

PromoRiver: an opportunity for promoting employment and local sustainable development



A Grundtvig Partnerships project

Newsletter 1

July 2014

FORWARD

PromoRiver: an opportunity for promoting employment and local sustainable development has come to the first half of its lifespan. A group of 5 European partners have found in this project a means to promote their concern for the rivers in their own countries and all over Europe, and took the opportunity to share ideas, actions and good practices regarding rivers, an important resource that has to be preserved and cared for.

The partners were called to search and organise information about rivers, to collect case studies as good examples in their own countries, to run workshops, to organize field trips, informal meetings and to feed the project webpage with images and information about the actions undertaken..

Altogether they helped the dissemination of the theme and of this EU Grundtvig Partnerships Project, which will for sure continue its path for a successful outcome, due to the contributions of all the partner countries.

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I thought of Thee, my partner and my guide,
As being past away.—Vain sympathies!
For, backward, Duddon! as I cast my eyes,
I see what was, and is, and will abide;
Still glides the Stream, and shall for ever glide;
The Form remains, the Function never dies;
While we, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,
We Men, who in our morn of youth defied
The elements, must vanish;—be it so!
Enough, if something from our hands have power
To live, and act, and serve the future hour;
And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,
Through love, through hope, and faith's transcendent
dower,
We feel that we are greater than we know.

Sonnets from The River Duddon: After-Thought
By William Wordsworth



The River Duddon

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From Czech Republic



1 Works in Beskydy mountain – cutting off non-native spruces, leaving birches and maples.

Project Partnership for Rivers

Through Czech Coalition for Rivers, people from Arnika are now participating in the project „Partnership of Rivers – River Trusts“ supported by a grant from Switzerland through the Swiss Contribution to the enlarged European Union. Within this project, we so far managed to rent about 21 ha of land in river landscape and started there a management aimed to increase biodiversity, especially by supporting a re-creation of floodplain forests and meadows. We have two localities – approx. 8 ha in Beskydy mountains, where we are using traditional management practises such as sheep grazing and pasture forestry, and 13 ha near community of Cehovice, where we are now using a management practise of coppiced forest.

River restoration project in community Cehovice

River restoration project, prepared in cooperation of Arnika and Coalition for Rivers in Olomouc province Nera community of Cehovice, got building permission! Construction works on this project, which combines elements of biodiversity increase, flood prevention, improvement of hydromorphology and self-cleaning capacity, should start during the holiday season.



We do hope soon this stream will look better!

Healthy Czech rivers and employment

Works in landscape can bring new jobs. In Czech Republic we promote a new form of community work for rivers, the river trusts. People in the countryside could thus find a jobs where they live, and would not have to look for it in the cities. Trusts would take care of forests and meadows in the floodplains, creating orchards, grow vegetables or keep bees. DDE to such activities, river trusts could achieve economic sustainability. We met with the representatives of Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to discuss possibilities of initial support for these land trusts.

Living Elbe

Navigation in big rivers is definitely here to stay. Possibilities of reconcile ship freight inland transportation and conservation of unique river ecosystems on Elbe river was a topic of discussion with members of German parliament. Construction of dam on Czech Elbe river, proposed to improve navigational conditions near city of Decin in Czech Republic near Czech-German borders, would undoubtedly irreversibly damage also river section on German territory.



Minister of Labor and Social Affairs in the meeting with Jakub Esterka.



Elbe River near Czech-German border.

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River adoptions

Arnika is coordinating several groups of volunteers who take care of local small rivers and streams. We support these groups in negotiation with water authorities and give them expert advice. For these groups, we also established [web page](#) and [facebook group](#). In spring and beginning of summer, several events organized by volunteer groups took place in different regions of Czech Republic.

Řásná near Telč

Group of people, who own here summer houses, cleansed the river channel from invasive plants. In autumn, the same group intends to do small restoration measures to improve morphology of the deepened and straighten stream, so it is important to stop spreading of the weed now.



