



CENTRE

Creating a European Network of Bio-Districts
to achieve a True Territorial Renaissance



Co-funded by the
Europe for Citizens Programme
of the European Union

The Project

The BIO-DISTRICT: a new rural development model is spreading in Europe based on the defense of agricultural landscape, food sovereignty, enhancement of local resources and on the new frontiers of sustainability (alternative energy, water, biodiversity, bio-architecture, waste recycling, soil protection, quality of life and work), fully consistent with the European "20-20-20" goals. This strategic choice for local communities, however, is often taken in a "top-down" process by policy makers without the direct and active involvement of citizens.



Main Aims

- 1) Create a "DISCIPLINARY" clearly defining a "EUROPEAN BIO-DISTRICT", created through the ACTIVE and DEMOCRATIC participation of citizens, as a means to achieve a TRUE TERRITORIAL RENAISSANCE for a sustainable future of Europe.
- 2) Constitution of EUBiodistricts - EUROPEAN NETWORK OF BIO-DISTRICTS signed by all project's Mayors.
- 3) Making European citizens active stakeholders in the local decision making processes (BOTTOM-UP approach), especially regarding "bio districts" as key choice for quality of life in their communities.
- 4) Test INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS to explore new forms of direct and active citizens' involvement to foster a stronger sense of belonging by target groups to the issues of the project and to the EU, e.g.: active participation to public initiatives during very CROWDED events; direct attendance in concrete on field "LEARNING-BY-DOING" experiences.

To achieve these aims, the 6 project events have been based on a common working structure including ACTIVITIES to: involve local target groups in unusual way -Citizens, Farmers, Public Bodies, Enterprises, Research and Training Bodies, Associations - ; let European delegates acquainted on best practices, success cases, local experiences; mingle in innovative way local target groups and European participants; discuss internally among partners; give visibility to the project, the EU and its aims (COMMUNICATION & DISSEMINATION PLAN)

Calendar of the events

6 events of 3 days have been organized in the following towns:

1. San Leo - ITALY from 5th to 7th September 2015 (www.comune.san-leo.rn.it)
2. Die - FRANCE from 22nd to 24th January 2016 (www.ecologieauquotidien.free.fr)
3. Petrosino - ITALY from 29th to 31st May 2016 (www.comune.petrosino.tp.it)
4. Platres - CYPRUS from 23th to 25th July 2016 (www.platres.org / www.lovetroodos.org)
5. Berovo - MACEDONIA from 27th to 29th August 2016 (www.berovo.gov.mk)
6. Hranice - CZECH REPUBLIC from 14th to 16th October 2016 (www.regionhranicko.cz)

EUBiodistricts Network

Members of EUBiodistricts network will contribute by supporting it with appropriate initiatives in their territory. The members will participate in the joint organization of the network, also including specific coordination involving the local authorities.

Action plan/strategy for the implementation of the Bio-District:

1. Definition of the exact geographic position/area of the Bio-District
2. SWOT Analysis of the area
3. Vision and Mission
4. Tools to be used- eg Organic Markets, Exhibitions, Conferences, Training, Eco Paths etc

Each city will adhere to the "Covenant of Mayors for sustainable agriculture and food".

Definition of Bio-district and the European Network of Biodistricts

EUBiodistricts is a European network composed by members (Municipalities, Associations, NGOs, Development agencies, etc..) whose primary objective is the creation of Biodistricts, as an agreement by which the stakeholders of the sustainable economic growth of their territory undertake to define and develop a common project focused on the conservation of resources, environmental compatibility and exploitation of different opportunities of their territorial reality.

EUBiodistricts will be an open place to create a dense network of relationships in the European area, up to involve the territories of other continents.

EUBiodistricts will assume the role of promoter of the comparison, processing and development of local projects that, networked, can represent the key to design a new model of eco-sustainable economic growth. A role which does not replace all many associations of producers, consumers, technicians, operators of the complex food processing and agri-food distribution, as well as environmental protection and tourism, but that can give to these entities the spaces where build the necessary synergies, able to ensure the development of a cooperation system.

The Biodistrict, the Bio Community

The network will focus on the creation of Biodistricts.

Conserve natural resources (water, air, soil, sunlight, and biodiversity) and enhance them to meet the needs of the population in relation to: drinking water, food, habitat, health, energy, quality of life, well-being.

The Bio Community

The Bio Community, a community of purposes and interests which, though different from each other, work together to achieve a common set of objectives that exceed individual and special benefits, to make economic activities and the surrounding environment economically supportive, characterized on sustainability and respect for ethical values. A community able of supporting the lives of all those who -for various reasons- come into contact with it. The community becomes an organic unity that shares an economic interest, animated by a social content and an ethical order.

Each area, whether rural or urban, will promote the establishment of the Bio Community, which will live up the project in its specific action space.

