollution prevention control (IPPC), persistent organic pollutants (POPs), occupational health and safety, management of major industrial accidents, industrial risk assessment and appraisal, chemical management, fire protection; environmental, quality as well as health and safety management systems (ISO 9001, ISO 14001, OHSAS 18001, HACCP), eco-innovation, technology transfer and investment processes support. Emerging areas are sustainable construction, sustainable purchasing and others. The SCPC Ltd. provides professional consultancy, trainings, advice provision to different sector clients; business rates are charged. PROVENTUS provides awareness raising, education as well as training and research activities.

The Slovak NCPC is active in Slovakia. Its staff has also delivered services in other countries in Southern and Central Europe (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Russia, Croatia) USA, Asia (Armenia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan) and Africa (Kenya).

The clients are varied and include: Small and Medium sized Enterprises and micro companies in production and services (Montservis, Ekolas), large companies (SPP - national gas provider, ZENTIVA-pharmaceuticals, Slovnaft/MOL - refinery and petrochemicals), local branches of multinationals (Peugeot Citroen, Samsung, Faurecia, Johnson Controls International, ENEL), multinationals in other countries (ENEL in Russia), municipalities (Martin, Sala), authorities (Ministry of Environment), consultants (Convergence Consulting UK/US, Manager Service), design companies (Energoprojekt, IPE, Coproject, Zinchem), foreign investors coming to Slovakia (Hoppecke – German battery producer), international organisations (such as UNEP, UNIDO, and EU), and non-governmental organizations.

Networking and maintaining links with partners from all sectors and all stakeholders is an important part of the work of the Slovak NCPC. These include subcontractors, individual consultants, but also competitors, research institutions and universities in Slovakia, in the EU and in other countries, where the Slovak NCPC always acts in cooperation with local partners. As a principle, long-term cooperation is preferred, for example, partnership with SPP since 1999, Zentiva since 2000, Johnson Controls, FAURECIA, Peugeot Citroen since 2006, and Uzbekistan since 2006). It is also understood that the roles (client/partner/subcontractors) are variable, depending on the project.

The products are always tailor-made to address client needs but also to promote integrated, systemic and preventive approaches, to reach the most cost-efficient and effective way of solving the client's problem. There are some standard products (such as IMRO - integrated risk management of an organization, Environmental Impact Assessments, CP and energy efficiency) but often the service must be adapted. It can cover any health, safety, environmental and chemicals area, can involve different experts, and consist of any combination of consultancy, training, policy advice, technology transfer, research, and awareness raising activities. Also the project duration and size are very variable, from small projects starting at EUR 100, with duration of one week and involving only one expert, to long term contracts involving 4 to 9 experts at different stages, or 3-4 years projects where special teams of up to 8 people are formed with budgets of several ten-thousands euros.

Efforts to remain on the leading edge means also active identification and creative development of new commercial and non-commercial projects and activities, including answering to calls for proposals of the Slovak aid agency (projects in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kenya), European Commission programmes (ACT CLEAN project within the Central Europe Programme), EU structural and development fund applications in Slovakia for clients, etc.

EXPERTISE

Experts of the Slovak NCPC are recognized in their professional area and possess all individual authorisations and permits required by law. Moreover, continuing education and personal development is considered natural part of working at the leading edge. Formally, the staff is obliged to pass specific trainings of minimum 5 days per year, and engage in language training, as working languages are Slovak, English, Russian, German and Czech.



The extensive hardcopy and electronic libraries are systematically built up; information is organised and stored in several databases. The access to legal information is pre-paid; the SCPC Ltd. maintains its own 'Register of legal requirements' related to its operations and services. The SCPC Ltd. owns more than 100 specific international, EU and national standards, technical publications, etc. The Slovak NCPC owns software needed for work, including modelling of industrial accident hazards (BREEZE). A system of development, maintenance and improvement of own know-how exists and methodologies, documents, manuals, checklists, etc. are established. The hardcopy and electronic information related to partners and clients as well as projects is carefully managed. Information safety and confidentiality issues are controlled.

For success and transparency, it is important that the Slovak NCPC owns and maintains all relevant authorisations required by law for organisations. Also, for example, the Slovak NCPC received accreditation by the Ministry of Education for trainings 'Cleaner Production for Implementation Teams', and 'Introduction into Cleaner Production' and in this way the courses are recognised in the formal education system.

EXPERIENCE WITH PRIMER APPLICATION

The Primer on Good Management, Organization and Governance Practices for NCPCs helped the Slovak NCPC to make its self-assessment in the area of management, governance and organisation. Most of the management mistakes and weaknesses of the beginning are now under control. There is still room for continuous improvement (marketing, networking, etc.) towards 'excellence'.

The Primer has proven to be a very useful tool for identifying weaknesses (What has to be improved in management and how to deliver services?) and strengths (What are our NCPC focus activities? Which services our NCPC is able to offer to industry clients?).

Even if the Primer is initially meant for newly established or young NCPCs or for NCPCs with a new governance, management or director, the oldest NCPCs (like the Slovak NCPC) can still use it as a benchmarking tool and for the identification of areas for improvement.



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