



COMMUNITIES IN ACTION

BE INSPIRED – 32 case studies in our Compendium of Biodiversity and Climate Change Best Practices



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Welcome to the Climate Champions Project

The Climate Champions project aims to empower and equip members of the local community and voluntary groups with the skills and knowledge to become empowered climate action and biodiversity changemakers in their own communities.

BE INSPIRED BY OUR COMPENDIUM OF BEST PRACTICE, FROM PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES, JUST LIKE YOU.

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How to use the Communities in Action Compendium

The Climate Champions Communities in Action Best Practice Compendium is an online interactive set of resources to inspire and motivate. This content provides deep self-guided learning opportunity featuring Biodiversity and Climate Change Best Practices throughout Europe. We invite you to use these links and to explore and engage with the case studies and best practices in more detail and apply the learning in your own communities.

INTERACTIVE CONTENT IS IDENTIFIED IN THIS COMPENDIUM BY THESE **ICONS** THAT WILL TAKE YOU TO DEEPER LEARNING



DEEP LEARNING

Click to find out more and deepen your knowledge



TOP TIP

To return to the Compendium - use the click to go back option in your browser



FAST AND EASY NAVIGATION

Jump to a case study of choice by clicking on the interactive table of contents at the beginning of each section



What is the Climate Champions Project?

Climate Champions is supported by the ERASMUS+ programme as an Adult Education project to empower and equip members of the local community and voluntary groups with the skills and knowledge to become empowered climate action and biodiversity changemakers in their own communities.

In order to achieve this aim, the results of the project will be:

RESULT 01

Empowering Biodiversity and Climate Change Community Champions

course This resource will upskill community champions to be positioned to create an immediate impact. A single Champion can create a ripple effect of biodiverse & climate change actions.

RESULT 02

Communities in Action: Compendium of Biodiversity and Climate Change

best practices (this document) 32 case studies from biodiversity and climate action changemakers at the community level throughout Europe will consolidate sources of information in one place.

RESULT 03

Theory of Change Toolkit for Communities

This toolkit will equip participants to lead their community group through a series of climate change and biodiversity specific steps to define long-term goals, identify measurable indicators of success, and then work back to formulate actions and the 'mini-steps' that must be taken to achieve those goals.



Project Partners

The **Climate Champions Project** brings together partners from **Ireland, Greece, Denmark, Portugal** and **Bulgaria**.

To learn more about the individual partners and their work, click on the images below to explore the individual websites.



[CLICK TO VIEW](#)

Roscommon Leader Partnership



[CLICK TO VIEW](#)

European E-Learning Institute



ORGANIZATION FOR LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

[CLICK TO VIEW](#)

Anatoliki S.A.



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Euro Perspectives Foundation



[CLICK TO VIEW](#)

Momentum [Educate + Innovate]



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ADC Moura

Communities in Action Compendium



INTRODUCTION

Communities everywhere are vulnerable to climate change and reductions in biodiversity. While youth are growing up in a climate activist world with heightened environmental awareness, adults feel powerless to effect any meaningful change because of the sheer size and scale of the climate change and environmental impact issues and a lack of skills regarding where to start.

This compendium consolidates **32 INSPIRATIONAL CASE STUDIES** collected from biodiversity and climate action changemakers at the community level throughout Europe. Sustainability is not an endpoint, nor is there a one-size-fits-all solution especially when it comes to communities, as each has its own unique ecosystem, and local ecological and cultural traits. By showcasing these case studies, we offer a wide view of communities in action and first-hand experience of Climate Champions across Europe. We have divided the 32 case studies into 5 categories of good practices.



LEARNING FROM OTHERS

For each good practice that we have collected, we present some of the basic facts related to the detailed information of the initiatives, the evidence of success, the sharing and learning, the transferability of the initiatives and the volunteering associations involved behind the initiatives, as well as the contact details of the persons responsible.

By doing this, we want to inspire community groups to replicate those activities in their territories or improve the already existing initiatives that they are implementing.



SHARE WITH OTHERS

Given the power of community, we would love it if you could share our Compendium with your colleagues and contacts. Join our EPALE Community of Practice (EPALE stands for Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe) which is an online group where people with similar interests from the adult learning sector can get together to exchange ideas, resources, and good practices. The link you need is **Climate Champions Community of Practice | EPALE (europa.eu)**.

While you are in the connecting mode, please follow and interact with our social media accounts to stay up to date as our project develops...



Facebook



Twitter



Our 32 case studies cover 5 key themes ...



01

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION IN THE COMMUNITY



Our biodiversity is very important to the well-being of our planet. As communities, we are recognising the importance of conserving natural resources, but recent data shows that 60% of species and 77% of habitat assessments show persistent habitat loss, over-exploitation of resources, and the growing impact of invasive species. Never before has the building of community resilience, improving sustainable lifestyles and business practices been such a high priority. This category highlights selected and transferable case studies of community initiatives contributing to the conservation of biodiversity in the local communities in which they are being implemented.

02

GREEN COMMUNITY ENERGY



Green energy communities refers to collective and citizen-driven energy actions that help pave the way for a clean energy transition while moving citizens to the fore. They contribute to increasing public acceptance of renewable energy projects and at the same time, they have the potential to provide direct benefits to citizens by increasing energy efficiency, lowering their electricity bills and creating local job opportunities. We selected case studies of initiatives and projects of Green Community Energy to transfer their application and stimulate the implementation of similar initiatives at a community level across Europe.

03

COMMUNITY WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING



The European Union (EU-27) currently recycles roughly 48 percent of municipal waste each year, leaving approximately 113 million metric tonnes of residual municipal waste (neither recycled nor reused) annually. Under the European Commission's Waste Framework Directive, residual municipal waste needs to be reduced by 50 percent by 2030 to roughly 56.5 million metric tonnes. However, the EU is currently not on track to reach this target without reducing total municipal waste. Therefore, this category, Waste Management and Recycling programmes cannot be absent from our Compendium. Amazing work is being done at local level, we just need most more of it.

04

COMMUNITY WATER CONSERVATION



Community water conservation is a movement of citizens to help clean up our rivers, oceans, lakes, beaches and coastlines, thereby creating greater connection and engagement of citizens with water, allowing them to give back to our planet. The oceans contribute to 75% of the oxygen we have on this planet. In this section we showcase some of the community initiatives for water conservation, that are present in our regions. They are important examples of how community actions can lead to great results.

05

COMMUNITY LEARNING AND SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES



Local communities have an indispensable role to play in supporting people's learning and development and in creating societies that are engaged, inclusive and sustainable. Community-based learning strengthens bonds across generations, promotes agency and self-reliance, and fosters social cohesion, thus encouraging active citizenship and a sense of ownership of a community's future. Moreover, it enables the exchange of information and the development of skills necessary in tackling the challenges of today's rapidly changing world, ultimately contributing in a very significant way to sustainable development at local level.





Biodiversity Conservation in the Community

This category highlights 8 selected and transferable case studies from across our regions.

These examples showcase community initiatives that are contributing to the conservation of biodiversity within the communities where they are being implemented.

1. [KEEPERS OF THE RIVER SADO](#)
2. [BIOCOFINAKI](#)
3. [SCIENCE FOR CITIZENS FOR THE BENEFIT OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND NATURE](#)
4. [ECOTREE](#)
5. [LERSØGRØFTENS INTEGRATION VILLAGE GARDENS](#)
6. [THE BEE SANCTUARY OF IRELAND](#)
7. [WILD WORK](#)
8. [CASTLECOOTE BOG BIODIVERSITY & ECOLOGICAL STUDY](#)





KEEPERS OF THE RIVER SADO

CATEGORY

Biodiversity conservation in the community

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Portugal, district of Setúbal, Sado Estuary

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

Seagrass meadows degradation in the estuary in the Sado river, due to human activities such as litter from shellfishing and destructive fishing, has led to the decrease of marine life in this habitat and the decline of the resident dolphin pods.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



Ocean Alive, a co-operative association founded by Raquel Gaspar and Sofia Jorge, was the first co-operative in Portugal dedicated to the protection of the sea. 18 fisherwomen, the Keepers of the Sea, work with this Association as guides for their education programme. They act as awareness-raising agents of the Shell Fishing WITHOUT Litter campaign, and monitor scientific projects related to the seagrass meadows.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



One of their key projects is focused on the restoration of the seagrass meadows existing in the estuary of the river Sado, where seagrass meadows are the nursery habitat for both the prey of the resident dolphin pods, and for the fish and shellfish which are the livelihood of the local fishing community. Seagrass beds support emblematic species with economic value to traditional fisheries - cuttlefish, gilthead seabream, seabass, sole - and charismatic species, important for marine conservation and tourism, like seahorses and the resident population of bottlenose dolphins.





The main objective is to protect the seagrass meadows through a programme of marine education, awareness-raising campaigns, and monitoring and evaluating the impact of the project on the seagrass meadows. To achieve its goal the project relies on the engagement of local fisherwomen, the Keepers of the Sea. Through a capacity-building programme, Ocean Alive created new occupational and professional roles tailored to these women's expertise and life experiences. They assume an important role catalysing behaviour changes in their peers in the fishing community. To reward this behaviour change, a best practice certification label will be granted, encouraging the public to buy fish and shellfish from this fishing community and thus providing them with a source of supplementary income.

Sharing & Learning

Ms. Raquel Gaspar said that the Shellfishing WITHOUT litter campaign responded to a local problem but also to the global problem of plastic contamination of the ocean. It started on a Holy Friday, the day when shellfish gatherers go to the estuary of the Sado to catch razor clams for that day's family gathering. With the support of the Oceano Azul Foundation and the Lisbon Oceanarium, the activity created a network of awareness-raising agents.

Transferability of the Practice

Shellfishing WITHOUT litter includes three activities: direct awareness actions carried out by the network of Keepers of the Ocean (women from the fishing community educated as awareness-raising agents); monthly beach-cleaning actions with volunteers in the Sado Estuary, and a network of local stakeholders that implement solutions to tackle the problem of plastic in the ocean.

Keepers of the Ocean is a process led by the local fisherwomen aimed at being reproducible in other marine areas of Portugal and Portuguese-speaking African countries (PALOP communities). Collaborating with projects that support women and the protection of seagrass meadows in PALOP communities is already on the way.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 1/1/2015

End Date: Ongoing



EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



The Shellfishing WITHOUT Litter campaign organises every year 3 major awareness-raising and beach-cleaning actions, involving the local fishing community and volunteers from all over the country. Since 2016, over 5,318 volunteers have participated in this activity and more than 60 tonnes of litter were collected from the estuary of the river Sado.

The campaign won the “Mobilization Initiative” award at the 10th edition of Green Project Awards, in 2017.



INFORMATION LINKS

<https://www.wilder.pt/naturalistas/raquel-gaspar-so-com-persistencia-podemos-mudar-habitos/>

<https://www.ocean-alive.org/en/keepers-of-the-sea>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5t7-bVLNVQ>

CONTACT

OCEAN ALIVE

ORGANISATION

Cooperativa para a educação criativa marinha
CRL

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BIOCOFINAKI

CATEGORY

Biodiversity conservation in the community

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

196, Lagkada Str. Stavroupoli **Western Thessaloniki, Greece**

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

Biologically farmed food products contribute to the use of less chemicals and fertilisers, following the benefits of climate-friendly practices in agriculture.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



With a rehabilitative focus, the people who work on the biological farm are mainly former addicts (21 individuals) and the families of former addicts (8 individuals), thus the project has an added value since it helps these people reintegrate back into society.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



Biological vegetables and fruit are farmed in the 1-acre land as part of the Psychiatric Hospital of Thessaloniki. Former addicts who have now recovered, parents of former addicts and workers of the hospital tend to the biodiversity project. Other biological products such as honey, tomato sauce, dough and traditional sweets are also for sale. The products are sold online and delivered directly to the customers by truck. All vegetables are seasonal, so they vary from summer to winter.



The workers of BOKOFINAKI are members of the Social Inclusion Enterprise "ARGO", collaborating with 4 more entities, 1 public hospital and 3 civil society organisations. The profit is shared among the members of the enterprise, helping them to financially support themselves.

The project BOKOFINAKI has an ambiguous objective. On one hand, to provide the community with biological, healthy products free of chemicals and sustainably farmed, and on the other hand, it offers vulnerable groups of former addicts the chance to recover from their addiction both emotionally and physically, while earning a decent income and improving their financially precarious situation.

Sharing & Learning

Stelios Giuseppas, the Head of the social inclusion enterprise ARGO that runs the project BOKOFINAKI, has stated:

"The project is based on the freshness of the products, in other words, it is about quality over quantity. If a customer wants a kind of vegetable that is either out of season or hard to farm biologically, we simply say no. The main goal of the project is to help people overcome themselves and reinvent their dreams by being employed and by earning a steady income, that will discourage them from falling back into the trap of becoming addicted".



Transferability of the Practice

A parcel of land appropriate for agriculture and of a minimum size that can sustain a variety of farming products needs to be purchased. Good weather conditions favour the effort. The commitment of people with agricultural skills and managing skills is necessary. An initial funding capital will be required. People from a vulnerable group with fewer opportunities must also be interested to work in the long term with the purpose of achieving good results.

Spreading the platform opportunities leads to positive green side effects - waste will be prevented and reused and it will not go to incineration, landfill or be dumped in the landscape.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 6/2018

End Date: Ongoing



EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



The project BOKOFINAKI started with a modest ten customers base and within two years this number had multiplied by five. The success was such that last year (2021) the social inclusion enterprise was donated a small refrigerated van, in order to help with the deliveries with longer distances and in warmer weather conditions. The donation was made by a private institution.



INFORMATION LINKS

<https://argokoinsep.gr/biokofinaki/>

https://www.voria.gr/article/viokofinaki-kalathia-me-viologika-proionta-apo-apexartimena-atoma?fbclid=IwAR3KWkd2ySr9QQVYxKwr8Z_6irhEK5fjAk95mhYIfITUTY9PKq9h-8mSAvg

Photo Sources: <https://argokoinsep.gr/biokofinaki/>

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SCIENCE FOR CITIZENS FOR THE BENEFIT OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND NATURE

CATEGORY

Biodiversity conservation in the community

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Bulgaria, Sofia, 71 Yavorov Residential Complex

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

Limited access to and use of research on environmental, climate change and biodiversity conservation issues, such as:

- policy monitoring and advocacy;
- establishing or maintaining partnerships between civil society organisations and public or private institutions and organisations;
- carrying out educational activities.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



The good practice is a project of the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds - BSPB

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



Migratory birds are of great ecological and economic value as they are an integral part of the global biological diversity. Nearly half the world's 10,000 bird species depend on forests, wetlands and grasslands - they are inhabitants of virtually all ecosystems of the world. Bulgaria ranks second in Europe in bird species diversity, and this makes even more important the activities initiated in the good practice.



The practice "Science for Citizens for the Benefit of Local Communities and Nature" demonstrates how young people with a strong interest in science and in particular in nature conservation can be engaged. The activities of the project are united around the targeted involvement of more young people in research and data collection on birds in key places of the ecological network Natura 2000 in Bulgaria through the innovative mobile application SmartBirds Pro. The application makes it possible to monitor common bird species and their mapping for the Bulgarian Atlas of nesting birds. A new step, which is extremely important for the preservation of valuable and rare places in the wild, is the training among local civic groups and representatives of various non-governmental organisations. The training is focused on getting acquainted with the legislation in the field of environment and biodiversity and how to collect and use scientific data in the preparation of opinions and participation in procedures and appeals in the field of environmental legislation.

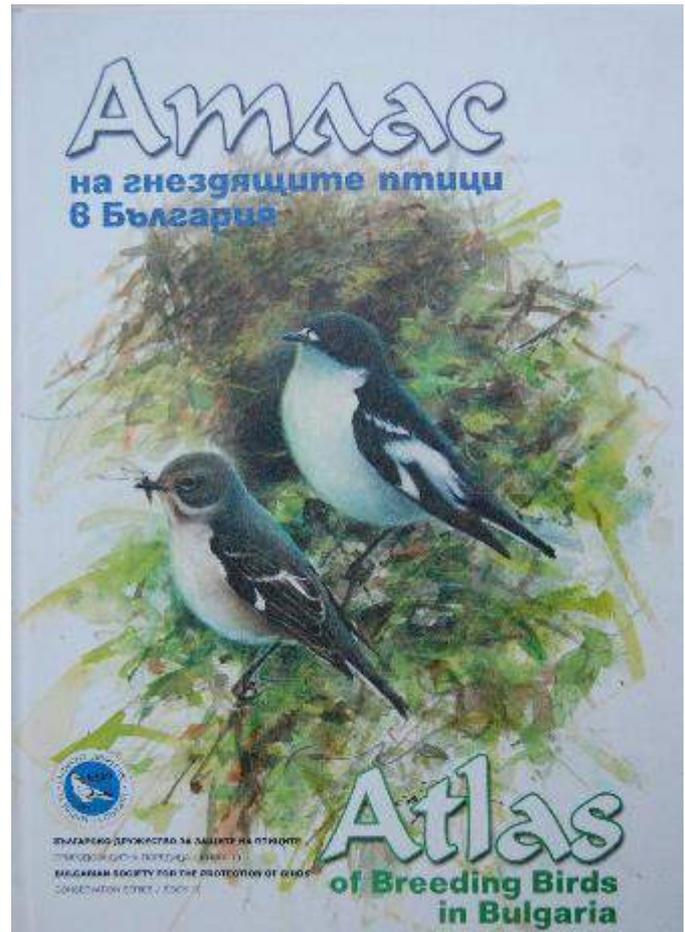
The main stakeholders and beneficiaries of the practice are young people, NGOs, government institutions, and civil society all over Bulgaria.

Sharing & Learning

Irina stated that attracting young people and training local societies and NGOs is the key to the success of the "Science for Citizens for the Benefit of Local Communities and Nature" project. This gives ground for the sustainability of the initiative and constant update of the Atlas and thus contributes to biodiversity preservation.

Transferability of the Practice

The atlas and its online version aim to update and supplement the data on the species of nesting birds in Bulgaria and their distribution. Work on them will continue over the next four years and will unite the efforts of anyone who would like to get involved and collect data using the SmartBirds Pro application - <https://bit.ly/3c431KR>. This application can easily be transferred to other regions or countries



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 27/9/2019

End Date: Ongoing



EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



The result of the good practice is the first of its kind in Bulgaria's public platform "Atlas of Nesting Birds in Bulgaria"; which provides an easy and interesting way to collect ornithological information for the purposes of nesting and wintering birds.

There are more than 20 training events for citizens and NGOs for data collection and monitoring of common bird species and over 20 on-site inspections carried out by experts to verify the data collected by the citizens.



INFORMATION LINKS

<https://atlas.bspb.org/en>

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqdroOqsDx_lA2_Myqi-xrg

<https://www.facebook.com/BSPBirds>

<https://www.instagram.com/birds.bg>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-R9vDOZKb1E&ab_channel=%D0%91%D0%94%D0%97%D0%9F

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ECOTREE

CATEGORY

Biodiversity conservation in the community

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Denmark

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

The world loses 48 football fields worth of forest every minute. Those forests are home to 60,000 different tree species, 80% of amphibian species, 75% of bird species and 68% of the world's mammal species.

Forests are essential to human life too. They provide clean drinking water, building materials, materials for medical equipment and drugs, a free space to enjoy, plus much more. One of the most important carbon sinks on Earth, forests absorb around 2.6 billion tonnes of carbon every year. That's one third of the CO₂ released by burning fossil fuels.

