



Annual report 2012

2012 through the eyes of Arnika



This magical year, in which, according to some prophecies, the end of the world was supposed to come, wasn't an easy one. In the name of the fight against the financial crisis, the requirements for environmental protection are being reduced in many places,

often at the expense of the quality of our lives and our health. The nightmares of the environment keep rising from their imaginary grave: Spolana wants to keep using mercury for another six years. The Ministry of the Environment sometimes behaves more like the Ministry for the Protection of Industry and promotes the construction of more combustion plants. Some lobbyists are dusting off the whopping Danube-Oder-Elbe Canal. All of this under the guise of reassuring industry or the encouragement of economic growth.

Despite this turn for the worse, we succeeded in a number of things in the field of environmental protection in 2012. The greatest successes certainly include the rescue of avenues of trees along roads from being cut down. Some MPs' attempts to allow road administrators to cut down trees without a permit were not successful thanks to our "Save the trees" campaign. Similarly, the industrial lobby failed to curb the register of pollution in the way they intended. This way, you were able to learn from Arnika which industrial company in your region caused the biggest pollution in 2012, and you can learn that even in 2013. We also managed to launch the first adoption by Arnika of a stream, and as is traditional, we mowed the white hills of the Central Bohemian Uplands as a part of a weekend camp, in order to help endangered plants to continue to grow.

Arnika has been involved in the protection of the environment even beyond the borders of the Czech Republic in recent years, and 2012 was proof of that. After the successful completion of a project in Armenia, we helped open an advisory ecological centre in Minsk. Moreover, we performed a unique mapping of river pollution caused by toxic substances in Belarus.

You can read more on the following pages. I wish you pleasant and, I hope, stimulating reading. However, before that, allow me to thank all Arnika's employees, volunteers, and contributors for their work and support. Your trust is binding for us.

Jindřich Petrlík, Chair of Arnika in 2012



The motto of Arnika: "He knew that man's heart, away from nature, becomes hard; he knew that lack of respect for growing, living things soon led to lack of respect for humans too."

(Luther Standing Bear from the Lakota tribe)

Arnika- Center for Citizens' Support

We help people defend the right to a healthy environment.

Right at the beginning of the year, we were deeply engaged in a rescue campaign. A few MPs headed by Pavel Dobeš, Minister of Transport, tried to enforce an exception for road users again to be able to cut down trees alongside roads without a permit. Together with the volunteers of Arnika, we built a petition stand on Palacký Square in Prague and offered people a walk through the last avenue. We also lobbied for the trees directly with MPs, Over thirty thousand signatures on Arnika's "Save the trees!" petition were a powerful argument. Our efforts paid off. The proposed "harvesting" amendment was not accepted, and several MPs confirmed that they voted against the adoption of the amendment just thanks to the activities of Arnika.

2012 in numbers:

- ◆ 5494 voters in the Avenue of the Year 2012 poll
- ◆ 3500 signatures on a petition "Don't let ourselves be excavated"
- ◆ 9 film stories about active citizens
- ◆ over 50 cases in the building map of Prague

In mid-2012, we announced the second edition of the Avenue of the Year poll. Out of 72 nominated avenues, the Fishing Avenue in Přerov won. The winning avenue is at risk of being cut down, but representatives present at the announcement promised that they would fight to rescue it. We participated in the publication of the book "Avenues: the beauty of an endangered world" by the author Marie Hrušková, photographer Marie Holečková, and botanist Václav Větvíčka. The last chapter of the book is dedicated to the protection of the avenues in our country and the work of Arnika.

Another great success of Arnika and Green Circle is to preserve the rights of citizens to comment on planned buildings. A group of MPs wanted to prohibit civic associations interfering with construction management as part of a comprehensive amendment. This would facilitate the life of developers, but also make it impossible for people to influence construction in towns and villages. In a short time, we managed to collect

ourselves be excavated). Our initiative was supported by nearly 60 mayors and representatives of towns and villages and over 80 non-governmental organizations and thanks to them too the controversial amendment of the construction law failed to pass.



We published a publication *Občané sobě* (Citizens by Themselves), representing 15 different stories of people who were engaged in environmental decision making and helped their town or village. Nine stories were filmed in the form of short documentaries.

We addressed the territorial plan for Prague – we released details of what has been termed a fourth wave of change, which includes a range of harmful projects. For example, we drew attention to the imminent construction in Vidoule and the Dívčí Hradý area and supported local civic associations. With our help, they managed to halt the efforts to hamper the construction on the green areas of Rožtyly. People in the Pankrác neighbourhood then succeeded in the Supreme Court and achieved the cancellation of authorization for the construction of a skyscraper which would have damaged the historic skyline of Prague. We evaluated the first year of the City Council's work and participated in dozens of sets of negotiations on the territorial plan.