Disciplinary defining the “Eubiodistricts European Network of Biodistricts”

Manifesto of a European dream that revives from the territories and local communities:

1. We declare ended the era of the advantageous position of unlimited growth and consumption. The whole society, from local to global communities, is involved in the biggest redesign of the economic models of all time. Limited resources (and therefore the great themes of accessibility and distribution), together with the protection of common goods, the reduction of land consumption and a more sober and convivial lifestyle, are options becoming viable to ensure a more equitable and sustainable future: new economic models fairer and widespread, sustainable and responsible, represent the opportunity of a new spring.
2. The well-being of the peoples (re) starts from the ground. The new economy has already experienced: bring the agriculture at the center of society is means love the land, preserve and protect the common goods - first of all the landscape - by stimulating the sense of belonging and sharing of resources. Restore dignity to the role of farmers and shepherds means recognize the fundamental role in the government and in the preservation of the territory, but also in the creation of value, providing qualified opportunities for young people and future generations.
3. Love for the earth bears fruit. The passion for the land supports the central role of the producers in the society and economy, the defenders of nature, legality custodians, of law principals, custodians of knowledge that cross the time slowly, season after season. The bio productions consider the whole agricultural ecosystem, promoting the natural fertility of the soil with limited interventions, promoting the biodiversity of the environment in which they operate and excluding the use of synthetic products and genetically modified organisms (GMOs).
4. We are all producers. Food sovereignty puts the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of the system and politics. It defends the interests and contemplates the future generations, ensuring that the rights of use and management of lands, territories, waters, seeds, cattles and biodiversity will be managed by those who produce the food. But above all, undermines the dichotomy between producers and consumers, all co-producers, to new social relations free of oppression

and inequalities between men and women, peoples, ethnic groups, economic classes and generations.

5. The food is health, well being, pleasure, conviviality and culture. Food is life.

Recognize the proper value of food means ensuring the right to a healthy, abundant, accessible food production. But also quality of life in different areas of the community, from the culture to the social, town planning, environment, energy, transport, tourism, youth training, research, such as the reasons of a society.

6. A productive decision in favor of sustainability.

From the field of energy from renewable sources to bio-architecture, from organic textiles to slow tourism, many sectors of the economy can pave the way for a paradigm shift that values a new and better lifestyle for everyone.

Towards expressions of good local governance, in which the health, safety, future, protection of common goods and happiness of citizens will be at the center of thought and action and guidance in daily decisions characterized by sober, balanced and forward-looking lifestyles, withdrawn from the myopia of the “production” frenzy.

7. A revival of values, ideas and projects.

EUBiodistricts is a covenant between those who think primary and urgent a commitment in favour to a strategy to protect and promote the immense tangible and intangible heritage that sees in local communities the place and human and cultural context synonymous of good life, taste, traditions, creativity, of an harmonious social dimension and the balanced landscape between urban and rural environments. In other words, is a covenant in favor of beauty, which requires a real resurgence of values, ideas and projects.

8. Let us feed of “genius loci”.

We agree with the need to support the “spirit of place”, that feeds on authenticity, citizenship, culture and local identities that sink proudly their roots in popular peasant and religious matrices.

It is the inclination leadership to produce development by leveraging unusual factors such as tradition, craftsmanship, culture, respect for the person and the environment: a competitive economic model based on the quality that leaves from the concept, involves details, acts on the processes and enriches the product of a unique and unrepeatable added value, which can't be relocated.

9. European Bio-Citizens.

EUBiodistricts is the home of the new citizens, who do not oppose the local or national plan to the development of a common European identity. And that they see Europe as an opportunity for peace and dialogue with all cultures of the world.

10. Organic Green Ways: network of excellent territories.

A network of territories, countries, cities, parks and protected areas, connected by ecological paths and good practices of environmental sustainability and responsible tourism. Towards the building of biodistricts who work on the quality of the land, landscape, agriculture and life. Because the local action changes the world. United by a network of cultural and emotional tourist routes, such as Tratturi Transhumance and Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.

Municipality of San Leo - Italy

Town of San Leo places its self as point of reference for integrated territorial promotion of its cultural and gastronomic heritage. The territorial marketing policies are mainly based on the promotion of the environment and local gastronomical specialties. Although it is a small town (3.000 inhabitants) San Leo welcomes more than 500.000 visitors a year and became a promotional showcase for the "basket" of local products, especially for those related to organic farming. The Municipality has a long experience in the organization of cultural events and exhibitions aimed at the promotion of local culture, gastronomy and history. More than 30 public events are organized by the local administration each year. The Municipality has an internal unit composed by a team of experts in planning and coordination of gastronomy and cultural events.

Municipality of Berovo - Macedonia

The Municipality perform their competencies through bodies elected directly by citizens according to Law on Local Self-Government. The municipalities do things in the public interest of local importance, which are included in their competence, and not are the responsibility of the state government. The municipalities are responsible for performing the following tasks: Urban (rural and urban) planning, Environmental protection and nature, Local economic development, Communal activities, The culture, The sport and recreation, Social care and protection of children, Education, Health care, Preparing and Implementing measures to protect and rescue of citizens and goods, Fire protection provided by the local fire units; Supervision over its activities and other statutory duties. It is active in sustainable development activities and bio-districts promotion.