Manual weeding of invasive bobby tops (*Impatiens glandulifera*)

Nový Rychnov

The small stream with clean water is a habitat for freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*). To keep suitable living conditions for their population, it is necessary to prevent the stream from growing over with mosses and grasses – it would cause obstacles for flow and creation of mud. Volunteers cleaned stream very carefully, only with their hands, not to harm protected molluscs.



Freshwater pearl mussel



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From Greece

"Varosi" is planning an educational trip for its members, at the area of stone bridges of Epirus, Greece, in September 2014. The activity is aiming to familiarize its members with the interaction of the water element together with arts and culture/ecotourism.

Bridges bring people and cultures together. The stone bridges of Greece are mostly built in rugged landscapes and stand as architectural masterpieces of superb craftsmanship. They are associated with legends, with local traditions and sometimes even with tragic stories. The rocky paths of the Epirus Region take us past some well-hidden historic stone bridges. To find them, you may need to swim in large rivers, walk along riverbanks or just follow city roads. At times, sheep and goats will lead the way; at others signposts or downhill trails will point you in the right destination! A person interested in traditional architecture will see stone arched bridges in several parts of Epirus, samples of excellent technique by the builders of the area.

The fame of the local builders spread soon throughout Greece and Balkans and that is why we are seeing in many places of Greece (Thessaly, Peloponnese etc) bridges built by craftsmen of Epirus. Most were built during the period of Turkish rule by the need of communication between villages - mostly mountainous - since they had retreat in inaccessible places to escape the Turkish yoke.

The overall build quality was so elaborate and robust, that many of which are in use today.

The name of the bridge usually it was given by the person who gave money for its construction (hence we meet names of benefactors or villages). Several times, there are two or three names on a bridge that took the name from those persons that assumed the cost of repairing, if it was needed.

The bridges have as their main characteristic the arch, which gives them the necessary stability and a special grace and beauty. The bridges are divided into several types depending on their characteristics.

The single-arched bridges were constructed in the places where the river banks had a short distance between and the ground was stable.

The multi-arched bridges were constructed when the distance among the points which they want to connect was relatively big or the soil was not suitable for attachment. At some of these, the bases were in the river, a hard and painful work, which needed the indispensable knowledge of the great art by the master builder.

Villages of the region of Epirus, which "give birth" to remarkable craftsmen, are Pysogianni, Molista, Houliarades, Pramanta, Plikati, Vourbiani etc.

Additionally to the above, the overall area of Pindos (the mountain chain that runs through Epirus) is a natural habitat of numerous species of flora and fauna, rendering itself one of the richest in that aspect, areas of Greece.

As it , it comes as natural consequence the fact that the interaction of the local style of bridge building/cultural element, the water element, as well as the amazing landscape and ecotourism possibilities create a very attractive bundle for visitors from all over the world. The trip is planned to take place during September 2014, in the framework of the project "Promoriver".



"The secrets of the wetland"

"Varosi" organization in collaboration with "NeoSOS" and "Caretakers Greece", is organizing a boat trip from the springs of Edessaiois river to the information point of the Agras-Nisi-Vrytta wetland. The activity is planned to take place at Sunday 5th October 2014. The aim is expose the participants to the secrets of the wetland, to observe the bird habitat and the chlora that can be found at the overall area. Information regarding the characteristics of this specific Natura 2000 area, and the importance of river and wetland system will precede the boat trip.



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From Italy

EXHIBITIONS



Piave-LIVE is a cooperation project implemented by the Veneto Rural Development Programme 2007-2013, Axis 4 Leader by the LAGs Alps and Pre-Alps Dolomites, Alta Marca, Terre di Marca, VEGAL for the promotion of the rivers Piave and Livenza, along which the most diverse natural environments (from the mountains to the lagoon) delimit geographically and join the territories of the LAGs, identifying a common cultural and historical heritage.

Starting from the concept of a unique land of the two rivers which form the backbone, the LAG partners have implemented the appropriate and necessary actions for the protection, promotion, enhancement and recovery of riparian areas, improving the dialogue between rivers and land.

