



Dear Reader,

this winter, it will be 30 years of innovation for the SEKEM initiative and its work against poverty and for better education and livelihoods in Egypt. SEKEM celebrated the anniversary with a week of festivities and public events by co-workers for co-workers and guests in November.

On 29 November 2.000 people filled the weekly circle taking place on Thursdays. During regularly working weeks there are approximately 650. This year the public event at SEKEM's Roman theatre could also be used to develop the initiative's external relations. Two representatives of the Egyptian Ministry of the Environment took the chance to inaugurate one of SEKEM's latest projects: an extensive compost production plant that also produces compost for commercial distribution. The project that has already received certification by the responsible United Nation's agency for implementation of the Kyoto Protocol currently saves around 60.000t of CO2 emissions every year. The compost is sold to agricultural producers all over Egypt and thus also promotes organic agriculture.

This way the event also became important in a double sense: it also symbolises SEKEM's openness towards the public and society and international partners as the initiative enters a "new phase" of development.

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30 Years of Innovation and Development in Egypt

SEKEM Celebrates 30th Anniversary with a Week of Festivities



Children from the SEKEM School perform a theatre play on stage on the occasion of a public event

SEKEM celebrates its 30th birthday - the day on which the initiative was founded by Dr. Ibrahim Abouleish in 1977 - with a full week of events, some of which are public such as the big event taking place in the Roman theatre on the premises of the first farm. Approximately 1.500 guests arrived for the performances that were to the greatest part contributed by co-workers, pupils and friends of the institutions and firms. Many dignitaries from Egypt's public life joined the many suppliers, friends and visitors that had also arrived from overseas such as the governor of the province of

Sharkeya, SEKEM's home province, and Mr. Mohamed Said Khalil, Counselor to the Minister of the Environment and

Gen. Ezz ElDeen Abd El Rahman, Assistant to the chairman of the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency - Ministry of Environment. As a representative of the Minister of the Environment Mr. Said Khalil officially inaugurated SEKEM's new composting plant. Since summer 2007 compost is mass produced on more than 50ha. Several ten thousand tons of CO2 emissions could be avoided this way.

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Mrs. Teichmann, long-standing supporter of SEKEM, contributes her own experience of the festivities to this month's issue. A birthday celebration is also an opportunity for recollection and thoughtfulness: what have I become?



SEKEM's activities set milestones in the work with handicapped young people in Egypt

What do I strive to be? SEKEM co-workers and friends have begun to engage in this process on 27 November and the following days through celebrating SEKEM's anniversary with speeches, theatre performances, concerts and talks about the challenges of "turning thirty".

Those who return to SEKEM after a certain time with new eyes easily experience anew what it means to live and work within a living community. The

„2.000 people in the great circle - a strong moment of community and belonging to the SEKEM idea“

Abouleish family, the people who joined her in building SEKEM over the years and took more and more responsibility - within Egypt as well as elsewhere - continuously also work through, with and on each other by innovating under sometimes difficult circumstances. Many of them experience the SEKEM community as a grand family.

This includes effects on others, external contributors and worldwide friends. Whenever I meet someone in Germany and announce my intention to return to

SEKEM, I receive lots of appreciation and even when telling public officials: everyone has heard of the initiative's work, they know that is truly must be a small piece of heaven in the desert. They always encourage me in my work and deeply appreciate the chance to hear of positive change and the successes of lasting innovation particularly in challenging, multicultural circumstances.

The public events symbolised this double effect for me: a truly global family celebrated in community. Long-standing co-workers were honoured during the early hours before midday. They have been serving the SEKEM idea for years. Everyone could sense a loving connection to the Abouleish

family. Afterwards, all visitors joined with almost 2.000 other people in the weekly Thursday closure circle: again a strong moment of belonging and community with SEKEM.

All then moved to the Roman theatre together with all other guests from all over the world. Thanks to the flawless organisation everyone found his or her seats and thus could witness the SEKEM idea's colourful realisation: theatre plays from pupils, children in curative care, small humorous plays by co-workers, music, recitals and Eurhythm. A celebration where the excitement of all contributors truly met with that of the visitors.

