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NEWSLETTER

CNVP ALBANIA



Feature Story

From Albania's Fields to European Markets

Albania's medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs) are already reaching markets across Europe. With nearly 95% of production exported, the sector has become an important source of income for rural communities—and an opportunity for further growth as Albania moves closer to EU integration.

To explore this potential, CNVP Albania, through the Local Economic Development (LED) Project, brought together farmers, collectors, processors, exporters, institutions, researchers, and development partners for a high-level roundtable on the future of the sector. Discussions focused on strengthening cooperation across the value chain, improving quality and certification, supporting small producers, and investing in processing and innovation. CNVP also presented its latest study on the impact of EU integration on the MAPs value chain, offering recommendations to strengthen competitiveness and prepare the sector for European markets.

The message was clear: stronger partnerships, better market systems, and targeted investment can help Albania turn its MAPs potential into lasting opportunities for rural communities.



Sharing IFM Experience Across the Drin Basin

CNVP Albania welcomed international development partners to the Drin River Basin for a field study visit showcasing the results of the Integrated Forest Management (IFM) project. From reforestation and forest restoration to community engagement and sustainable solutions, the visit highlighted CNVP's practical approach to strengthening forest management.

Spotlight

CVNP Albania is supporting 5 eco-friendly start-ups.

5 grantees of IFM project are growing new opportunities in Puka, creating income possibilites and protecting the environment.



Quick Updates

IFM Project: Empowering Rural Women, Growing Local Futures

Pulse Project: 4 Returns framework completed the 2st faze of workshops on landscape restauration

In the Field

Investing in Local Forestry Expertise

Across the Drin River Basin, strengthening local forestry expertise is an important part of building more sustainable and resilient landscapes. In this context, CNVP Albania, together with the National Forest Agency of Albania and the Faculty of Forestry Sciences, brought together forestry professionals from municipalities across the basin for a two-day technical training focused on sustainable forest management.

The training connected professionals from Malësi e Madhe, Shkodër, Vau i Dejës, Pukë, Fushë-Arrëz, Kukës, Has, Tropojë, Dibër and Bulqizë, creating space not only for technical learning, but also for practical exchange and shared experience.

During the two days, participants strengthened their knowledge of:

- Developing operational forest management plans following the lifting of the forestry moratorium;
- Preparing forest management plans by combining field data collection with office-based planning through the ALFIS digital system;
- Understanding the role of forests in erosion prevention, soil protection and sustainable water resource management.

The programme combined classroom sessions with practical field exercises, allowing participants to collect dendrometric data, practice forest inventory techniques and explore approaches for improving forest management at the local level.

Strengthening the skills of local forestry professionals is ultimately an investment in the landscapes they manage — and in the communities, ecosystems and natural resources that depend on them.

The activity was organized within the framework of the Integrated Forest Management along the Drin River Basin (IFM) project, implemented by CNVP Foundation and funded by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and the Austrian NGO ICEP.



"4 Returns" Milestone



Restoration starts with a shared vision.

Across the four PULSE landscapes, CNVP Albania brought together local communities, institutions and stakeholders for 4 Returns trainings, exploring how nature, people and local economies can thrive together. Through discussion and practical exercises, participants identified local challenges and opportunities, contributing to a more inclusive and locally driven approach to landscape restoration. Healthy landscapes. Stronger communities. Sustainable futures.

Funded by PONT and ADA and implemented by CNVP Albania under the PULSE Project.

Action Spotlight

From Forest Inventory to Forest Information Governance

CNVP Albania, together with ICEP, hosted the latest session of the "Beyond Forests" Expert Webinar Series, bringing together forestry professionals and stakeholders from across the Western Balkans to explore how forest inventory data can support stronger information systems and more effective decision-making. The webinar focused on the role of reliable forest information in sustainable forest management, evidence-based policies and EU integration. Alois Schuschnigg from the Austrian Research Centre for Forests (BFW) shared insights from the Austrian experience, highlighting how quality data and information systems can strengthen decision-making and the long-term development of the forest sector.

Beyond the technical discussion, the session created a valuable space for knowledge exchange between Austria and the Western Balkans, connecting expertise and practical experience around forest governance. For CNVP, strengthening institutions and improving access to reliable forest information are essential steps towards more sustainable and transparent forest management across the region. The webinar was organised within the framework of the Integrated Forest Management (IFM) Project, funded by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) under International Partnerships Austria.





