



EEFOREST - Efficiency and Effectiveness of Awareness Campaigns in the EU Forests

LIFE08 INF/P/000220



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Project description:

Background

Forest fires are a regular phenomenon in the Mediterranean regions that have a dry climate, including one very hot season - typically June to September. Across Portugal, 900 000 ha burned between 2003 and 2005 - approximately 10% of the mainland territory. According to information released by the Portuguese Forest Authority (AFN), in the municipality of Tavira, 699 forest fires and flares responsible for the destruction of 5 689 ha of forest stands and bushes occurred between 1980 and 2006. The worst year was 2004, with 3 719 ha burnt. Forest fires have direct impact on human life and goods as well as plants and animals. They have a further impact on biodiversity by destroying the natural food and shelter which provide the habitat for numerous species. Tavira has seen increased appearance of invasive species and the recurrent appearance of species that grow in poor and degraded soils. In Portugal, according to AFN, a vast majority of forest fires do not start from natural causes and are directly or indirectly related to human activity.

Objectives

The EEFORREST project aimed to reduce forest fires in the Tavira municipality by increasing the efficiency of forest awareness campaigns for different target groups. The beneficiary would carry out an overall assessment, characterising the municipality of Tavira and its different target groups. This would inform the

theoretical definition of methodological approaches to awareness-raising aimed at maximising their effectiveness with different groups. Case studies, tests and surveys would be used to develop a practical assessment of awareness-raising activities to complement the theoretical component. The project would produce a guidebook that identifies the best methodology to follow in a public awareness campaign on forest fires, covering what should be the key messages and how these should be put across. The project would oversee an innovative awareness campaign in the municipality of Tavira through targeted preparation of different materials for different groups. It hoped to reduce the number of forest fires in the next five years - 2010 to 2014 - by 10%. Surveys would assess the effectiveness of the work. The project should have helped support the work of national and regional forest authorities in the Mediterranean region. An international seminar would be organised.

Results

The project ended prematurely without reaching the objectives and the expected results. Some totally unexpected financial constraints strongly affected the good implementation of the project and the beneficiary decided to request the termination of the project ~2,5 years before planned.

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Environmental issues addressed:

Themes

Land-use and Planning - Forest management
Risk management - Natural risks (Flood - Forest fire - Landslide)

Keywords

fire protection, forest fire, public awareness campaign

Natura 2000 sites

Not applicable

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Beneficiaries:

Coordinator

Município de Tavira

Type of organisation	Local authority
Description	The Council of Tavira (Câmara Municipal de Tavira), is the local authority of the city of Tavira, in the Algarve region of Portugal.
Partners	None

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Administrative data:

Project reference	LIFE08 INF/P/000220
Duration	01-JAN-2010 to 30-JUN -2014
Total budget	975,825.00 €
EU contribution	295,913.00 €
Project location	Algarve

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