

Future Actions

Future actions for the next six months regarding the project are the following:

E-Forum

During September 2010, e-forum will start its operation. The main role of the e-forum is the development of a wider Local Authorities network through the web for exchange knowledge and information between relevant stakeholders on forest fire issues.

2nd Project Meeting

On September 2010 the second project meeting will be held in Athens at the premises of University of Athens in order to assess the project process and plan future actions. The exact date will be appointed after summer vacations.

Development and Application of an informative system

In the framework of the implementation of Action 5, Technical University of Crete will develop a simplified and innovative platform for the dynamic assessment of forest fire. This platform is based on the monitoring of several crucial parameters that foresee forest fire such as meteorological and climate data, terrain, time of year, etc.

The main subsystems of this platform are:

- Real time input data
- Record, analysis and correlation of data from the past years
- Identification of critical parameters and decision making model regarding forest fire risk
- Graphic representation of results and real time assessment.

For more information about the project please visit us at:
www.forestcities.gr



Local Authorities Alliance for Forest Fire Prevention

LIFE08 ENV/GR/000553



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LIFE instrument

FORESTCITIES project is implemented in the framework of the funding tool LIFE – Environmental Policy and Governance. The main target of the project is the assessment of the current status in forest fire protection and prevention, in Greece and Mediterranean Countries (Italy, Spain, S. France, Portugal and Cyprus). Through the project, the current status in Local Authorities regarding management structure in civil protection and forest fire prevention, the legislative framework and propose new measures for improvements.

Project Partners:

- Local Union of Municipalities and Communities of Attica (TEDKNA)
- University of Athens – Department of Geology and Geoenvironment – Laboratory of Natural Hazards (UoA)
- Technical University of Crete – Department of Electronic and Computer Engineering (TUC)
- Municipality
- Municipality of Ilioupoli

Subcontractors:

- Energy Environment Local Development (EPTA)

LIFE+ aims at co-funding actions in the field of nature conservation (LIFE+ Nature and Biodiversity) as well as in other fields of the environment that are of European interest (LIFE+ Environment and Governance). A third component of LIFE+ aims specifically at co-funding information and communication activities for the environment (LIFE+ Information and Communication). More specifically, the following types of projects can be distinguished under LIFE+:

1. LIFE+ Nature and Biodiversity

Best practice and/or demonstration projects contributing to the implementation of the objectives of the Birds and Habitats Directives (Council Directives 79/409 EEC and 92/43/EEC). Demonstration and/or innovation projects contributing to the implementation of the objectives of the Commission Communication COM (2006) 216 final: "Halting the loss of Biodiversity by 2010 – and beyond".

2. LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance

Demonstration and/or innovation projects related to any of the "priority areas of action" set out in chapter 2 of the present guidelines. Projects contributing to the monitoring of the environmental status of forests within the European Union territory.

3. LIFE+ Information and Communication

Communication and awareness raising campaigns related to the implementation, updating and development of European environmental policy and legislation set out in the document "LIFE+ Information and Communication, Guidelines for applicants 2010". Awareness raising campaigns for the prevention of forest fires and training for forest fire agents.



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Editorial

Every year, millions of trees are vanished from the map worldwide. Especially in Mediterranean countries such as Greece, every summer there are many forest fires that should be confronted. This results to the degradation of forests and in consequence to the loss of Biodiversity, Health and Economy.

In many countries, among other and Greece, there are several weaknesses in the management structure of the central government regarding civil protection in general. It is important to take immediate actions on a Local Authorities level, in order to activate and motivate local communities in forest fire protection and thus the protection and preservation of forest lands.



Project Actions

Project Action can be summarized below:

- Development of Greek Cities Network which will be comprised by representatives from Local Authorities. This Network will exchange information, know – how and best practices for forest fire prevention in Greece, through a series of activities such as e-forum, project meetings and Working Group).

- Recording and assessment of the current situation in Greece. Through the establishment of the Working Group, record, analysis and assessment of the current situation in Greece will be implemented. The Working Group is comprised by representatives from Local Authorities, Universities, central government and forest offices.

- Recording of the existing measures that are implemented in the forest fire prevention sector in Greece and development of a new measures list.

This list will be finalized through the Working Group Meetings and other relevant stakeholders. In addition, local action plans will be developed for the participated Municipalities in the project together with a proposed action plan that will be forwarded to the central government. Meanwhile, a guide on forest fire prevention will be developed both in Greek and English.

- Development and implantation of an informative platform for the dynamic assessment of the forest fire risk. This platform will be established in the participating municipalities, Serres and Ilioupoli. The platform will be available for every Municipality that is registered in the Network contact list of the project.

- Organization of training seminars for the Local Authorities staff in forest fire prevention and on the dynamic assessment tool that TUC has developed for the purposes of this project.

Project Progress



Regarding the progress of the project during the first six months, the following actions have been realized:

Publicity

For further information about the project and issues regarding forest fires please visit our website at

(<http://www.forestcities.gr>)

Kick-off Meeting

On January 2010 the kick off meeting of the project took place in Athens, at the premises of TEDKNA. In the meeting, project partners organized the future actions of the project.

Working Group

In the framework of the project it is expected to establish the Working Group. Members of this group will be, project partners, relevant stakeholders from public organizations, institutions, ministries, professors, etc. The WG is expected to be established mid October 2010.

Directive 3818/2010 of the Greek Law regarding forest fire prevention and forest protection

In order to accelerate the procedures on forest fires prevention and protection in the region of Attica and forest fires across Greece, the new law 3818/2010 updates certain articles on the previous law 3208/2003 on issues such as forest fire protection, development of forestry maps and immediate actions in restoring forests that were hit by the fires in August 2009.



Meanwhile, actions are taken for the immediate development of forest maps right after a forest fire. This can help the implicated authorities on reforestation actions. In the framework of this new law, special attention is given to the forests of Attica region that recently (2009) were hit by fires.

This is done by stalling all building permits in those regions until the reforestation zoning will finalize. Also, new forest maps should be adjusted. For the restoration of forest fire damages, fire damages to buildings or total disasters of private and public infrastructure, exclusions will be granted and permits will be approved. For speeding up all the above mentioned procedures, several deadlines have been set and there will be no deviations from these.