Municipality of Naukseni - Latvia

Naukseni is located in rural area in Northern part of Latvia. The inhabitants mainly work in agricultural sectors like grain farming, animal husbandry, growing fruits and vegetables, wood-processing, crafts, fishing, sheep-farming, beekeeping. There are different organic farms in Naukseni, they are enga-

ged in the cultivation of apples and apple wine production, growing sheep, strawberry cultivation, etc.

In the municipality works agriculture specialist, who supports organic farmers with information, provide the necessary advice, help them to involve in various projects. It is active in sustainable development and bio-districts promotion. Naukseni organic farmers have participated in projects such as "Demo farm" in Estonian Latvian cross-border cooperation program. Participation to the ORG.EU project. It has been a continuation of the work begun in support, education and experience enlargement of our organic farmers producers and citizen.

Association Città del Bio - Italy

Città del Bio is an association composed by more than 180 Italian local authorities. Over the last several years the association has been expanding outside Italian borders and presently there are more than 30 EU cities which actively collaborate with Città del Bio. The main goal of the association is the promotion of organic food culture as a model of sustainable economy which can contribute to the protection of natural resources, biodiversity, animal welfare and to make citizens aware to be responsible consumer. In order to achieve its goals and to expand the networks a number of projects, events and initiatives have been implemented by the association: exhibition, nutrition education in schools, organization of international seminars, conferences and fair competition of organic products, realization and publication of educational and communication tools, participation in TV and Radio shows, strengthening of partnership with research bodies, governmental agencies, NGOs etc.

Ecologie au Quotidien - France

The association Ecologie au Quotidien aims at informing, educating and stimulate citizens awareness about the impact of our lifestyles and daily activities on health, environment, life and society while proposing alternatives to the existing lifestyle.

The association participated to the creation of Biovallée in

the Drôme Valley. It organizes events throughout the year including a Meeting for Ecology lasting 2 weeks in January / February for 14 years and hosting more than 10,000 people. The association connects associations, businesses, officials and citizens and organizes lectures, debates, festivals, exhibition, practical workshops, forums, site visits. The outstanding motif for 2015 has been "Slow - For a happy sobriety" and for 2016 "Changing of Vision".

Municipality of Petrosino - Italy

Petrosino is a town in Sicily, administratively part of the province of Trapani, located between the municipalities of Marsala and Mazara del Vallo. Thanks to the CENTRE project it formally created the first Bio - District in Sicily named "Terra degli Elmi" that involves 19 Municipalities. The biodistrict implements the model of organic production and consumption, defining an area where farmers, citizens, tourist operators, private and public organizations pursue a sustainable management of local resources, while fostering development of the territory. Any stakeholder on the territory participates to the Bio-District in order to fully permit the development of the region while responding to the local development needs.

Hranice development Agency Czech Republic

The Hranice Development Agency (HDA) is an interest group which aims are to be executive and service ground for implementation of development strategies of Hranice region. Main fields of interests are: cooperation among the towns, entrepreneurs, association in the region; educating, informing during the preparation and implementation of projects; following realization of project activities like workshops, seminars, meetings, study visits etc.

HDA provides touristic programmes which foster the local services and prolong the stay of visitor in region. Provides to the elaboration of development strategic plan for municipalities or small regions. HDA consider the local bio production one of the most important direction where the small towns and regions can go towards in the sustainable development and bio-districts.

Regional Development Centre Koper Slovenia

The Regional Development Centre Koper (hereafter RDC Koper) acts as an institution on regional level with the aim of promoting business and economy development in our region. It performs the role of regional co-ordinator of interests on local as well as national level in the fields of regional development, economy, human resources and environment protection. In 2001 RDC Koper gained the status of leading organization of the Regional Development Agency South Primorska (hereafter RDA) for the municipalities of Ankaran, Divača, Hrpelje-Kozina, Izola, Komen, Koper, Piran and Sežana. In this role RDC Koper became a permanent representative of ministries, governmental organizations, chambers of commerce and craft, companies and other institutions. RDC Koper promotes and implements projects of cross-border partnerships with Italy and Croatia. It manages the Local action group of Istra.

Troodos regional tourism board Cyprus

The Troodos Regional Board of Tourism is a public regional authority. Common denominator for the sustainable development of tourism in the region is the protection and upgrading of both the unique natural environment of high ecological value and the rich history and tradition. The beneficiary and acting partner in this project is the Platres's Community Council a member of Troodos, which has been selected for the specific project due to the great experience in the field of Biodiversity and managing effectively natural resources. The Council hosts national Conferences, Seminars and Exhibitions, such as the Lavender Festival the Aromatic and Healing Herbs of Cyprus the Mushroom Festival, it cooperates closely with all organic producers in Cyprus with the aim of creating a culture of appreciating and using natural resources in the most effective way for the creation of a Bio district based on the best practices shared during this project.

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