

# BIOVISION

Newsletter no. 26

## Clever shopping

Think globally –  
act locally  
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[www.biovision.ch](http://www.biovision.ch)

A future for all, naturally

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By concrete examples, the “Clever – easy, intelligent shopping” exhibition experience enables visitors to find out how they can support environmentally-friendly and socially acceptable development on our planet.

Photo: Sabine Lerch / Biovision



# CLEVER SHOP

## THINK GLOBALLY – ACT LOCALLY

The milk shelf in CLEVER, the interactive Biovision exhibition on sustainable and fair shopping, leaves you spoilt for choice. Why not choose Heidi milk? The label evokes Swiss mountains, lush Alpine meadows and happy cows. But at the checkout till comes disillusionment. The choice is neither animal-friendly nor ecological. By Peter Lüthi

**Cover:**  
A healthy snack for  
8-year-old Samuel Ngugi  
from Kigio, Central Kenya.  
Photo: Peter Lüthi / Biovision

Heidi milk does indeed originate from a Swiss mountain area. But only the highest farms, in mountain zone 4, may at best be reminiscent of Heidi's alm. And such farms only supply a small percentage of Heidi milk. The bulk of it is produced conventionally and mostly comes from high-yielding cows on intensive dairy farms. Their milk yield is continually boosted by breeding geared towards higher yields, modern reproduction technology, the use of drugs and concentrated feed supplements.

Many dairy cows are still being held tethered, without being allowed to graze and only a minimum of lairage – 90 days a year are all that is required by law. Their protein needs can only be met by concentrated feedstuffs imported from abroad. These feed supplements also contain soya. According to a study by Agrofutura in 2011\*, which was commissioned by Greenpeace, Swiss cows consume more than 80,000 tons of soya per year, 97% of which is imported. The banning of animal meal for feeding to livestock in 2001 becau-

se of mad cow disease heralded the dawn of soya beans as a feedstuff. Up-and-coming Brazil, one of the largest exporters of soya, is benefiting in particular from this situation. But its economic progress comes at a high environmental and social price.

### Virgin forests transformed into soya plantations

In the Amazon, huge areas of tropical rainforest are being sacrificed to the cultivation of soya. The plantations are increasingly encroaching on precious primeval forest. Not only is this of deep ecological concern, but it also constitutes a social disaster. Along with the trees, the local people, very often indigenous communities, are losing their traditional living space, their livelihoods and their culture. In Brazil, the soya business is closely linked to corruption and organised crime. Not infrequently, the lives and health of local resistance group members and their families are threatened. Those who do not leave of their own accord are often driven out, and those who stay are threatened with a slave-like existence as plantation workers.





# PING

Meat consumption has an even greater impact on the demand for soya as a feedstuff than milk production. This also applies to Switzerland, where soya imports have increased ten-fold since 1990. According to a Greenpeace study, about 41% of this is fed to cattle, 29% to pigs, 26% to poultry and 4% is used elsewhere.

### Regional organic products – a viable alternative

To those who look beyond the end of their noses when buying milk, cheese, cream or meat, regional organic products represent an environmentally-friendly choice. Although organic farmers are allowed to supplement roughage with up to 10% concentrated feed, which may also contain soya, the Biosuisse “Bud” label explicitly bans feedstuffs for which rainforest has been felled. This organic label also guarantees humane living conditions that give animals sufficient freedom to move around and exercise, both indoors and outdoors.

Biovision advises Swiss consumers to significantly reduce their traditionally high consumption of meat and increasingly turn towards vegetarian alternatives.

### Five tips for ecological and fair shopping

Conventional meat and organic milk are only two of a hundred products that can be chosen in Biovision’s sustainable supermarket. They have all been assessed according to six standard criteria (climate relevance, environmental pollution, impact on livelihood, social responsibility, biodiversity and use of resources).

## 5 GOLDEN SHOPPING RULES

In the interactive CLEVER exhibition, you can experience a hands-on shopping trip that allows you to test the impact of your product choices on nature, the environment and other people. The following five tips for fair and ecological shopping are very helpful:

- 1 Less is more! Only buy what you really need
- 2 Eat vegetarian meals regularly
- 3 Buy seasonal and regional produce
- 4 Choose products with sustainable labels, such as organic or fairtrade
- 5 Avoid products that contain palm oil

Until October 20<sup>th</sup>, you can visit CLEVER as part of the special “Cargo” exhibition in the Swiss Museum of Transport in Lucerne. From November 2013 it can be found at the Rathausplatz square in Vaduz. [www.clever-konsumieren.ch](http://www.clever-konsumieren.ch)



The Biovision team will be pleased to answer your queries on the environmental and social impact of products at the CLEVER exhibition (l. to r. Sabine Lerch, Ursina Anesoni, Sarah Märki, Noëmi Bumann). Photo: Peter Lüthi / Biovision

In our daily shopping, it is difficult to take account of the complex background of individual products. For this reason, Biovision recommends five basic shopping tips (see box). If you follow them, you will be well on the way towards sustainable and fair shopping.

