



SAGE10 - Establishment of Impact Assessment Procedure as a tool for the sustainability of agroecosystem: the case of mediterranean olives

LIFE09 ENV/GR/000302



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Project description:

Background

Olive groves have been the backbone of the rural economy and ecology in Greece for thousands of years. However, farmers are increasingly abandoning olive groves due the decline in income from olive products, particularly olive oil.

The environmental risks of extensive olive grove abandonment are high. The demise of olive groves will have negative impacts on local ecosystems, local fauna, soil quality, water balance and biomass formation.

Furthermore, unattended land in Greece is more susceptible to summer fires similar to the 2007 fires that devastated large areas of the Peloponnese. Such land also becomes an easier target for unsustainable development. There are already examples in the South-West Peloponnese of ancient olive groves being replaced by water-thirsty golf courses in order to promote tourism.

The lack of a systematic and focused advisory service is a contributory factor. This encourages both the continuation of unsustainable farming practices and land abandonment, with the associated problems for the environment.

Objectives

The SAGE10 project aims to develop an environmental impact assessment tool to guide Greek farmers towards the most efficient use of their resources. It thus

seeks to promote the long-term sustainability of the agro-ecosystem and economy.

The project will be based around the development of an innovative Impact Assessment Procedure (IAP) for objectively evaluating the potential environment consequences of proposed agricultural practices. The IAP should be a tool for prioritising activities and achieving ISO14001/EMAS accreditation on farms.

The beneficiary will evaluate and select the technical and environmental parameters of the IAP and train advisors to use the tool in the field. In a pilot scheme, the IAP will be used on 600 olive parcels in three different areas of Greece.

Monitoring of the environmental impacts and crop yields will enable standardisation of the IAP and a validation of the sustainability and cost-efficiency of its implementation. The project plans to propose 50 Environmental Performance Indicators (EPIs) at the level of the farm. It will make the optimised IAP available as software, as well as on paper, with support on its use and the achievement of environmental accreditation.

Expected results:

- Optimised Impact Assessment Procedure (IAP) for the environmental assessment of agricultural practices - available electronically and in print format;
- 50 Environmental Performance Indicators (EPIs) at field level;
- Trained advisors and environmental assessors;
- The promotion of environmental accreditation for olive groves.

Results

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Environmental issues addressed:

Themes

Environmental management - EMAS
Industry-Production - Agriculture - Fisheries

Keywords

organic farming, vegetable oil, agricultural method, EC regulation on eco-management and audit, environmental assessment

Natura 2000 sites

Not applicable

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Beneficiaries:

Coordinator	Benaki Phytopathological Institute
Type of organisation	Research institution
Description	The laboratory of toxicology at the Benaki Phytopathological Institute (BPI) is a public, non-profit research institute, specialising in plant disease and pesticides.
Partners	Land Reclamation Institute of the Hellenic Agricultural Organisation Demeter, Greece Greek Biotope/Wetland Centre, Greece RodaxAgro Ltd, Greece Benaki Phytopathological Organisation, Greece Agricultural University of Athens

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Administrative data:

Project reference	LIFE09 ENV/GR/000302
Duration	01-OCT-2010 to 30-JUN -2014
Total budget	2,109,442.00 €
EU contribution	1,052,221.00 €
Project location	Peloponnisos, Kriti

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