

DUTCH CAMPAIGN 'CYCLE TO WORK':

A SYMBOL AND TOOL FOR WORLDWIDE SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY



ORGANISATION:

COS Netherlands (Centre for International Cooperation in the Netherlands)
P.O. Box 2125
4460 MC GOES
The Netherlands
e-mail: info@fietsnaarjewerk.nl

AUTHORS:

Ad Phernambucq e-mail: a.phernambucq@coszeeland.nl

Jan Koeman e-mail: info@fietsnaarjewerk.nl

WEBSITE: www.fietsnaarjewerk.nl

February 2006

Abstract:

'CYCLE TO WORK':

A SYMBOL AND TOOL FOR WORLDWIDE SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY

INTRODUCTION

Cycle to Work is a Dutch campaign to stimulate employees to use their bicycles to commute to their jobs. The bicycle as a solution to several pressing problems in our modern society.

Local authorities in rich, industrialised countries and poor developing countries are unaware of the many benefits of bicycle commuting. In the Netherlands this campaign is organised by 'COS Netherlands' (Centre for International Cooperation in the Netherlands). The Partners are the Dutch cycling and health organisations, Novib/Oxfam Netherlands and I-ce (Interface for Cycling Expertise).

MANY BENEFITS

The full range of the 3 P's: People, Profit and Planet applies to this campaign.

- * People: physical inactivity at work and obesity are increasing significantly in the western world.

Cycling employees are healthier and do have less absence from work.

Cycling can meet the mobility needs of people to a considerable extent.

- * Profit: cycling can reduce the growth of traffic congestion in cities and help to improve accessibility to the city centre.

Cycling is a cheap and economic means of transport.

- * Planet: cycling doesn't contribute to the emission of greenhouse gasses.

Extra benefit comes from financial support of sustainable projects in developing countries by sponsoring bicycle-kilometers.

THE CAMPAIGN MODEL

Participating companies encourage their employees to take part in the campaign by sponsoring every cycled kilometer with 1 or more cents. In 2005 the total sponsorship budget was 100,000 euro. Projects of Novib-Oxfam partners in Brazil, Philippines, Ethiopia and I-ce partner BEN (Bicycling Empowerment Network) in South-Africa have been supported financially.

RESULTS AND EFFECTS

More than 24,000 participants of 450 companies and institutions cycled over 14,000,000 kilometres in 2005. The resulting reduction in CO₂-emission is 3,000,000 kg. This is comparable with the CO₂-absorption of 375 hectares of forest.

1. INTRODUCTION

If a Nobel Prize were to exist for the best invention on behalf of sustainable development, then the bike would score points.

We are living on a fabulously beautiful and abundant planet. The natural resources of earth, however, are exhaustible. The increase of the world population and the growth of material prosperity have shown unmistakably by now that there are limits to the earth's ability to provide for the boundless needs of man. Therefore, further development has to be sustainable all over the world.

Sustainable development will provide for the needs of all people. In it the main condition is that future world citizens as well, wherever they are living, are able to provide for their needs. The present generation in its striving for (increasingly materialistic) prosperity is not to encroach disproportionately upon the natural resources of earth. Earth should not become any more polluted and out of balance than it already is.

The concept of the ecological footprint indicates that each world citizen is entitled equally to his or her piece of earth resources. The assessment of the ecological footprint shows that people living in rich countries are currently overspending. The spending level of energy, water, food, resources and natural fibres in the industrial world is exceeding the 'fair' and 'sustainable' level almost with a factor of three.

One of man's needs is that for mobility. Better still: mobility is a means to provide for needs. By moving from one place to the next we get at varying locations where those things are offered that we need for our living and our development. In short, we are mobile to provide for our needs.

An important worldwide trend is that of mobility increasing when prosperity is increasing. The growth number of our mobility, expressed in the number of movements and the distances of movement per person, is increasing more sharply in nearly all countries than overall economic growth.

A range of means of transport is available in the industrialized countries to provide for our need for mobility. The private car is becoming increasingly important in personal traffic. Buses, subways and trains and for great distances aeroplanes as well are taking up an important place in public transport of passengers.

Altogether they offer sheer unlimited opportunities to provide for our mobility needs.

This enormous achievement, however, has its drawbacks as well. Our mobility system is unsustainable. It is unsustainable for more than one reason. In the first place movement with the means of transport mentioned costs lots of energy. This energy mainly comes from fossil fuels, in particular petroleum. Fossil energy sources are both limited and add to global warming by emitting CO₂. The effects of climatic changes have not all been mapped with scientific certainty. One fact however, is marked off clearly: it are the rich industrialized countries that are responsible for three quarters of the climate-gas emissions, while their negative effects will occur all over the world. It is plausible that developing countries will be affected harder by climatic changes as more people are directly dependent on local natural resources (water, arable land and woods)

and primary production (agriculture, animal husbandry and fisheries). In addition, the rich nations have more opportunities for 'adaptation': investing in expensive adaptations to meet the effects of climatic changes.

