

GERMANY

Farm performance, modernisation & restructuring

Location
Neustadt

Programming period
2014 – 2020

Priority
P2 – Competitiveness

Measure
M4 – Investments in physical
assets

Funding (EUR)
Total budget 1 001 000
EAFRD 300 000
National/Regional 601 000
Private 100 000

Project duration
2015 – 2021

Project promoter
Dienstleistungszentrum
Ländlicher Raum Rheinpfalz
(DLR)

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A land consolidation project helped restore the functionality of vineyard terraces and thus maintained a landscape which is a habitat of rare species.

Summary

Winegrowing on the steep slopes of the Wingertsberg, Rhineland-Palatinate is typically labour-intensive and time-consuming. As a result many winegrowers abandoned the tradition. The vineyard terraces lay fallow and rare animal and plant species were threatened. A land consolidation process has helped to counteract this development.



Results

The project made it possible to redesign a 15 hectare vineyard in such a way that it can be used again for viticulture and that its value in terms of nature conservation is safeguarded.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ Local communities and authorities, landowners and farm managers need to work closely together over a long period of time, in order to redistribute ownership and public land. This has to be done in such a way that both individual and public objectives (nature conservation, landscape) can benefit.
- ❑ Land consolidation is a tried and tested instrument that is often used to restructure real estate.

Context

Wingertsberg in the municipality of Saint Martin, forms a small-scale mosaic consisting of vineyard terraces and dry-stone walls. These are habitats of many rare species, such as the sand lizard, the grey woodpecker, the red-backed shrike and the bunting. Wingertsberg is protected by law as a nature reserve and parts of it are listed as a European bird protection area.

However, winegrowing on steep slopes requires strenuous manual work and as a consequence more and more winegrowers gave up using the vineyard. By 2006, around 60% of the area was left fallow. This created the immediate threat of losing the vineyard's landscape aesthetic and touristic value.

The Dienstleistungszentrum Ländlicher Raum Rheinpfalz (DLR) initiated a land consolidation procedure on around 15 hectares, in order to improve the conditions for land development.

Objectives

The project set out to urgently restore 15 ha of vineyards in order to preserve the Wingertsberg's viticultural, nature, landscape aesthetic and touristic value.

Activities

The project financed the construction of new paths that allow farmers to move around the vineyard regardless of weather conditions. Cross-terraces were established on the slopes and now allow partial mechanisation of cultivation. These are the basic prerequisites for

sustainable, long-term use and for keeping the areas open. The embankments and stone walls were integrated into the transverse terraces by means of gabion construction - i.e. using stone-filled baskets. This compensates for the landscape modifications and provides a habitat for animal and plant species that depend on open land.

It was necessary to make extensive changes in the ownership structure of the vineyards before carrying out the necessary investments.

Main results

The project successfully redesigned the 15 ha vineyard in such a way that it can be used again for viticulture and that its nature conservation value is preserved.

Key lessons

For projects of this kind that require broad consensus, it is necessary for local communities, authorities, landowners and managers to work closely together over a long period of time. This enables land ownership issues to be resolved in such a way that both individual and public objectives (nature conservation, landscape) can benefit.

Land consolidation is a tried and tested instrument that is often used to restructure real estate. Agricultural and nature conservation objectives are increasingly being implemented together. This project can thus be used as a model for solving further conflicts in the areas of viticulture, abandonment of land and nature conservation.

Additional sources of information

n/a