Project Focus

CNVP Albania Showcases to Fellow NGOs IFM Experience in the Drin River Basin





On 9 September 2026, CNVP Albania welcomed international development partners to the Drin River Basin for a field study visit showcasing the practical results and experience of the Integrated Forest Management (IFM) project. Representatives from the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) in Tirana, UNDP Albania, the EU Presence in Albania and the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), together with staff from the EU4Forest project, joined CNVP Albania for a day of field visits and discussions across Shkodër and Pukë. The visit offered an opportunity to see how forest management interventions are translating into concrete action on the ground — from reforestation and forest improvement to community engagement and environmentally friendly solutions.

The day began in Ana e Malit, Vau i Dejës, where the delegation visited an afforested area and met with representatives of Shkodër Municipality, the Shkodër Forest and Pasture Users Federation, forest associations and the local community. Discussions focused on cooperation and the long-term sustainable management of forest resources. The group also visited the Eco Social Farm, a nursery supported by ADA, CNVP and LENZING, which produces forest tree seedlings and demonstrates how public-private cooperation can contribute to reforestation efforts.

In Korthpulë, participants visited a chestnut reforestation site supported by anti-erosion measures and met with representatives of the Qerret Forest and Pasture Users Association. The intervention demonstrated how forest restoration can contribute not only to improving forest resources, but also to protecting soil and strengthening landscape resilience. The visit continued in Pukë Municipality, where the delegation met with Mayor Rrok Dodaj to exchange experiences on institutional cooperation. At Qerret School, participants saw the wood-biomass central heating system introduced through the IFM project — an example of how locally available forest resources can support more sustainable community infrastructure.

From field experience to regional cooperation

Implemented by CNVP Albania in partnership with ICEP – Association for Global Development and funded by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) under International Partnerships Austria, the IFM project works across Albania, North Macedonia, Kosovo and Montenegro to promote sustainable and participatory management of natural resources along the transboundary Drin River Basin.
Through reforestation, forest improvement, support to nurseries and stronger forest and pasture user associations, the project connects environmental restoration with local communities and institutions.

For CNVP Albania, the study visit was more than an opportunity to present project results. It was a space to exchange practical experience, strengthen cooperation among development partners and demonstrate how locally grounded forest management can contribute to broader regional goals. From restored forests to stronger communities, the IFM experience in the Drin River Basin shows that lasting environmental impact is built through cooperation, knowledge and action on the ground.

Success Stories

From Restoration to Eco-Tourism: A New Trail in Korthpulë



Across the landscapes where CNVP works, restoration is about more than repairing damaged ecosystems. It is about creating places where nature can recover, communities can benefit and new opportunities can grow. In Korthpulë, Pukë, this approach is taking shape through a new hiking trail that connects restored forest areas with local natural and cultural heritage. Through the Integrated Forest Management (IFM) project, CNVP Albania has supported the rehabilitation of degraded land through afforestation with native species, erosion-control measures and improved management of natural resources. These restored areas are now connected by a 6-kilometre hiking trail between Korthpulë and Gomsiqe, making the results of restoration accessible to visitors and creating new possibilities for local eco-tourism.

The trail passes through a recovering forest landscape and offers views across the valleys and hills surrounding Pukë. Along the route, visitors can discover natural, historical and cultural sites, including the Natural Monument "Bungat e Varrezave Korthpul", the Church of Shën Gjini and a centuries-old chestnut tree. For CNVP, the trail represents more than a recreational route. It demonstrates how restoring degraded land can also create social and economic value — supporting biodiversity, protecting soil and water resources, and opening possibilities for local employment and sustainable tourism. What was once a landscape affected by erosion is now becoming a place to restore, explore and share — showing how integrated forest management can create lasting benefits for both nature and people.

The IFM project is implemented by CNVP in Albania, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Montenegro, in partnership with ICEP – Association for Global Development, and funded by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) under International Partnerships Austria.

Tips to Read

- Turning an idea to a real raspberry garden with the Support o CNVP Albani. The story of Eliona from Puka. Read more
- Identifying the landscape restauration through the **"4 Returns"** Framework: Read more

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