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PAWS-MED Newsletter

PAWS-MED presents fire, desertification and climate change activities

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Since the beginning of 2011, the PAWS-MED partners have been busy promoting and preparing PAWS-MED training courses for foresters (mainly). All in all 140 participants were trained in developing forest guided tours for different target groups, especially for children from varied range of ages.

The PAWS-MED concept was well accepted in each country, there were no difficulties to find participants for the courses and, in some cases, there was the need to do more than one course due to demand.

Although, some of the organisers of the PAWS-MED courses faced some weather or logistical obstacles, all agreed that it was all overcome by the flexibility and good willing of the participants. For Savvas Andrea, from Dasiko Kolegio KYPROU "the participants were very familiar with the forest but not with such activities. The ones with blinded eyes were the most interesting for them". In the case of PROFOR – Spanish Foresters Association Ricardo Codomiu, Mari Angeles, "the activities participants liked the most were interviewing a tree, the resin harvester, looking for seedlings, looking for insects and, of course, the activity Blind Caravan, which is always the favourite one".

Some of the improvements that arose were due to the length of the seminar, because it was very difficult to have "permissions for foresters to be away from their duties for 3 whole days", say Savvas Andrea. However, other things were also pointed out, such as, the need to prepare more activities related to forest fires, "learn and expand the forest guided tour to other target group like secondary schools or even general public", as pointed out by Maria Colaço, from Portuguese Institute of Agronomy, and "reinforcing the messages that PAWS-MED tour can pass to the target groups", is another of the proposals, presented by Irini Nikolaou, from the Greek Ministry of Environment Energy and Climate Change.

Nevertheless, it is the opinions and comments of the participants of the PAWS-MED training courses that really fulfil the expectations of the organizers. "Everything was great! I am absolutely satisfied! I am very glad that I took part in such seminar", these were some of the comments of Georgios Aristotelous, one of the foresters that attended the PAWS-MED course in Cyprus. For Ntonti Maria, from Greece, "The techniques that we learned in PAWS-MED course will be helpful in order to plan an interesting tour in the forest for people of different ages". In the case of Antonio Mancuso, from Italy, the course was a "Very positive experience and it would be meaningful to repeat it."

The results of the project will be presented and implemented in the International Conference "Forest Pedagogic and Environmental Education – The PAWS-MED Experience", that will take place on September 15th and 16th, in Sabaudia, near Rome, during the commemoration of International Year of Forests.

PAWS-MED project will finish at the end of September, but the materials will be provided on the project website and can be downloaded for free.

More details on the project(s) and international conference are available on www.paws-europe.org

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