



# ECO-BRAND

Since his childhood a French businessman Jean Roche was brought up in the atmosphere of respect for nature and ecology. So it is natural that in due course his company BETEN International started expanding in non-polluting types of business. And even working in a nuclear power engineering field the company dealt with not nuclear reactors, but with problems of environmental protection around nuclear power plants. Hence, today the businessman propagandizes a business model when commercial activity is combined with ecological benefit in every possible way.

During the USSR period Jean Roche who worked in a nuclear power engineering field more than fifteen years by then, signed the contract on construction of 20 modular factories in the territory of all republics of the former Soviet Union on the basis of an innovative approach developed in INPI ("The State Institute of Industrial Property Protection") in France.

obviously, contributed to the fact that Jean Roche switched his attention to agriculture of Ukraine. At first he delivered equipment (i.e. tractors, grain harvesters, irrigating systems) to agricultural manufacturers. In due course he himself became a manufacturer of agricultural crops among which aromatic plants hold a special place. This activity allowed Jean to invest also in

projects in the sphere of alternative power engineering, real estate, industry and agriculture as well. It also helps other companies to realize similar projects. Given this BETEN pays special attention to "green business". "Firstly, we got to be interested in biomass issues, and also in other types of renewable energy sources for the purpose of receiving bigger energy power independence for our own factories. But a new law on a green tariff adopted in April 2009 allowed to allocate this area and promoted its further development" – Mr. Roche says. According to him, today BETEN takes an active part in studying possibilities for constructing wind farms, solar energy power stations, mini-hydroelectric power stations modernization, and also for installing equipment for biomass and biogas in Ukraine. However, from Jean Roche's point of view, it is necessary to be careful with biofuel in Ukraine for many people yet did not forget the recent cultivation of agricultural energy crops boom, in particular of soya beans and a colza, which led almost to exhaustion of the fertile Ukrainian soil. "At present use of that biomass which is discarded or rots

## Soya and rape growing almost led to the depletion of soil

---

The first factory was constructed in Azerbaijan. They started to realize the second one in Ukraine. But right then the Soviet Union collapsed, and the French businessman made the decision to transfer his business from Moscow, which was in due time the only entrance doors in the USSR for a foreigner, to young democratic Ukraine. He finished building a factory of printed-circuits (the factory is still operating – as amended by an editor). Agricultural production was received as a payment for the work. This,

primary processing, namely in processing of plants into essential oils known now all around the world by distillation.

## Big business

In 1996 Jean Roche expanded the sphere of his activity even larger. On the basis of the engineering enterprise which operated in France, and then beyond its boundaries, he created the BETEN International company. Today the company is implementing

---

## Jean Roche

the president of Beten International

**Was born:** 03.06.1944 in Beirut, Lebanon

**Education:** National High School of Arts and Industries "ENSAIS", section HVAC systems and Energetic

engineering, Strasbourg, France; Advanced degree of Research Center "COSTIC" (Scientific and Technical Committee for Heating Industries) – Thesis on "HVAC systems and Energetic engineering"; ESSEC (High School of Economic and Business Sciences)

**Marital status:** married

like for example, straw which is left on fields or burnt in Ukraine but which could be used for biofuel manufacture is considered to be a sound practice" – he explains. – Planting crops on the fields which could have been used for cultivation of agricultural crops intended for manufacturing foodstuff is the example of incorrect use of biomass. For when the food deficiency increases, lands suitable for agriculture get simply exhausted. It has nothing to do with ecological compatibility.

## Absence of law is a route to falsification in eco production

In the course of numerous researches it has been found out that the carbon remains when using biofuel is not that positive. For in order to raise a plant it is necessary to apply agricultural equipment manufacture of which pollutes the environment. Besides, the agricultural equipment mentioned not always works using biofuel. Raw materials transportation for example, from Ukraine to other countries also leaves additional carbohydrate trace. If only there were a possibility for each individual farmer to plant energy crops on that patch of land which is not suitable for agricultural cultivation, then process them into fuel locally and consume it locally. Such biofuel manufacture would be considered to be ecological".

## The village and people

Beside the fact that his company BETEN is in agricultural business, it got involved into certification of farmlands and organic manufacture with introduction of the new Land Code in Ukraine (2001-2003). It also involved Ecocert, which is the most recognized international certification center. "Actually, I feel pity that it has been no law on certification of agricultural organic production adopted so far in Ukraine though the draft law is available and has been repeatedly discussed in the Verkhovna Rada», – Jean Roche complains. According to

him, until the government does not regulate and support organic manufacture, it will remain a business of small farms for all pure organic chemistry is not a cheap business. "Transition to "organic chemistry" causes certain decline in agricultural manufacture productivity which changes the entire economic model accordingly. Furthermore, in order to switch to proper organic agricultural manufacture, it is necessary for businessmen to merge animal industries and

plant growing. This is the way of farming which existed thousands years ago when pus of animals was used for fertilizing those fields on which plants for consumption by people as well as by animals were raised. Today agricultural manufacturers have thousands hectares of land and no cow, and they have to fertilize land with something", – Jean Roche says. Besides, according to the French businessman, postponing approval of the law on organic manufacture in Ukraine results in having no organic brand protection as such today. In other words, any farmer can argue that his manufacture is ecologically clean, but they do not always observe all necessary rules accurately. "Unavailability of the law or at least an appropriate certification is an open doors for all falsifications in the organic manufacture which, naturally, does not promote interest in similar projects from the side of serious foreign companies», – Jean Roche notes.

## Green Building

Among others, Jean's company also got involved into the area of "green" construction. "The basic idea of green construction implies having "green" buildings the most ecological ones. It means that when constructing them non-polluting materials should be used to the fullest extent possible. These buildings should consume as least energy as possible. Besides, their construction should not bring destructive

elements in environment in the form of emissions, soil, water and even landscape pollution. It is thus very important for builders to file an application on certification prior construction as to make any changes to already ready buildings in order to raise their level of ecological compatibility is very difficult", – the businessman explains specificity of "green" construction.

As well as in the case with organic manufacture, no urge to undergo certification Ukrainian companies have Mister Jean explains with its expensiveness. "LEED certification cost for example, varies from USD 30,000 to USD 60,000. Handing in for BREEAM certification costs about 1,500 pounds sterling and higher, plus the fee of the assessor (depending on complexity of object, its area, a designated purpose, a site location, etc.). The cost estimate for the end-to-end process will amount to 20,000 to 50,000 thousand pounds for the customer, – the businessman gives an example. – It is also necessary to note that cost of those measures which can be recommended for achievement of certain certification level do not enter into the above-stated expenses".

At the same time Jean Roche does not lose optimism. He is confident, "green" buildings will soon appear in Ukraine.

According to him, activity of the Ukrainian Green Building Council (UaGBC) can become an important factor contributing to certification promotion in Ukraine. And BETEN is one of its founder members. "Green Councils (Green Building Council) have been established in many developed countries worldwide for realization of certification of green building objects. They unite into the World Green Council (WGBC).

Jean Roche tells about ecological projects with genuine enthusiasm: "Firstly, this activity is an essential input into environmental protection and struggle against global warming, mainly thanks to renewed energy sources use. Secondly, it promotes increase of ecological culture of the society as a whole. And thirdly, it attracts interest concerning development of new technologies and their implementation in Ukraine".