

Biodiversity Analysis of Old Cherry Varieties in the Area of Association “The Land of St Anne” (Poland)

Goals of the project and motivate

- protecting biodiversity of old or threatened by extinction varieties of sweet cherry trees
- preservation of cultural heritage area of Opole Voivodeship
- raise environmental awareness and integration of residents
- make recommendations for to proceed in the future

Implemented actions

The project was implemented in cooperation with a Silesian Botanical Garden in Mikolow. The work was divided into three stages. In 2010-2012 there was a detailed inventory of the avenues of sweet cherry trees and identification of varieties. The longest and oldest avenue is situated at the foot of St Anne's Mountain and it has 2 km length, where is planted 174 trees. The oldest are from 20 years of the twentieth century, and the youngest exceed 40 years old. The genetic material of all varieties was collected and preserved. An important part of the project is the acquisition of scions which were grafted onto rootstocks at the Silesian Botanical Garden in Mikolow. The result of the project include: the promotion of old varieties of sweet cherry trees - publication a brochure with information about the resources within the avenue, preparation a list of points of gardening, which seedlings are available for purchase, organizing the Cherries Blossom Festival with the active participation of the local community and creation a new avenue of sweet cherry trees, which consist with 100 cherry trees. A seminar to promote and inform about the project was conducted after each stage. On the seminar was propagated information about the work done and the possibilities of the use of sweet cherries for example: cosmetology, design, significance and application in landscape architecture.



Regional benefits of the project

Benefits for:

- **biodiversity:** reconstruction and protection of old varieties of sweet cherry genotypes constituting since decades an integral part of the landscape area of the Land of St Anna
- **cultural landscapes:** a new avenues with 200 cherry trees was created at the initiative of the krapkowicki and strzelecki counties. In the future are planned a new plantings.
- **awareness of the public:** organisation of seminars in order to promote and inform about the project
- **economy:** Inclusion in the sales assortment of old varieties of sweet cherry trees in local garden centers and acquisition of dried sweet cherry fruits as an ingredient of fruit teas
- **tourism:** organization of local Cherries Blossom Festival
- **social aspects:** integration of local communities

Perception of the project in the region:

The project has contributed to the raise awareness and the sense of pride the local community of possession of natural resources and their importance to the local culture.



Fact box

- LEADER-region: Poland, Opole Voivodeship
- Project management: Association „The Land of St Anne”
- Total cost: 30 000,00 PLN (7 500,00 €)
- LEADER-funding: PROW 2007-2013 – 100%
- Project duration: 2010-2012 (three years)
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