Arnika – Nature Conservation Programme

We strive to maintain the diversity of the natural environment and the value of our water flows.

Arnika's nature protection programme in 2012 was mainly devoted to the issue of water flows and the protection of biodiversity. In the middle of March, we presented a challenge, Protect the River Elbe, on the occasion of the International Day of Action against Dams. The challenge appeals to the Minister of the Environment, his office, and the entire government to finally complete the national list of sites protected by the Natura 2000 network. During the theatrical happening, otters, salmon, and other animals packed their suitcases and left the Elbe Canyon in an orderly manner. Because of the planned construction of a weir this site has not yet been added to the list. Two months later, on the International Day of Biodiversity, we handed the challenge and a complete inventory of natural valuable sites, some of which have been waiting to be listed for over ten years, to the Minister of the Environment. The Directorate of Waterways tried again to persuade the general public and professionals that the construction of a weir near Děčín will not affect the environment in the valley of the River Elbe. Arnika has a different opinion on the five-metre dam on the territory of a landscape park. The weir would change the dynamics of the river irretrievably and damage the local ecosystems. Therefore we submitted our remarks on the documentation of the project.

2012 in numbers:

- ◆ 200 participants in the bathing day in Děčín
- ◆ 1st adoption of a stream
- ◆ 26 female and male volunteers mowed the hillsides of the Central Bohemian Uplands
- ◆ over 5000 signatures on a petition "Man and Water" and the challenge "Let's preserve the Elbe"

The rivers in the Czech Republic are cleaner than ever before and bathing in them has its magic. The Big Jump event spreads such messages among the public every year. In 2012, Arnika joined the celebration of river bathing again and on Sunday, July 8, organized a bathing day in Děčín called "Love Labe" (Elbe).

In Lázecká remíza, near Karviná, there are flooded fragments of a forest. This unique environment that is home to a number of endangered species of plants and animals is, however, threatened by the planned extensive felling of trees and coal mining. Arnika decided to help the local



associations with its rescue. The call to name Lazecká remíza a natural monument has been supported by over a thousand people so far. You can sign the petition here: <http://arnika.org/podepiste>.

Adoption of a stream: what is it? A number of streams are in bad shape, enclosed in concrete troughs and starved of resources for their revitalization. Arnika wants to show through adoption that the revitalization of small flows can be done with the help of local volunteers and self-help. In the summer of 2012, the first adoption of a stream with the support of Arnika took place. Children from a summer camp in Kadov took charge of the two streams in the villages in Kadov and Vrbno, which they cleared of trash, and made the first small revitalizing adjustments. In 2012, Arnika once again didn't forget about the white slopes in the Central Bohemian Uplands. During the weekend camp of the Bořena Team, 26 volunteers mowed the meadows and removed the self-seeded trees so that rare plants could continue to grow on the white slopes under the Leipzig mountain.

Arnika- Toxics and Waste Programme

We reduce the occurrence of toxic substances and improve waste management.

We started off 2012 briskly in January with the campaign “**Don’t burn, recycle!**” The production of municipal waste is increasing in our country; most of it ends up in landfill sites, which have a number of disadvantages, so landfill sites are not so popular any more. In several places in the Czech Republic (Jihlava, Plzeň, Karviná, Most, Přešov, Cheb, etc.) there were plans for the construction of new waste incineration plants, regardless of their overcapacity and other negative features. Arnika is trying to convince the responsible officials and politicians to push for **better recycling, a reduction of waste production, and equitable fees for waste.**

2012 in numbers:

- ◆ 7 incinerator projects which we commented on
- ◆ 26,320 signatures on a petition for cleaner air in Ostrava
- ◆ 7 years of announcing the biggest polluters in the Czech Republic
- ◆ 3 research studies on the presence of toxic substances

In February, therefore, we organized a seminar where the statewide coalition of civic associations “Pro 3R” was founded (3R: “reduce, reuse, recycle”). We prepared an app for cities and towns that would allow them to calculate the income and costs of separate collection. We submitted a number of comments on various projects for incinerators and participated in relevant procedures throughout the year. We also brought attention to the topic with several events. The regional representatives of Jihlava, for example, received from Arnika the waste from the incineration plant in Liberec which had ended up in the woods next to the stream in the Frýdlant area instead of a landfill site. All this despite the fact that it contained concentrations of dioxins and polyaromatic hydrocarbons. We protested against the overloading of incineration plants to the detriment of recycling with a happening in front of the Office of the Government and November’s street mask parade, dominated by a greedy incinerator. An expert on toxic substances from incineration plants, Alan Watson from the UK, arrived in the Czech Republic at Arnika’s invitation.