For the Netherlands, for instance, it means that we will have to invest billions in making the dikes higher and widening waterways and rivers in the next decades. A country like Bangladesh, having a similar low altitude, will not be able to invest to such a scale. In other words a shift is taking place: to provide for our (mobility) needs we burden the developing countries with the insurmountable effects of climatic changes.

Another important drawback of our modern means of transport is that the vehicles are moving all right, but that we, ourselves, are moving increasingly less. While wheels are spinning on roads or rails, we travellers are sitting motionless and are watching the scenery flashing by. The increasing lack of physical exercise is a fast-growing problem to public health in the western world. The health risks of lack of exercise can hardly be overestimated. The relation between cardiovascular diseases and lack of exercise is evident. But other Western diseases such as diabetes, rheumatism and some forms of cancer are related to lack of exercise. The difference in life expectancy between people that are physically active and those that are not is in the Netherlands estimated at 3.5 years.

The bike does not have any of these important drawbacks for environment and health. The bike does not contribute to the emission of greenhouse gases and keeps man in motion. Those are a few important pros. The bike is, in the Netherlands in particular, where most destinations are within a distance of 7.5 kilometres, a very strong and sustainable means of transport. But its position as a means to provide for our mobility needs is subjected to pressure. The dominant position of the car in politics and policy, in public debate and in social discussions is at the expense of the Attention for the bike. The bike is still providing for an important part of our mobility needs and it has to remain that way from a sustainability point of view.

Maybe the bike and cycling are contending with an unfavourable image. Is a bike too common to be noticed? Perhaps it would have been better if the bike had been invented in Silicon Valley or some other hi-tech place only five years ago. Then the bike would have been embraced as an unprecedented innovation having only benefits by all walks of life and by leftwing as well as rightwing politicians as the ideal means of transport for distances up to 10 kilometres.

Here, the posing is that the bike is underrated as a means of transport for sustainable development. This applies to both the rich industrialized countries and the developing countries. Even in the Netherlands, an outstanding cycle-country, the bike does not get the attention it deserves.

In the first part of this paper we are placing the bike on a pedestal. It will be spotlighted from the three approaches of sustainability - People, Planet and Profit. In the second part we are describing the Dutch campaign of cycle promotion 'Cycle to your job' in the Netherlands, in which over 25,000 participants and 400 companies and non-profit institutions are taking part.

2. THE BIKE AS A VEHICLE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainability according to the Triple-P model.

We have described above sustainable development as a development that provides for the needs of all people and has consideration for future generations. Another approach is that of the Triple-P model, which departs from the view that developments in social (People), ecological (Planet) and economic (Profit) fields should be balanced and should not be at each other's expense. Below we give a broad outline of the special pros and characteristics of the bike in the process of sustainable development via the three fields of sustainability, People, Planet en Profit.

2.1 THE BIKE AND 'PEOPLE'

The field of 'People' of sustainability is about people, the social side. To what extent can the bike provide for the needs of people and contribute to people's development opportunities?

The answer to these questions partly depends on the country the question is related to. To people living in the Netherlands and other rich countries the emphasis will be different than e.g. in African countries. We will stick to the Dutch situation, but most considerations will be recognizable globally.

2.1.1 Mobility need

In modern Dutch society almost all family members travel from their houses to their jobs, shops, all sorts of public and cultural facilities, to sports clubs and entertainment centres, to relatives, friends and acquaintances each day. By being mobile we can work, learn, do sports, make social contacts, carry out social activities and enjoy culture. In modern Western society mobility is an achievement and an important condition for social and individual development.

In the past 40 years, people have tended to become increasingly mobile. The number of movements per day increases and the distances of those movements increase. The average Dutchman (>12 years) now travels 3.1 times per day a total distance of 35 km. We are spending 64 minutes per day on travel. Half of all movements are by car.

The bike provides for the mobility needs for many Dutchmen, in particular for short distances. Well over 30 % of all movements up to 7.5 km are by bike. Of 5.1 million people with a job, 1.2 million people are cycling to their jobs. 86% of the pupils between 12 and 18 years are cycling to school. Collectively Dutch people cycle well over 14 billion kilometres annually, something amounting to 900 kilometres per citizen.

Despite its popularity the bike is losing ground to the car. Since 1990 the number of cars has increased with 2 million to 7 million. People increasingly tend to take their children to primary school (5-12 years) by car due to the fact that traffic is becoming heavier, a vicious circle that can hardly be broken. Mainly people over 40 are participating in the campaign 'Cycle to your job'. The younger generation is opting massively for the car.