However, as much as 80% of the world's original forests have been destroyed beyond repair. The race to supply cheap timber on top of climate change caused by human activity has led to mass deforestation.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



The idea behind EcoTree was born in 2014, when a group of five friends from France went on holiday to Copenhagen, Denmark. They noticed how the Danes use financial incentive to get more people to recycle. When they return cans and bottles to supermarkets, they get a direct cash payment.

EcoTree's co-founders asked themselves: "Why don't we do the same on a larger scale... but with trees?"

The concept rewards people who care about the environment and are ambitious about tackling climate change. That is the foundation of EcoTree.

Today, EcoTree has more than 100 employees located in Paris, Brest and Copenhagen. They are a diverse team of foresters, business experts, designers, communicators – you name it!



Their mission at EcoTree is to reforest Europe. As sustainable forestry experts, they protect and conserve vital carbon sinks and biodiversity ecosystems. Their foresters use a close-to-nature concept, which means they never plant monocultures or clear-cut the land. Instead, they plant trees of various ages and species to promote biological diversity. They cut trees selectively when they no longer sequester carbon, so they can replant or make room for natural regeneration.

The high-quality timber from those trees is then used for furniture and building materials. The carbon stored in the wood is locked for several hundred years and can be used in place of climate-damaging materials, such as plastic, cement or steel.

Ecotree wants to put sustainable forestry in the hands of everyone. Through EcoTree, anyone can own a real tree in a real forest. They don't do greenwashing. They don't do traditional carbon offsets.

The EcoTree model is unlike other tree-planting companies.

1. They offer a financial incentive that encourages people to invest, literally and metaphorically in sustainable forestry, reforestation and to tackle climate change.
2. They remove carbon from the atmosphere by creating and protecting carbon sinks in the form of forests and wetlands.
3. They don't plant a tree with the customer's name on it. It really belongs to them.
4. They are a certified B Corp and their methods are verified by third parties.
5. They don't just work with trees, but also biodiversity.
6. They provide tree owners with an online account where they can follow the growth of their tree, estimated carbon absorbed and its growth in value. They also access further data on their tree and any other projects they support.
7. They offer carbon removal for businesses, verified by Bureau Veritas, a world-class

certification organisation.

EcoTree also engages in communities and social projects by working with local partners, such as sawmills, foresters, ecology experts and beekeepers. That allows them to create jobs in local areas and support specific initiatives, including those that help disabled people get back into the labour market.

Sharing & Learning

Individuals and companies need to stop looking for the perfect, miraculous solution. Instead, they should just get started by engaging with and supporting multiple initiatives.

"Inaction is the issue, not the potential to fail along the way. Doing nothing waiting for perfection will not help the world tackle climate change."

Similarly, Ecotree believes they do not need to reinvent the wheel. Nature has given us one of the best routes to maintaining a planet we can all live on happily: trees. Trees contain a tremendous amount of 'technology', which took approximately 4.5 billion years of 'research and development'! We have what we need already... and it is free. So, we need to start by leveraging what we have in the natural world

Transferability of the Practice

Ecotree is a rapidly expanding organisation that has transformed a simple concept into a huge success. They have established their organisation in a number of nations and plan to expand it even further across Europe. It would be a simple notion and idea to reproduce on a small scale within your community by signing up as a volunteer or looking into and investigating the work they do.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 1/1/2014

End Date: Ongoing



EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



The solution of many of humanity's problems is found in the conservation and planting of forests. Much of what they do has a ripple effect. Ecotree's work has a positive impact on reforestation, climate change, biodiversity, food and water supply, jobs, sustainable building materials, and threatened species.

By planting trees, they create carbon sinks, safe habitats for local flora and fauna, protect pollinators, secure clean water sources, provide high-quality timber and much more.



INFORMATION LINKS

<https://ecotree.green/en/>

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LERSØGRØFTENS INTEGRATION VILLAGE GARDENS

CATEGORY

Biodiversity conservation in the community

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Denmark

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

They hope to bring nature and the outdoors into the community by hosting community members who do not have access to a garden space in their own home.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



Lersøgrøftens Integrationsbyhaver

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



We are a garden community with 150 gardens located along the path between Bispebjerg station and Lersø Parkallé. Each garden is 12 square meters and all are grown by local residents.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



Their community works to strengthen local unity across residents' groups. Therefore, half of the gardens are reserved for people born outside of Denmark, while the other half is reserved for people born in Denmark.

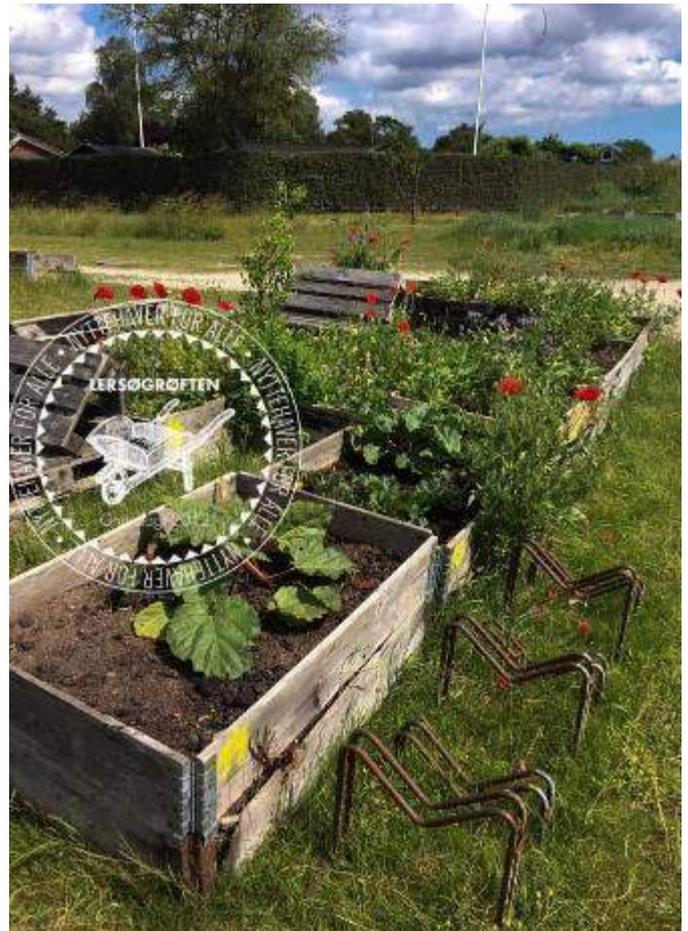
In addition, The community focuses on sharing knowledge about gardening and sustainable principles. At the same time, the ambition is to actively enter networks with the many other associations and organisations working on green initiatives in Copenhagen and on a national level.

Sharing & Learning

Through the activities of Lersgrftens Integrationsbyhaver, they have managed to create a community and bring nature to those who would otherwise never have had the chance to have a garden.

Transferability of the Practice

A community garden is not a new idea; it is a popular one with a lot of potential benefits for folks who don't have enough room in their own house. Lersgrftens Integrationsbyhaver, employs a set of principles and procedures that might assist others who want to develop their own community gardens. Here is a link to their House Rules, as a guideline to potential future community gardeners.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 1/1/2020

End Date: Ongoing



EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



In Lersøgrøftens integrationsbyhaver they focus on the social community. All of their members live in the local area. No matter when you stop by the gardens, you will most often meet other members. They greet each other and share ideas and advice on cultivating the gardens. Even though there are 150 gardens. No two gardens are alike. Therefore, there is a lot of knowledge and inspiration to find in each other.

We are a community run by volunteers. that means: We help out by looking after each other and the common areas. We have common garden days during the year.



INFORMATION LINKS

<https://lersogroften.dk/?wkid=92454&navid=1>

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THE BEE SANCTUARY OF IRELAND

CATEGORY

Biodiversity Conservation in the Community

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

The Bee Sanctuary of Ireland. Coolafancy, Co. Wicklow, Ireland.

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

One of the key ecosystem services provided to us by nature is through pollination with natures pollinators providing \$577 billion in global economic value annually with Bees alone estimated to contribute €53 million to the Irish economy each year.

Habitat loss, non-native species, and the use of herbicides and pesticides in agriculture has led to a 76% decline in flying insect populations by mass in Europe between 1991 and 2018.

While we're all aware that we must protect the bees, each bee has a niche, so it's important that we protect all native bee species and not just the ones that produce products for us.

The Bee Sanctuary solves that problem on its 55 acres of natural habitat being the first designated native bee sanctuary in the World.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



The Bee Sanctuary of Ireland is the World's first designated native bee sanctuary and the only certified organic vegan land in Ireland. It is family-run, set up by a husband-and-wife team of Paul Handrick and Clare-Louise Donelan with the help of their four children. They advocate for and educate about endangered wild bee populations and are real-life proof of the simple measures we can all take to address the serious issue of pollinator decline.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



For over a decade the Save Bees movement has been in the mainstream discourse with CSR and green communities making homes for bees with hives on rooftops and in gardens. We immediately associate Bees with honey and hives, but only 4% of all species produce honey. According to Biodiversity Ireland, there are 101 bee species in Ireland, including the native Irish honeybee. Nineteen of these species are bumblebees and more than half of these are in decline with three very rare bumblebees threatened with extinction. Of the other 81 bee species in Ireland, most of them are solitary and nearly half of them are in decline.



When Paul and Claire-Louise first bought their land in Wicklow in 2012 they decided to do things differently and create a habitat for all bee species in Ireland.

Activities

Originally planning on running a productive organic vegetable farm, Paul and Clare-Louise struggled to tame nature and prevent it from damaging their crops. They decided instead of fighting nature they would work with it and Paul, Louise, and their family now own and maintain 55 acres of native habitat, consisting of wildflower meadows, 12 acres of wetland habitats and other vital ecosystems.

2 acres of their land is set aside as Irelands only certified organic vegan farm, with the other 53 acres given over to nature providing a habitat for native bees.

'So, what are we? We are inspiring. We are reconnection. We are fields of wildflower meadows, sunflowers, phacelia, clovers and mustard buzzing with bees and dancing with butterflies. We are vast hedgerows unkempt and full of nettles, brambles, thistles, wildflowers and life. We are trees filled with a cacophony of birdsong. We are quite literally a breath of fresh air.'

Although they never set out to be activists, Paul and Clare-Louise share that they are 'reluctant activists' as they believe there shouldn't be anything special about caring for the native insect species. Despite this, Paul and Clare-Louise are ambassadors for Ireland's bee population and are setting an example for the rest of Europe and the World as to what is possible just by giving over to Nature.

Evidence of Success and Transferability

Over the last decade they have given their land back over to Nature creating a sanctuary for Ireland's Bees. The 55 acres of land is now home to Irelands native flora and fauna as well as acting as a carbon sink.

Not only have they successfully created a sanctuary for native bees and pollinators on their land in Wicklow, but they are also extending their reach through the transfer of knowledge and encouraging other stakeholders to get involved. Through their '[Business for Bees](#)' scheme they are communicating the economic value of bees and getting businesses involved through sponsorship,

partnership, donations and through allowing businesses to experience what real sustainability looks like with corporate outings at the Bee Sanctuary.

To extend the habitat for bees beyond their 55 acres, Paul and Clare-Louise have begun the 'National Meadowland' project, asking farmers to pledge 2% of their land to a no-graze policy from March to September increasing the habitats for Bees Nationwide.

The Bee Sanctuary has created a community of learning on its extensive webpage. Through their website and social media presence, they continue to educate the public and the native flora and fauna of Ireland and lay out clear and easy steps for what we can all do to help save the bees.

1. Stop Poisoning them with Chemicals
2. Stop removing their Habitat – provide habitat
3. Make sure they have food

The transferability of Paul and Clare-Louise's actions are simple. Allow space for nature to take over and we will provide a habitat for bees to thrive.



“Save the Bees, Save the Future” | Sanctuary’s Call



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 2012

End Date: Ongoing

INFORMATION LINKS

[The Bee Sanctuary of Ireland Website](#)

[RTE Climate Heroes](#)

[Independent News – Nature Just want us to give it some space](#)

[The Bee Sanctuary of Ireland Instagram](#)

CONTACT

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WILD WORK

CATEGORY

Biodiversity conservation in the community

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Ireland

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

Nature is facing a number of serious challenges. Throughout our landscape, we need to conserve, protect and reinvigorate biodiversity. Wild Work is an initiative to help you, help nature, and help people.



By working together to sustain nature and biodiversity, Wild Work are creating something special to benefit our people, our communities and the places in which we work and live.

All around us, there are numerous natural places that are not being used to their full potential; with Wild Work this potential can be realised – creating beautiful connections – not just ecologically – but between business and community to bring wildness back into people's lives.

Working in partnership, SECAD Partnership CLG, West Limerick Resources and Cavan County Local Development have expanded the reach of the award-winning Wild Work initiative. This innovative new training experience will combine outdoor classrooms with online learning, exciting virtual reality experiences and online toolkits, building and expanding on the Wild Work carried out by SECAD over the last five years. We want to bring people back into wild spaces in their counties and help people help nature help people.



Wild Work's role has been to lead the project as a solutions provider for data-driven programmes. They have a team of a dozen people ensuring all communications and KPI's are tracked and measured to achieve the best outcomes for the over 400 volunteers. With their ecology team under Dr. Amanda Greer, they are bringing Irish place-based learning into this new innovative blended programme.

Wild Work has developed important relationships with many businesses directly engaging with over 100 individuals in the business community. Their work with businesses aims to bring nature into the workplace by helping companies discover, protect and promote the biodiversity that can be found at their site. Encouraging nature and wildness at work is not only good for biodiversity, but for people too. By engaging staff through nature walks and talks, they show how nature can greatly benefit mental health and stress management.

The free, flexible, 12-week training programme will be delivered in 20 locations across South Cork, West Cork, West Limerick and Cavan, as an extension of the award-winning Wild Work not-for-profit biodiversity initiative first established by SECAD Partnership CLG in 2017. It is hoped that, over time, it will be rolled out nationwide and will inspire other counties to create similar programmes for the benefit of both people and place.

Sharing & Learning

Any income generated through their work is re-invested to help people, help nature, help people. It is their hope that people who become part of the Wild Work movement will enjoy helping nature and our environment, as well as having the opportunity to socialise with others and benefit greatly in terms of health and well-being.

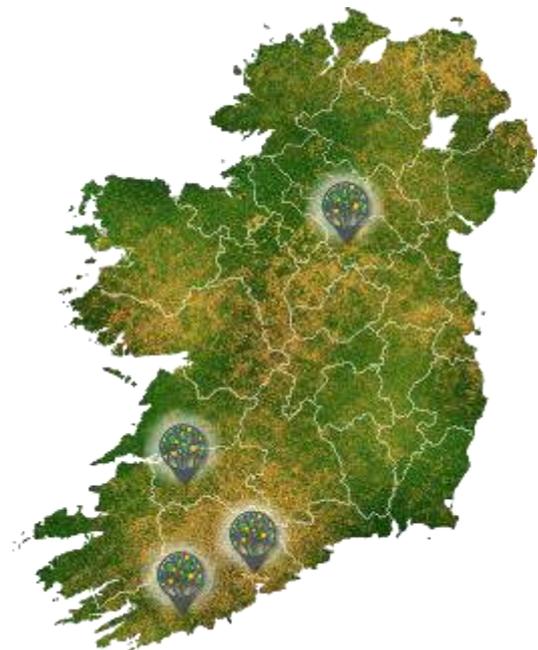
Above all, they aim to make a big impact by fostering people's goodwill to ensure that our local flora, fauna and habitats are protected, valued and enhanced. They believe their collaborative approach with business and communities will

prove successful in benefiting biodiversity, our environment and our society; a society dependent on nature for its prosperity...

Through their citizen science portal, significant trees project, the pollinator project, biodiversity action plans, habitat management projects and their research, they aim to share their practices and help others learn and grow in the areas of biodiversity.

Transferability of the Project

This innovative new training experience combines outdoor classrooms with online learning, exciting virtual reality experiences and online toolkits, building and expanding on the Wild Work carried out by SECAD over the last five years. The Project is transferable as it helps engage businesses and people and show them in a creative and innovative way the wild spaces in their countries and how they can help protect it.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 2021

End Date: Ongoing



Wild Work is Growing

It is exciting to see Wild Work spreading to more locations on our beautiful Island. Their blended learning approach offers an opportunity for people to reengage with nature and see the impact it can have on our wellbeing.



INFORMATION LINKS

<https://wildwork.ie/>

EMAIL

info@wildwork.ie



Wildwork
HELPING PEOPLE HELP NATURE HELP PEOPLE





CASTLECOOTE BOG BIODIVERSITY & ECOLOGICAL STUDY

CATEGORY

Biodiversity conservation in the community

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Castlecoote Co. Roscommon, Ireland

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

- 01** The area was lacking any official analysis of the flora and fauna of the Castlecoote Bog (selected sections);
- 02** There were no signage or information boards currently
- 03** The group wanted to provide information for printed and digital media for schools and other organisations for education and training purposes;
- 04** The group wanted to provide information to inform a potential project to construct a boardwalk across the bog

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



Castlecoote Tidy Towns was re-activated in the 1980's. Since then, the group has gone from strength to strength, winning two environmental awards, two bronze, three silver and six gold medals. For three years in a row, 2016/17/18, they came 1st in Roscommon. In 2019, they again received a gold medal and increased their overall score by 4 marks. In 2013 the village received the major award of winning the Tidiest Village and Small Town in Ireland.

Castlecoote Tidy Towns is a vibrant and hardworking community group representative of a variety of interests from throughout the community. This group has been instrumental in voluntary community activities for the past number of years and is supported in its endeavours by Roscommon County Council, CE Scheme and Sesame Construction. The group has also successfully completed work on the Old Mill Wheels and the development of the Island on the River Suck. This group has good experience in dealing with funding applications.



Castlecoote Bog is a raised bog, located 1.5km north of Castlecoote village and is adjacent to a section of the Suck Valley Waymarked Way (900m). Castlecoote Bog has not been worked for at least 25 years and is, to the naked eye, heavily overgrown with rushes, birch, briars and other vegetation.

The following information is taken from the Irish Peatland Conservation Council website:

Raised bogs are discreet, raised, dome-shaped masses of peat occupying former lakes or shallow depressions in the landscape. They occur throughout the midlands of Ireland. Their principal supply of water and nutrients is from rainfall and the substrate is acid peat soil, which can be up to 12m deep. Raised bogs are characterised by low-growing, open vegetation dominated by mosses, sedges and heathers, all of which are adapted to waterlogged, acidic and exposed conditions.

Raised bogs are beautiful landscapes with a unique biodiversity. Raised bogs are:

- the finest example of their type in Europe, and probably the world
- a unique repository of information of past climates, vegetation and human activity
- valuable outdoor laboratories in which plants, animals and natural processes in an extremely inhospitable environment can be studied
- of national and international importance as part of the biosphere in which they are inextricably linked to other ecosystems
- a unique feature of the Irish landscape of considerable tourist value
- a priority habitat under the EU Habitats Directive because of their scarcity in Europe
- an important store of carbon, helping to control greenhouse gases
- an important store of water within river catchments

Castlecoote Tidy Towns sought LEADER funding to engage a competent consultant to carry out a full Biodiversity and Ecological Survey on selected

sections of the Castlecoote Bog. The results of the survey will:

1. Provide a comprehensive analysis of the flora and fauna of Castlecoote Bog (selected sections);
2. Provide information for signage and information boards;
3. Provide information for printed and digital media for schools and other organisations for education and training purposes;
4. Provide information to inform a potential project to construct a boardwalk across the bog

Innovation:

This project will add to the current ecological knowledge of Castlecoote specifically around its nearby bog land and the River Suck bank environments. The project forms Phase 1 of a larger project aimed at creating a Biodiversity Attraction Site at Castlecoote Bog, including the establishment of a boardwalk across the bog and a viewing stand and hides on the bank of the River Suck.