In the year 2012, we also devoted plenty of attention to the topic of toxic



substances and the pursuit of their reduction in our environment. In March, a representative of Arnika handed over a petition for cleaner air in the Ostrava region, signed by over 26 thousand people, to Minister Chalupa. Once again, we were forced to defend an integrated pollution register against the efforts of industry to limit its effectiveness. We managed to defend the register at least against the interventions of the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic, which would have almost liquidated it. We announced the biggest polluters of the environment of the Czech Republic for the seventh time. We tested floor coverings and PVC wallpapers for the presence of dangerous phthalates. Unfortunately, they were present in all the samples, and in two cases the dangerous phthalate DEHP, which will be prohibited from the year 2015, was found. As a part of the preparation of a global study by the international network IPEN, we observed the mercury concentrations in fish from the Czech part of the River Elbe. Unfortunately, the results were alarming. One of the samples of common bream, caught at Spolana, ended up first out of all 326 of the analyzed fish from twenty countries of the world, with a value of 1583 mg/kg.

Arnika and the world

What is on the other side of the fence doesn't concern us.

Toxic substances in products, mercury in fish, the loss of plant and animal species; these and many other issues cannot be resolved at the national level of a single state. Arnika is well aware of it. We are therefore members of several international networks and we are trying to influence the formation of key international conventions. At the same time, we have been successfully exporting our know-how to countries with less environmental experience for several years. After a successful project in Armenia and the current situation in Belarus, we launched a new project in Kazakhstan.

The foreign activity of Arnika in 2012 revolved a lot around Belarus and in collaboration with our partner organization CES-Centre for ecological solutions. At the turn of the year, we helped our Belarusian colleagues to open an information centre in Minsk that provides local people with information on waste and toxic substances. In the summer we performed a unique mapping of toxic substances in Belarusian rivers. At the main polluters, such as factories or wastewater treatment plants, we took a total of 61 samples of river sediments and soils.

2012 in numbers:

- ◆ 5 large foreign projects
- ◆ 7 international networks and organizations where Arnika operates
- ◆ 61 samples of river sediments and soil in Belarus
- ◆ 8 years of Arnika being the Central European centre of the IPEN network

At the end of the year, Arnika, along with the Kazakh civil association Eco Museum and the Centre for the Introduction of New Technologies Beneficial to the Environment (CINEST), launched a project to **protect the health of the inhabitants of Kazakhstan against toxic chemicals**. The cooperation will last at least two and a half years and one of the main goals is to identify contaminated sites and to inform local residents and authorities about how to deal with hazardous substances. In June 2012, representatives of Arnika took part in the **Forum for a Future without Toxic Substances** in Rio de Janeiro. Here, Arnika joined the declaration of the international network IPEN for the restriction of persistent organic substances addressed to the delegates of the Rio+20 World Summit.



Arnika was also involved in the fourth set of negotiations to develop a **global convention on mercury** and participated significantly in the creation of an international study about this toxic metal in fish and hair. Within the IPEN organization, we also started a project whose aim is to protect children in the countries of South and South-east Asia from contamination with lead originating from colours. During the summer, Arnika, as is traditional, worked with the **Dutch University of Wageningen**. This time, environmental management students arrived in Prague to examine the importance of the River Vltava in connection with the development of our capital city.

"I am very pleased that Arnika was able to provide their professional experience, background, and contacts and helped to open the first information centre in Belarus, which is focused on issues of waste and toxic substances." Jevgenij Lobanov, CES

Arnika's eco-advisory centre

If necessary, we will advise and help you.

We help individual citizens, but also civic associations, municipalities, authorities, businesses and schools. Simple questions are answered by our eco-advisors for free; only more extensive advice on difficult cases is charged for. We mainly deal with topics such as the protection of green areas and trees, nature, the issue of toxic substances, wastes, domestic ecology, the right to information, and public participation in decision making. We are a member of STEP, a network of eco-counselling centres. In 2012, we provided **798 free consultations through Arnika's eco-advisory centre. 138 cases were more extensive** ones related to environmental damage, the protection of nature, and threats to human health. We also offered expert advice in a variety of information kiosks, of which we had over two dozen.