In the Netherlands people are able to opt for various means of transport. People cycling to work may have a car as well or travel by public transport.

In developing countries this freedom of choice is very limited to large sections of the population. Walking often is the only option to get to work, school or facilities. The daily walking distance and the time it takes often is considerable. The range is limited.

In this situation the bike may mean a considerable improvement and it may make an important contribution to the breaking up of the spiral of poverty. The possibilities of cycling are strongly determined by the nature of the terrain and infrastructure, obviously. In urban areas, where a vast infrastructure for car traffic is present, it is mostly a question of creating space for the bike.

2.1.2 Need for exercise and health

Health is a crucial factor for the quality of life and our social functioning. People need exercise to stay healthy and fit. Too little exercise entails large health risks. This is still being recognized insufficiently widely.

The need for adequate exercise and physical efforts is present in our genes. Our genetic design stems from prehistoric times and has been passed down by an ancestry that was able to stay alive exclusively by means of hunting, gathering, fleeing and fighting. For all civilisation, we only have shed part of our coat of hair, not the arsenal of genes of our far ancestors.

Adequate exercise is rather a physical necessity to keep the body fit, than a strongly felt need, such as eating and drinking. Physical efforts at work, in the household, in the whole field of daily life are rather avoided than searched for.

The technical developments of the past 150 years – mechanization and automation – are almost without exception aimed at the reduction of physical efforts in daily life and at work. Social appreciation of professions in which physical efforts are still needed, is strongly determined by the association of low-educated and lowly paid labour.

Physical efforts are negatively perceived in part of our private lives, at work and in the household.

On the other hand exercise and physical efforts are appreciated indeed when sporting or in active recreation. In sports and recreation we even seek physical efforts. Social appreciation of sports achievements and top sports is high.

All in all modern man has an ambivalent attitude towards physical efforts. In sports and active forms of recreation it is appreciated and sought for, in daily life and at work it is avoided and, besides exceptions, valued negatively.

In the past ten years health scientists and policy makers have been very interested in the relation between exercise and health. There is consensus to a large extent in scientific circles. Too little exercise increases the odds of developing cardiovascular diseases and other Western diseases and ailments. People exercising adequately are more healthy and fitter and are feeling better. Employees exercising adequately show a lower degree of absenteeism, higher productivity and are more immune to stress.

To indicate how much exercise and physical efforts are necessary, the '**standard for exercise**' has been developed in the Netherlands. It says that adults should exercise moderately intensively on a daily basis for 30 minutes (walking briskly or cycling), at least five days a week. More than half of the adult Dutch do not achieve it. Likewise, the situation of youngsters is alarming. The sharp increase of the number of students with overweight grows to an alarming extent. It is a time bomb for public health.

The authorities (the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport) are recognizing the problems and are placing sport and stimulation of exercise increasingly higher on the political agenda. Campaigns to make citizens aware of a healthy lifestyle with adequate exercise are becoming increasingly numerous and sizeable.

As yet the results of these campaigns are modest. The main result is that various target groups are better informed and that the awareness of the necessity of adequate exercise has increased.

It seems that there is a gap between 'knowing' and 'doing', between attitude and concrete action. As far as this is concerned the analogy with the gap between environment-mindedness and environment-minded action is striking.

It goes without saying that the bike can play an important role in a healthy lifestyle. Cycling is an ideal form of exercise and it combines the need for mobility with the need for physical exercise.

This combination has been deliberately sought for in the campaign 'Cycle to your job', which we are describing in the second part of this paper. The power of this campaign is that people cycle very frequently (twice each working day), making them achieve easily the standard for exercise.

2.1.3. Need for recreation and entertainment

People need recreation and entertainment. The bike is ranking high in leisure activities in the Netherlands. Bike trips, whether of not organised, are popular. Recreational cycling varies from walking one's dog on one's bike through the park or the polders to organised pleasure bike rides with distances from 40 to over 100 km. There are hundreds of cycle clubs and unregistered cycle groups. The number of signposted and marked out cycle routes is sheer uncountable. Increasingly more of these routes are situated on separate cycle lanes or restricted traffic roads.

The recreational cyclist may seek solitude, but in many cases cycling on the contrary is a social event. Cycling with your family, friends or acquaintances or in large groups is popular. The range in possibilities of recreational cycling is so wide that one can make a choice of the way in which to give this leisure activity shape at any moment.

Almost every Dutchman owns a bike and uses it frequently for recreational purposes. Due to the good cycle infrastructure and the extensive possibilities in the field of cycle routes and active cycle clubs the Netherlands are an (almost) ideal cycle country, for recreational cycling as well.

On this matter the Netherlands may be a model for both other Western countries and developing countries.

2.2 THE BIKE AND THE 'PLANET'

The 'P' of Planet is for the ecological side of sustainability. Here it is a matter of the use of natural resources, the damage to the various environmental components (water, air, soil) by pollution and the unbalancing of natural control systems (such as in climatic changes).