This is the first time that a biodiversity and ecological analysis of any area of Castlecoote Village or Castlecoote Bog has been carried out. It is also the first time that the promoters have undertaken a project of this nature.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

The project was approved funding at 90% rate of aid to a maximum of €8,966.70 by Roscommon LCDC on 11th December 2019. Flynn Furney Environment Consultants were engaged and work on the project commenced in late February 2020 but was soon halted due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. Despite a number of delays caused by restrictions on public gatherings and travel, the project was completed in August 2021.



EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



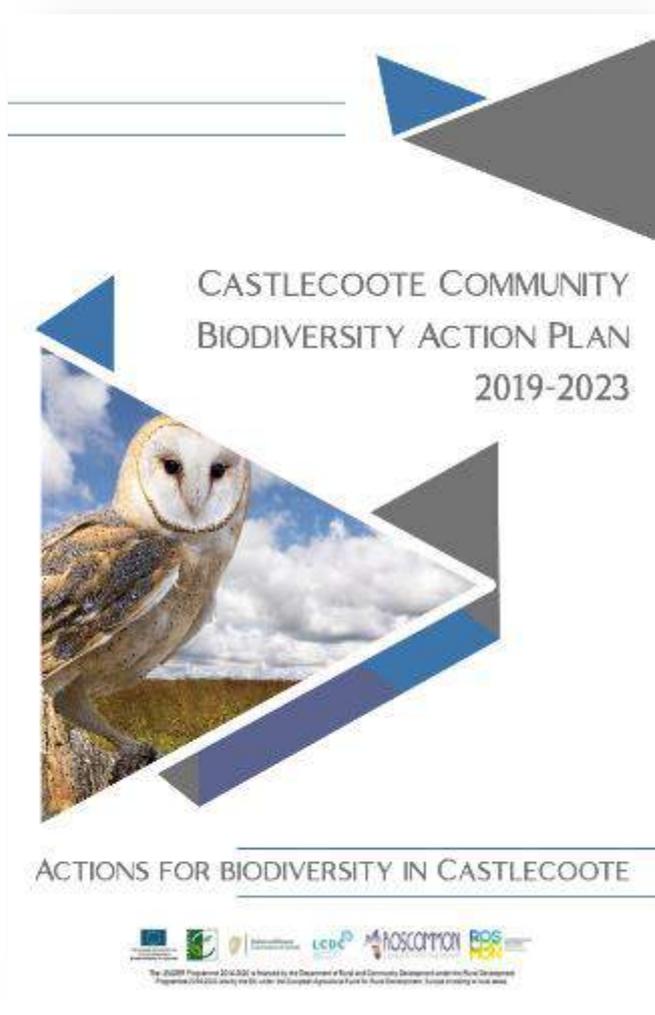
The Consultants assessed habitats, examined the presence of rare and threatened flora and/or fauna and identified if there were any ecological constraints present along the proposed route options. The survey also assessed ground conditions, identified drains, ditches and other impediments to track construction and safe access to and through the bog and woodland.

Castlecoote Bog and surrounding landscape contains a number of excellent habitats including rivers, wetlands, peatlands and woodland. This complexity creates opportunities for a diverse range of plant and animal species. A full range of the flora and fauna to be found on Castlecoote Bog has been provided as part of the study. Of particular interest were recordings of Wasp Hoverfly (believed to be the first recorded sighting for County Roscommon). Another interesting find close to the River Suck was Common Meadow Rue (*Thalictrum flavum*) which is not a widespread

species in Ireland and there are only 172 records for this species on the National Biodiversity Data Centre database.

The Final Report has provided the promoters with valuable information on the biodiversity and habitats found at Castlecoote Bog as well as a number of options to potentially link to the Suck Valley Way.

A number of the Castlecoote Bog landowners also became very interested in the variety of flora and fauna on their land. The promoters felt that it was very important to bring these landowners on-board with the overall project idea at an early stage as their co-operation and agreement would be required for any future capital project. This project has helped to do this



EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



In 2018, Roscommon LEADER Partnership devised and implemented a Training Project, Introduction to Biodiversity Training for Community Groups in Co. Roscommon. Castlecoote Tidy Towns were one of 15 community groups who participated in the training. As part of the training, 15 Biodiversity Local Area Plans were developed, setting out biodiversity actions that community groups could implement as well as giving biodiversity advice and assistance to the community groups.

In mid-2019, Roscommon LEADER Partnership issued a LEADER Targeted Call for Biodiversity Projects. Castlecoote Tidy Towns submitted an EOI which was deemed eligible in principle, and they were invited to submit a full application for LEADER funding.

The results of the survey have

1. Provided a comprehensive analysis of the flora and fauna of Castlecoote Bog (selected sections);
2. Provided information for signage and information boards;
3. Provided information for printed and digital media for schools and other organisations for education and training purposes;
4. Informed the biodiversity and ecological elements of a feasibility study to construct a raised boardwalk across the bog to the River Suck.

The Survey covered all Fauna and Flora and must be Seasonal, Daytime and Night-time.

The specifics of the survey were:

- The undertaking of all necessary surveys to recognised standards.

- Completed site visits to conduct the survey across both day and night and to include as many visits as are deemed necessary to capture seasonal changes across the Bog habitats.
- Recorded, identified, and documented all species found and provided full listings in the interim and final reports.
- Liaised and consulted with Castlecoote Tidy Town during on-site visits and with issues arising.
- Provided itemised cost estimates for the completion of the project.
- Provided an interim report covering the initial seasonal survey.
- Provided final report to cover the full survey period.
- Provided 4 full 'hard-copies' and one soft-copy of both Reports
- Provided soft-copy information for use in interpretative signage for Castlecoote Bog
- Provided soft copy information for dissemination to local schools and other outlets.
- Provided relevant information on the biodiversity and ecology of Castlecoote Bog so as to inform a future feasibility study into the construction of a Boarded Walkway and River Suck Viewing Area at Castlecoote Bog.

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CLICK TO VIEW





Green Community Energy

Climate change has had a negative physical impact on our environment, society, economy and natural resources.

Action must be taken urgently to respond to the climate crisis and create a sustainable future for all.

Green energy communities refer to collective and citizen-driven energy actions that help pave the way for a clean energy transition while moving citizens to the fore. They contribute to increasing public acceptance of renewable energy projects and at the same time, they have the potential to provide direct benefits to citizens by increasing energy efficiency, lowering their electricity bills and creating local job opportunities.

We selected case studies of initiatives and projects of Green Community Energy to transfer their application and stimulate the implementation of similar initiatives at a community level across Europe.

1. COOPÉRNICO, A COOPERATIVE OF RENEWABLE ENERGIES
2. GREEN ENERGY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BRATSIGOVO
3. GREEN SKIBBEREEN
4. TEMPLEDERRY RENEWABLE ENERGY SUPPLY
5. CLOUGHJORDAN ECOVILLAGE





COOPÉRNICO, A COOPERATIVE OF RENEWABLE ENERGIES

CATEGORY

Green community energy

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Portugal

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

The desire to contribute to a new energy, social and business model, generating economic as well as environmental benefits through the production of clean electricity

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



Coopérnico was created by 16 citizens from diverse backgrounds and professional experiences, sharing a common concern for sustainable development. Under the legal form of a cooperative dedicated to the development of renewable energies, it combines its social purpose with support to solidarity, educational or environmental protection projects.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



Vision: A fair and responsible model based on renewable energies, contributing to a more sustainable future, both under the social, environmental and energy aspects.

Mission: To involve citizens and companies in the creation of a new, renewable and decentralized energy standard for the benefit of society and the environment.



The main activities developed are the purchase and commercialisation of energy, and the construction and improvement of electricity distribution networks, in low and medium voltage electricity distribution networks for lighting and motive power.

All electricity is produced exclusively from renewable energy sources; all the projects create social value, either by close association or the sharing of revenues with social economy entities. Local partners are given priority in the development of new projects, promoting local jobs and the transition to a more sustainable economy; and updated information on the projects is shared with all the members that have supported them.

Becoming a member requires the purchase of at least 3 shares, at the total amount of €60. These bonds do not have a fixed remuneration except when there is a distribution of surplus resulting from the activity of the cooperative.

Sharing & Learning

Coopérnico is a cooperative of renewable energies, that allows them due to its social nature to support projects of solidarity and educational or of environmental protection. The project received a «Vote of Praise for the exceptional support in the pursuit of Cerciespinho's objectives and for the active promotion of the inclusion of people with disabilities in sports, cultural and social initiatives to Coopérnico Cooperativa during the implementation of the electric energy production project through solar panels, and which also represents a source of revenue for Cerciespinho and contributes to the environmental policy promoted by the organization.

General assembly 2018
Cerciespinho»

Transferability of the Practice

Promoting the establishment of Local Groups is a way for Coopérnico to make itself known throughout the country, encouraging other groups to carry out similar projects and represent action and its members.

In addition to fostering cooperation with the local authorities (municipality), the functions of the Local Groups include: ensuring the regional representation of the cooperative and identifying opportunities for new members and new projects for the production of renewable energy.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 1/11/2012

End Date: Ongoing



Coopérnico is the first Portuguese renewable energy cooperative to sell electricity in mainland Portugal. They advocate a democratic, transparent and participatory model, where each customer owns their electricity company. They seek the transition to a 100% renewable energy model. They promote self-consumption, energy communities, electricity sharing, as well as ensuring the production of electricity from renewable sources equivalent to the electricity consumed by their customers. The cooperative has currently 2351 members and an accumulated investment of €1,859,250.



INFORMATION LINKS

<https://www.coopernico.org/en>

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Ccoopérnico

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GREEN ENERGY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BRATSIGOVO

CATEGORY

Green community energy

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Bulgaria, South Central Region, Bratsigovo, 6A Atanas Kabov Str.At

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

Main problem for the Municipality are high costs for electricity and heat energy supply to the municipal buildings – kindergartens, schools, cultural buildings and healthcare centers. The multifamily buildings are not energy efficient and use fossil fuel and wood for heating. High costs of street lightening.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



Five experts from Bratsigovo Municipality technical department, Three Directors of schools and kindergartens, 6 external technical experts in PV installations and biomass heating installations.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



In the last 5 years the Municipality realized a number of projects aimed at the introduction of combined renewable energy sources, that would be able to provide electricity, heating and cooling of municipal premises and private multifamily houses. The investments in green energy transition include the installation of 4.5 MWp of biomass heat/electrical energy and 160 sq.m. solar panels in municipal-owned buildings.



The Municipality of Bratsigovo is located in the foot of Rodopi Mountain and covers a very large area under Natura 2000. The major objective of the municipal energy strategy is to implement the route to green energy transition. The stages in the journey to energy efficiency and renewable energy sources include:

- Set up a team of experts at the Municipality
- Cooperate with external experts in energy audit and suppliers of services and materials
- Development of a Sustainable Energy Action Plan for the period 2016 – 2021
- Identify sources for project preparation and implementation
- Develop pipeline of projects
- Launch number of projects for funding under different sources – ERDF, EEA and National funding

On the roof of the health care centre in the city of Bratsigovo a photovoltaic central of 30 KWp has been installed and the electricity is used for their own needs. Part of the energy is sold to the grid mainly out of the working hours.

The retrofitting of the main cultural building in the city included change of window frames, repair of roof and installation of biomass heat boiler 675 Kw.

The retrofitting of four multifamily buildings was financed by the National Energy Efficiency Program where the beneficiaries are the respective associations of owners. The municipality supported the process with the respective technical documentation and permissions.

The streetlights in the city of Bratsigovo were replaced with energy efficient lightening. Main stakeholders in the initiative are the municipal authorities and managers of municipal enterprises as well as the population of the municipality.

Sharing & Learning

Mrs Grigorova, Director Territorial Settlement Planning at Bratsigovo Municipality shared how municipalities and regions can become independent of fossil energy sources.

"All decisions in the municipality like spatial planning, public buildings, energy supply, mobility, procurement and awareness-raising are directly or indirectly related with energy. Our energy transition is based on a vision designed to make the energy supply of the municipality as independent as possible of fossil energy in the areas of heat and electricity and to cover the demand mainly from renewable sources in the area."

Transferability of the Practice

This practice can be transferred to other small municipalities in Bulgaria and across Europe since they face the same problems with high energy costs and use of fossil fuels. The structure of the social and utility infrastructure is similar and as well as the economic development. The lessons learned can be of support for other local authorities in Bulgaria.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 1/1/2017

End Date: Ongoing



EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



Current energy savings for the Municipality are around 5 MW/h and reduction of CO₂ emissions - 13 t/year.

The municipal energy costs decreased twice and thus allows the local authority to save from the budget for other investments in utility infrastructure.

The Municipality became a member of the Covenant of Mayors (CoM) in 2015 and was awarded the Energy Award for 2016 which proves the firm commitment to increasing energy efficiency and the use of alternative energies in the municipal territories.



INFORMATION LINKS

<http://www.bratsigovo.bg/documents.php?id=143>

CONTACT

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Municipality of Bratsigovo

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GREEN SKIBBEREEN

CATEGORY

Green Community Energy

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Skibbereen is a town in County Cork, Ireland. It is the largest town in West Cork with a population of 2,568, but acts as a central hub for the small towns and villages throughout the region.

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

In 2016 more than 9,357 households (20,844 people) in West Cork Municipal District were living in accommodation constructed before 1970, with the majority being heated by fossil fuels. 85% of buildings that will be used in 2050 have already been built, meaning that retrofitting must be a massive part of the solution for sustainable communities.

Green Skibbereen was born from a group of friends looking at what they could do within their community to eradicate carbon. The bare roof space of buildings was identified as a place to install PV panels and Green Skibbereen grew from there.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



Green Skibbereen is a not-for-profit community organisation, set up in 2020 by a group of friends who were disillusioned with progress on climate action in their local area in West Cork. Director Jim O'Donnell, has said that the group was born from the vision of wanting to "go after carbon" to reduce or eliminate it.

After a steering group was set up, Green Skibbereen began engaging with key stakeholders and approached the owners of [Myross Wood House](#) about setting up a [Centre for Excellence for Climate Action & Sustainability \(CECAS\)](#)

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



Green Skibbereen has been established to address the challenge of moving to low carbon energy through actively engaging, educating and facilitating a whole community approach, that is driven by local people, businesses and organisations rather than top down, one size fits all schemes that can struggle to reach rural areas.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



Green Skibbereen aims to promote awareness and understanding of the need for community action on climate change in Skibbereen & West Cork and encourage the uptake of renewable energy and energy efficiency measures by the local community.

This will have the impact of helping participants save money on bills, reducing emissions and contributing to a broader community supported transition to sustainable development for the town and the surrounding areas.

Activities

Green Skibbereen is a truly community-led project. It was born from concerned local stakeholders looking at what they can do to reduce the impact of their rural town. Through active engagement with the broader community, they have worked on this idea and are setting an example for what towns around Ireland and Europe can achieve.

In the short term, the plan was to develop a Sustainable Energy Community, applying for funding for a Masterplan, to identify energy retrofitting opportunities and renewable energy opportunities in the region, whilst working with [NCE's Energy Hub](#) to access [SEAI](#) funding for Better Energy Community Grants. Following Green Skibbereen's first meeting in November of 2019, the vision was set, and the community was mobilised to start greening Skibbereen starting with 3 case study organisations as proof of concept consisting of Baltimore Pool, Drinagh co-op and O'Donnell Furniture. The working group were able to secure funding from SEAI under the [2020 community grants project](#) and deliver 10 energy efficiency projects throughout the community.

Under the same aim, it works to promote awareness and understanding of the need for community action on climate change in Skibbereen & West Cork and encourage the uptake of renewable energy and energy efficiency measures

by the local community. The Green Skibbereen Steering group identified the opportunity of establishing a Centre for Excellence for Climate Action & Sustainability ([CECAS](#)) at Myross House just outside of Skibbereen and approached the owners. In 2021, they carried out feasibility studies and went about sourcing funding for the centre.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 2019

End Date: Ongoing

Green Skibbereen was established in November 2019 following a public meeting in the town. They are continuing to build and engage with the community and are seeking funding for a Centre for Excellence for Climate Action & Sustainability (CECAS) at Myross house just outside of Skibbereen.



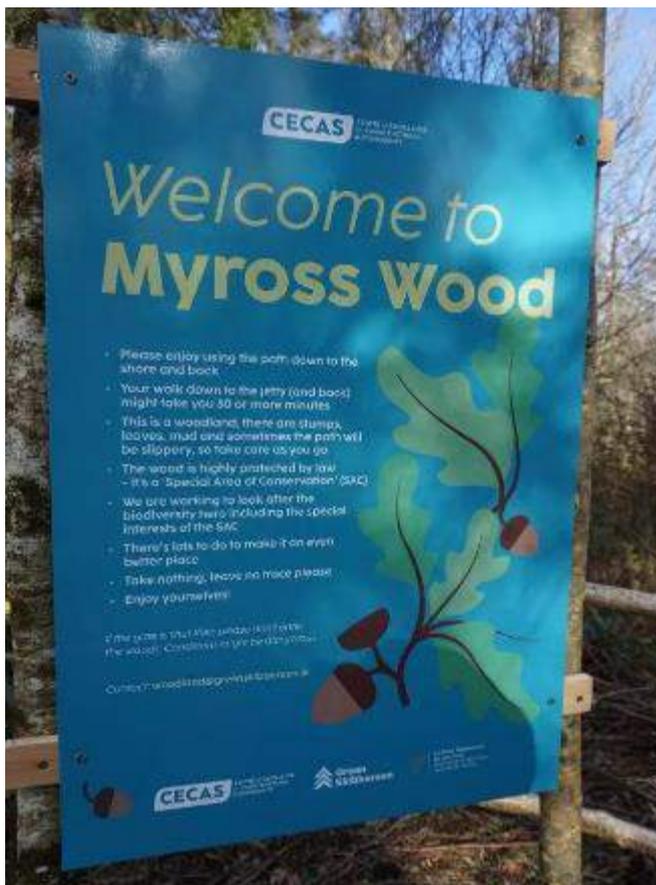
EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



Born from a group of local stakeholders identifying that something needed to be done about climate action within the community, Green Skibbereen has successfully delivered energy efficiency projects and has set up a centre of excellence for Climate and Sustainability.

CECAS is an inclusive, effective, practical and innovative centre for investigating and demonstrating practical solutions to Climate Change and Biodiversity loss.

CECAS land provides the opportunity to research and raise awareness about both sustainable infrastructure and communities, and the importance the preserving biodiversity and how that interconnects with climate action. CECAS will have an education centre where students could come and learn about the environment, a business hub, an accommodation centre, a training & research hub, an events centre (hosting green weddings and concerts), a well-being centre and other important community learning projects.