\* “Sojaimporte Schweiz: Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der Reduktion/Vermeidung von Sojaimporten in die Schweiz” (Swiss soya imports: Possibilities and limits for reducing/avoiding soya imports into Switzerland)  
A study by Agrifutura, commissioned by Greenpeace. [www.greenpeace.ch/soja](http://www.greenpeace.ch/soja)



^  
Mosquito scouts locate the breeding grounds of malaria mosquitoes and collect samples of the larvae. These are then analysed and interpreted by insect scientists. Carefully collated data and the involvement of the population concerned are crucial for the success of Biovision's Stop Malaria projects.

Photos: Peter Lüthi / Biovision

**FEWER MOSQUITOES – LESS MALARIA**

**“Control mosquitoes – conquer malaria”**

In 1998, a study in 20 schools of Malindi revealed the worrying finding that between 50 and 60% of pupils were infected with malaria pathogens. In 2012, the study in the Kenyan coastal town was repeated. This time, the prevalence of malaria in the 20 schools amounted to between 2 and 5%. The reason for this striking decrease is a project for fighting malaria that has received significant support from Biovision since 2005. Both the health authorities of Malindi and scientists at the “Kenya Medical Research Institute” (KEMRI) in Kilifi are convinced of this. In the project area, the mosquitoes that carry the disease (vectors) have been decimated in a targeted manner, using environmentally friendly methods. “Integrated vector management” (IVM) tackles the causes of the disease, not its consequences. These methods include the detection and elimination of mosquito breeding grounds and the biological suppression of mosquito larvae by specifically trained mosquito scouts and the population concerned. Crucial to the project’s success has been the large-scale distribution of mosquito bed nets by the health authorities.

**The malaria project is having a significant impact**

“Biovision was the driving force behind this project”, says Professor Charles Mbogo, Project Leader and Head of the “Vector Public Health” department at KEMRI, which is implementing the project. “I am proud and convinced that IVM is the right approach in

the fight against malaria”, he adds decisively, emphasising that thorough field work and analysis of the relevant data, the active involvement of all those affected and well-coordinated activities by the different authorities are essential for success. This is also confirmed by Dr. Fatma Bazahy, Head of the Malindi district health authority: “IVM has united us all in eliminating vector-borne diseases”.

IVM has now been expanded to become IVDM. The “D” stands for diseases, as controlling Anopheles mosquitoes in their breeding grounds also controls the carriers of other diseases. As well as Anopheles, these include mosquitoes of the Culex and Aedes species. They transmit filariasis, which can lead to elephantiasis, causing extreme swelling of the legs of those infected. IVDM also controls bilharzia, which is transmitted by snails.

In the latest project phase, Biovision has succeeded in initiating IVDM activities in four new areas, some of which are rural. Mosquito scouts there are recruited and monitored by the local health authorities. This pleases Project Leader Charles Mbogo, who has set his sights high: “In 10 years’ time, I will retire”, he says. “By then, I want IVDM to have become a fixed component of Kenya’s national health strategy”.





▲ For years now, Biovision has been campaigning for a definitive ban on the infamous insecticide DDT. Charles Mbogo (left), our expert in Africa and Geneva, informs delegates from African countries on environmentally-friendly alternatives. The picture was taken at the COP4 conference in Geneva.  
 Photos: Peter Lüthi / Biovision

## DDT COP6 IN GENEVA No ban on DDT yet

The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants could not agree on a deadline for a world-wide ban on DDT. This persistent poison has been banned in industrial countries since the 1970s, but is still being used in the fight against malaria in developing countries.

At its May meeting in Geneva, the Stockholm Convention merely decided to step up research into affordable alternatives over the coming years. It agreed to draw up a roadmap for this purpose. The resolute stance of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the last producer of DDT, India, against the setting of any deadline was the decisive factor in Geneva.

“Unfortunately, the proposal by African countries to the Convention’s member states to set 2020 as the deadline for finding alternatives to DDT has still not been accepted, because of interventions by India and the WHO. This calls into question the commitment of developed countries and the WHO to really stop the use of DDT and therefore end our population’s exposure to this long-lived organic pollutant”, said a disappointed African delegate, who wished to remain anonymous.