The bike is in comparison with motorized forms of passenger transport extremely environment-friendly.

2.2.1 The bike and energy

The cyclist does not use limited fossil fuels. The bike is an extremely energy-efficient form of passenger transport. Its energy source consists of sunlight-produced biomass (food) that is converted by muscular strength into kinetic energy. It happens in a very energy-efficient way. Compared to walking, cycling is three to ten times faster.

The production of the bike-frame and bike-parts, however, consumes some energy, but in comparison with the energy-content of other vehicles it is almost negligible.

The production of a car consumes 18,000 MJ (5 MWh) per car. A bike's production takes only a fraction of it.

2.2.2 Cycling is climate-neutral

Contrary to motorized forms of transport, cycling does not contribute to the enhancing of global warming. Passenger cars are emitting 2 kg of CO₂ per 10 kilometres on average. Car-traffic on the roads in the Netherlands is responsible for a quarter of the total CO₂-emission. The share of traffic in the total CO₂-emission is increasing as well. Driving back the CO₂-emission by traffic is considered to be a sheer impossible task.

To achieve the climate targets of the Kyoto-protocol, the bike may be an alternative to the car in many situations. The share of the bike in all movements up to 7.5 km is 30 %. This share is rather high as many children cycle to school. 86% of the pupils of the age between 12 and 18 years cycle to school. Adults are cycling much less.

Of all car movements in the Netherlands, well over half is shorter than 7.5 kilometres. Well over 20% even is shorter than 2.5 kilometres. Therefore, there is a world to win by replacing more short car trips by cycling.

This certainly applies to commuter traffic. The average commuting distance in the Netherlands is 8 kilometres. This distance can be overcome easily in less than half an hour. Nevertheless less than a quarter of the Dutch employees travel to work on their bikes.

2.2.3 Air quality

Cars do not only emit CO₂, but nitrogen oxides, volatiles and fine particulate as well. At the moment much attention is being paid to the fine particulate emission by traffic, mainly caused by diesel engines. 18,000 people in the Netherlands die about 10 years prematurely due to the effects of fine particulates in the air. That

is 13% of all deaths. In other words: one in eight persons comes to an untimely end due to air pollution of fine particulate in the Netherlands. It will not take long before cars will be fitted with air filters to clear the sucked-in air. Then the nasty situation will develop that cyclists, who do not contribute to air pollution themselves, have to breathe the polluted air.

2.2.4 Other effects on the environment and quality of life

The listing of the bike's pros for environment, nature and quality of life, actually amounts to the listing of the car's cons.

To be complete here would be overdone. We are limiting ourselves to a few important ones:

- **Covering of space.** The Netherlands currently has 7 million passenger cars for 16 million citizens. Parked cars take up a large part of the scarce space, in particular in urban areas. The Dutch Cyclist's Union has calculated that in the space that is taken up by one parked car 12 bikes can be parked. The accessibility of shops and facilities in the old city centres in particular is heavily burdened by the increasing number of car owners that work and shop in the towns. Roads and streets in residential areas have become no-go areas for playing children due to the busy traffic.

The covering of space is a factor in the construction of roads as well. Nature and agriculture areas outside the towns are increasingly split up due to the construction of new roads. This strongly affect habitats of plants and animals, they are as it were 'closed in' in green islets in between roads.

Noise and noise pollution. There are hardly any places left in the Netherlands where one cannot hear car traffic. Although it is a matter of a process of habituation and noise pollution is perceived differently per person, silence is becoming more and more a scarce commodity. For relaxation and recreation in scenic areas or the countryside the lack of car noise is an important quality.

Road victims. Due to road accidents there are annually 1,000-1,200 casualties, about 18,000 people end up in hospitals and about 200,000 receive treatment by GPs or in first aid posts in the Netherlands. Here applies as well that (as was the case with the emission of fine particulates) cyclists are falling victim relatively often, as they are vulnerable in confrontations with cars.

The bike is in all respects from the point of view of ecological sustainability an ideal means of transport. The consumption of natural resources and the harmful effects on the global and local environment and quality of life, are almost negligible with respect to the car.

The car's dominant position in modern society is unbelievably big. Likewise are its harmful effects on the environment and the world. All in all social acceptance of the harmful effects of the increasing car traffic stretches very far. The price we have to pay for the freedom the car is offering, is very high. Where is the limit?

From the point of view of ecological sustainability (the 'Planet'-dimension of sustainability) the bike should receive much support from the government, trade

and industry and social organisations. This does not only apply to the Western countries, but to the rising economies all over the world.

