



The GuardEn Newsletter

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“GuardEn”: Guardians of Environment Framework: An Integrated Approach of Strategies for Prevention of Soil Pollution and Rehabilitation of Harmed Territories”

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INSIDE THE ISSUE

- a) The “GuardEn” Project 1
- b) GuardEn awareness raising workshops 2
- c) Training workshop for trainers 3
- d) Training of trainees
- e) Coordination meeting in Hungary
- f) Communication activities
- g) Training of trainees

a) The GuardEn Project

Pollution prevention is a much more cost-efficient strategy than rehabilitation of soil. The purpose of the project is the development of an integrated mechanism aimed to support rational design and effective implementation of local strategies for environmental risks’ prevention and rehabilitation, specified for rural territories threatened by soil or water pollution.

The “keys of the solution” could be in the hands of Polluters themselves with necessary motivation, support and training from other stakeholders guiding them towards a Socially Responsible attitude and behavior. The project’s specific goals are:

a) Formulation of the “GuardEn Model System”: Definition of the Profile of the “GuardEn” Enterprise. Development of a set of Methodological Tools to support Enterprises to move towards the “GuardEn Status”.

b) Development of a “Methodology for Rational Strategic Planning for Soil Pollution Prevention and Rehabilitation at the Local Level” including: awareness raising, motivation and training of different target groups. Focus on the development of sets of indicators permitting multi-criteria Impact analysis at the company and the Community levels. Identify best practices of responsible environmental performance of industrial activities.

c) Design-Development of local Collaborative Patterns/Clusters for water and Soil Pollution Prevention and soil Rehabilitation, and of a supportive Transnational Expert Network.

Project Activities

b) GuardEn awareness raising workshops

In December 2014 the the project team organised awareness raising workshops.



In Hungary the workshops were separated for farmers and agricultural producers and for institutional stake-holders. At these meetings the environmental protection issues of agricultural production was discussed and the role of standards guiding appropriate agricultural practices were highlighted. Discussions were organised in small groups related to the role of authorities, fertilisation practices and main problems related to cross compliance requirements. Both workshops underlined the importance of voluntary instruments and expressed the need for a standardised

consultancy and control in case of agricultural production.

Workshop of the Veneto Region in Vallevecchia, Caorle 18/10/2013



The Veneto Region partnership have organized the workshop with the title “Networking with the Cooperative system becoming Guardians of Environment” in October 2013, bringing its participants directly to the on of the best agricultural practices of the region, an agricultural demonstrative pilot farm Vallevecchia.

This event gathered more than 40 participants mostly from small and medium agricultural cooperatives and their regional associations. This event allowed to create first links and network for further GuardEn activities and initiatives.



Zadar County Development Agency ZADRA, 20.12.2013



In the workshop organized by ZADRA Development agency participated 26 representatives of the agricultural as well as the environmental fields.

Besides the presentation of the project and its activities, participants had an opportunity to express their observations, suggestions regarding next activities, regional problematic to be included in the following steps and experimentations, like Vrana lake, Bokanjačko blato and the area round waste management site.



c) Training workshop for trainers

The training workshop for trainers was organised in Tripoli, Greece in March 2014. During the training several important issues were raised introducing the training materials for sustainable soil and water management. Participating experts identified essential Training package elements, contents, methodologies to be used for the target groups of the GuardEn seminars and other suggestions in order to ensure the quality of the training activities that should be organized in each partner territory. Additionally, recent development of the GuardEN Standard was presented and discussed.



d) Training of trainees or GuardEn seminars

In Hungary the training of trainees was organised in two sessions in April 2014. One for the potential GuardEN farmers and one for the auditors. Previously, farmers were consulted personally regarding the proposed requirements of the standard and their most relevant environmental performance

and problems. The outcomes of these pre-audits were incorporated to the developing GaurDEN Standard.

During the meetings the main water- and soil protection possibilities and practices were presented and discussed. In the light of the outcomes of this discussion the functioning and reliability of the prescriptions and capacity audit methodology were tested both viewpoints of producers and auditors. The results of the workshops were used to fine tune the requirements of the GuardEN Standard and Audit Methodology.

ZADRA Development Agency has organized seminar “Environmental Protection and Management of Environmental Risks” on the 27/05/2014.



In the Veneto Region there has been organized various seminars, separately for agricultural enterprises and for experts, thus deepening different aspects of the sustainability and environmental protection in agricultural activities with different target groups. Each of the trainings was organized in two or more meetings and with participation of experienced experts of the field.



Training seminar for farmers and agricultural enterprises, 19/02/2014, Negrar (Verona)



Training seminar for experts, 23/06/2014, Castelfranco Veneto (Treviso).

e) Coordination meeting in Hungary, 29-30/05/2014

The third Steering committee meeting was held in Budapest, Hungary organized by the Szent István University. During the meeting partners analyzed the state of art of project activities, like Analysis of current status on the Environmental Risk Management; Design and Development of the Guardians of Environment Framework; Establishment and Operation of the Transnational

GuardEn Expert Network and other. Program of the meeting included also discussions on the challenges and difficulties met in the implementation process, qualitative and quantitative evaluation of already produced project outcomes and the scheduling of the last project period.

f) Communication activities

From the early stages of the project, the partners started carrying out **communication Activities** (publicity through the Mass Media and the Internet, development and operation of the GuardEn Website - www.guarden.eu -, etc.) based included in an intensive Communication Strategy which will be implemented throughout the project's lifespan.

This Strategy includes publications, preparation of dissemination materials, participation in different conferences and fairs linked with the topic of the project- environmental and sustainable agriculture.

For example, the GuardEn project has been presented in the international conference Researchers Supporting the Food Industry through Innovation and Services organized by The National Research and Development Institute for Food



Bioresources, IBA Bucharest on the April 13, 2013.



The Veneto partners had a chance to present the GuardEn project, objectives and its on-going activities to participants of the 9th edition of the annual fair “Fiera 4 passi” in Treviso, that in 2014 year was dedicated to the themes of cooperation and sustainability.



Project partners in the last phase of the project will also organize national and international conferences in order to present project results to wider public, multiplying its outcomes still after its end.