Brigitte Teichmann

ISIS Milk Now Available Everywhere

Since September 2007 ISIS now also offers organic milk in tetra packs that has been ultra-high tempered and is thus easy to preserve for a much longer time.

Until September, fresh milk from ISIS could only be purchased at selected supermarkets in Cairo where consistent cooling could be guaranteed along the entire chain of transportation and where sales were strong enough to allow for daily fresh sales. Now the new UHT milk opens entirely new distribution channels. Everywhere in Cairo and Alexandria ISIS milk can now be bought at small supermarkets. This way ISIS could substantially increase production.

Soon cow herds on the SEKEM farm shall be increased to meet demand that is continuously picking up. ISIS milk is available as full-cream and skimmed milk and has already found many loyal customers appreciating the difference in taste. Tarek Nabil, Marketing Manager at ISIS, can tell of many calls from customers surprised at the new taste that is different from regular UHT milk.

The introduction of ISIS milk in a new, colourful and modern packaging was also supported by advertisements

on the radio and in print. All ISIS lorries also transport the message effectively through colourful commercials. ISIS also started taste testings in stores since in November.

The package design of all other dairy produce by ISIS such as fresh milk in glass bottles, yoghurt and cheese has been completely redesigned to match the look of the new UHT packs that stand out visibly from the shelves of Egypt's supermarkets.

Tarek Nabil, Christina Boecker



Heliopolis University Connects to Dutch Higher Education Institutions

Dr. Ibrahim Abouleish had been invited to present the Heliopolis University project and SEKEM's widespread scientific initiatives in a speech at the Erasmus University Rotterdam. Dr. Abouleish was particularly interested in visiting The Netherlands as the event had been called for by the local students organisation and because the higher education institution is well-regarded globally particularly for its business administration courses. The Technical University Delft, the National Institute for Subatomic Physics and the University Wageningen had also been put on the agenda.

Dutch universities are also world-famous for their teaching and research in water and agriculture-related topics as well as environmental studies. Among their specialities also feature renewable energies, particularly in research and development. An exchange was therefore almost naturally within the scope of the Heliopolis University's project plans.

Dr. Abouleish was accompanied by Dr.-Eng. Hany Sewilam, scientist at the RWTH Aachen (Germany) and co-worker at the Heliopolis University project.

At the TU Delft a visit to the laboratory of electronic components was one of the first stations on the way. The ECTM

to industries thus providing a formidable example for a practice-oriented form education at the Heliopolis institution. This approach is, for instance, applied to the production of ultra-thin solar cells of the third generation. Prof. Zeman who was in charge of caring for the guests at TU Delft was interested in exploring possible opportunities for a closer cooperation in research in Egypt. Thus the Egyptian delegation was also invited to visit the various labs in which new solar cells are developed. The opportunity was furthermore used for a discussion on questions of accreditation of common courses.

Also on the list were the environmental facilities. Dr. Abouleish was also able to meet the rector of the institution to discuss possible connecting points between SEKEM's institution and the Dutch university. Equal to its reputation in solar research stands its expertise in water management. The rector acknowledged his interest in explor-



Dr. Ibrahim Abouleish in a talk with Wouter Bos, Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister

ing future cooperation models, particularly the exchange of students. Project managers on the Heliopolis team also consider to link future programmes to a related UNIDO Master of Science programme by the United Nations. One of the most relevant and outstanding developments of the department of water and environment is an innovative salt water desalination system that can be powered by wind energy alone. It is inventions like these that would obviously be of particular interest for SEKEM itself and many partners of its initiatives in Egypt.

Hani Sewilam, Bijan Kafi

The Development of the Alnatura Collection for 2008/09 at SEKEM

In October it was once again time for the designers of the German firm Alnatura to arrive at SEKEM at develop the new collection for the coming year together with their partner team at Naturetex' development department.