INFORMATION LINKS

[Green Skibbereen Website](#)

[Centre for Excellence for Climate Action & Sustainability \(CECAS\)](#)

[CECAS Feasibility Report](#)

[Photos of West Cork credited to Red Door Photography](#)

WATCH



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TEMPLEDERRY RENEWABLE ENERGY SUPPLY

CATEGORY

Green community energy

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

2nd Floor, Friars Court, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

The group recognises that Ireland's energy system is in crisis, with over 90% reliance on climate-polluting fossil fuels, but many people are struggling to pay high energy bills in cold homes. That's why Community Power is working to make sure the many benefits of generating renewable power are shared by the people and communities of Ireland.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



The mission is to support Ireland to run on clean, renewable power, but as if that's not enough the group also thinks people should also have a real stake in it and own it for themselves.

In September 2013 Templederry Wind Farm (4.6 MW installed capacity) in Tipperary became the first entirely community-owned Wind Farm to connect to the National Grid and began selling renewable electricity for the benefit of its members. There are two other operational Wind Farms in Ireland within which there is a community benefit element; a 0.68 MW Wind Farm on Innis Meain in the Aran Islands that powers the island's desalination plant, and a 0.66 MW Wind Farm in Burtonport, Donegal that supplies electricity to a fish processing plant. A further five community-owned developments are currently in progress and are likely to be constructed over the coming years, pending grid connection and financing



This practice helps to catalyse, part-fund and project manage community-owned, renewable energy facilities such as solar, wind, hydro and biomass.

1.. Provide communities with optional PPAs (power purchase agreements), so they can sell their excess electricity, thereby improving their revenue stream from their power plants.

Selling electricity to communities and the wider market

1. Contracts have no early termination clause, which means customers are free to leave whenever they wish without penalty. The community ethos and the service level agreements are the strengths that bind the group to the customers – who in the vast majority of cases are also the owners.
2. Provide businesses, large and small, with an ideal opportunity to lead by example in terms of Corporate Social Responsibility. Every euro spent and every kilowatt hour of electricity used – facilitates the development of additional community-owned renewable energy generation facilities, in their neighborhood, and around the country.
3. Provide a meaningful ownership structure for communities and individuals in the renewable energy sector – to ensure that the surplus revenue generated stays in the communities, thereby buttressing the local circular economy.

Sharing & Learning:

Sharing and Learning Registering as a member of Community Power Group:

- Community Power will provide advice and guidance on legal structures for communities, land leases (including Lease Options), planning (including all studies & impact assessments), grid connections, RESS auctions, finance for

projects, construction and operation.

- Community Power is also a vehicle for all individual community groups to make representations whereby we can influence policy, promote the Community ethos, attempt to ensure commercial viability for Community Projects, and with the common purpose of building community-owned renewable electricity generation projects and supplying electricity locally through Community Power.
- You are expected to pay the Annual Subscription and expand the Community Power customer base.
- The first steps for each Community would include, identifying a suitable site (preferably adjacent to an ESB Power-station), land lease/lease option, RESS (see below for further details) Auction application and acquiring Planning Permission.
- Community Power will also provide advice for successful projects (i.e. having secured Lease, Grid Connection and Planning) in the next phase which includes; Secure Finance/Investment Options, Tendering and Construction stage, Commissioning and operation of the facility.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 1/11/2022

End Date: Ongoing



EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



Community-owned energy projects have the potential to transform our energy system. Communities and cooperatives all over Europe are creating projects where they own and are actively involved in running an energy resource.

The Community Power (CO-POWER) project aims:

- Speed up the development of renewable energy projects by creating a favourable legislative environment.
- Build a broad, public coalition across Europe supportive of community renewable projects.
- Inform and educate policymakers, empowering them to put forward enabling legislative frameworks.
- Inform and engage citizens.
- Make recommendations to enable legislative change in the Czech Republic, Denmark, Spain, Hungary, Ireland, Scotland and Belgium and recommendations to support community energy projects in EU legislation.
- Create opportunities for public-private finance of community renewables projects in Eastern European countries.



INFORMATION LINKS

<https://communitypower.ie/our-story/>

CONTACT

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ORGANISATION

Community Power

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CLOUGHJORDAN ECOVILLAGE

CATEGORY

Green community energy

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

North Tipperary Green Enterprise Park,
Cloughjordan, Co. Tipperary, Ireland E53 VP86

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

Europe is lacking sustainability-centred living centres and demonstrative sites. Ecovillages are living laboratories pioneering sustainable alternatives and innovative solutions. Cloughjordan EcoVillage is a project that creates a socially, economically and ecologically viable community that will serve as a model for sustainable living into the 21st century and as an education, enterprise, research and service resource for all based on a 67-acre site that includes beautiful and fertile land where they grow their own food, and plants and trees to promote biodiversity.

The Eco Village provides a wide range of educational programmes for all ages, primary to third-level, active retirement, local and international.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



Cloughjordan Ecovillage brings together a diverse group of people creating an innovative relatively new community in Tipperary led by the Educational Charity Sustainable Projects Ireland CLG, they are doing this a way that is democratic, healthy and socially enriching while minimising ecological impacts.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



The village with the lowest Ecological Footprint in Ireland.

This is the lowest ever measured in Ireland.

The Cloughjordan project supports its status as an ecovillage: its ecological building standards, its carbon-neutral District Heating System and its food system centred on Cloughjordan Community Farm.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



- Ecological building standards have been adhered to in terms of the construction of the Eco village. The buildings are well insulated as well as covering issues of air-tight construction, ventilation, and maximising natural light and heat through building south-facing. The building material is non-toxic in nature and regionally sourced and with low embodied energy. The village has pioneered the use of different building types such as passive timber-frame, Durisol blocks of chipped waste wood bonded with eco-cement, cellulose, hemp-lime, and cob.
- The majority of the 55 houses in the ecovillage have installed photovoltaic panels to generate energy.
- Biomass-fuelled district heating system: All homes in the ecovillage depend on the district system for the supply of hot water and heating. The heating plant contains two 500-kilowatt wood-chip boilers backed up by 500 m² of solar (thermal) panels. This system is the first of its kind in a private housing development in Ireland and is estimated to save some 113.5 tonnes of carbon emissions annually over what would be emitted by an equivalent size development using conventional heating methods. The plant supplies hot water daily to all homes via a well-insulated network of piping and the water is stored in each house in an insulated storage tank supplying hot water and heating.

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



The Eco Village has grown over the last twenty years. The village has one hundred residents living in 55 Eco-homes, a bakery, an enterprise centre and a hostel which are powered by solar and district heating systems. The village has an amphitheatre and a community farm with 16 acres of broadleaved forestry is maturing nicely; a meandering biodiversity trail, colloquially known as the “perimeter walk”, is trod daily by eco-villagers and locals alike. There’s also a steady trail of students, both from school and university, who come to learn in the community.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 1999

End Date: Ongoing



INFORMATION LINKS

<https://www.thevillage.ie>

Twenty years a growing, celebrating 20 years of CloughJordan Eco Village

<https://youtu.be/ZhRiVmhS8T4>

The Relevance of Ecovillages in these Challenging Times

<https://youtu.be/5M68ya9mXs8>

CONTACT

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Community Waste Management / Recycling Programmes

The European Union (EU-27) currently recycles roughly 48% of municipal waste each year, leaving approximately 113 million metric tonnes of residual municipal waste (neither recycled nor reused) annually. Under the European Commission's Waste Framework Directive, residual municipal waste needs to be reduced by 50% by 2030 to roughly 56.5 million metric tonnes. However, the EU is currently not on track to reach this target without reducing total municipal waste.

Waste management in Europe aims at promoting waste treatment options in line with the waste hierarchy, notably favouring preparation for re-use and recycling over disposal operations such as landfilling.

These case studies demonstrate how together communities can do it correctly and how each and every one of these projects is making an impact

1. [MISSÃO CASCAS SOLIDÁRIAS \(MCS\)](#)
2. [GREEN SOAP](#)
3. [NoWaste - GUIDE TO SEPARATE COLLECTION OF HOUSEHOLD WASTE](#)
4. [THE USELESS PROJECT](#)
5. [BALLYLEAGUE RENEWAL'S COMMUNITY COMPOSTING INITIATIVE](#)





MISSÃO CASCAS SOLIDÁRIAS (MCS)

CATEGORY

Community waste management/recycling programmes

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Portugal, District of Évora, 12 municipalities of the district

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

Food waste is increasingly being talked about. On average, in Portugal, each citizen wastes 183 kilos of food per year. The Portuguese values are 10 kilos above the European average, which accounts for a waste of 173 kilos of food, per inhabitant, per year.

This company aims to change this and make a difference environmentally and socially by recycling leftover fruit and vegetables through composting, in an urban environment, and by providing social support

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



MISSÃO CASCAS SOLIDÁRIAS (MCS) or the “Mission Solidary Peels is an active and environmental citizenship initiative developed by the municipal waste company Gesamb. The project, a pioneer in the region, has the primary objective of encouraging local populations and organisations to adopt recycling habits of the organic waste they produce (fruit peels, vegetables, stalks and leaves) while contributing to help those who need it most.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



Since last year, in Alentejo, any citizen, company or organisation can support children and adults with disabilities simply by recycling their fruit and vegetable peelings - less waste, more social support.

The amount of organic waste that citizens separate and deposit in the domestic and community equipment distributed and installed in the district of Évora represents a value, that will later be converted into monetary support for Private Social Solidarity Institutions, whose work is focused on the provision of care to people with disabilities.



MCS managed to deliver more than 300 household composters in the last quarter of 2021 and there is still a list of citizens and companies waiting for their turn. This year, the aim is to provide community composters. These are, to a certain extent, equivalent to the “ecopoints” on the street. The difference is that instead of packages, people deposit organic waste.

Currently, in this pilot phase, there are a total of 28 community composters spread in the more populated areas of 12 municipalities of the district of Évora.

By joining the community composting, people are taking trucks off the road (waste collection), valuing a resource that would otherwise be wasted, and above all, actively participating in restoring the environmental balance of their region.

Sharing & Learning

Ms. Gilda Matos, senior official of GESAMB stated:

“We found that since MCS started, and after all the effort of the door-to-door, street-to-street, house-to-house campaign by the 12 municipalities covered by the GESAMB service, we have had a record number of online requests for home composters. There are 167 eligible people and 5 institutions waiting for their turn. And every day we receive more requests”.

Transferability of the Practice

This is a pioneering solution in the region, and probably also in the country, and that can dictate the success of Community Composting at a national level. It is preparing the ground for municipalities to perpetuate these procedures and good practices in their communities, through their

own means. In the near future, it is expected that residents and civic associations assume this commitment in favour of their community. MCS is just the beginning of a movement that will make a difference in the district of Évora and, hopefully, will echo throughout the country.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 1/6/2021

End Date: Ongoing



EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



MCS managed to deliver more than 300 household composters in the last quarter of 2021. As from February 2022, a new pilot project is installing 28 community composting islands in 12 municipalities in the district of Évora, some of them are already full.

Within the scope of this initiative, 24 municipal officials (from the 12 municipalities) received specific training. They will be checking the community composting islands on a weekly basis and disseminating good composting practices, thus becoming the Composting Guides.



INFORMATION LINKS

[Re-Plant! - Composting is back. \(re-planta.pt\)](https://re-planta.pt)

[Mission solidary shells - Institutional Portal of the Municipality of Mourão \(cm-mourao.pt\)](https://cm-mourao.pt)

CONTACT

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GREEN SOAP

CATEGORY

Community waste management/recycling programmes

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

35, Konstantinou Karamanli St., Florina, Western Macedonia, Greece

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

Hundreds of used soaps and soap packaging residuals are being produced every day in hotel rooms across the country, and with greater intensity during the summer months when most hotels are traditionally overflowing with tourists.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



The Green Soap initiative is a project inspired and carried out by the NGO “Clean Hands”, the first soap recycling company in Greece, founded in 2012 by four enthusiastic young people from the border town of Florina in northwestern Macedonia. The NGO “Clean Hands” works with dozens of volunteers, accepts donations from the public and is currently cooperating with around 100 hotels in Greece.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



Every hotel that wishes to have their soaps and soap packaging recycled and removed contacts “Clean Hands” and is registered on the platform. A cooperation agreement is signed between the hotel and the company and then a receptacle is placed in the premises of the hotel for the soaps and soap packaging material to be disposed and collected. When the receptacle is full, the used products are removed and brought to the soap recycling unit. The hotel is given the “Greensoap” logo that they can use as part of their environmental practices.



The initiative has multiple benefits for the community. Number one, it recycles tonnes of waste that would otherwise end in landfills, already overflowed with waste all over Greece. Number two, it serves a social purpose, as the recycled soaps are sold at very low prices or given for free to poor and vulnerable consumers. Number three, the initiative raises awareness among the foreign and local tourists about the protection of the environment and the benefits of recycling. Hotel owners are also benefited through a positive environmentally friendly company profile.

Sharing & Learning

Shuza Reeves, manager of a hotel that takes part in the Green Soap project, has written:

“Our hotel has fully integrated the project into its routine. We save money from our general budget, we contribute to the recycling of our products and our premises now look cleaner and tidier than ever”.

Transferability of the Practice

The project can be implemented in all hotel premises that use and provide a substantial number of soaps for their customers. The initiative can be carried out by a social enterprise, an NGO or any other civil society organisation that is committed to the protection of the environment and the advantages of recycling practices. Good management skills and former market experience is helpful but not necessary. The project must be well advertised, and the business plan must be carefully designed.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 2012

End Date: Ongoing



EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



100 hotels are already part of the Green Soap network, having helped over 11.000 people with financial difficulties benefit from the project. 62 tonnes of recycling material has been collected and tens of thousands of soaps have been recycled. Further on, the N.G.O. offers a variety of educational trainings in schools about the benefits of recycling, as well as healthy advice and the importance of ...washing our hands!



INFORMATION LINKS

<https://www.greensoap.gr/>
[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=13LN
XWRZGD8&T=14S](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=13LNxWRZGD8&t=14s)

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Photo Sources: <https://www.greensoap.gr/>





NoWaste - GUIDE TO SEPARATE COLLECTION OF HOUSEHOLD WASTE

CATEGORY

Community waste management/recycling programmes

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Bulgaria, City of Sofia

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

The most significant challenge for separate collection is that all citizens must realize their responsibility towards the environment and health of surrounding people and animals, and to make efforts not to throw the batteries, hazardous waste and WEEE generated in each household and offices into the residual waste bins.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



The platform NO WASTE is run by the Green Sofia team and informs locals on where to locate the relevant waste collection points and how to become involved in waste collection volunteer campaigns that are organised periodically.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



The integrated waste management system of the largest Municipality in Bulgaria – Sofia capital city is in force since 2015. It includes waste recycling, treatment and utilization of the waste as well as separate collection organization. The system is constantly improving and aims to reduce the environmental impact of waste, improve recycling and stimulate investment in waste management in Sofia. In spite of the efforts of Sofia Municipality it is acknowledged that further investments in reducing, reusing, repairing, recycling, recovering and disposing are essential for an efficient and sustainable separate waste collection in the city.



The most significant challenge for separate collection is that of all citizens realising their responsibility towards the environment and health of surrounding people and animals, and to make efforts not to throw the batteries, hazardous waste and WEEE generated in each household and offices into the appropriate residual waste bins.

Addressing this problem “Green Sofia”, part of Sofia Development Agency have developed an online guide NO WASTE. The platform provides information on the different types of waste and how they are disposed or collected. The map of the site through geospatial linking information/data sets and shows the location of the different types of containers for separate waste collection, the municipal sites for secondary raw materials, the reuse and repair centers. The schedules for the collection of construction and bulky waste by region are also available.

Stakeholders involved: Sofia Municipality, Ministry of Environment, citizens, companies, waste operators

Sharing & Learning

Mrs. Desislava Stoyanova, part of Green Sofia Team shared what is important to maintain the platform NO WASTE fully operational:

“The main challenge is the regular update of the information on the site. Sofia is growing fast in population numbers. New production sites, offices and residential areas are opening every day. Here the role of our volunteering campaigns for collection of up-to-date information is of utmost importance.”

Transferability of the Practice

The development of waste management information systems is important for waste prevention. This experience is valuable for other municipalities. Waste prevention is the most efficient way to improve resource efficiency and reduce the environmental impact of waste by setting up and supporting re-use and repair networks and repurchase and refill schemes, and by encouraging re-production, renewal and, where appropriate, re-use of products through information sharing platforms.

Spreading the platform opportunities leads to positive green side effects - waste will be prevented and reused and they will not go to incineration, landfill or be dumped in the landscape.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 1/8/2019

End Date: Ongoing

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



The internet platform is fully operational. The Facebook followers of Green Sofia are more than 5.3K. The results are seen through increased quantity and quality of the recycling materials reported by Sofia Municipality increasing annually: +20% separate waste collected compared to the previous period.



INFORMATION LINKS

<http://waste.sofia.bg>

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THE USELESS PROJECT



CATEGORY

Waste Management and Recycling

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

The Useless project is an Irish based initiative with founders Taz and Geraldine based in Dublin. They host events throughout Ireland making sustainable living and the circular economy information more accessible. Then with their enthusiasm and positivity through their online presence they extend their reach even further.

PROBLEMS TACKLED

We are living in a consumerist throwaway culture where household decisions, from diet, to transport, to recreational spending and everyday decisions are estimated to make up 60-70% of global GHG emissions. While we can't place the blame and burden of change on the consumer, it is clear that we all have a large role to play in being responsible with our everyday spending choices and aim to minimise waste wherever we can. With 93% of people in the EU viewing climate change as a serious issue it is clear that people want to do what they can, but for many, making changes can be daunting as they feel insignificant in the face of the scale of the issue.

The useless project's aim is clear; they want to help people use less and feel less 'useless' in the process.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



The Useless project was set-up by friends Geraldine Carton and Taz Kelleher back in November 2018. Stemming from a shared interest in fashion and the environment, Geraldine and Taz have used their unique skills and interests to build the Useless project into what it is today.

Taz is a podcaster, Graphic Designer and social media manager, working for projects like the World Economic Forum.

Geraldine is an artist, writer and meme connoisseur and their combined skillset makes for an accessible and fun delivery style that helps people use less and feel less useless in the fight against climate change.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



The Useless Project helps people take steps toward more sustainable living through tutorials, workshops, tips on food waste prevention, reuse, second-hand and upcycled fashion for individuals, schools or businesses.



Activities

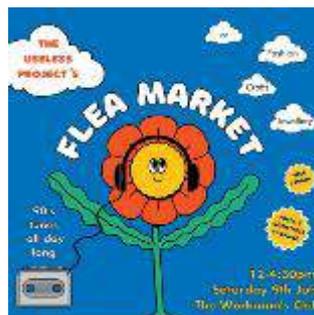
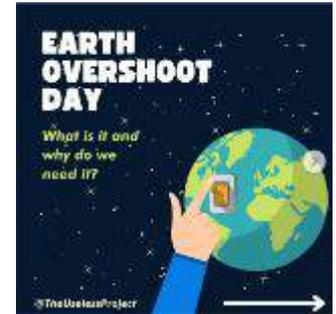
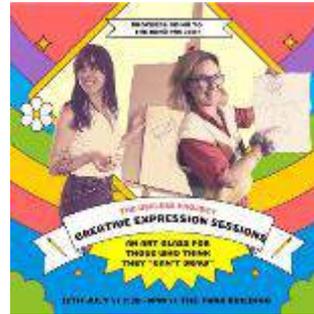
The Useless project started off as a side project called 'Sustainable Fashion Dublin' when the pair shared an interest in sustainable fashion and thrifting. However, once their eyes were opened to the horrors of the fast fashion industry, they began to wonder what else is happening in the world that we don't realise. As Geraldine said, "it's inherently unsustainable to just focus on one area of life", so following a rebrand and a lot of work developing their events and social media presence the Useless project now address issues like recycling, food waste and greenwashing by large corporations.