Since 2006, the WHO has recommended the use of DDT indoors, although it harms people, pollutes the environment and leads to mosquitos developing a resistance to the substance, which makes the toxin use-

Comment

## Emotional roller coaster

At the beginning of the negotiations in Geneva, we were extremely pleased with the text proposed by the 54 African countries. They demanded an intensification of the development and dissemination of DDT alternatives, in order to ban the use of the persistent toxin by 2020 at the latest. The proposal was based on wording that had been drawn up at a meeting for the preparation of the 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Stockholm Convention, organised by us. This meeting included representatives of governments, international organisations, civil society and industry. With the submission of their text, the African states for the first time collectively supported a definitive rejection of DDT. Switzerland also supported the proposal. Unfortunately, the 2020 deadline was suddenly deleted from the text in the final round of negotiations, and a total ban on DDT was shelved indefinitely.

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Biovision will continue to campaign for environmentally-friendly malaria control and a total ban on DDT. Despite this blow, we are happy that our activities have decisively helped to unite the African states on the issue of the DDT ban and we hope to continue to have a positive influence on the Stockholm Convention negotiations.



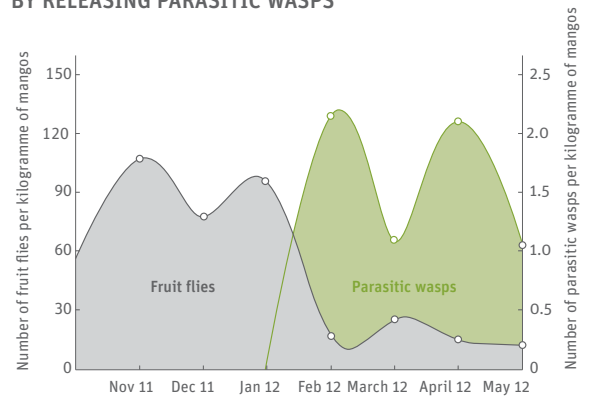
**Stephanie Keller**  
 Stephanie Keller works for Biovision, in Advocacy & Policy. She is responsible for the “Stop DDT” project.  
 Photo: SRF, Swiss news bulletin (screen shot)

less. At first sight, DDT is a cheap solution for the WHO, but this is only because follow-up costs are not taken into account. Moreover, the poison is sprayed almost exclusively in the homes of poor people.

Biovision on DDT in the Swiss TV news bulletin (SRF): [www.biovision.ch/ddt](http://www.biovision.ch/ddt)



### SUCCESSFULLY CONTROLLING FRUIT FLIES BY RELEASING PARASITIC WASPS



“*Bactrocera invadens*” fruit flies (above right), which were introduced from Asia in 2003, cause major damage to mangos in Kenya. They can be controlled in an environmentally-friendly way, for example by promoting their natural enemies.

Photos:  
Robert Copeland / *icipe*  
Philomena Nyagilo / Biovision  
Graphic: *icipe* 2012

#### INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

### Wasps to control mango fruit flies

They are small, beautiful, and very good at destroying mangos. They are fruit flies called *Bactrocera invadens*. Introduced to the African continent from Asia in 2003, they have spread rapidly because of a lack of natural enemies. The insects lay their eggs under the skin of mangos, which causes the fruit to rot. As soon as the maggots emerge, they feed on the rotten fruit flesh. In Kenya, harvest losses are as high as 80%. This is disastrous, in particular for thousands of small-scale farmers who occupy a promising market niche with the production of mangos. The fruit is sweet, supposedly healthy and increasingly popular, particularly in Europe and the USA. This makes it a sought-after export product and gives the rural population in Kenya a good opportunity to improve their livelihoods. The fruit fly has unfortunately put an end to all this. Due to stringent quarantine regulations, mangos that are infested with fruit flies are banned by the main export countries.

#### Environmentally-friendly pest control

The *icipe*\* International Insect Research Centre in Nairobi, the long-time project partner of Biovision, has now developed an innovative combination of environmentally-friendly methods to combat the problem. With Integrated Pest Management (IPM), the fruit flies can be contained and the quality of the fruit increased significantly. IPM measures include the consistent removal of infested mangos and targeted

control using scent traps, as well treating the insects with bio-pesticides. It also is important to biologically control the insects using their natural enemies. This is done with parasitic wasps, which lay their own eggs in the young mango pests. The parasitic wasps infest the eggs and larvae of the fruit flies and thus decimate their population. In the pilot project, which we are supporting, the farmers learn how to sustainably control fruit flies with the help of over 70,000 wasps that have taken up residence in their orchards.

Since July 2011, agricultural consultants have been trained under different conditions in three locations. They are currently supporting more than 1,500 mango producers in the use of IPM measures.

