

## NEWSLETTER

Number 1/12  
March 2012

### News

#### FS priorities for 2012-2013

As the new CAP and Rural Development Policy after 2013 is taking shape, the focus of Forum Synergies' activities will move from influencing policies on the EU level towards implementing better policies on the very local level. We wish to identify opportunities for sustainable development within the new programs and measures and help people making use of it to strengthen their own projects and initiatives.

One of our focus will be to learn more about the specific situations on the local level. We will invite success stories, friends, members and partners to make their voice heard. We will contact or visit you handing over to you the "walking stick" – our traveling talking stick. The "walking stick" symbolizes continuity and interactivity between Forum Synergies projects and meetings. For the events planned for 2012-2013 the walking stick shall follow a route of "messages from rural Europe". We encourage members and civil society to visit local projects and to report back which lessons can be learnt from the local know how.

### Outlook / Events

#### More Farmers, Better Food 7 March 2012



UNION EUROPEENNE



Comité des Régions



Conference on CAP and Food Sovereignty, organized by European Coordination Via Campesina and the movement Nyeleni Europe, and hosted by the Committee of the Regions

When: 7 March 2012, from 9h30 till 17h30. Where: Committee of the Regions, rue Belliard 99, Brussels

#### 5<sup>th</sup> Workshop "Sustainable Development in Lake Areas" 18-22 April 2012

The 5<sup>th</sup> and final will be held from 18-22 April 2012 in Val de Drugeon, Département du Haut Doubs, in Eastern France (close to the Swiss Border) For any questions regarding programme or registration please contact [lakeproject@forum-synergies.eu](mailto:lakeproject@forum-synergies.eu).

Programme and registration form will be available on soon on our website.

#### The new FS calendar of events is available now

Please visit our website [www.forum-synergies.eu/](http://www.forum-synergies.eu/)

## Sustainable Forestry

"Sustainable forestry" group met for the 1<sup>st</sup> time in Provence, St. Michel l'Obsveratoire in January 2012



The core group identified the main topics for the future work:

1. to analyze strategies of how forest can be a lever for local development in rural communities (Germany)
2. to raise awareness about the different services provided by a sustainable forest management (United Kingdom)
3. to share experiences of how rural communities are involved in looking after woodlands (Sweden)
4. to give local actors and authorities better access to practical knowledge about sustainable forest management (France)

## Rural Actors for Health

The 1<sup>st</sup> **European Herbal Gathering** will take place from 4-7 of October 2012 in Austria, Lesachtal. It will be hosted by the "Natur- & Kräuterwerkstatt Lesachtal" [www.kraeuterwerkstatt-lesachtal.at/](http://www.kraeuterwerkstatt-lesachtal.at/).

The Austrian national UNESCO committee for the intangible heritage programme will take over the patronage for this event. Their interest to promote and safeguard traditional knowledge and practices concerning nature fits perfectly to our focus on rural actors and their contribution to valorize the local knowledge about medicinal and spice plants.

On 21-02-12 5 partners brought in a **Grundtvig Project called "European medicinal and spice plants skills and best practice transfer" (EMASP)**. The application was done by 5 partners:

**Civitas Foundation (RO, lead partner):** Motto: Our natural treasures are the future of our communities! Civitas Foundation stimulates local and regional development in Romania. I hope that through this Grundtvig project woman from the rural area will create a new cocktail of knowledge in medicinal and spice plants to enchant the EU policy makers. Pakot Mónika - project coordinator



**Natur- & Kräuterwerkstatt Lesachtal (AT):** The `Natur -& Krauterwerkstatt Lesachtal` was founded in 2007 as a local NGO in a disadvantaged area. Besides giving support to local producers of herbal products there are 3 main aims:

1. to give support and generate opportunities for job creation mainly for women in rural areas;
2. to engage in safeguarding the traditional knowledge related to the use of herbs. This is achieved through ongoing production on the one hand and teaching on the other;
3. contribute to the development of sustainable local tourism.



**PermaLand (NL):** PermaLand is a training and development organisation with working offices both in the Netherlands and Portugal. PermaLand aims at creating and realising learning events for sustainable land-use

and human empowerment in an effort to support and consolidate thriving rural communities. "In PermaLand we bring natural consciousness and earth sciences together with human intelligence and creativity in designing sustainable habitats."

Our personal motivation to participate in the EMASP project is an on-going wish to seek, maintain and transfer indigenous knowledge and skills which are at the basis of social coherent economic activities that respect, incorporate and foster intrinsic countryside values, leading to the re-integration and diversification of rural communities. Within this context, the relation between ethno-botanic resources and biodiversity conservation is a subject that attracts our full attention. [www.permaland.nl](http://www.permaland.nl)



**Sauna Association (LV):** Latvian Sauna Association (BIEDRĪBA LATVIJAS PIRTS ASOCIĀCIJA) was founded to maintain ancient national tradition – water and herbal procedures- sauna. Tradition was close connected with survival of Latvian nation as sauna was a place for health maintenance and base of healthy lifestyle for centuries.

Maintenance and development of this tradition, uniting it with creating of own herb gardens and use of herbal products in sauna, active training work for both – society, including people who are interested in use of water and herb procedures due to their specific health problems, also disadvantaged persons and members of Association - was main goal of staff and members.

[pirtslietas.lv](http://pirtslietas.lv)



**The firm of ARCH (GB):** Arch Network is a Scottish Non Government Organisation promoting learning and development in natural and cultural heritage between Scotland and other European countries. Trainers, students and young workers have the opportunity to gain new skills and to expand their European point of view by becoming involved in international joint working. [www.archnetworks.eu](http://www.archnetworks.eu)



## News from Forum Synergies members and partners

### ARC – Voices of change

ARC 2020 offers the opportunity to raise our voices of change. A new website feature has started which will give you a chance to tell our story from the point of view where we live. Forum Synergies will also contribute with a series of stories, interviews and success stories to present what is true from our point of view.





We thereby can contribute to an alternative voice for farming, food and rural development in Europe.

ARC will develop a series of pages, each one focusing on a different topic. The first will be **FACTORY FARMING**, examining the hidden costs for the environment, human health, sustainability and rural communities. Suggestions for topics also welcome. Please contact [communication@arc2020.eu](mailto:communication@arc2020.eu)

### **ARC – Political correspondents**

A number of political correspondents are working on a national level for the ARC. If you want to come into closer contact with the ARC process, want to propose a topic or inform about interesting events, please feel free to contact your political correspondent. Have a look at [www.arc2020.eu/front/the-arc-web-team/](http://www.arc2020.eu/front/the-arc-web-team/) or contact [communication@arc2020.eu](mailto:communication@arc2020.eu)

### **About Forum Synergies**

Forum Synergies is a European non-profit organisation. Since 1994 our network of engaged citizens and associations has gathered rich and varied experience in sustainable practices, mainly in rural areas. Trying out the best ways to save resources and energy in our local communities, combining the intelligent use of modern technologies with traditional know how, and sharing our successes and weaknesses throughout Europe, have given us faith in getting involved in political decision-making on our future.

Forum Synergies is kindly supported by



Fondation de France  
<http://www.fdf.org>



Fondation pour le Progrès de l'Homme  
<http://www.fph.ch>

Contact: [info@forum-synergies.eu](mailto:info@forum-synergies.eu)