They now run events (including a monthly flea market!), workshops and provide a wide range of education and awareness-raising resources from DIY upcycling videos and sewing tutorials, to batch-cooking recipes, climate justice deep-dives and listicles of their favourite sustainable brands in Ireland and beyond.

"We're not calling for a small amount of people to be perfectly zero-waste or "100% sustainable". What we want to see is a huge amount of people making incremental positive changes in whatever way they can. So if you're someone who feels useless – just start small. Keep it simple. Just use less"

Evidence of Success

As of the summer of 2022, the useless project has amassed over 45,000 followers online and they hold weekly sold-out events where learners get hands-on solving waste problems and getting in touch with their creative sides at their workshops. Starting from two friends who shared a passion for sustainable fashion, the Useless Projects, positive and accessible approach has helped thousands of people make small incremental changes, reduce waste and feel less useless.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 2018

End Date: Ongoing

Since Taz and Geraldine began in 2018, the useless project has gone on to become one of the biggest sustainability and low waste focused social media pages in Ireland. They are considered thought leaders in Ireland and have been asked to speak at different launch events and on national media, particularly around recycling and low waste movements.





Taz and Geraldine are proof of the impact we can achieve through the use of social media. By starting where they know and looking at where else they can have an influence, they have grown their community of change makers. The Useless project is inspiration for other passionate individuals and friends throughout Europe who may not know where to start. By working on what you know and expanding your sphere of influence you can achieve extraordinary results.



INFORMATION LINKS

<https://www.instagram.com/theuselessproject/>
[Community Resource Network Ireland](#)
[Image Magazine](#)
[Dublin Live](#)

CONTACT

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[Geraldine Carton](#)

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BALLYLEAGUE RENEWAL'S COMMUNITY COMPOSTING INITIATIVE

CATEGORY

Community waste management/recycling programmes

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Ballyleague, Co. Roscommon

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

The lack of provision of a community-based composter in this particular local area. Therefore prior to this initiative vast amounts of organic material were going to landfill for disposal. There was also a need for the delivery of a comprehensive community composting training programme.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



A Voluntary community group working for tidy towns and a variety of village development projects in Ballyleague on the Roscommon - Longford border. There is a core group of 12 members and the wider community assist as needed.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



Community Composting in Ballyleague village has developed centralized facilities which serve the village and divert significant quantities of organic materials from disposal. Composting locally at the community-level yields many other benefits: social inclusion and empowerment, green aware communities, improved local soils, enhanced food security and fewer food deserts, less truck traffic hauling garbage, more local jobs, and increased composting know-how and skills within the local workforce that is reinforced in the next generation.

DETAILED INFORMATION ON THE PRACTICE



Composting is small-scale in that it is locally based and involves community participation which is underpinned by an education programme. When materials are collected and transported out of the community for processing, few if any of these benefits are realised at the local level. In addition, community-scale operations moved from concept to operation in a relatively short time frame in Ballyleague.

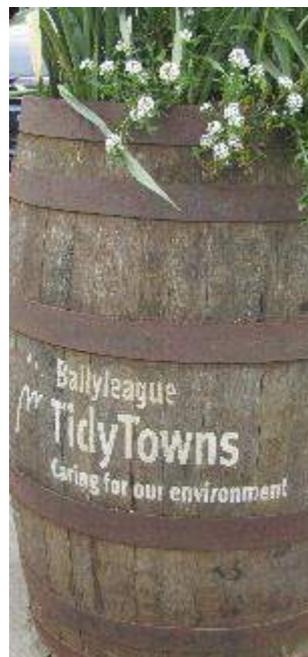
The main aims and activities implemented in the community computing are:

- Resources recovered: Waste is reduced; food scraps and other organic materials are diverted from disposal and composted.
- Locally based and closed loop: Organic materials are a community asset and are generated and recycled into compost within the same community.
- Organic materials returned to soils: Compost is used to enhance local soils, support local food production, and conserve natural ecology by improving soil structure and maintaining nutrients, carbon, and soil micro-organisms.
- Community-scaled and diverse: Composting infrastructure is diverse, distributed, and sustainable; systems are scaled to meet the needs of a self-defined community of Ballyleague
- The Ballyleague Community is engaged, empowered, and educated: compost programming engages and educates the community in food systems thinking, resource stewardship, or community sustainability while providing solutions that empower individuals, businesses, and institutions to capture organic waste and retain it as a community resource.
- Community supported: aligns with community goals (such as healthy soils and healthy Ireland programme) and is supported by the community it serves. The reverse is true, too; a community composting programme supports community social, economic, and environmental well-being.

Sharing & Learning:

Mr. Gerry Trimble, Chairperson of Ballyleague Renewal and Tidy Towns Committee said

“the training enabled me to understand that different materials break down at different rates, grass on its own won’t provide compost but mixed with leaves it attracts the earth worms which enables compost to be made. To make compost is a process, by turning grass and leaves into compost has saved us a lot of money as we no longer have to buy any composts for our tidy town work”.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 1/4/2018

End Date: 13/5/2022

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



- Sixteen village members were upskilled to become competent composters.
- The community composting programme has saved the local tidy towns an enormous amount of money every year in the purchase of compost.
- The compost produced has reduced the need for chemical fertilisers and produces higher-yielding grass and plants.
- Ballyleague community composting initiative uses good composting practices thereby minimising greenhouse gas emissions. The use of compost provides numerous greenhouse gas benefits, both directly through carbon sequestration and indirectly through improved soil health, reduced soil loss, increased water infiltration and storage, and reduction in other inputs.



CONTACT

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Community Water Conservation

Community water conservation is a movement of citizens to help clean up our rivers, oceans, lakes, beaches and coastlines and thereby create greater connection and engagement of citizens with water, allowing them to give back to our planet. The oceans contribute to 75% of the oxygen we have on this planet.

In this section, we showcase some of the community initiatives for water conservation, that are present in our regions. They are important examples of how community actions can lead to great results.

1. [PROJECTO RIOS](#)
2. [ECHEDOROS NATURE](#)
3. [COMMUNITY 'WATER PROTECTORS'](#)
4. [NOREVISION](#)
5. [POLECAT SPRINGS](#)





PROJECTO RIOS

CATEGORY

Community water conservation

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Portugal

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

This environmental education Project is aimed at promoting social participation in the conservation of river areas, due to the wide-ranging deterioration of river quality and the lack of effective involvement of their users and the general population.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



ASPEA is a non-governmental organisation, most of the groups involved in the Project come from educational institutions, from kindergarten to universities.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



The Project aims to create a network for monitoring and adopting stretches of rivers and streams by organised local groups. Using a methodology that is simple but rigorous, standardised, easy to apply and develop, these groups take the responsibility of monitoring and protecting the stretch of watercourse they have selected, thus contributing to the sustained improvement of water resources in general, and of the rehabilitation of their stretch of the watercourse in particular.



Each group is autonomous and must be accompanied on field trips by a duly trained project monitor, which must carry out two field trips per year (spring and autumn) and one improvement action. They are provided with a didactic kit consisting of materials for collecting data and gauging the reality of the riverside ecosystem at various levels: fauna, flora, cultural and ethnographic heritage and the quality of the water and banks.

These activities do improve the studied area and the global quality of a river, and they also inspire scientific curiosity and foster the experimental scientific method by collecting and recording information and geographic, physicochemical, biological, historical, social and ethnographic events. They also contribute to the implementation of the Earth Charter of the UN and the Water Framework Directive of the EU.

Various institutional entities (municipal councils, parish councils, schools, associations, non-governmental organisations, institutes and research centres), companies and the general population are involved in the Project. Currently, most of the groups come from educational institutions, from kindergarten to universities.

Sharing & Learning

The president of ASPEA, Joaquim Ramos Pinto, stated that

“in 2015 over the previous seven years, 50,000 people had adopted 187 kilometres of rivers in 20 Portuguese districts, removing two tonnes of waste from riverbanks and planting hundreds of trees. The main voluntary groups were groups of children, scouts, families and municipalities. There is a higher incidence of districts in northern Portugal because there was financial support from European funds for municipalities in the north”

Transferability of the Practice

The Project Rios has annually organised National Meetings, providing interested groups with the possibility of making known the work carried out on the adopted section, to raise awareness of positive examples of groups that care about rivers.

These Meetings include lectures, presentations of work developed by the groups, presentations of a play/music/dance created by the groups, and didactic workshops, among others. They are open to all and for many groups, work as a “guide” to understand what kind of activities they can develop around the adopted section.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 2006

End Date: Ongoing

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



In 2019 the Project had:

577 river/stream sections adopted in 141 municipalities; 301,5 km of river/stream adopted in 20 districts; 791 monitors in 51 training courses; 603 groups; more than 50,000 people involved in various activities

For a full overview of the results achieved so far, please see

<https://aspea.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/4b5a65c1dbc14c99ae43e9950fccbcce>



INFORMATION LINKS

https://www.facebook.com/projetorios/?ref=pag_e_internal

<https://aspea.org/index.php/pt/projeto-rios-conhecer>

<https://www.facebook.com/aspea.org/videos/1272797246551719>

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ECHEDOROS NATURE

CATEGORY

Community water conservation

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

The Delta of the river of Echedoros (Gallikos) and the lagoon of the village of Kalochori, Thessaloniki, Greece

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

Although the areas of the Echedoros Delta and the Kalochori lagoon is part of one of the most important ecosystems in Greece, the litter that is being illegally wasted in the protected area, in both land and water, by mainly construction companies, farmers and fishermen, makes the intervention of "Echedoros Nature" volunteers urgently needed.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



The initiative belongs to citizens of the nearby villages and urban districts who have kept vivid childhood memories of the riverbanks and the estuary of Echedoros river being clean and friendly to visit, and who consider the present situation of neglect as inappropriate. The State and irresponsible individuals who have not been respecting nature for the past number of decades, it is believed are the ones to blame.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



"Echedoros Nature" is a team of active citizens who lead actions against the manmade degradation of the wetlands of the Echedoros Delta and the Kalochori lagoon and fight against the destruction of its environmental value and beauty.



The team members voluntarily patrol the area finding rubbish and any sort of solid waste and inform the authorities to help remove them.

In the past couple of years, the team has found and notified the police over huge quantities of tyres being thrown into the riverbanks and the seashore, fertilizers' packaging containing dangerous chemical residuals being illegally burned in open-air fires, and they have cleaned overflowing rubbish bins inside the nature reserve and placed extra litter bins for the hikers where needed.

The team often organises and makes public calls to citizens for clean-ups in the area and arranges tree plantings in the nature reserve.

An important "Echedoros Nature" team's recent success has been the support of the state in their plan of reconstructing two old, half-destroyed hiking bridges along the main hiking route around the Delta, preserving the birdwatchers' observatory that has not been maintained in years and is in danger of collapsing, as well as replacing the worn-out trekking route signs.

The amount required for the construction works is raised through an online platform in the framework of the European project "Blue Crowdfunding", which is part of the European Territorial Cooperation Programme INTERREG MEDITERRANEAN 2014-2020.

"Echedoros Nature" team also organises guided cycling events in the routes around the Delta and the lagoon, with frequent stops in points of interest where the participants learn about the fauna and flora of the wetland.

Sharing & Learning

George Konstantinidis, an active volunteer and member of "Echedoros Nature" has stated in a formal meeting about the crowdfunding initiative:

"When I was a child, we were visiting the Delta with our school and we were celebrating the beginning of spring on the clear river banks with my family. All the detrimental results of the last decades' pollution in the area have started to change. We are determined to transform the Delta and the lagoon into what it was - a welcoming place for families and outdoor activities, that all citizens can easily access, as the centre of Thessaloniki lies only 10 kilometres away".

Transferability of the Practice

All it takes for the supervision and protection of the nature reserves is a handful of determined citizens who are committed to the task of fighting pollution and bad practices. The team members come together and form a union that must have a dynamic representation on social media with frequent online activity, aiming to gain popularity. The members must have some free time to dedicate to patrols, actions e.g. cleaning up activities, implementing ideas, finding sponsorships for litter bags to be placed in the area, and finding ways to raise finances is also to help run the project and proceed with bigger scale plans.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 2020

End Date: Ongoing



EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



The volunteers of “Echedoros Nature” supervise the wellbeing of the nature reserve which should be successfully managed and protected by the State. Their commitment is remarkable and a bright example of socially and environmentally responsible behavior.

The team has helped remove tonnes of bulky waste from the heart of the protected wetland, has been informing the public about plenty of activities to clean/protect/revive the wetland and over sinister practices that pollute the area (e.g. burning of pesticides cans containing toxic substances, or petrol leaks coming from a ship in the port of the city, right opposite the Delta).

Through crowdfunding, the team has raised 2,285 euro so far for the maintenance of the hiking bridges of the wetland.



CROWDFUNDING LINK

<https://el.goteo.org/project/gallikos-delta-eco-path>

INFORMATION LINKS

<https://ca.goteo.org/project/gallikos-delta-eco-path>

<https://www.makthes.gr/echedoroy-fysis-kai-perifereia-charassoyn-xana-monopatia-sto-delta-toy-gallikoy-469013>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVdR7v4PJik>

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COMMUNITY 'WATER PROTECTORS'

CATEGORY

Community water conservation

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Bulgaria, City of Sofia, 24 Krastyo Sarafov Str

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

Water is the primary medium through which we will feel the effects of climate change. Water availability is becoming less predictable in many places, and increased incidences of flooding threaten to destroy water points and sanitation facilities and contaminate water sources. The poor water management, biodiversity loss and the continued exploitation of industries such as energy, agriculture and others have negative impact on the water sources.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



Green Peace Bulgaria together with more than 30 experts in water conservation, protection and management. The community is based on an online platform and includes more than 300 subscribers so far.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



The good practice is about an e-learning platform developed and run by Green Peace Bulgaria. It aims to create a "Water Guards" community to exchange knowledge and realise activities aimed at water resource preservation in Bulgaria. To achieve its goals this platform is a place for various series of webinars and regular information events, organised with the help of experts and scientists from different fields presenting various topics such as the impact of climate change on water Resources; the impact of Hydro Power Plants on rivers and their biodiversity; actions that could protect water and others.



The platform facilitates the creation of a community to which everyone interested will be able to join. Participants will have the opportunity to meet other involved people from the country, share the problems they face and seek solutions to deal with them together as a community.

Involvement in the initiative is done by subscribing to a special bulletin “Water Guards”, through which stakeholders will be informed about the development of topics and initiatives that are planned. So far, 5 webinars have been held on:

1. The impact of the coal industry on water resources;
2. Contemporary challenges to water protection in Bulgaria;
3. What is hydropower and how it affects nature and local people;
4. Danube before and now - nature, biodiversity and people;
5. Wetlands - the cradle of life.

Recordings from the webinars can be viewed on the Internet or on the Facebook page of Green Peace - Bulgaria.

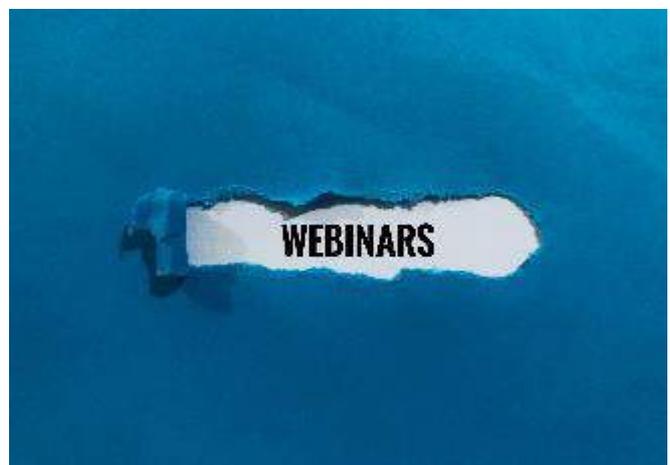
The platform provides open access and stakeholders are all citizens who want to join the initiative, regardless of gender, age, education

Sharing & Learning

Mr. Balinov stated *“Civil society has become a critical stakeholder in environmental decision-making processes and a valued partner in implementing and monitoring environmental policies at the local and national level. When their capacities are adequately developed and respective tools are available, civil society organizations (CSOs) can play important role in nature preservation and climate change actions.”*

Transferability of the Practice

The good practice demonstrates how the e-platforms through webinars and information events can play an important role in engaging the vast majority of stakeholders from all over the country in nature, water and biodiversity protection. The webinars offer the opportunity to discuss various topics such as: the impact of climate change on water resources, the impact of Hydro Power Plants on rivers and their biodiversity; actions by which we could protect water, and others.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 1/11/2021

End Date: Ongoing

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



This is the first in its kind initiative in Bulgaria, to form a community of stakeholders on water protection and preservation. So far, five webinars have been held, with more than 300 people taking part and with more than 10 million views of the videos on Facebook. More than 1,500 people were interested in the webinars. New webinars are coming up, for which there will be information on the Facebook page of Green Peace Bulgaria - <https://www.facebook.com/greenpeacebg>



INFORMATION LINKS

https://act.gp/Blog_PaziteliNaVodata

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VerLTmWZKS0&list=PLQeUNU9u1jSFLnPEsMz4ZVfu7-MxKvP3G&index=4&ab_channel=GreenpeaceBulgaria

CONTACT

Balin Balinov

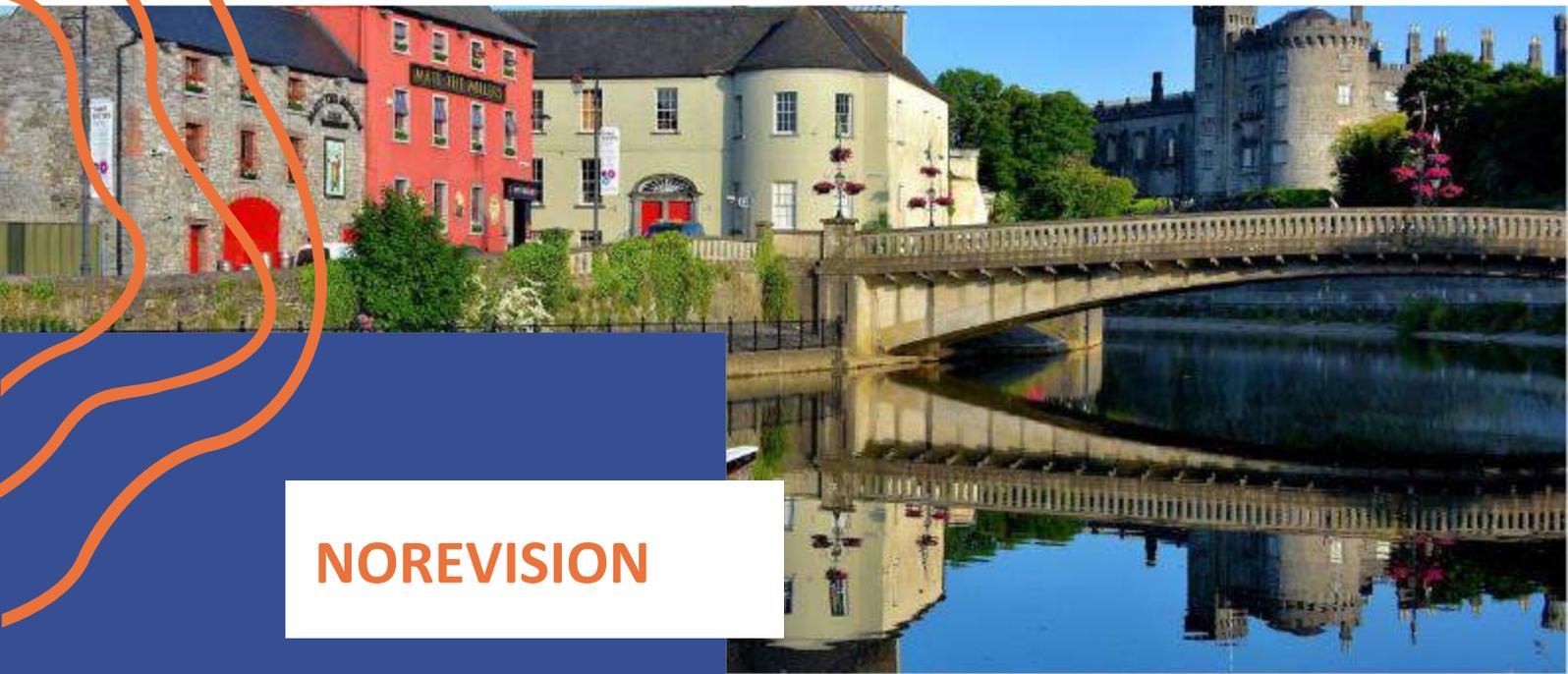
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NOREVISION

CATEGORY

Community Water Conservation Project

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Ireland

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

NoreVision tackles issues of the future of the River Nore in the Republic of Ireland. This river runs through several counties in Ireland and therefore its health and conservation are of utmost importance to many citizens in its vicinity. Having a plan for the future of this river and its hinterland will give them some element of influence over the health and prosperity of the River Nore.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



NoreVision is a statement of the shared aspirations of stakeholders for the future of the River Nore, its tributaries, the land that drains into them, and the people who live and work there.