2012 in numbers:

- ◆ 14 professionally trained eco-advisors
- ◆ 798 free consultations
- ◆ 138 cases handled
- ◆ over 40 information booths and lectures

And what is it you ask us most often? In 2012, most of the questions concerned **the protection of trees and avenues**. There were a total of 180. We helped protect parks and individual tree species in Černošice, Horazdovice, Kopřivnice, Český Těšín, Žebrák, Pardubice u Lipna, Thákurova Street in Prague, Wenceslas Square, and Krč. Another major group consisted of questions **about building regulations, territorial governance, and the EIA process**. In 2012, we succeeded in the campaign Don't let ourselves be excavated and retained the right to public participation in building procedures. Regarding the number of questions, it is evident that the authorization of buildings interests more and more citizens. You often asked about **territorial planning**. In Prague, we faced a lot of questions related to the new Metropolitan plan and the ongoing fourth wave of changes to the current master plan. People from Děčín, Jablonec nad Nisou, Lysá nad Labem, Odolené Vody, Rudolfov,



and Trutnov turned to us concerning their observations on the territorial plans. We published a **guide through zoning** laws from territorial planning to the building permit, which helps individuals and civic associations to protect the environment when new construction is being authorized. A hot topic of Arnika's eco-advisory centre was issues concerning **waste and toxic substances**. Regarding waste, people often asked our eco-advisors about specific things concerning recycling or hazardous wastes, such as asbestos. We also continued dealing with complex cases regarding the construction of several new incinerators in Chotíkov, Mníšek pod Brdy, Jihlava, and other places. Speaking of toxic substances, many of the questions again pointed to the hazardous substances in products, specifically heavy metals in colours, phthalates in PVC, etc.

Thank you so much for your advice and support for citizens. Today, thanks to your information, I have succeeded in difficult negotiations with the Mayor of the city. Unfortunately, the right to information is often not only disrespected but also disputed. Thanks to your information, and especially the brochure, where it is clearly and intelligibly stated what we have the right to, I've enforced this right in the end."
Petra Hanáková, o.s. Ohnica

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An overview of the management of Arnika's entities in 2012

Arnika, according to its statute, has established three programmes that have their own legal personality and thematic scope. All three programmes are governed by the same statute, registered at the Ministry of the Interior, under no.: Vs/1-1/R 48279/01-16 on December 10, 2001, as last amended and approved by the general meeting on November 6, 2007.

An overall view of the management of Arnika

Costs	10 028 073	Revenues	9 628 193
personal expenses	3 623 098	donations from individuals	791 360
consulting and professional services	1 996 567	gifts from a legal person	21 868
communications (phone, internet)	261 033	SR grants	3 284 627
publishing costs	233 169	EU grants	6 681 262
consumables	298 927	Czech foundation grants	573 000
fares and travel expenses	837 832	foreign foundation grants	1 516 331
rent	523 006	bank interest	634
per diem and representation	238 749	custom activity	481 480
promotion	188 140	exchange rate gains	1 027
other (repairs and maintenance,		accruals and deferrals	-1 624 301
processing of accounting,		payment of shares to part	-2 099 095
shipping, bank charges, services)	1 251 845		
exchange rate losses	59 457		
chemical analysis, analysis	516 251		
		Profit	-399 880

Costs	1 506 198
Revenues	1 258 190
ER 2012	-248 008

Arnika – Center for Citizens' Support

Costs	395 562
Revenues	700 902
ER 2012	305 340

Arnika – Nature Conservation Programme

Costs	1 484 429
Revenues	1 124 169
ER 2012	-360 260

Arnika – Toxics and Waste Programme

Costs	7 438 885
Revenues	7 341 932
ER 2012	-96 953

The largest donors in 2012

Czech Development Agency */ European Union / Global Greengrants Fund – Marisla / IPEN - The International POPs Elimination Network / Prague City Municipality / City district Prague 3 / MŠMT - OPVK by means of the Centre for Research on Toxic Substances of Masaryk University in Brno / Foundation OSF / State Environmental Fund

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Mutual costs and revenues between the entities of Arnika were excluded from the total overview of management.

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The supreme body of Arnika is a general meeting, which meets once a year (23.10.2012). In the period between the members' meetings, the activities of Arnika are managed by the Executive Board, which has five members. In the year 2012, these members were Vendula Krčmářová, Lukáš Matějka (who resigned from his position as a member on April 19, 2012), Jindřich Petrlík, Martin Skalský, and Jana Vitnerová. The Arnika Association is a member of Zelený kruh, the STEP network of eco-counselling centres, and the European Environmental Bureau.

We recognize the ethical code of ecological organizations and the transparency rules of non-governmental non-profit organizations.

Account for donations and contributions:
290 011 7959/2010 (Fio Bank)
Arnika managed to help protect the environment and change things for the better, and not only in the cases and campaigns of the year 2012. Please help us and support our work. We are among the last organizations that are not afraid to stand up in opposition to the senseless devastation of our natural environment. Thank you.

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