The rapid economic changes of recent decades have resulted in the abandonment of the areas of the rivers, with the inevitable degradation of the entire surrounding area. You can't, however, think about the balanced and sustainable growth in a rural area, without looking at the fate of the main rivers that cross it.



From this concept comes the Piave-Live Project, whose goal is to promote jointly and synergistically, using a multidimensional approach, the multiple meanings of the areas of the river Piave and Livenza (art, environment, food and wine, nature, culture, history), for develop sustainable tourism in the area between the two rivers, and therefore support the quality of life and the competitiveness of the country involved.

There will be presentations recovery of landscape elements and specific actions to improve the environment of the river areas through the creation of itineraries and thematic tourism as well as points of reception and

information with low environmental impact.

A promotional purposes was organized a multimedia exhibition that takes place simultaneously in Caorle from 21 June to 6 July 2014 in the Serra dei Giardini - Venice Biennale from June 5 to September 7, 2014.

“River Contract Basso Piave” Contracts of river take the form of negotiated planning tools interrelated to processes of strategic planning for the redevelopment of the river basins. The adjective "strategic" refers to a process of co-planning in which the methodology and the same path are shared ongoing with all the stakeholders. These processes are in fact aimed at creating scenarios of sustainable development of the basins developed in a participatory way, so that they are widely shared.

In this case the Piave River is an important resource not only economic but also social and tourist, being a corridor on which to develop bike paths, waterways, and healthy leisure activities, fishing and environmental education.



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Is required enhancement of the river system that takes into account the culture of the river, with the training and sensitization of both boys and adults. So an actual plan information, training and education.

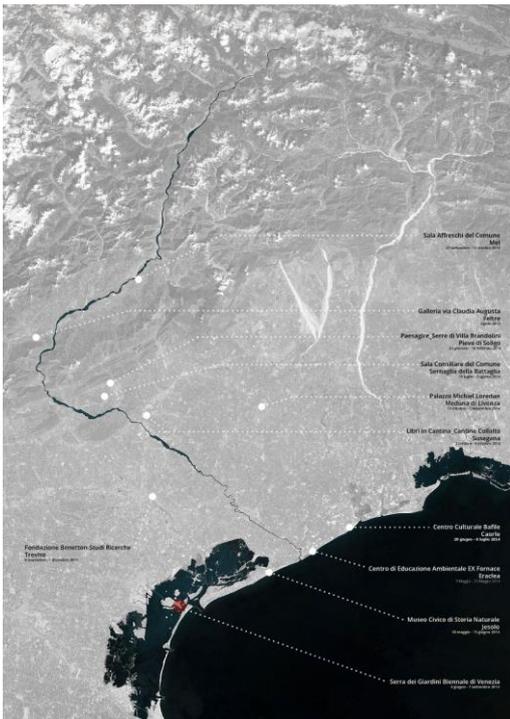
The need to start the River Contract in the basin of the Lower Piave is also linked to the worsening of critical situations, also as a result of climate changes and levels of employment and soil sealing.

The identification of integrated strategies and a shared programming to be achieved through specific actions will be necessary condition for access to the opportunities provided by the funds of European funding (2014-2020).



LA PIAVE is a knowledge process, an exploration, an action-research carried out with feet and eyes and through the hands: a 220 km journey on an elusive, iridescent, aquatic land, where the micro and macro melt themselves, communicating between science and nature, fiction and tale. LA PIAVE represents the desire

for the river, for his banks, for living the river as aggregation and meeting place: the need of sailing it again, of being in it as in a maternal womb. LA PIAVE represents an identity source, the river as a living being, eager to find his physical space of movement, confirming a common dimension where human actions can live together in balance. LA PIAVE is a community talking to the river through the tales, the culture, the events, the traditions, the economies belonging to him and creating a contemporary, multimedia, and popular catalogue in evolution through time, between past, present and future. LA PIAVE is an open, multidisciplinary instrument aiming at talking about water as a common good.