Fact sheet on the issue: <http://www.biovision.ch/en/projects/kenya/fruit-fly-control/>

\* *icipe*, International Centre for Insect Physiology and Ecology, [www.icipe.org](http://www.icipe.org)





▲ Alex Wostry and Janet Maro during a project visit to the Mandeleo farmers' group in Towelo and with his family in Morogoro (Tanzania). Photos: Peter Lüthi / Biovision

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ALEX WOSTRY

## My heart is here in Morogoro

“It is really encouraging for me to see how the farmers absorb, use and develop their new knowledge”, says Alex Wostry, the initiator and coordinator of the training centre for sustainable agriculture, Bustani ya Tushikamane, in Morogoro, Tanzania. In 2006, the 35-year-old mechanic from Feldkirch, Austria, who subsequently worked as group leader in a workshop for mentally disabled people, decided to study “International Development” at the University of Vienna. In 2008, he spent a seven-month voluntary internship at the “Water for the Third World” association in Morogoro. Here, his life took an unexpected turn: Alex stayed on in Tanzania and currently lives at the foot of the Uluguru mountains, in a simple hut, together with his Tanzanian wife, Janet Maro, and their small daughter Anna. “My heart is here in Morogoro – this is my home”, he says.

His time in Tanzania started with an extensive trip through East Africa, during which concrete examples confirmed many of his concerns as a critical thinker regarding developing projects. “But I also saw that agricultural projects can really help people”, he remembers. He immediately wanted to put this insight into practice with a concrete training project for small-scale farmers in Morogoro.

### 300 US dollars seed capital

From W3W he got moral support, a piece of land on their plot and seed capital amounting to 300 dollars.

Alex bought gardening tools and construction timber, built a shed and began to cultivate the soil. But above all, he created an agricultural network, astutely and with a keen sense for the right way to act. At the Sokoine University of Agriculture, he found some extremely motivated allies who actively helped him in his work. These included Janet Maro, a particularly motivated student of agronomy...

When Biovision finally helped with start-up financing, the ambitious project could really take off. Today, Bustani ya Tushikamane is one of the most renowned training centres for sustainable agriculture in Tanzania and has already trained hundreds of small-scale farmers.

The next coup will follow in September 2013, when Alex and Janet open a major Farmer Training Centre with training rooms, accommodation for trainees and nursery gardens for practical training, on 50 hectares of land. For Alex Wostry, this is a major step in the right direction “Today, our future teeters on a knife edge”, explains the Austrian. “If we want to preserve the chance of a safe and decent life for future generations, sustainable agriculture is quite simply a must for humankind.”



Home run: The team members accompany their final runner over the finish line  
Photo: alphafoto.com

#### ON THE ROAD, DOING GOOD

### Zurich Marathon Teamrun

Two teams of four ran the Zurich Marathon on 7 April 2013 in aid of Biovision. Each team covered the total marathon distance of 42.2 km in relay legs. Their performance was actively supported by their families, friends and colleagues. A total of 2,950 francs was raised for Biovision's push-pull projects.

Will you soon be celebrating a birthday, anniversary or other event at which you would like to collect donations? On [www.getactive.ch](http://www.getactive.ch), you can start your own campaign and help to sustainably fight poverty and hunger.

#### SILK FROM WESTERN KENYA

### The silk factory in Othoro has reopened its doors

Four years have passed since fierce gusts of wind and political turmoil wrecked the silk factory in Othoro in West Kenya and brought its machines to a standstill. But the farmers' groups who participated in the project have shown continued persistence and made every effort to reopen the factory. Since last autumn, it has again been producing African silk, which is being sold or processed into coloured cloth or crocheted tablecloths. Working at the factory generates additional income for hundreds of farming families. We would like to express our deep thanks to the patrons who have supported the project with their donations and helped to revive it.



Working at the silk factory offers new prospects for many people in Othoro.

Photo: Biovision / Corinne Corradi



Johanna Kocher at the opening of the art exhibition in the Althuus farming museum.

Photo: Biovision / Nina Zenklusen

#### WATER COLOURS, GOUACHES AND DRAWINGS

### Sale of pictures for Biovision

When Johanna Kocher inherited the artworks of her late friend Valentin Liechti, she decided to organise a sales exhibition and donate the profits to charity. "I decided to give the money to the Biovision Foundation, because I am delighted to see that it tackles the causes of hunger and poverty and fights them with sustainable methods. In the many years during which I have been supporting Biovision, I have participated in some very interesting events, each of which has renewed my conviction of the organisation's commitment to East Africa." The exhibition in Althuus, BE, ended on June 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Imprint** Newsletter 26 / June 2013, © Biovision Foundation, Zurich **Editor** Peter Lüthi **Text** Peter Lüthi, Nina Zenklusen, David Fritz, Stefanie Keller  
**Layout** Binkert Partner, Zurich **Production** Nina Zenklusen and Jürg Weber **Printing** Koprind Alpnach AG, Alpnach **Paper quality** Cyclus Offset (100% recycled)



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