

Albanian & Austrian Cooperation to foster Sustainable Forestry

The Albanian NGO CNVP and the Austrian fiber-company Lenzing partner to reinforce community-based forestry through a best practice afforestation, training and school cooperation

Shkodra, 19th June 2019 – A remarkable Social Impact Project brings together Albanian and Austrian experts to increase forest management skills amongst communities, enable know-exchange between vocational schools and last but not least afforest 10ha communal land. This is made possible thanks to the commitment of the fibre-company Lenzing and the Austrian Development Agency.

The Austrian company Lenzing, an international producer of cellulose fibres, has more than 120 years of experience in the field of wood processing and wood sourcing. In the frame of its sustainability agenda Lenzing decided to set-up a best practice project in the context of sustainable forestry in Albania. Reason for this is that Albania, a European neighbour country, is affected by the negative consequences of deforestation even though major reforms already have been implemented in recent years. In 2016, about 80% of the land categorised as “Forest and Pastures” was transferred to 61 Local Government Units, aiming to increase the responsibility and involvement of local communities in natural resources’ planning and management. In 2018, the institutional reform process was successfully completed.

Together with its local partner organisation CNVP (Connecting Natural Values and People), Lenzing aims to share its expertise and support a know-how transfer in the field of sustainable afforestation and increase local expertise and awareness for sustainable forest management. The project integrates afforestation activities in a 10ha degraded and community-managed forest close to Shkodra (Ana e Malit), with the training of local communities in forest management and the modernisation of the vocational training centre for forestry in Shkodra.

The project, which is set up for a time frame of 3 years, is co-funded by the Austrian Development Agency ADA and was developed in cooperation with the Austrian Social Impact Expert ICEP.

Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration for Sustainability

Sustainable afforestation is a topic that needs to be tackled from various levels, and can’t be implemented through just one institution. Local partners play an integral part in the successful realisation and the long-term anchoring of the project.

For that reason, an alliance between Albanian public and private institutions (government units, NGO’s and state-owned schools) has been formed. Austria has a long history in sustainable afforestation and numerous state-of-the art forestry schools. Therefore, cooperation with Austrian forestry schools and experts has been established, who serve as know-how partners in the project and will enable a profound knowledge transfer.

Best Practice Afforestation in Ana e Malit

The Federation of Communal Forests and Pastures Shkodra (FCFP-Shkodra) will coordinate the implementation of the afforestation activities in the region of Ana e Malit, while the Members of the Forest Users Association FUA-Ana e Malit will be actively integrated in the planting activities.

The mixed-forest plantation will be used as a best-practice example on how to afforest degraded land in a sustainable manner, including erosion control measure as well as on possible income option through fruits and nuts.

Forestry Training for Communities and Vocational Forestry Training

The “Training Centre for Communal Forestry and Rural Development” – TCCFRD – will develop target group specific forest trainings covering topics like “Forest Management”, “Forest Fire Prevention” and “Safety in Forest Works”. Beside the members of the FUA-Ana e Malit, further FUAs will be invited to participate in the modular trainings on sustainable forest management.

Vocational Forestry Training has a long tradition in Austria. To enable know-how exchange and to support the technical & forestry high school Shkodra “Kole Margjini” exchange and collaboration with the Austrian Forestry School Traunkirchen will be set up. Besides the Austrian School Shkodra will collaborate with the Kole Margjini and the project by developing “computer-aided-plant-monitoring” within their master thesis program. Latter will be practically tested in the afforestation area.

The project at a glance

Through three pillars – best-practise afforestation, forest training and vocational education – the project enables a holistic approach to foster know-how on sustainable forestry in Albania.

Goal: Increased expertise amongst local communities and experts in sustainable forest management

Project run-time: 3 years (May 2019 – May 2021)

Target group: Members of the Forest Users Associations, students of Forestry schools

Partner in Austria: Lenzing, Forestry School Traunkirchen, ICEP - Institute for Cooperation in Development Projects, ADA - Austrian Development Agency

Partner in Albania: CNVP - Connecting Natural Values and People, Federation of Communal Forest and Pastures Shkoder, Training Centre of Communal Forestry & Rural Development, Forestry High School Shkodra, Austrian Technical High School Shkodra

Lenzing

The Lenzing Group headquartered in Austria is an international company of wood-based cellulose fibers. These high quality fibers of botanic origin are used in the textile industry, in the nonwovens industry (hygiene products) and are also used in work and protective wear and in industrial applications. For the Lenzing Group, sustainability is a core value, key business driver and stimulus for innovation.

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ADA – Austrian Development Agency

The Austrian Development Agency (ADA) is the operational unit of Austrian Development Cooperation under the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (FMEIA). ADA implements programmes and projects in collaboration with public institutions, non-governmental organisations and business enterprises. In the frame of its Business Partnership Programme ADA provides funding for companies activities that generate an added value for both, business and development impact.

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CNVP – Connecting Natural Values and People

CNVP is a registered Albanian NGO aiming to build a Greener Economic Environment. CNVP’s capacity strengthening covers: sustainable forest management; climate change, environment and natural resource management; agri-rural development; renewable energy and waste management, including transboundary water pollution; community mobilization, civil society and governance; as well as European accession issues and related policy questions.

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ICEP

ICEP is an independent Austrian development organisation with a clear goal: to bring people to business and business to the people. ICEP advises partners in developing countries as well as companies on how to integrate poor people into economic cycles, and implements projects worldwide. As social impact expert ICEP supports companies like Lenzing in the identification of their opportunities and challenges in emerging and developing countries and in the conceptualization of social impact projects.

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Panel discussion with stakeholders f.l.: Sokol Guri (Federation Shkoder), Peter Bartsch (Lenzing), Simone Ungersboeck (ADA Austrian Development Agency), Janaq Male (CNVP), Arben Gjuraj (Shkoder Municipality), Agim Dardha (Protected Areas).



All partners: CNVP, Lenzing, ADA, ICEP, CNVP, Federation of Communal Forest and Pastures Shkoder, FUA Ana e Malit, Forestry High School Shkoder, Austrian Technical High School Shkoder, Social Eco Farm;



Visit of the afforestation area in Ana e Malit with Lenzing and CNVP together with Austrian and Albanien forest expters.