LA PIAVE action-research lab expresses the need for rediscovering the river full potential, from the spring to the mouth, calling for the citizens, public administrators, organizations, associations, and universities participation. The aim is to affirm the river's cultural identity, overcoming the restricted and extremely local vision of the river offered nowadays. LA PIAVE becomes a public component of this sharing desire and intends to give back the complex cultural and geographical variety that has always shaped this aquatic land. LA PIAVE takes an active part in building the current perception of the river through real and virtual actions performed along the river flow. It raises awareness about different, but essential, patterns and logics concerning our relationship with nature and water: irreducible element, simultaneously identical and different, mobile and sudden, ductile and persistent, necessary to our life.

LA PIAVE exhibitions are in progress, based on an action-research experimental method that adds data, programs, projects, and topics concerning the river and his land through time, holding a constant dialogue with the landscape and the citizen. The exhibitions are carried out in accordance with all the characters involved and become site-specific where physical, historical, cultural, and thought conditions are shared with the river.



An event of the exhibition was organized in Eraclea mare in May 2014.

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From Portugal



Monitoring and Cleaning at the Coina Creek, 7 June 2014

Curso de monitores

3-5 Outubro

Rios Oficinas

Educação ambiental

Percursos interpretativos

Actividades nocturnas

Monitorização

Sustentabilidade

Jogos ambientais

Sessões teórico-práticas

Local: Centro Ciência Viva
Praia Fluvial dos Olhos d'Água do Alviela
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Aspea - Associação Portuguesa de Educação Ambiental
Caretakeers of the Environment - International / Portugal
Aliada na Iniciativa Carta da Terra

PROMORIVER

Promoriver training course 03 to 05 October 2014

This 3-day training course is addressed to youth and adults aged 18 onwards. Its aim is to promote and strengthen the involvement of learners in outdoor education, especially in riparian areas, by creating space for reflection, experimentation and joint participation. The participants will learn about the potentiality of the rivers and how to promote conservation actions and raise awareness to river problems. It will be a theoretical and practical training with workshops and field activities

8th Environmental rally - Raft descent of the Douro river

05 and 06 July 2014

Participants from all over the country were invited to take part in this rally, aiming at promoting environmental awareness of the public towards fresh water and rivers and its related problems. It is also a means to promote cooperation among environmental movements and associations. The rally was organised by Ecoclubes organization and ASPEA decided to join and disseminate information about the PROMORIVER project. The participants will descend the Douro River on rafts built with reused materials by the participants themselves. Slogans and words of order will be placed on posters and banners.

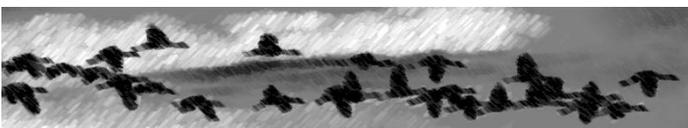
Besides the rally, there will be a river trail and other activities by the river banks.



Public participation

March for the rivers, 24 May 2014

PromoRiver participated in the wide range of activities undertaken during the 5th National Meeting of the Rivers Project - seminars, workshops, monitoring and cleaning of the Tinto river, near Porto. About 60 persons, mostly students and teachers, but also local people and volunteers from NGOs, were involved in the "River March", aiming to raise awareness for the rivers and for the need to protect them, but also to enjoy them. During the march, children sang and shouted slogans about the river. Other environmental initiatives and projects, such as "Clean Up the Med", the "Rivers and Oceans Project" and the "River Project", were involved.



What's next?

Next partners' meeting -
PRAGUE

24-28 SEPTEMBER

River restoration
projects



PROJECT OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

The overall objective of the project is to stimulate the start-up of economic initiatives oriented to sustainable exploitation of rivers as a matter of local rural development.

The areas of interest to which the project will be addressed will include:

1. Conservation and restoration of river banks and water quality - through practical examples and good practice
2. Strategies and methodologies to develop public participation and civic competences
3. Ecotourism - Environmental and cultural impacts and creation of eco-trails
4. Enhance ICT skills and communication using English as a common language for exchange
5. Tackle European priorities such as "Education and Training 2020" (objective 2: improving the quality and efficiency of education and training), to the European Water Action Plan.

The Partners



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