

SPAIN

Diversify the rural economy

Location

Paraje La Venta

Programming period

2007 – 2013

Axis

Axis 4 – LEADER

Measure

M312 - Support for business creation and development

Funding (EUR)

Total budget 135 139.00

EAFRD 32 446.91

National/Regional 10 815.64

Private 52 876.45

Other (bank loan) 39 000.00

Project duration

2015 – 2017

Project promoter

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Contact

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Website

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An innovative environmental training centre was established in Murcia, demonstrating the potentials of renewable energy based on diversified rural tourism.

Summary

The North-West region of Murcia is characterised by numerous construction sites, intensive agriculture and extensive energy use. At the same time, rural tourism in the area is relatively old fashioned with very little diversification. In this context, the idea for this project was born to combine sustainable rural tourism with theoretical and practical training for people of all ages.

RDP support was used to design the training courses and the associated learning kits on renewable energy for all ages and knowledge levels. In addition, a guesthouse was built using only bioconstruction techniques. The complex offers a workshop room and accommodation for families and groups of up to nine people.

Bambullas

Cultiva tu bicicleta

PROYECTO VIRERE



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Results

After the first year, a turnover of 25.000 EUR was achieved, originating 60% from consultancy and engineering projects, 25% from training courses and 15% from the accommodation and guided visits.

The courses evolved and are included in the training curricula of the Engineers Official Association of Murcia.

Local public support has been very strong and interest has grown amongst the public administration and other businesses.

The project has demonstrated and increased awareness of the potential of renewable energy.

Lessons & Recommendations

- The only way this kind of project can be economically viable in the current situation is to be innovative, diversified and integrated.
- Even with a highly appreciated niche offer, prices have to be competitive.
- These types of projects require an extra effort in marketing and dissemination.
- As any business model that is unique and stands out from the mainstream, the administrative obstacles are numerous.
- At the beginning, it was very difficult to find specialised workers, so in the end it was more convenient to train local people.

Context

The North-West region of Murcia is characterised by numerous construction sites, intensive agriculture and extensive energy use. At the same time, rural tourism in the area was relatively old fashioned with very little diversification. In this context, the idea for this project was born to combine rural and sustainable tourism with theoretical and practical training for all people and ages.

The approach would be based on re-valourising indigenous biodiversity and integrating popular knowledge with the new global trends in more environmentally friendly energy, architecture, agriculture, waste recycling, water treatment, ecology and mobility.

Objectives

The project aimed to create a new type of service combining environmental education and tourism.

Activities

At first, the project focused on developing the training materials and awareness-raising activities. Training courses on renewable energy were designed and adapted to all ages and knowledge levels. Learning kits were prepared as well.

RDP support was also used for the building of a guesthouse using only bioconstruction techniques. The complex offers a workshop room and accommodation for families and groups up to nine people.

The package of services offered by the centre to the visitor includes accommodation, renting bamboo bicycles as an example of sustainable mobility, and free introductory courses on topics including permaculture, renewable energies and gastronomy using organic local produce and solar-powered ovens.

The facilities can be rented out for business meetings or groups that want to learn in a convivial environment surrounded by nature. A website was been put in place in order to allow online reservations and promotion.

The centre can also offer consultancy expertise and advice to enterprises and NGOs interested in implementing renewable energy projects. The centre is specialised in solar-diesel hybrid systems and photovoltaic systems for electricity generation.

The beneficiary participated in other initiatives to help spread further awareness of the project's messages, such as at the Forum Innpulsa.

Main results

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- The courses evolved and are included in the training curricula of the Engineers Official Association of Murcia.
- Local public support has been very strong and interest has grown amongst the public administration and other businesses.
- The project has demonstrated and increased awareness of the potential of renewable energy

Key lessons

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Additional sources of information

www.facebook.com/Proyecto-Virere-353004048221464/

<http://innpulsa2017.es/>