The Nore catchment is the source of drinking water, flood control, biodiversity, food and resource production for some 110,000 residents across 2,500 km² in a strong farming region.

Through a series of initiatives, such as, water quality monitoring, biodiversity walks, oral history, farming, education and invasive species, NoreVision aims to maintain the health and prosperity of the River Nore.



What is The Nore Vision?

First and foremost, The Nore Vision is an evolving initiative. To date, the initiative has been a consultation process funded by Kilkenny LEADER Partnership, Laois Partnership, North Tipperary Development Company and South Tipperary Development Company through LEADER funding under the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020.

Who is The Nore Vision?

The Nore Vision is 'you'. It is every stakeholder who has participated in the consultation process, sharing their hopes and ideas for the future of River Nore and its tributaries, whether an individual or as a representative of a group, organisation or agency. The Nore Vision is overseen by a voluntary steering group with members drawn from the community, development organisations, local authorities and statutory agencies.

The Nore Vision process:

From October 2017 to March 2018, over 200 people participated in consultation workshops for The Nore Vision including residents, landowners, community groups, development organisations and government agencies. The consultations revealed that while people, groups and agencies have a range of perspectives and priorities when it comes to the River Nore and its tributaries, there is a great deal of common ground with regard to their 'Vision' for the future.

The Nore Vision report:

This report brings together the contributions of all the stakeholders that participated in the consultation and presents their collective aspirations and ideas for the future of the Nore and its tributaries. It also reveals the extent of people, groups, organisations and agencies working on matters related to the Nore. The

consensus that is documented in this report from around the catchment and across interests is a valuable outcome of the consultation process. This is summarised into the five priority themes of 'The Nore Vision' towards the end of the report. This is the statement of the shared aspirations of stakeholders for the future of the River and all of its tributaries, the land that drains into them, and the people who live and work there. It sets out the future that the participants in the 2017/2018 consultation process for The Nore Vision wish to see for the catchment during their lifetime.

Nore Vision is a 'generational' initiative with five priorities



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 2017

End Date: Ongoing



Sharing and Learning

NoreVision, after the results of the 2017/2018 report, began a series of initiatives. For example, they developed a water quality monitoring initiative, which aims to increase understanding and the identification of the problems that lead to water quality issues. The biodiversity walks are led by expert ecologists and help participants learn more about the catchment. The invasive species project aims to promote awareness of the importance of the River Nore for us and the oral history project was developed as an engaging activity to capture the heritage of the river.

Furthermore, NoreVision has education and farming programmes. They also have a podcast series about the project, its initiatives and an update on the work they are doing. This is how they share with others the work they are undertaking and promote themselves to bring others into the project to learn about the River Nore and its possibilities.

Transferability of the Practice

NoreVision is an extremely transferable project. It highlights the importance of taking care of the local Rivers, to protect the animals and fish from pollution. It also highlights that education, farming all play important roles in protecting biodiversity. By educating people on the history of the River and by leading them around the river, NoreVision aims to create a respect for the area, and to highlight its potential and importance in the community.



INFORMATION LINKS

<https://www.norevision.ie/>

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POLECAT SEC , 1 MW COMMUNITY PHOTOVOLTAIC FACILITY FEASIBILITY STUDY

CATEGORY

Community water conservation

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Lisavilla, Elphin, Co. Roscommon

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

Being a Community Co-operative, Polecat Springs GWS will be using all profits for community gain within its catchment. Currently they require their existing energy project to be enhanced and scaled up to meet the demand placed on it. With the main emphasis being on climate action, energy and environmental sustainability. Polecat Springs GWS have considered other types of technology for renewable energy generation but feel that it is best at this stage to go with Photovoltaic (PV) as it can be located in a way that has the least visual impact on the Community and will therefore have better acceptance.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



Operating for over 30 years, Polecat Springs GWS is the largest private Group Water Scheme in Co. Roscommon. They deliver a high-quality treated water supply to over 600 households and farms in and around the Elphin area. They have organised and spent over €5,000,000.00 of capital expenditure on elements such as providing a state-of-the-art treatment plant, network upgrading and leak elimination, metering, etc. Polecat Springs GWS operates a Source Site & Treatment Plant at Lisavilla, Elphin

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



The ultimate aim of the promoter is to upscale the existing Photovoltaic Energy Project for the production of electricity from a renewable source in Elphin. This project will be delivered to assess what is the viable scale of facility. The promoters then hope to apply for Community status under the Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (RESS).



In 2019 Polecat GWS successfully installed a smaller scale 50kW PV installation with the aim of producing 70% of its annual electricity requirements (€10,000 per year) from this source. In 2020, this installation produced over €7,500 worth of electricity which was used on-site for pumping and treatment. This amounted to almost 75% of the scheme's energy demand. An additional amount of generated electricity worth almost €2000 was exported to the Grid.

Polecat is aiming at a minimum size of 1 MW up to a possible maximum of 5 MW depending on the outcome of the Feasibility study. The smaller size would involve an expenditure of just over 1 million euro up to a possible 6 million euro for a 6 MW plant. RESS is operated by the Department of Communications Climate Action and Energy as the cornerstone for producing electricity from renewable sources into the future. It offers a guaranteed Power Purchase Agreement up until December 2037 at the earliest. RESS also has a mandatory requirement for a Community Benefit Fund to be set up by the electricity producer. Being a Community Co-op, Polecat will be using all profits for Community gain within its catchment – with the main emphasis being on climate action, energy and environmental sustainability. The scheme has considered other types of technology for renewable energy generation but feel that it is best at this stage to go with PV as it can be located in a way that has the least visual impact on the Community and will therefore have better acceptance

Sharing & Learning:

The genesis of Polecat SEC in 2019 was the desire felt within the Polecat Springs GWS entity to reduce the annual electricity bill of almost €10K. The group identified renewable energy, in particular community solar PV, as the most optimum method of achieving this. The existing Polecat Springs PV System was the first large-scale community operated renewable energy project in Co. Roscommon.

The Final Report will be in the form of a Masterplan which will provide an overview of the current situation as regards energy sustainability in the area, using data on building age, BER ratings, population profile, motor vehicle profile and similar (based on National Census and other available data). This study clearly shows the need there is for works such as retrofitting homes, micro generation, sustainable transport vehicles and much more. Polecat Springs will be the Co-ordinator, Driver and Promoter of sustainable energy in the Community. It will also be an example of best practice that can be replicated in other communities throughout Co. Roscommon and beyond. If successful at this scale, there is the possibility of the Polecat Springs SEC being expanded to cover a much wider catchment area as has happened with CLAR in Claremorris.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 28/7/2021

End Date: Ongoing

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



The motivation for the initial project was two-fold: firstly, to reduce electricity bills; and secondly, the group were passionate about the need to collectively reduce the dependency on fossil fuels locally with all the attendant consequences of such dependency. In addition, they also had the intention of raising awareness about and acceptance of renewable energy as a means of delivering Community benefit as well as environmental gain.

The ambitious vision of the project is to grow the SEC to provide a 5MW PV project within the 150sq km hinterland. Fundamental to the RESS Community Scheme is that this project is community controlled with potential profits from the sale of electricity into the grid returned to the local community for further development. The plan is to be a part of the government policy of locating more large-scale consumers of electricity closer to the sources of renewable energy with consequent employment benefits to the region.

As per the National Energy and Climate Plan, the promoters envisage the implementation of local schemes to retrofit homes to the highest BER ratings, the establishment of electric vehicles charging points as well as the encouragement of more sustainable methods of farming.



INFORMATION LINKS

<https://www.con-telegraph.ie/2020/03/05/west-of-ireland-group-water-scheme-launches-new-solar-panel-project/>

<https://www.veolia.ie/media/news-and-press-releases/group-water-scheme-launches-new-solar-energy-project>

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Community Learning and Sustainability Initiatives

Local communities have an indispensable role to play in supporting people's learning and development and in creating societies that are engaged, inclusive and sustainable.

Community-based learning strengthens bonds across generations, promotes agency and self-reliance, and fosters social cohesion, thus encouraging active citizenship and a sense of ownership of a community's future. Moreover, it enables the exchange of information and the development of skills necessary to tackle the challenges of today's rapidly changing world, ultimately contributing in a very significant way to sustainable development at a local level.

Check out these 9 great examples of Community Learning and Sustainability initiatives that are being carried out within our regions across Europe.

1. [REDE MAPEAR](#)
2. [FRIENDS OF THE NEW WATERFRONT](#)
3. [HORSE FOREST FIREWATCHERS PATROL](#)
4. [BE PROACTIVE - CHANGE THE WORLD](#)
5. [GLOBE BUDDY](#)
6. [MILJØPUNKT NØRREBRO](#)
7. [BIOTEKET](#)
8. [EDIBLE LANDSCAPE PROJECT](#)
9. [FARMING RATHCROGHAN EIP](#)





REDE MAPEAR – EDUCATIONAL NETWORK FOR A COLLABORATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL MAPPING OF AIR AND NOISE QUALITY

CATEGORY

Community learning and sustainability initiatives

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Portugal

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

This network aims to promote socio-environmental literacy, in the educational community, on the impacts of air quality and its effects, above all on human health, and thus encourage active participation in the daily lives of the communities and cities in which they operate. It is the follow-up of a pilot project with the same title.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



ASPEA - Portuguese Environmental Education Association, a non-profit Environmental Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), founded in June 1990.

Since 2020, 47 secondary schools became members of the network.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



The network MAPeAR is intended to introduce research activities and citizen science methodologies in secondary schools, in the area of air quality; to promote and raise awareness and socio-environmental literacy in secondary schools; to train teachers and students to become MAPeAR multiplier agents, through the use of digital tools and air quality measurement; to encourage teachers and students to actively participate in the development of public policies for the materialisation of smart, resilient and sustainable cities.





This programme began by offering teachers a training course/workshop of at least 25 hours to deepen the theoretical and practical contents in the area of air quality, public and human health, and public participation in public policies; and to produce a tutorial providing teachers and students with didactic sheets allowing them to explore the methodology of air quality contents, and not simply apply the protocol for measurement and use of the equipment provided. To this end, several face-to-face workshops and on-line meetings and webinars were organised throughout the country in 2020 and 2021.

The measurements in this project will focus on the continuous (fixed) and commuting (mobile) measurement of PM10 and PM2.5 particles in the air of ASPEA's associated schools and regional centres and respective commuting routes, given that this is considered one of the most critical pollutants in Portugal, exceeding in several urban areas the concentration limit values allowed by the legislation in force.

Several monitoring campaigns were organised in 2020 and 2021, and measurements were taken for emissions of particles into the atmosphere, noxious gases and excessive noise. The whole educational community, participates and the whole community around the school/in their city benefit from the activities of the MAPeAR network.

Sharing & Learning

Joaquim Ramos Pinto, President of ASPEA, stated that the pilot project now underway includes a total of 15 actions.

"The set of actions ... connects schools, their teachers and students, but also local communities, local authorities, civil protection, businesses, the scientific community and civil society in general". And he clarifies: "This strengthening of social links allows for a deepening of self-reflection, supporting inclusion and awareness of co-responsibility in the management of air quality".

Transferability of the Practice

As the network keeps expanding throughout the country, more schools are becoming associated parties. More teachers and students are involved in its activities and more monitoring campaigns are put in practice. There is a continued increase in air quality monitoring data, as well as an increase in awareness-raising in the local communities around the schools. Therefore, it is through example that the practice is being transferred to new locations.

The MAPeAR Network organised a Participatory Forum. It brought together ASPEA's delegations and its partners, universities, NGOs, political parties and decision-makers of the local and central public administration to discuss the best practices in the management of air quality in the urban areas of the associated schools. The network is successfully contributing to bringing young people closer to democratic institutions and participative democracy



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 1/52020

End Date: Ongoing



EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



The main outcome of the MAPeAR network is the WebGIS (Geographical Information System), a space where all stakeholders can share, analyse and compare results collected. It includes three components:

- dashboards, allowing to present the project's quantitative results in an immediate way and in real time
- a geo-visualizer, allowing crossing the project's quantitative and qualitative information through several layers; and
- story maps, for communicating quantitative and qualitative data.

10.ºGT3

CONHECE OS SENSORES INSTALADOS NA NOSSA ESCOLA

Na NOSSA ESCOLA temos instalado 5 SENSORES num único equipamento. Nesse equipamento, esses sensores medem as seguintes grandezas do AR:

- MATERIA PARTICULADA (PM 2,5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, PM 10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$);
- TEMPERATURA ($^{\circ}\text{C}$);
- HUMIDADE (%H);
- PRESSÃO ATMOSFÉRICA (hPa).

A sua LOCALIZAÇÃO na nossa ESCOLA é AQUI!

As MEDIDAS podem ser consultadas no ENDEREÇO

<http://api-mt.madwin.de/graficos/CUoL5eZM2/poi-sensores?orgId=1&view=detail&esp6266-2393578>

IDENTIFICAÇÃO DO SENSOR
ID: **esp6266-2393578**

Semana da Cultura Científica
22 a 26 de novembro

ASPEA
MAPEAR

INFORMATION LINKS

<https://aspea.org/index.php/pt/o-que-fazemos/projetos-nacionais/redemapear>

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ASPEA – Associação Portuguesa de Educação Ambiental

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FRIENDS OF THE NEW WATERFRONT

CATEGORY

Community learning and sustainability initiatives

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Along “Megalou Alexandrou” Avenue, Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki, Greece

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

Countless tonnes of solid waste are being disposed of every year on earth, and Greece is not an exception. Reusing subproducts after being treated, transformed and recycled for a different use, for example as clothes, is a common sustainability practice as the production of a substantial percentage of solid waste is avoided.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



The catwalk is organised by the “Friends of New Waterfront” association. The association was founded once the “old” new waterfront’s renovation works were concluded in late 2013. Since, the “Friends of the New Waterfront” have implemented several art, music and raise awareness events on the site that have attracted thousands of residents.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



In September of each year since 2014 the “New Catwalk” is being scheduled on the New Waterfront of the city of Thessaloniki. The event attracts hundreds of spectators and has taken place in several locations along the new waterfront.



The fashion items presented in the catwalk are produced by recycled materials such as cloth, leather, carton, plastic etc. The main purpose of the event is to raise awareness of the good sustainability practices in society, recycling being prevalent amongst them.

Sharing & Learning

In a recent section dedicated to the initiatives of the Friends of the New Waterfront of Thessaloniki, representatives of the association stated that:

“Cultural Heritage is intertwined with something unexpected and subversive, making creative materials from garbage. Artists have learned how to use garbage and see it as a material where every new creation has its own identity and history.”

Transferability of the Practice

Events like these are very transferable in other coastal regions. Organising a public catwalk only requires a proper flat and long surface on a public space, preferably busy and with easy access. An alternative is to organise the event indoors, as long as the premises are free and popular with the public (with frequent public visits).

Fashion designers willing to participate by designing and creating clothes from recycling products need to be contacted, sponsorship for the minimum costs of the event must be guaranteed, the city council must give its permission for the use of the public space, the event must be advertised on social media and the local press.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: September 2014

End Date: Ongoing (except in 2020 due to the pandemic)



EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



The participation of fashion designers and the interest of the public keep growing year after year. 2021's New Recycling Catwalk included 19 fashion designers' creations.



INFORMATION LINKS

<https://www.ertnews.gr/roi-idiseon/prototypi-pasarela-drasi-gia-tin-anakyklosi-sti-nea-paralia-thessalonikis/>

<https://paraliazo.gr/draseis-2/>

<https://paraliazo.gr/pasarela/>

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Bernard Cuomo (deputy chair)

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"FRIENDS OF NEW WATERFRONT"

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Photo Sources: <https://www.protothema.gr/greece/article/822415/thessaloniki-pasarela-sti-nea-paralia-me-rouha-apo-anakuklosima-ulika/>
<https://www.polismagazino.gr/%CE%B5%CF%80%CE%AF%CE%B4%CE%B5%CE%B9%CE%BE%CE%B7-%CE%BC%CF%8C%CE%B4%CE%B1%CF%82-%CE%B1%CF%80%CF%8C-%CF%84%CE%BF%CF%85%CF%82-%CF%86%CE%AF%CE%BB%CE%BF%CF%85%CF%82-%CF%84%CE%B7%CF%82-%CE%BD/>



HORSE FOREST FIREWATCHERS PATROL

CATEGORY

Community learning and sustainability initiatives

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Eastern Thessaloniki, City Forest “Şeyh Su”, Greece

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

The city pine forest of Thessaloniki named “Say Sooh” is pretty vulnerable to forest fires that occur almost entirely during the summertime, when temperatures are high, and the pine needles are dry and flammable. Volunteers’ patrols across the forest paths are thus vital. Moreover, the members of the Horse Forest Firewatchers Patrol develop their riding skills and learn to love both horses and the nature while simultaneously offering a great service to the community through their volunteers patrolling work.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



The Horse Forest Firewatchers Patrol is under the Supervision National Park Department and all people involved are also members of the Civil Protection Elite Union of the Municipality of Thessaloniki. Participation is strictly voluntary and all volunteers have been undergoing various training programmes offered by the department.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



The Horse Forest Firewatchers Patrol, traditionally known as “Amazons” and “Horseriders” to the public, implement surveillance tours in the city forest of Thessaloniki that covers an extended area in the east and southeast sides of the city and is prone to forest fires during the summer period. About 20 volunteers and their horses patrol in turns inside the forest, as well as in other nature sights on the outskirts of Thessaloniki, such as the Thermi Dam Park and the Epanomi lagoon.