2.3 THE BIKE AND 'PROFIT'

The 'P' of 'Profit' stands for the economic side of sustainability; the opportunity to create economic value, turnover and to make profits and helping people to have jobs and incomes. Equilibrium has to be found in the striving for sustainability between economic growth on the one hand and conservation of resources and environmental qualities on the other hand. In searching solutions for the classic field of tension between economics and ecology, the bike - in the field of mobility - may play an important role.

In classic economic terms the meaning of the contribution of the car to economics is much larger than that of the bike. See inset. Expressed in turnover and employment the difference is at least a factor of ten.

Turnover and employment in the bike and car trades

In the Netherlands over 500,000 new passenger cars are sold annually at an average price of € 22.000 (11 billion euros in total). In addition almost 2 million used cars are sold. Employment in the car trade, petrol stations included, is about 80,000 jobs. Total annual turnover amounts to about 45 billion euros.

In the Netherlands there are 18 million bikes. The number of bikes that is sold annually is 1.2 million. At an average retail price of € 600 this amounts to a total of 720 million euros. The total spending on bikes amounts to 1.7 billion euros annually. About 5,000 people work in the bike trade.

At first sight the car contributes considerably more to the 'Profit'-dimension of sustainability than the bike does. But figures about turnover and employment tell but a small part of the story. It is outside our scope to dedicate a far-reaching analysis to it. Nevertheless we want to make a few remarks that are important in this respect.

The massive use of cars in passenger traffic and the growth that is still visible brings about big social costs. Many costs that are linked to the use of cars are shifted. We described the harmful effects of the use of cars on the environment and quality of life partly above. Various effects cannot (yet) be expressed in money.

This applies as well to some of the social effects mentioned below.

- **Investments in infrastructure.** Investments in infrastructure for moving and parked cars are very high. Construction of roads, bridges, flyovers, tunnels, multi-storey car parks etc are costing society billions of euros annually. Only part of the costs for construction and maintenance are paid by taxes related to the use of cars.
- **Traffic gridlock.** Despite the investments in new roads, the number of traffic jams increases each year. The loss of productive hours by traffic jams amounts to billions of euros annually.

- **Public health.** Social costs for traffic victims are high. Care costs for the annual 18,000 victims of fine particulate likewise are not attributed to car traffic.
- **Productivity.** Car use contributes to the fact that people move too little. The lack of movement leads to a series of Western diseases and absenteeism. People cycling to their jobs for instance, are healthier and have less days they feel ill.

This listing makes it clear that massive use of cars has two sides on the 'Profit'-dimension of sustainability. On the one hand the car and fuel trades yield a turnover of billions and a large number of jobs, on the other hand social costs are very high as well. The shifting of costs is by definition a process that has to be avoided as much as possible if there is to be sustainable development.

As opposed to the car, the bike hardly has any external costs. It is hardly a matter of shifting.

We almost forget an important economic aspect of the bike. The bike is compared to the car a cheap means of transport. The Dutch are spending less than 100 euros on average on their bikes on an annual basis. On average no less than two movements per day are being carried out on it.

To the Netherlands it applies that the bike is in all respects a cheap and sustainable means of transport. The bike is the easiest means of transport for an important part of the movements. This conclusion is important to other countries –industrialized or developing.

The realisation that the bike may fulfil for an important part the mobility needs of people in both rich and poor countries in a sustainable way has been an important reason for COS Netherlands (Centre for International Cooperation) to develop and set up the campaign 'Cycle to your job'. In the second part of this paper, we are describing its model, its approach and its results more extensively.

3. THE CAMPAIGN 'CYCLE TO WORK' HAS MANY BENEFITS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In 1992 the 'Zeeland Platform for Sustainable Development' (provincial NGO in the Netherlands) started the campaign 'Cycle to Work'. Inhabitants of the province of Zeeland were being encouraged to cycle to their jobs as much as possible in the 6 month period from 1st April until 1st October.

The Platform wanted to contribute to a sustainable development with this cycling campaign. 1992 was the UNCED year, with the UN World Conference on Environment and Development. The concept of durable development that was launched in 'Our Common Future', was the key target. Climate change and the greenhouse effect were high on the agenda. Within the framework of the climate treaty proposals have been formulated to reduce CO₂ emissions in the rich industrial countries. Simultaneously, the rich countries would support the developing countries with modern and clean technologies and the protection of the tropical forests.

The UNCED appeal to tackle the global environmental and development problems has been translated into AGENDA 21, an action programme for the 21st century. So far the UNCED process continues on an international scale. From sequential conferences increasingly concrete agreements on issues such as CO₂ emission, conservation of biodiversity, the protection of the world seas etc. have been made.

AGENDA 21 has appealed for action on a local scale as well. Citizens, local authorities, companies and social organisations too, had to make a move to contribute to a liveable world and a future for generations to come. Against this background the concept of the action 'Cycle to Work' has been generated and set up. More cycling means less car kilometres and therefore less emission of the greenhouse gas CO₂.

