

Brussels, 22 May 2019

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Oikos is a Belgian think tank that works on socio-ecological change. In that sense, complementary to work done in the field of ecological economics, we strongly focus on new citizen collectives that actively contribute to the transition to a sustainable society. In order to get more knowledge and insight about these new collectives, Oikos was able to collaborate with and rely on the expertise of the Utrecht research team "Institutions for Collective Action". This has led to very important insights in two separate studies (the first one the region of Flanders, the second for the whole of Belgium on behalf of the King Baudouin Foundation). As a first for Belgium, it has allowed our organization to draw up and publish an overview of new citizen collectives. This has sparked the interest of civil society organizations, academic scholars and the media. It was the basis for the organization of events at which we could bring together citizens from all over Belgium involved in citizen collective so that they could exchange experiences and knowledge and thus strengthen each other.

Without the collaboration with 'Institutions for Collective Action' and its experience with scientific research on citizen collectives, Oikos could never have realized this. The research results also provide direct guidance for new socially relevant questions, such as what are the motives of citizens to invest time and energy in such citizen collectives. There is also the question of how existing citizen collectives can work together so that they can strengthen each other. The role of local authorities seems very important to us.

I think that 'Institutions for Collective Action' is an important research team that combines excellent scientific work with collaboration with relevant stakeholders. We hope they can continue their important work the coming years.

With best regards,

Dirk Holemans
Director Oikos