In this case the new collection is developed for sales next autumn/winter 2008/2009 and which will be presented at trade shows this coming spring. Preparations always have to start early in fashion and the textile industries. In order to be able to deliver the new collection to customers and stores in Germany in autumn 2008 there has to be enough time to produce garments, yarns and other accessories. Also on the German market importers and distributors need time to present the new collection to retail customers on

fairs and at fashion shows and to collect orders.

That is the reason why the entire development team met already this October to put together the colours and shapes of the new collection while paying close attention to current trends in the markets. The first samples are initially put together on paper. The material of the garments and the colours are developed and even though we cannot yet reveal too much we can state that all customers of Alnatura and Cotton People Organic can look forward to exciting new product lines with the colour combinations aubergine-blue and brown-light-blue playing a big role and remarkable accessories expressing the spirit of the autumn season.

Christina Boecker



Dr. Ibrahim Abouleish admires one of the inventions based on advanced solar technology at the TU Delft

offers a multi-disciplinary approach to learning and particularly close relations

Triodos Bank Successfully Closes SEKEM Bond Issue

More than 1,000 private Dutch investors subscribed to the SEKEM bond issue that Triodos Bank offered in The Netherlands. Many people showed their interest in the 6.5% bond issue. As a result the maximum number of subscriptions was reached well before the end of the emission period. The EUR 5 million-bond issue has a five-year tenure.

Koert Jansen, senior Investment Officer at Triodos Bank: 'Triodos Bank has been a financial partner of SEKEM for many



years already. Because of the continuous positive development at SEKEM, also commercially, we have become a shareholder in SEKEM through one of our investment funds earlier this year. We also decided to give private

investors the opportunity to invest in this unique company.'

Dr Ibrahim Abouleish: 'It is wonderful that through this bond issue private investors in the Netherlands are directly involved in our development and growth. SEKEM wants to expand further and needs finance for new machines and business premises for the production of organic cotton and herbal medicine.'

More than two hundred Triodos Bank clients and other interested parties gladly accepted the invitation to attend a presentation by Dr Abouleish during his visit in the Netherlands in October 2007. In his presentation Dr Abouleish talked about the inspiration of SEKEM and about SEKEM as a model for sustainable development and inter-religious cooperation in Egypt.

Gera van Wijk

SEKEM Book is Published in French, Italian and Arabic

The book „Die SEKEM Vision“ (The SEKEM Vision) is now available also in Arabic, French and Italian. The richly illustrated work that represents both the autobiography of Dr. Ibrahim Abouleish and an extensive historic recount of the development of the SEKEM initiative is thus now available in four languages and offers all interested readers the opportunity to either refresh their memories or catch the first in-depth glimpse on the achievements of the Egyptian initiative and its various institutions. The book that was originally published in German offers what is probably the broadest and most colourful description of SEKEM currently available.

The new Arabic edition is for the first time also published in Egypt at a very renowned publishing house. „Dar El Shorouk“ one of the most well-regarded publishers will publish the “SEKEM Vision” beginning in January. The Italian edition will be available from Editrice Antroposofica. In France aethera, Editions Triades will bring the work to market.

info@editrice-antroposofica.it

Fax: +39 02 70103173



إبراهيم أبو العيش



سيلم

وكيف ساهمت في تغيير وجه مصر

The autobiography of Dr. Ibrahim Abouleish is published in three additional languages

Impressions from SEKEM



The new tractor of the village communities

It is well-known that just a few years ago Cairo did not have a comprehensive public waste removal system. It is also known that when it was finally introduced it caused societal disruptions that made its eventually successful implementation doubtful at times. In the countryside SEKEM was just now able to achieve a success that could avoid such issues. The solution is simple and effective. Within the framework of the “13-villages-project” a tractor equipped with a trailer now visits the communities regularly and collects all garbage for sorting and, if possible, recycling. It replaces waste collection by hand and donkey cart and is not only more hygienic but also more effective.



SEKEM

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Editors:

Christina Boecker
Bijan Kafi

SEKEM-Insight
c/o SEKEM Holding
P.O.Box 2834
El Horreya, Heliopolis
Cairo, Egypt
insight@SEKEM.com