3.2 CYCLING TO YOUR WORK MEANS MANY BENEFITS

After several years of gaining experience with organising the cycling campaign it has become clear that this campaign has many more benefits than the prevention of CO₂-emission by traffic alone. This campaign stimulates commuter cycling and this realises benefits in at least five fields:

- Nature & environment (energy saving, less emissions, less extra roads)
- Health and absenteeism at work
- Less traffic jams and better accessibility
- Quality of life in towns and villages (space, noise, nuisance)
- Support of sustainable energy projects in developing countries

Moreover, taking part in the cycling campaign contributes to a positive image of the participating companies and institutions. Finally cycling is cheap. That is a benefit as well.

3.3 HOW DID THE CAMPAIGN GROW NATIONWIDE

The campaign started in the province of Zeeland with 400 participants in 1992. With its 370,000 inhabitants Zeeland is one of the smallest Dutch provinces. Only 2.5 percent of the Dutch population lives in this region. Since then the number of participants has increased annually to a current number of 4,000 in this province.

The approach is clearly bottom-up, in which the initiative has been taken by a small NGO. An increasing number of companies, institutions and local authorities have joined in.

The growth happens step by step. Eight years ago a process was started to organise this provincial campaign in other provinces as well. By 2000 there was a nation-wide covering with the involvement of 15,000 participants.

The campaign organisation is characterised by a decentralised approach. A web of provincially working NGOs (COS: centres for international co-operation and sustainable development) carries out the campaign in each province. On a national level there is a small campaign office and a number of means of action are being developed. (Newsletter, posters, exhibition, campaign manual, website) The provincial COS plays an important part in the canvassing for companies and participants, the communication with companies and the media and the consultation between the local and provincial authorities and other NGOs.

3.4 THE CAMPAIGN MODEL

Participants in the campaign cycle to their jobs around the year or from 1st April until 1st October respectively as much as possible. During that period they register on the campaign website the number of kilometres they cycle every day in the commuting traffic. Participants with no internet access may use a participants' chart, a kind of calendar.

Before the start participants register all the personal details on the website database. Every participant indicates how many kilometres he or she wants to cycle or thinks he/she will cycle in the total campaign period.

We call this the 'target distance'. This is a personal target for every participant. It is important that all data on target distance and the actual distance that was cycled is published. Therefore, all data is entered onto a database and daily reports of the progress are visible on the campaign website. Reports of the number of kilometers covered by bike are presented on 3 different scales: national, provincial and on company scale. Electronic newsletters are being sent on a regular basis to the participants.

Participants can enlist individually or via the company for which they work. Companies can enlist as well for the campaign and can take part with a number of employees as a group. Each participating company appoints an action co-ordinator who canvasses for participants, communicates about the objectives and presents the results. Over 80% of the participants participate via the company. Several prizes are raffled off between the participants, such as new bikes, bike accessories and bike magazines.

Participating companies stimulate their employees to take part in the cycling campaign by sponsoring every cycled kilometre with 1, 2, 5, 10 cents or more. At the end of the campaign period the amount sponsored is calculated and is transferred to the sponsor fund. With the money from that fund small-scale sustainable projects in the developing countries are supported. During the last 2 years a total amount of 100,000 Euros was donated annually to Novib-Oxfam partner project in Brazil, Ethiopia and the Phillipines. Since 2005 I-ce partner BEN (Bicycle Empowerment Network in South-Africa) is also one of the supported projects.

By means of sponsoring a link is made between action here (more cycling, less driving) and action in the developing countries (sustainable development projects). A link is made between the global environmental problems, developing problems and local actions (think globally, act locally). The cycling campaign makes it clear in a nutshell what sustainable development is about. The cycling campaign offers an educational model to bring international problems to the attention and gives a concrete action perspective. Citizens, companies and local authorities can contribute themselves to a solution of a global problem.

3.5 RESULTS AND EFFECTS

Making results visible is one of the cornerstones of the campaign. Based on kilometer registration on the website there is an actual presentation of the companies and participants that take part and how many kilometres are being cycled. The bicycle kilometres are translated in avoided CO₂ emission and the total amount of money contributed in the sponsor fund.

This both produces appealing results and makes it clear that all small individual contributions towards a better environment together have a meaning after all. It is illuminating to make a few comparisons. The more than 14 million bicycle kilometres that were cycled by all 24,000 participants in the Netherlands in 2005 were compared to a distance equal to 350 times around the world, or 40 times the distance to the moon. The CO₂ emission that was avoided by this cycled distance is 3,000,000 kg. This is comparable to the CO₂ absorption of 375 hectares of forest.

The results of the fund-raising are important as a stimulus to the participants as well. More difficult to ascertain, but equally important, is the effect of the campaign.