The concept of patrolling the city forest against fire stems from the fact that horses are able to approach surfaces in the forest that are impossible to be approached by car, motorcycle or other conventional means of transport. Riding on the back of the horse makes riders also be in a permanent state of readiness.

The Horse Forest Firewatchers Patrol members have fully experienced riders, many of whom frequently take part in horse riding races. The patrol horses are also trained beforehand, focusing in particular on their psychology, explaining correctly their reactions in case of fire and becoming familiar with the morphology of the terrain.

Sharing & Learning

Chrisa Makri, a distinguished member of the team, states:

“The whole idea was born in our minds while we were riding in the forest during our common trainings. Our love for horse riding and for the nature were met in the founding of the Horse Forest Firewatchers Patrol. When people see us appearing between the trees, first they lose it, then they respect our efforts and even take the chance for a photograph with us!”.

Transferability of the Practice

For the transferability of an initiative like this another region would require a horse-riding club with skilled riders who are committed to protecting nature and are happy to volunteer, plus any natural reserve, forest or park that is prone to fire and with a relevant proximity to the horse-riding club.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 2006

End Date: Ongoing (every May to September)

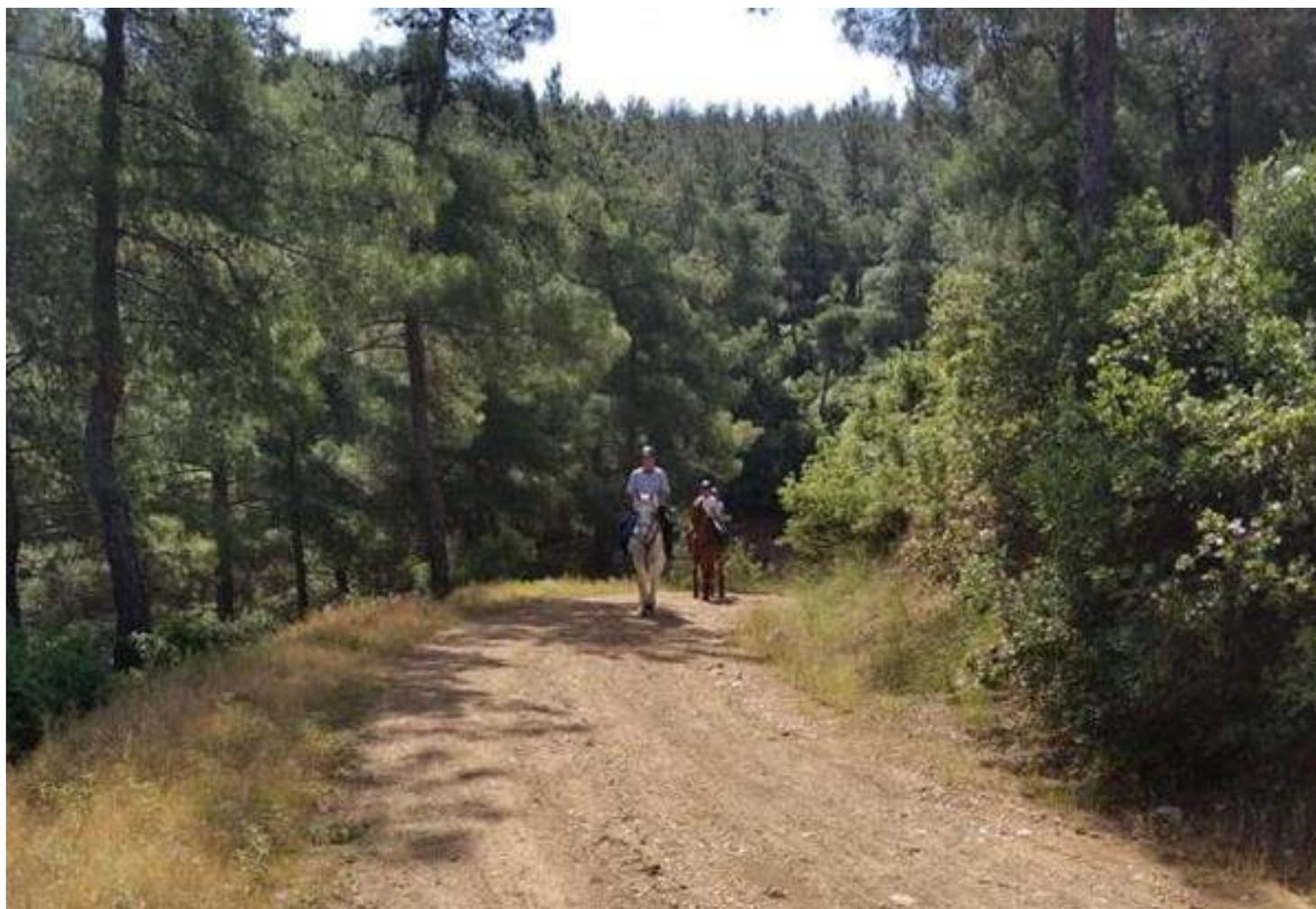


EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



The Horse Forest Firewatchers Patrol members have successfully informed the relevant authorities of forest fire incidents in the course of the years since 2006 and have been precious help to the Fire Brigade Department of Thessaloniki.

Various volunteers have been trained to horse riding and many more have discovered the beauty of nature and the fulfillment one feels when they serve the public for the common good.



INFORMATION LINKS

<https://www.karfitsa.gr/koinonia/thessaloniki-sti-machi-tis-perifrourosis-tou-seich-sou-oi-ethelontes/>

<http://www.epomeathessalonikis.gr/index.php/activities-menu/246-8-39>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wzrkdtDFsA>

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MUNICIPALITY OF THESSALONIKI

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BE PROACTIVE - CHANGE THE WORLD

CATEGORY

Community learning and sustainability initiatives

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Bulgaria, North East Region, Varna, 14 "Sava Radulov" str

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

It is believed that the citizens are not engaged enough in nature preservation. Protecting the environment for self-interested reasons is the message sent to the citizens. The slogan of the initiative is: "PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT IS A PERSONAL INTEREST OF EVERYONE OF US". Yet to date, the dominant approach for promoting pro-environmental behaviour has focused on highlighting the benefits to others or nature, rather than appealing to self-interest.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



The volunteers involved in the initiative are the students of the first established faculty of Ecology and Environmental preservation in Bulgaria, targeting a means of how to implement their expertise as active citizens. The initiative is orchestrated by the Public Environmental Center for Sustainable Development in Varna.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



The good practice demonstrates a number of activities and campaigns initiated by the Public Environmental Center for Sustainable Development targeted towards citizens and local authorities to raise awareness on climate change and nature protection.



The diversity of campaigns includes: (i) separate collection and recycling of paper waste from offices and educational institutions; (ii) support to schools and kindergartens in reducing energy consumption; (iii) promotion of vertical greening of buildings as a possible solution for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the city of Varna and others. The information is disseminated through organised outdoor events, and the distribution of information materials in schools and universities.

The activities and campaigns are seen as means and approach towards reducing pollution and repairing damages as well as prevailing eventual future harms on the environment.

To engage the citizens the Center is developing different titles for the campaigns for example: "Return a bottle - grab a book" for separate collection and recycling of paper and glass bottles, and "I prefer cups for multiple use" for replacing in the kindergartens the single-use plastic cups with multiple use metal ones. The Center confronts the implementation of GMO food and further promotes organic agriculture and composting. In the summer they organised the Eco camp „Ezerets“ aimed at promoting healthy living, passive buildings and clean food.

Beneficiaries of the practice are the entire population of the City of Varna.

Sharing & Learning

Ilyian Iliev, one of the Center founders shared with us:

"Up till now we managed to:

- *Involve more than 300 company offices to participate in a programme for recycling;*
- *Promote more than 45 civil initiatives and practices;*
- *Train more than 1000 students;*
- *Provide dozens of juridical consults;*

- *Prevent the cutting of more than 800 trees;*
- *Run a common approach referendum."*

Transferability of the Practice

The campaigns and initiatives are applicable in different areas. Addressing environmental issues requires that people do things differently. The approach is to embrace self-interest and to develop programmes and messages that appeal to the personal benefits of environmental protection, such as saving money or garnering the social approval of others.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 15/12/2009

End Date: Ongoing

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



The campaign “I choose the cup for multiple usage” won the 2020 competition BEYOND PLASTIC AWARD;

The project “Rural ecology” of the Public Center for Sustainable development is one of the 15 chosen projects by the European body of solidarity that will be presented and included in the new vision of the programme.

The EC presented the “Page by page” report on “Erasmus+” projects for the 2014-2020 period. “Ecocamp Ezerets” had been awarded the “Most influential volunteer initiative for 2019” by the Municipality of Varna. The competition was held within the “Youth activities 2019”



INFORMATION LINKS

<https://ecovarna.info/>

<https://www.facebook.com/ecovarna>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbfeatfZgQrnmChR2KDyDkw>

<https://youtu.be/t9DaXPnzwcM>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbfeatfZgQrnmChR2KDyDkw>

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GLOBE BUDDY

CATEGORY

Community learning and sustainability initiatives

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Denmark

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

Pet food leaves a considerable carbon footprint, e.g., the average dog in its lifetime is responsible for the emission of greenhouse gases equivalent to 13 flights from Berlin to Barcelona and back, mainly due to the use of traditional meat sources in the food.

Globe Buddy is a start-up with a mission to keep pets happy and healthy through planet-friendly pet food. Therefore, this project is tackling the environmental impact of pet food.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



Globe Buddy - two co-founders who are working to get the business going. They share a passion for pets as well as sustainability.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



Globe Buddy is founded on the ideals of sustainability. They're not just another company here to sell you traditional pet food. Their purpose is to inspire a sustainable pet life.

They're committed to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, known as the 17 SDGs. Their efforts particularly focus on six of the SDGs.

Goal 17 is "Partnerships for the Goals". Put simply, it's a very important goal, which all of the other goals are dependent upon. They actively reach out to other companies, organisations, and the public sector, because we know partnerships are key to achieving the SDGs. We collaborate closely with our suppliers to drive sustainable development.



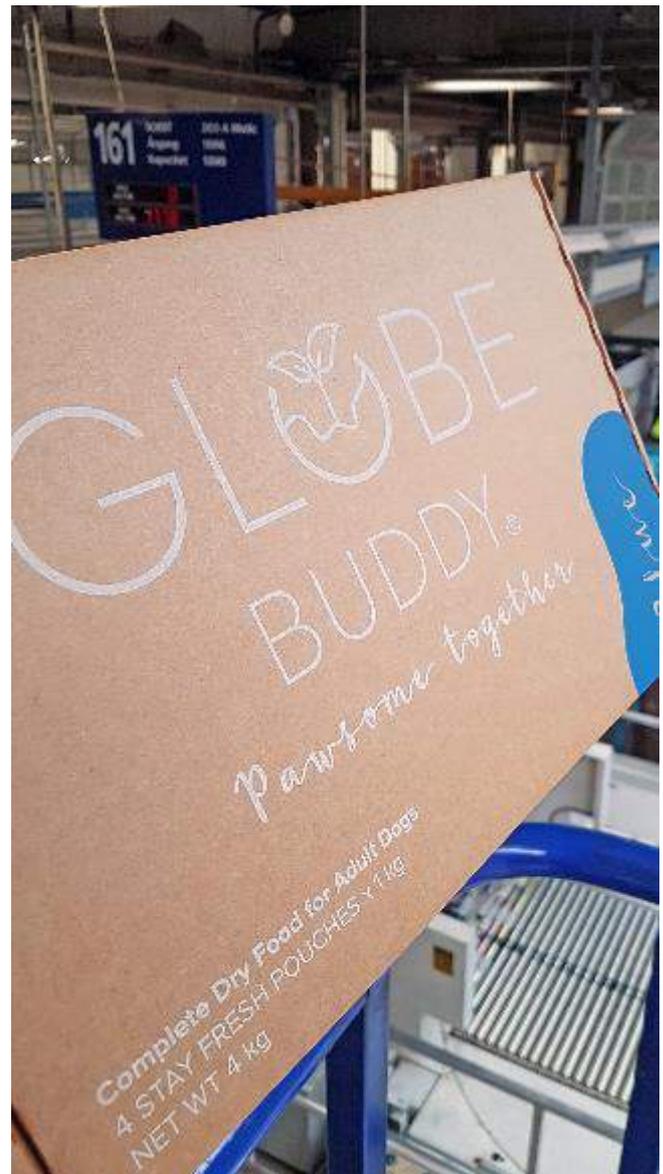
Sustainability is the keyword in everything Globe Buddy does. Their pet food is created in a planet-friendly way and therefore their carbon footprint is smaller. They use solar-powered production facilities and recyclable packaging. They also carefully evaluate suppliers as they want to make sure they share the same values. However, the organisation also values feedback from its customers, and then uses this feedback proactively in product development. Their tagline is “Pawsome together”, and it involves all aspects of the business, from working with relevant suppliers to implementing feedback from customers.

Sharing & Learning

Globe Buddy has learned that working with climate action in business and product development can be quite complex. They want to do good and reach so many goals in a short amount of time, but they have learned that it’s better to keep it simple and take one step at a time. That means to focus, for example on ingredients, or packaging, and maybe not on all elements at once. By doing that, it’s easier to keep track and see the improvements coming.

Transferability of the Practice

Others should also be aware of regulations, especially if they are working with different markets internationally. There are many regulations within the food and pet food production as well as in regard to packaging, and marketing claims. Again, take one step at a time and focus and be realistic. Their advice is that others should not expect that it is possible to develop a product or business that is 100% sustainable in a very short time. It’s good to have the 100% as a vision and aim for it, and then take the time and steps to get there. Customers will value you for the effort and every improvement you make on the journey.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 1/1/2020

End Date: Ongoing



EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



As mentioned already pet food manufacture, packaging, distribution and consumption leave a considerable carbon footprint, mainly due to the use of traditional meat sources in the food. The Globe Buddy brand's purpose is to inspire a sustainable pet life, and they do so by offering easy access to planet-friendly pet food, including transparency of carbon emissions and the climate impact of individual products accompanied by a commitment to reduce them. They focus their product development on climate-friendly solutions, e.g., with ingredients using plant-based sources or insects. Their company is small, yet they believe their activities contribute to the movement that is needed within the industry. They also think that they need to give consumers an opportunity to choose a sustainable solution as well as provide insight into the good environmental consequences of making a difference.



INFORMATION LINKS

<https://globebuddy.dog/>

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MILJØPUNKT NØRREBRO

CATEGORY

Community learning and sustainability initiatives

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Nørrebro, Denmark

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

Miljøpunkt Nørrebro is a foundation that works for a better environment in Nørrebro. They do this by implementing tangible environmental and climate projects. But also, by challenging citizens and decision-makers' perceptions of what is possible.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



Miljøpunkt Nørrebro - 4 main team members

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



Miljøpunkt Nørrebro is a Nørrebro-based organisation that seeks to help Copenhagen achieve carbon neutrality by 2025 and accomplish Denmark's objective of reducing carbon emissions by 70% by 2030 under the terms of the Paris Climate Agreement.



The energy of environmental labour is captured, organised, coordinated, and, most importantly, maintained by Miljupunkt Nørrebro. They ensure that synergies and experiences are maintained in the district and assist in creating a common platform for the district's diverse professional knowledge and extensive experience. In the borough's environmental activity, Miljupunkt Nørrebro plays a variety of roles, including those of mediator, instigator, bridge-builder, networker, coordinator, front-runner, and citizen advocate. As an independent actor with many contacts across political organisations, administrative roles, and population categories, MPN has advantages. The role of the environmental points appears to be unchanged in the ongoing work of "adapting local committees" in the municipality of Copenhagen, MPN, which they believe indicates that there is their task. Some of the current projects they are working on include:

- **Impact Farm:** The farm uses the hydroponic diving system, which is known for marijuana production in containers and from NASA's preparations for a manned Mars mission. Hydroponic cultivation takes place completely without soil and with minimal water consumption. The crops even grow quickly and throughout the year.

Their vision with this effort is for Nørrebro to take the first step towards sustainable food production on a large scale. It will be fantastic if Nørrebro – despite the fact that they have the fewest green areas – shows the way in this important area. The project is an example of how the necessary green transition of our cities can create value and green jobs in the local community.

Impact Farm is created by Human Habitat (design and engineering) and MPN have helped with fundraising, local facilitation and project management. The project was first in the pilot phase on Jesper Brochmandsgade and has now been upgraded and put up at Copenhagen University College at Sigurdsgade 26, with support from Realdania's Wonders campaign. Here, the farm is included in both teaching about food and sustainability, canteen kitchen and as an extra 'stage' for events.

Træbørsen: The goal is to preserve the old trees in the city instead of them being felled. The method

is to create a wooden exchange where people can offer trees that stand for felling and people can demand large old trees. In addition, an agreement has been made with Metroselskabet that they must be alerted no later than 3 weeks before a tree is to be felled. The project has the largest wood removal machine in the Nordic region, which takes 4 tonnes of soil around the roots.

Trees for approx. 30,000 can be procured for interested recipients for the moving costs of approx. DKK 5,000. The results over the last 4 years have been that about 300 trees have been saved. Krinsen on Kongens Nytorv with 52 emperors has been saved from felling and the trees have been moved to schools (e.g. Anders Morgenthaler's small school), to private individuals (e.g. Merete Stagetorn's farm in Slangstrup with an avenue with 12 trees) and others. An Ørestad park with about 100 trees has been created on the windswept vestamager.

Sharing & Learning

Miljupunkt Nørrebro emphasises that for environmental change to happen, a group of leaders, organisations, and governments must fight for and carry out projects that aim to be of assistance. According to *Anders Irn Jensen, Director of Miljupunkt Nørrebro,*

"My goal is to help Nørrebro's numerous worthwhile environmental initiatives. When I launched the Ladegårds project, I myself was a firebrand who used Miljupunkt Nørrebro. A reputable organisation like Miljupunkt Nørrebro is necessary for the excellent ideas to spread and have an impact at the district level."

Transferability of the Practice

The methods of Miljupunkt Nørrebro are very transferrable. They make a strong case for engaging with authorities, organisations, and leaders to forge a community of actors who are all committed to taking action on climate change. Additionally, before beginning a project, they show the genuine need for the change, point out potential difficulties, and work backwards to figure out how their project may be effective and link it to the House Rules that Lersgrftens follows.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 2011

End Date: Ongoing

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



Numerous ongoing projects of Miljunkt Nørrebro have directly tackled climate change action in Denmark. Those initiatives, such as Traebrsen and Impact Farm, have helped to achieve the goal of lowering Denmark's carbon emissions. Additionally, their investigation on particle pollution found that the pollution from diesel automobiles was extremely high in Nørrebro and Bispebjerg. Miljunkt Nørrebro is working on a project to modify the environmental zone regulation so that it best protects the population from diesel pollution. It is estimated that 100 residents die each year in Copenhagen N-NV, and there are also chronic non-fatal disorders like asthma, etc. Among other things, they have written a letter to the Environment Committee in the Danish Parliament, in which they estimated the annual cost at DKK 75 billion in Denmark. The case was taken up in the Danish Parliament and the Danish Environmental Protection Agency then adjusted the cost to DKK 80 billion. Several parties in the Danish Parliament have announced that they will tighten the environmental zone rules after they and others have argued that the pollution is much greater than the authorities had acknowledged



INFORMATION LINKS

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BIOTEKET

CATEGORY

Community learning and sustainability initiatives

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Nørrebro, Denmark

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

The space - Created in 2016 in collaboration with Københavns Kultur og Fritidsforvaltning, Bioteket is a hidden gem in Nørrebro.

