



Serbia

Projects/Initiatives

Rural Development- Project on Interactive Farm

NGO “Natura Balkanika”- Nature Society in Dimitrovgrad initiated a project by the name of Interactive Farm. The project started in 2004 and was carried out for one year. It was supported by the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe in Serbia. It established an agro-tourist pilot model of an “interactive farm” in the village of Lukavica in order to preserve and valorize genetic resources and rural heritage of Serbia. Through this farm, the project also promoted quality and nutritive value of domestic genes; traditional knowledge and skills (through presentations, training and education activities). It initiated “learning on positive experience practice”, stipulating use of agriculture potentials of rural areas in Serbia, promoting “lessons learned” and promoted rural life among the younger generation in Serbia.

The Project also helped in the initiation of summer and winter schools on organic farming for farmers. It led to a stronger involvement of media in promotion of domestic farm production and products based on organic farming.

Education/ Learning for Overcoming Poverty and Sustainable Urbanization

Ecological Society ENDEMIT, started a six months programme in 2005, Program for Local Communities Capacity Building-Local Environmental Coordinators -Strengthening Communication, Civil Participation and Democracy for Sustainable Living of Local Communities in Serbia. The programme was supported by the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Belgrade, Ministry of Science and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Serbia and Local Self-government. The state of the environment (including social, economic and ecological component) in Serbian local communities is very poor. Majority of local communities are under-developed. People are leaving their settlements, abandoning traditional households and occupations and moving to the big cities for a better life. Due to the breakdown of big industries and the political system, the remaining population of the local communities has already exhausted its natural resources potential or is still placing huge pressure on them (fish stock supplies, forests, minerals, water etc). This leads to unsustainable trends in the new economic development scenario for the country. Developing awareness about the importance of nature and environmental preservation on sustainable development principles is a precondition for good environmental management and governance. It is also closely connected to sustainable management of resources and development of an open, democratic society that respects rights not only of present but future generations as well.

The programme involved training of Local Environmental Coordinators (LEC). It brought together representatives of different stakeholders (LEC) from six pilot local communities in Serbia and equipped them with knowledge and skills on sustainable development. This helps the LECs to address numerous issues and problems at the local level and guides them in making sustainable decisions. The communities were selected based on evaluation of the current state of local economies, environmental and social issues in Serbian municipalities. The evaluation was carried out from the data available within the National Institute for Statistics and the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities of Serbia. The project was developed to support sustainable development of local communities in Serbia through creating forums of all stakeholders for the purpose of future decision making. It also aimed to build capacities of local communities for sustainable living and create an open, democratic society that takes care of the needs of future generations.

Representatives of different stakeholders gained knowledge about environmental problems, sustainable development, project preparation and management, environmental policy and sustainable development.

Environment Education at schools

A primary school in Serbia, St. Sava, initiated the Project "Eco School" in 2003. The project was supported by the World Bank and realized in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Sports of the Republic of Serbia and Local Self-government. The main idea of the Project was to develop education by including environmental and ecological knowledge of the pupils. The Project goal has been realized through intensified lectures on the environment, including classes in Biology, Nature and Society and School Community. The Center for Socio-Ecological Research and Documentation conducted training of teachers of biology, school community, representatives of the school team for development of environmental education. A group of teachers and pupils have been trained to use visual technique to record natural phenomena during out-door lessons. Besides the school community, the project also included representatives of the local community, Municipal Health Institute, NGO "Eco-Center". Continuation of the implementation of environmental protection teaching programs within school eco-workshops was one of the final results of the project.