The effects of the cycling campaign in which the authorities and the policy makers are interested particularly, may be itemised into several fields. They want answers to the following questions:

- * Environment: How much CO₂ -emission and other emissions are avoided?
 How much fossil fuels are being saved?
- * Health: Will participants of the campaign get more active?
 Are inactive employees reached?
 Are participants healthier by being more active?
 Is there a decrease of absenteeism?
- * Accessibility How many cars will there be less on the road?
 Will there be more parking space?
- * Liveability Is there less nuisance from car traffic in residential areas
 towns and villages?
- * International co-operation: what projects can be realised?

In order to be able to say something about these effects, research is necessary. Some research is being carried out on the effects of the campaign 'Cycle to Work'. This has yielded some interesting conclusions already. The most important of these are:

- Commuter cycling is a normal phenomenon in the Netherlands. On the one hand the cycling campaign 'organises' and regulates an existing phenomenon and, on the other hand it stimulates a further increase in the use of the bike.

- Participants of the cycling campaign cycle 30% more kilometres compared to the situation before they participated in the campaign.
- Thirty percent of all kilometres cycled within the framework of the campaign are substituting for car use.
- Participants of the campaign drive weekly 25 kilometres less. Part of this is realised outside the scope of commuting.
- The cycling campaign succeeds to motivate a substantial number of relatively inactive employees to move and cycle.
- One third of the participants may be included in the group of physically inactive employees before the campaign started.

3.6 CYCLING, EXERCISE AND HEALTH

When we consider the effects of the cycling campaign on the employees' exercise pattern and link our knowledge of the relation between exercise and health to it, then it becomes clear what the perspectives of the cycling campaign are.

More than half of the Dutch adults are too inactive. As a standard the 'Dutch Standard of Healthy Exercise' has been developed. The standard for adults (18 – 55 years) is: **"Half an hour moderately intensive physical activities on at least five , preferably all days of the week"**.

The risks of too little exercise are sufficiently known in medical circles. Cardiovascular diseases, osteoporosis, geriatric diabetes, hypertension, obesity, certain types of cancer, depression and stress all are serious medical symptoms that show a strong relation to too little physical exercise. Physical inactivity causes about 35% of all numbers of death as a result of cardiovascular diseases. European research shows that few people realise the health risks caused by inactivity.

More exercising does not only improve our health and the quality of our lives but brings a huge saving of costs is possible as well. Apart from medical costs of all sorts of Western diseases, more exercising has a favourable effect on absenteeism in the workplace. It has been calculated that trade and industry could save at least 0,5 billion euros on absenteeism on an annual basis in 2000 if employees would exercise more.

More exercising (cycling in the open in particular) is an effective means against stress. Stress and complaints about the strain on the body at work (RSI, hernia) are the main causes of people becoming recipients of disablement insurance benefits.

Participating in the cycle campaign is in fact a guarantee to get sufficiently active . Roughly eight kilometres per day of cycling (16 km per hour or more) suffices to reach the standard. The power and effect of commuter cycling lies in its frequency and regularity. Moreover, the exercise does not have to be as intensive as with sporting activities or fitness activities. The stress on joints and the risk of injuries is negligible.

In the past few years much has been invested by the authorities and trade and industry in industrial fitness to fight employees' inactivity.

The encouraging of commuter cycling hardly came into focus. This is remarkable, as commuter cycling can contribute to the solution of other problems such as lack of parking space or accessibility.

Dutch employees live on average eight kilometres from their work, a distance that can be covered easily by bicycle in half an hour. Many commuter cyclists, that participate in the cycling campaign, cover distances considerably larger.

A powerful case for commuter cycling is that it tackles both the traffic jam problem and inactivity. In this country both problems are currently considered to be the most important social problems and political challenges.

A nation-wide endorsed campaign such as 'Cycle to Work' can give an important impulse to encourage commuter cycling.

3.7 GOVERNMENTAL SUPPORT IS NEEDED

The most important constraint to the strong and fast development of the cycling campaign is money. Despite the campaign's positive effects the attitude of the authorities on a local, provincial and national scale is quite ambivalent. Some municipalities and provinces do support the campaign financially and others definitely don't.

Two explanations may be possible for this.

First, the fact that the campaign impacts on the authorities' various policy fields has turned out to be more of a disadvantage than an advantage so far.

Administrators, policy-makers and civil servants are not able to see the campaign in its right perspective. They can not decide very well into which policy field to fit the campaign and are indecisive about which fund or savings the campaign is to be paid or subsidised from.

Is it environmental policy, energy policy, mobility policy; is it national health, is it cycling policy or international co-operation? As they cannot answer this question unambiguously, there are choices to be made and this leads quite often and rapidly to a process of shifting, postponement and eventually cancelling.