It is made of upcycled and refurbished shipping containers on two levels: workshop, laboratory, and growing space for MUSHROOMS on the ground level, and a greenhouse that accommodates the growth of PLANTS, MUSIC, ART, SOCIAL EVENTS, and SUSTAINABLE IDEAS on the first floor. Bioteket has also an open garden at GRO-SELV HAVEN, another hidden gem in Nordvest which counts several community gardens spread along the train rails in Lersøparken (Bispebjerg St).

The newly formed (2020) voluntary association behind bioteket is NÅFBE – Nørrebro's Åbne Fælleskab for Bæredygtige Eksperimenter (Nørrebro open community for sustainable experiments).



Bioteket is a volunteer-based green culture hub for sustainability, where science, culture, art and green activism flourishes together.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



Bioteket teach local people about the growing of plants, music, art, social events and sustainable ideas. They make sustainability more accessible for families and individuals who previously have no experience, and give them the skills and confidence to try to implement more green and sustainable practices, like gardening and growing food at home. They also embed the idea of culture and togetherness at Bioteket, which enables people to feel more involved and valued.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



They want to democratise access to knowledge about nature and science, and how it relates to citizens' lives.

Bioteket welcome people of all ages and nationalities to join and co-create together, physically, and virtually. They cherish cross-community collaborations and stand for open citizen science.

Bioteket aims to facilitate knowledge acquisition and transfer and make it fun and beautiful. They learn about, play with and subsidize experiments on sustainable urban living in all its kaleidoscopic colours and forms.

Every Wednesday Bioteket invites everyone for an evening of community get-together and cosiness. From 15.30 'till 19.30 one can expect their friendly neighbourhood game masters: Ole and Jakob, to guide those present through both interesting, deep and exciting board games which can range from anywhere between 20 mins per game to a whole night depending on which board game that is chosen. Anything to the deep brow furrowing and intense mind games, to dexterity-I'm-quicker-than-you games are available from the treasure troves of our game collections. They encourage people to bring their friends or find new ones, where the mood and atmosphere is both cosy and free-spirited, full of laughter and intensity. It is a great space for newcomers to the area (especially a warm welcome to migrants and refugees) to meet new people and get to know about the city's culture and people.

Bioteket participates in events and develops workshops throughout the year on various topics that foster the ethos of sustainability, culture and inclusion.

The skills below can offer people new pathways to business creation in sustainably produced food and drinks, it can also inspire people to bring sustainability training to their own workplace. For instance:

[Car-free Sunday: Workshop] Strain Cultivation with fungal dowels

They have made this Workshop in the desire to spread knowledge about how to grow mushrooms

most easily at home, in the garden, and elsewhere. Mushroom dowels are one of the easiest ways to grow mushrooms, but it is also one of the methods that takes the longest time. If you put the mycelium in here in the autumn, you can only expect to get fungi again in the spring.

48TIMER Festival

Every year Bioteket partakes as creators of a festival called 48 TIMER, a staple highlight of participation and co-creation. The 48 TIMER Festival is a cultural festival for the area of Nørrebro. The aim is to strengthen the area to become an even better place, to live and visit for all Copenhageners. For a full weekend they celebrate the weird, the personal, the geeky and untraditional initiatives, you will find at Nørrebro. The festival content is created by local initiators, artists, organisations, local businesses and residents. The events are geographically scattered across all Nørrebro. Being a tradition that they often showcase their lovely little oasis to the public, we've chosen again to showcase a bit of what we're doing.

320colab x Näfte: Sound Garden

This time they bring a whole afternoon and evening of sound to their beautiful garden in Lersøparken. Their friends 320colab, the experimental collective hidden on Refshaleøen island, will come to Nørrebro and collaborate in the curation of 9+ hours of music. Bioteket cherish a space where people can feel free to express themselves safely and openly in whatever practice may be. They create and expand their community with love and respect, and any behaviour that disagrees with this is not tolerated.

Sharing & Learning

"I think every city would value from having a "green and cultural hub" like Bioteket, if there is a need and a want to bring sustainability to the homes of families in regions across Europe, this organisation could showcase a lot of best practice in that realm."



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 2016

End Date: Ongoing



EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



Biotekets activities are mainly focused on sustainability and green culture is fostered to citizens across the region.

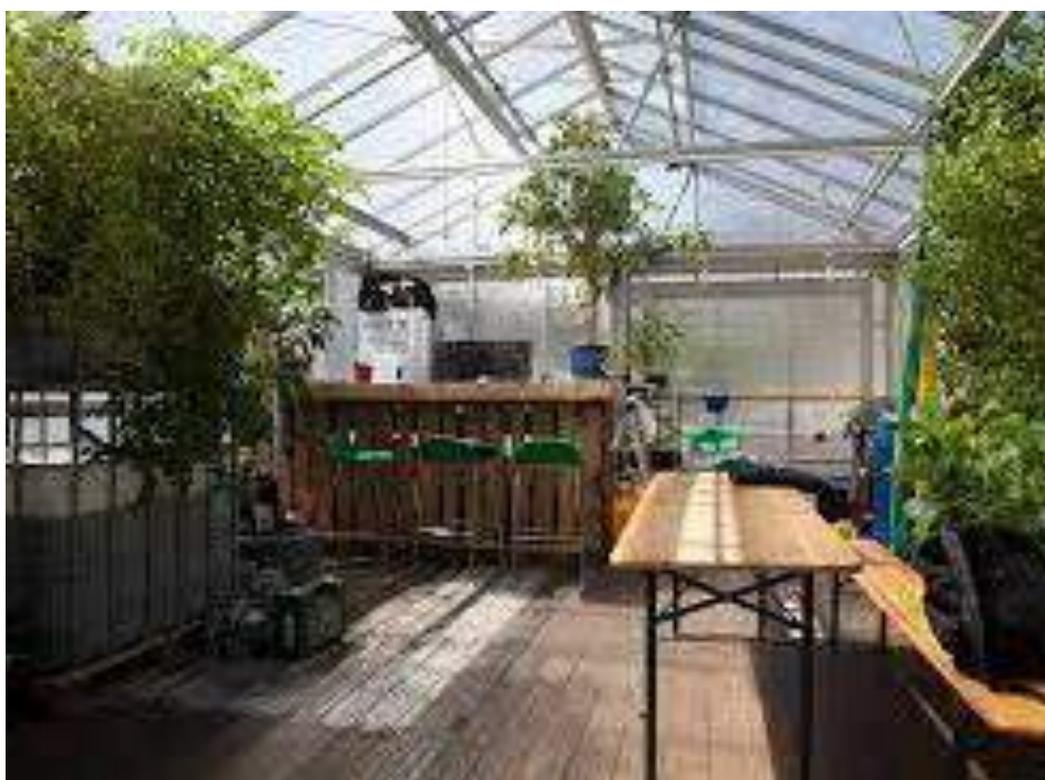
For example, on Saturdays, the volunteer driven Food sharing CPH distributes free surplus fruits and vegetables from Bioteket. Permanently located in a rebuilt container, Bioteket serves as a design- and culture house, focusing on organic gardening projects and communities for both children and adults. They run projects such as “Taste the waste”, it was about enabling people to think about the incredible amount of edible food that gets wasted every day. The event aimed to help families e-imagine and understand food together in a community dinner with Taste The Waste!

The Sensory Garden was another initiative produced by Bioteket in collaboration with IT University of Copenhagen. The goal was to make the space outside Bioteket more inviting while creating awareness about Bioteket among locals by enticing them to participate in a playful activity in green surroundings. The final design is a plant bed placed outside Bioteket with a screen hanging above it. The screen invites passers-by to interact with the plants by touching them. Touch is registered by the MPR121 capacitance sensor which activates sound and the screen to display information about Bioteket.

Transferability of the Practice

Bioteket’s activities give people a space to develop and grow natural produce, work and think in sustainable and ecological ways than they previously would have done. It enables people to become more self-sufficient and contribute to a healthier and more sustainable local environment.

Their projects and practices are innovative and creative. By creating their space from recycled and upcycled materials, Bioteket is a fabulous example of an organisation that not only cares for the environment but who actively practices sustainable and climate-saving practices in their everyday life. Moreover, they highlight that the small things changing the small things are a great starting point to becoming a climate champion.



INFORMATION LINKS

<https://bioteket.dk/about/>

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EDIBLE LANDSCAPE PROJECT

CATEGORY

Community Learning and Sustainability Initiatives

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

The Edible Landscape Project was started in Westport Co. Mayo, on Ireland's West Coast. Their primary 'food forest' is on the grounds of the Quay Community Centre but they engage with communities in the broader area to start their own edible landscape.

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

Activities in our food system are massive contributors to greenhouse gas emissions and biodiversity loss; from producing food, transporting it, packing it, and discarding it in landfills, reducing inefficiencies in our food system can have massive gains in our fight against climate change. In fact, 8 of the top 20 solutions to climate change relate to food.

The Edible Landscape Project encourages behavioural change in how and what we eat, by giving communities the power to make food consumption and purchasing choices that promote our own health, the health of our communities and the health of the planet.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



The Edible Landscape Project is a social enterprise run by community volunteers and a board of directors. They come from a variety of backgrounds from horticulture and teaching to engineering and medicine. This amalgamation of skills allows the Edible Landscape Project to take a holistic approach to everything they do.

Their community-focused projects influence people of all ages, from primary school children with their food forest education project to women in their 70s and 80s through their community garden volunteers.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



The Edible Landscape Project encourages behavioural change in how and what we eat, by giving communities the power to make food consumption and purchasing choices that promote our health, the health of our communities and the health of the planet.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



The Edible Landscape Project was founded in 2012 and was started as a community-growing initiative along the western greenway in Co. Mayo. The project aimed to create an edible landscape along the route through the hosting of edible planting workshops with local community groups.

The original food forest is located at the Quay Community Centre where volunteers and participants learn the skills of growing food in a climate-smart way.

Forest Garden

They are advocates of the forest garden method of growing foods which relates to the hunter-gatherer days. A forest garden, or food forest, contains clusters of plants that work together to produce a landscape where everything planted has a purpose whether it be something we can eat, something the birds can eat, or contributes towards the climate and biodiversity.

A decade since its founding and the edible landscape project remains rooted in community action but has continued to grow its sphere of influence. They educate through their workshops and other projects with a strong focus on climate and climate-smart food systems.

Mission

The Edible Landscape Project encourages behavioural change in how and what we eat, by giving communities the power to make food consumption and purchasing choices that promote our own health, the health of our communities and the health of the planet.

Vision

Their vision is to empower local communities to engage positively with climate change through education. They want to foster ethical decision-making regarding food choices and have integrity in everything they do.

Techniques

Using a wide range of techniques, from the art of storytelling to tree planting, the Edible Landscape Project aims to mobilise consumers to transform the marketplace into a global, sustainable food system.

Values

Inspiring people to make food choices that protect their own health, the health of our communities and the health of our planet.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 2012

End Date: Ongoing

The Edible Landscape project has been in existence over a decade, starting first as an initiative for planting fruit and nut trees, shrubs, root and leaf vegetables, wild herbs and mushrooms along the newly opened great western greenway in Co. Mayo. From this beginning, they began to run workshops for local community groups and started a community garden, and now they place a strong emphasis on the link between food and climate and aim to educate the broader community through their various projects.





Food Forest Climate Education Programme

ELP has devised a novel Education Program for Irish Primary Schools to encourage more schoolchildren to grow and consume food in an environmentally sustainable, climate smart way.

This solution-focused, Food Forest - Climate Education Programme was developed by teachers, for teachers, and in November 2021 was launched in primary schools in Co. Mayo

How does it work?

Participating primary school teachers receive a pack containing a set of Lesson Plans which are directly curriculum linked. The resources provided are intended to teach students how our food choices can have both a positive and negative impact on climate change.

2° Podcast

The Edible Landscape 2° Podcast is a podcast that is hosted by Edible Landscapes Program Manager Dave Whelan who speaks with ordinary people doing extraordinary things, from the Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications, Eamon Ryan, to world travelling Wildlife documentary maker Colin Stafford Johnson about all things climate change, biodiversity and our food systems.

[Link to Podcast](#)

Story of Food Videos

The Story of Food Series consists of a series of 14 short videos made with local Westport Food Producers, Cafes and Foodies, exploring how climate change has and is impacting their businesses. These videos spotlight some of the local actors in our food system and emphasise how we can all have a positive impact on climate change by making small changes to how we source and produce our food.

Climate Conversations

Climate conversations are a series of talks held by the Edible Landscapes project across a number of venues throughout Westport, Co. Mayo exploring topics such as how we can take advantage of our

marine environment when creating more sustainable food systems, food sovereignty and the effect food is having on our climate to name a few topics.



INFORMATION LINKS

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FARMING RATHCROGHAN EIP - SUSTAINABLE FARMING IN THE RATHCROGHAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL LANDSCAPE, EUROPEAN INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP

CATEGORY

Community learning and sustainability initiatives

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Rathcroghan, Tulsk, Co. Roscommon

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

Farmers in the area are struggling to cope within a production-focused framework, whilst they are open to preserving Rathcroghan but they are under economic and bureaucratic pressure to increase production. They need guidance and support to develop a partnership between themselves, agricultural experts, heritage and archaeological experts, the local community tourism social enterprise, and the local community to maintain and enhance the archaeological landscape, while providing co-benefits for a range of services – including biodiversity, carbon sequestration and water quality.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



Farming Rathcroghan is a well-facilitated and genuine partnership between farmers, agricultural experts, heritage and archaeological experts, the local community tourism social enterprise, and the local community more generally. It is a locally led project and community group developed by local landowners and stakeholders in 2019, successfully working with 45 local farmers to protect and maintain Rathcroghan archaeology in an agricultural landscape.



DETAILED INFORMATION ON THE PRACTICE



Farming Rathcroghan provides guidance and economic support for farmers to maintain and enhance the archaeological landscape, while providing co-benefits for a range of services – including biodiversity, carbon sequestration and water quality.

The objectives are to:

- Manage the landscape in order to sustain a viable and vibrant livelihood for its farming community.
- Promote, preserve and conserve the archaeological, cultural and ecological heritage of the area.
- Improve water quality and biodiversity.
- Promote best practice in relation to carbon sequestration initiatives.
- Devise a system of dynamic pedestrian route-ways to provide public access to the landscape.
- Increase awareness and recognition amongst the general public of the significance of Rathcroghan as a farmed archaeological landscape and of the central role of its farming community in its care and conservation.

The activities implemented are:

- Test and develop a management regime with farmers linked to the National Monument Service, State agencies and other relevant national bodies.
- Test and develop innovative management solutions to sustain a viable farming economy in harmony with the cultural and ecological assets of the landscape.
- Test, develop and implement best farming and archaeological practice to proactively monitor, manage, and enhance the cultural landscape in an environmentally-friendly way.
- Make available, through engagement with key stakeholders, the archaeology expertise to the

local farming community necessary to support the care and management of the cultural landscape.

Sharing & Learning:

Joe Fenwick, Archaeological Field Officer from the School of Geography and Archaeology at NUI Galway, said:

“The ‘Farming Rathcroghan’ project is an exciting new initiative with enormous potential for the future. Its objectives are to manage, care for and conserve this important archaeological landscape by implementing a programme of economically sustainable and ecologically sound farming practices, while also facilitating visitor access to the area.”



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 1/12/2018

End Date: Ongoing

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



The buy-in to the project has been substantial, with 59 applications in its inception year. From this, 31 full project places were agreed, with an additional 14 training farmers included in the scheme.

In terms of project participation, **over 75% of the core area of the Rathcroghan plateau (6.5km² area) is directly managed by Farming Rathcroghan farmers**, meaning that the vast majority of the Rathcroghan core area is now being managed with best practice standards in order to preserve and conserve the built heritage, as well as improved water quality and biodiversity.

- Average result-based score increased from 6.88 to 8.37 (out of 10) from 2020 to 2021 on our farms.
- 15 archaeological monuments are currently undergoing passive repair by farmers (2021)
- A range of bespoke project equipment has been developed and used in archaeological repair and precision grazing
- 21 resting frames currently in use
- 2 monuments have been fully repaired and cattle are being reintroduced in 2022
- 2 characteristic and prominent Rathcroghan monuments, which present with significant need of innovative repair actions, have been incorporated into a unique experiment trailing approaches to conservation and enhancement to archaeology which has not been undertaken in Ireland to date.
- 206 project actions have been successfully completed by farmers in 2021, incl. poaching repair/prevention around 114 gates and water troughs, and cattle restriction of 35 water bodies (ie. ponds, streams and swallow holes),

- 2,600 m (2.6 km) of grassy field margins have been introduced and 2 km of traditional dry-stone walls have been preserved.

Aside from this, Farming Rathcroghan is central to a series of ongoing projects and initiatives that are tied to the sustainable future of Rathcroghan, being a key voice in the ongoing Fáilte Ireland and **Rathcroghan Visitor Centre initiative known as the 'Rathcroghan Place Partnership'**, one of the drivers behind the project to deliver several archaeologically-conscious waymarked looped walking trails through the Rathcroghan Archaeological Landscape, as well as encouraging the re-establishment of the Roscommon Sheep Association and Roscommon Sheep breed, and linking in with the Roscommon LEADER Partnership Traditional Skills Training Courses.

Moreover, the project is informing best practice archaeological preservation, at a community level, on earthwork monuments nationally, and has charged itself with increasing and bolstering the pride and identity of the Rathcroghan community, tasking them with recognising and lauding the value of the heritage resource that they have been custodians of for several generations, sustainably using it to ensure a vibrant community in rural mid-Roscommon for generations to come.



INFORMATION LINKS

<https://farmingrathcroghan.ie/>

<https://www.nationalruralnetwork.ie/eip-agri/eip-agri-case-studies/farming-rathcroghan-project-sustainable-farming-in-the-rathcroghan-archaeological-landscape/>

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CONCLUSION

The **Good Practice Compendium** is a unique training tool for Climate Champions in Communities to gain an understanding of the drivers and opportunities for becoming involved and taking action in biodiversity conservation and climate action initiatives at the community level within their regions in Europe. The compendium acts to consolidate sources of information in one place.

The 32 case studies selected were very varied or multidimensional, yet relevant, and should give inspiration to local learning communities to apply this learning in their own regions.

The Good Practices Compendium provides, in detail, information about how local climate action and biodiversity can be fostered by communities in project partner regions. From

the 32 inspirational good practices collected, it can be seen that at the community level throughout Europe sustainability is not an endpoint, nor is there a one-size-fits-all solution especially when it comes to communities, as each has its own unique ecosystem, and local ecological and cultural traits. By showcasing these case studies, we offer a wide view of communities in action and first-hand experience of Climate Champions across Europe.

Good practices are one of the key principles to sharing experience among project regions. By analysing what other regions have and do in order to foster action and change, other regions across Europe will be able to use these examples as an inspiration to understand how their local issues and gaps in climate action and biodiversity conservation could be solved.





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