



Connecting Natural Values and People

October 2024

Newsletter



Foreword

Welcome to the first edition of CNVP Kosovo's newsletter!

The newsletter is part of the project Sustainable Use of Natural Resources for Environment and Economic Development (SUNREED) funded by the Embassy of Sweden in Prishtina and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

At the CNVP Foundation, we are committed to promoting sustainable development across the region. Our team shares a deep-rooted organizational culture founded on values of dedication, innovation, and collaboration.

This newsletter serves as a platform to share our initiatives, highlight impactful projects, and key advancements including the formation of strategic partnership agreements across the sector, aiming to boost employment, income generation, and sustainable forestry management practices.

In this issue, you will find insights into our ongoing initiatives, success stories from the Forest Sector, focusing on Non-Wood Forest Products (NWFPs), Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs), and biomass production for renewable energy markets, as well as how we are enhancing the organizational development of the National Association of Private Forestry Owners (NAPFO) and Associated Private Forest Owners (APFOs), resulting in improved internal operations, governance, and advocacy capabilities.

Thank you for joining us on this journey as we continue to innovate and collaborate towards a sustainable future.



Warm regards,

Xhevat Lushi

Director,
CNVP Kosovo



New Business Models: Enhancing MAPs Nursery Practices

In the village of Terpeze, within the municipality of Malisheve, spouses Shefqet and Zymrije Krasniqi have cultivated an inspiring enterprise: Agroshqiponja, dedicated to the cultivation of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs) and collection of Non-Wood Forest Products (NWFP). Since its establishment, Agroshqiponja has flourished, managing a 1000-m² nursery since 2018 where they nurture 14 types of MAPs. Their repertoire includes Common Mallow, Mentha, Oregano, Calendula, and more, each carefully tended for their essential oils and medicinal properties.

Beyond cultivation, Agroshqiponja excels in processing, packaging, and distributing MAPs and collecting Non-Wood Forest Products (NWFP). Recent innovations include the extraction of essential oils from plants like oregano, lavender, and sage, showcasing their commitment to quality and innovation in herbal products.

Central to Agroshqiponja's success is their collaboration with CNVP Kosovo's Sustainable Use of Natural Resources for Environment and Economic Development (SUNREED) project. This partnership has revitalized their MAPs nursery of 500 m², enhancing insulation, air tightness, and ground leveling to optimize energy efficiency and protect crops from weather and soil-borne threats. These improvements have not only boosted production volumes but also elevated the quality of their seedlings, enabling Agroshqiponja

to distribute over 800,000 MAPs seedlings to more than 50 farmers in the region.

Employment and profitability have risen as a result, benefiting not only Agroshqiponja but also empowering marginalized groups and farmers throughout Malisheve. Over 30 farmers now have contracts for MAPs seedlings, stimulating local business growth and creating sustainable employment opportunities.

Looking forward, Agroshqiponja remains dedicated to expanding contracted and organic farming practices, through the support and expertise gained from their partnership with SUNREED.

As Agroshqiponja continues to innovate and grow, supported by these kind of initiatives, their story inspires confidence and transformation for all to follow.



Before (left) and after (right) upgrading nursery for NWFPs and MAPs



Empowering Kosovo's Forest Owners

Kosovo's rich forestry sector plays a crucial role in both the local economy and environmental sustainability, with private forest owners (PFOs) leading the way in managing these resources. Recognizing the important role of PFOs in sustainable forest management, CNVP through its various projects and now the SUNREED project, continues to strengthen their capabilities and enhance their economic prospects.

The National Association of Private Forest Owners (NAPFO), as the umbrella organization for local associations of PFOs, works in consolidating and advancing the sector's capabilities. With CNVP's support, NAPFO has undergone significant organizational restructuring, enhancing transparency, accountability, and operational efficiency. Throughout 2023, the SUNREED project has facilitated a series of structural interventions which included the establishment of NAPFO offices in Prishtina, crucial for coordinating and delivering enhanced services to PFOs.

Working hand in hand with the national Association, CNVP has been instrumental in equipping PFOs with the necessary skills and knowledge through comprehensive capacity-building programs. These initiatives include developing tailored training modules on forest cultivation interventions, forestry tools and technology, safety measures, and sustainable forest management practices. The project facilitated multiple training sessions across Kosovo, reaching over 150 PFOs in various regions.

CNVP's support over the years has empowered NAPFO to work independently and effectively in managing forest resources.

Establishment of Fast-Growing Tree Plantations in Kosovo

This year, a group of proactive private farmers achieved a milestone in sustainable forestry by establishing a 4-hectare fast-growing tree plantation. This initiative, part of CNVP Kosovo's SUNREED project, introduces native species such as Poplar and Black Locust trees known for their rapid growth and high biomass yield, suitable for energy production and wood processing.

The partnership between farmers and a local wood processing company ensures a steady wood supply, with farmers cultivating the plantations and the company purchasing the biomass after a set period, fostering stability and mutual growth.

Transitioning to fast-growing tree plantations not only boosts agricultural productivity but also provides quicker returns on investment compared to traditional timber crops. The establishment of fast-growing tree plantations also reduces the pressure on forests to supply biomass for heating purposes. This approach, supported by the rapid growth cycle of Poplar and Black Locust trees, offers financial stability and predictability to farmers while securing a reliable supply of wood biomass for the processing company's operations.

The successful establishment of the initial 4-hectare plantation is just the beginning, setting a precedent for future projects. As these trees mature, the collaboration between farmers and the wood processing company will continue to yield benefits. This model shows promise for expansion into other regions, highlighting its potential to positively impact Kosovo's economy and environment.



CNVP's Initiative with Forest Management Plans for Empowering Kosovo's Forests

In the pursuit of sustainable forestry practices, CNVP is strengthening its work on enhancing the management of private forests in Kosovo. At the heart of this effort lies the development and implementation of Forest Management Plans (FMPs).

A Development Plan for Forests defines planned forestry activities (such as inventory, yield calculation, harvesting, silviculture, protection, and monitoring), setting out objectives, actions and control arrangements in a forest area.

Therefore, CNVP's objective is to build capacities and incentivize private forest owners (PFOs) and businesses to work together to ensure private forests operate under management plans.

A standout example is Hamit Pireva, a private forest owner (PFO) in Kamenica. Pireva's 3-hectare forest had not undergone any cultivation activities in its 35-year history until CNVP, through its SUNREED project, partnered with company Feniks-A, a prominent producer of woodchips and pellets.

There was keen interest from Feniks-A to collaborate with PFOs like Pireva to sustainably source biomass from local forests. The starting point involved conducting a comprehensive inventory and preparing a tailored Forest Management Plans for Pireva's forest. This plan outlined necessary interventions, including thinning activities for optimizing forest health and productivity.

Following the implementation of the Forest Management Plan, thinning activities were conducted on Pireva's forest stand. Although the biomass harvested was deemed low quality for other uses, it was suitable for woodchips production. Approximately 200 tons of biomass were harvested



and transported to the Feniks-A collection point in Gjakova, which subsequently fueled the district heating system in the region.

Successful collaborations and partnerships like the one between CNVP, Feniks-A, and PFOs exemplify a strategic approach to sustainable forestry management. Companies benefit from a reliable biomass supply sourced from forests with established Forest Management Plans, while providing economic benefits for private forest owners.

The integration of FMPs not only empowers private forest owners in Kosovo but also ensures the responsible management of forest resources for future generations.

CNVP remains committed to expanding its support for PFOs and strengthening partnerships with industry leaders.

For more information on the work of CNVP Kosovo and its impact, visit <http://www.cnvp-eu.org/eng/index.php>