While the cycling campaign is a sound example of an integrated approach to various social problems and fits in very well with the process of sustainable development, the lack of integration of the governmental organisation on a local, provincial and national scale is preventing the raising of adequate financial support on the part of the government.

Second, the government, both on a national and a local scale, thinks in the case of cycling policy primarily of the construction and maintenance of infrastructure, not of changing behaviour. The campaign 'Cycle to Work' is aimed at a change in behaviour in particular. A public but independent campaign, in which investments in a comfortable and safe cycle infrastructure go hand in hand with campaigns aimed at manipulation of behaviour, can stimulate the popularity of cycling considerably.

After the 'Master Plan Bicycle', that as a Dutch product gained almost as much fame as our windmills, clogs and tulips, the government's interest in the bicycle has worn off. The bicycle as a Dutch symbol of sustainable development must go back on the agenda!

Contactpersonen: Jan Koeman tel. 0113-250051 (COS Zeeland) / 06-10874388
Ad Phernambucq tel. 0113-250051 (COS Zeeland)

Website: www.fietsnaarjewerk.nl

Nederlandse fietscampagne op Wereldfietscongres in Kaapstad

Het Wereldfietscongres 'Velo Mondial 2006' dat van 5 t/m 12 maart a.s. in Kaapstad (Zuid-Afrika) wordt gehouden, heeft de van oorsprong Zeeuwse campagne 'Fiets naar je werk' uitgenodigd om een presentatie te geven van dit succesvolle project. Deze inmiddels grootste Nederlandse fietscampagne heeft als doel het woon-werkverkeer op de fiets te stimuleren. Doordat de werkgever de fietskilometers van werknemers kan sponsoren met een bedrag per kilometer, wordt een sponsorfonds gevormd voor duurzame ontwikkelingsprojecten in het zuiden. Het afgelopen jaar deden er landelijk 24.000 fietsers mee en werd er bijna € 100.000 bijeen gefietst. Bovendien werd er door het afleggen van in totaal 14 miljoen kilometer op de fiets 3 miljoen kilo CO₂ (broeikasgas) minder in de atmosfeer gebracht, dan wanneer de deelnemers de auto hadden gebruikt.

Velo Mondial 2006 is een internationaal congres dat voor de derde keer wordt gehouden (in 2000 was het in Amsterdam). Velo Mondial zet zich als organisatie in voor het promoten van de fiets in alle aspecten van het dagelijks leven. 'De weg naar welvaart' is het centrale thema van de komende conferentie. Meer dan 200 deskundigen uit alle windstreken buigen zich een week lang over de rol die de fiets kan krijgen in duurzame vervoerssystemen op onze aarde, of dat nu in Kaapstad, Londen of Goes is. In veel dichtbevolkte delen op onze aarde treden regelmatig verkeersinfarcten op. Wanneer je je realiseert dat veel mensen op fietsafstand van hun werk wonen en bijvoorbeeld in Nederland de helft van alle autoritten over een afstand van minder dan 8 km gaat, ligt het voor de hand dat een belangrijke sleutel voor het oplossen van lokale verkeersproblemen de fiets kan zijn. De fiets als dagelijks vervoersmiddel wordt bij ons gelukkig steeds meer (her)ontdekt als middel om de kwaliteit van ons leven en omgeving te verbeteren.

Volgens deskundigen kan de fiets een belangrijke rol spelen als voertuig voor de armoedebestrijding in de derde wereld. Voor de arme Afrikaan kan de fiets een middel zijn om zich goedkoop naar het werk te verplaatsen. Voor de rijke westerling die steeds meer last krijgt van bewegingsarmoede, is de fiets het beste medicijn om aan z'n dagelijkse minimale portie beweging te komen. De groeiende welvaart van mensen wereldwijd brengt automatisch een grotere behoefte tot verplaatsen met zich mee. Het is daarom ook dringend noodzakelijk om de fiets een belangrijke rol toe te bedelen in de duurzame vervoerssystemen van de toekomst.

COS Zeeland, het Centrum voor Internationale Samenwerking in Goes, is de afgelopen 15 jaar de motor geweest achter de campagne Fiets naar je werk. Het wordt dan ook als een erkenning gezien dat ons de gelegenheid wordt geboden om deze campagne te presenteren op het Velo Mondial congres in Kaapstad. Tevens is het een goede gelegenheid om een van de sponsorprojecten van 'Fiets naar je werk' te bezoeken, het Bicycle Empowerment Network (BEN) in Kaapstad. Hier worden Nederlandse fietsen opgeknapt en voor een gering bedrag verkocht aan de lokale bevolking. De twee medewerkers van de campagne die naar Kaap de Goede Hoop afreizen, hopen daar ook nieuwe ideeën op te doen om het fietsen naar het werk in de toekomst te promoten. Dat het een inspirerend evenement gaat worden kunt u zien op de website **www.velomondial2006.com**