

## **“Green Growth through the capitalization of innovative Greenhouses”**

### **(MED Greenhouses Project)**

**Minutes – 1<sup>st</sup> Consultation, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019, Hotel Gega, Berat, Albania**

The Regional Council of Berat, in collaboration with Living Prospects Ltd – the contracting company for the external expertise – organized the first Consultation “*Innovative measures for sustainable agriculture- Obstacles & Needs*” and the Seminar *for the use of Innovative Geothermal Greenhouses* in the context of the Interreg MED Greenhouses project.

The consultation was organized at the venue of Hotel Gega, in Berat. There were around 30 participants including greenhouse farmers, agriculture specialists and heads of regional directorates related to the field of agriculture, greenhouses and food safety. The registration process started at 11:00 (the participants list is attached).

According to the agenda, representatives of the Regional Council of Berat, welcomed all the participants. Mr. Evis Plaku – communication manager of the project – welcomed the participants and informed them about the purpose, objective, and expected results of the consultation and seminar. Then, Mr. Fatlli Adilaj – Chairman of the Regional Council of Berat – delivered the welcome speech by highlighting the importance of the MED Greenhouses project and launching the invitation to all participants to engage actively in the activities of the project.

The consultation meeting was followed by an overall presentation of the MED Greenhouses project, its main objectives and expected results, especially in the context of the Berat region. Participants were informed about the main objective of the project which is to stimulate environmental awareness on issues related to energy & water efficiency & sustainable production, contributing to Green Growth & promoting sustainable development. Key objectives were presented, such as:

- **Improve eco-innovation** capacities of public & private actors in the greenhouse/agriculture sector through stronger **transnational cooperation, knowledge transfer & better networks** between research bodies, businesses, public authorities & civil societies.
- **Improve** the existing innovation framework conditions on the **MED agricultural** sector.
- **Strengthen & empower** innovation clusters & networks in the field of **agriculture/greenhouse production**.

Between 11:30 and 12:15, participants were actively discussing issues related to the overall presentation of the project by providing their valuable input and feedback, alongside with discussions regarding *innovative measures for sustainable development* and *obstacles & needs of the agriculture sector*.

Representatives of the regional directorate of agriculture and food safety after highlighting the importance of the project in creating a network of bodies and interested parties in the field of agriculture, mentioned that they are very open to collaborate with the Regional Council in order to gather input and formally redirect the issues raised by the farmers to higher authorities such as the Ministry of Agriculture.

Farmers and specialists of the agriculture discussed actively. Several issues were raised for awareness and further actions, such as:

- Importance of creating a strong network of farmers, public institutions and national agencies and authorities in the field of agriculture in order to be able to discuss and implement policies that benefit all interested parties
- Difficulties faced by the farmers in constructing effective greenhouses due to the large costs of constructions and operations. Farmers noted that greenhouses are family-run businesses and as such they need support from other agencies as well
- The support required by farmers is three-fold
  - Better and faster information regarding all the policies and regulations in force in the field of agriculture and especially greenhouses
  - Financial support in forms of grants or low to no interest loans in order to make possible the construction of effective greenhouses
  - Transfer of knowledge in order to make use of new technologies to reduce costs of constructing, operating and maintaining greenhouses.

After these discussions, at around 12:45 – 13:30 a light lunch was served to all the participants. During the break, participants informally discussed topics of interest.

At the second session of the consultation / seminar, which started according to the agenda at 13:30, a presentation of innovative greenhouses was followed by the presentation of the project's e-learning platform and closing remarks and discussions. This part of the consultation / seminar was moderated and performed by the external experts Mr. Spiros Vasiliadis and Mr. Kristofor Muka.

The Training Course Material for Stakeholders/actors regarding MED Greenhouses installations highlighted the main objective of the project and related technology usage which is to *address issues related to energy & water efficiency & sustainable agricultural production, contributing to Green Growth & Circular Economy*.

The new technology was presented in details including i) an overview of the construction process; ii) various subsystems such as cooling & ventilation, heating system, curtain thermal insulation system, air drying system, hydroponic system and central control system; iii) advantages and challenges of the new technology were presented in comparison to traditional systems; iv) transferability of this new technology was discussed at last

The e-learning platform was presented next. Participants were informed about the importance of the platform as a fast and efficient tool for allowing them to gain, share and transfer knowledge by participating at different online webinars and other similar events. Participants were informed about the technical steps of accessing the platform through a simple demonstration tutorial.

At the end, around 14:30 – 15:00 participants were discussing the new presented technology. They highlighted its importance into reducing the costs and being more efficient than traditional technology. They valued it as the *future* of greenhouses. Issues were raised only in terms of

- Initial production and installation cost. Participants would prefer a collaboration with public authorities in order to create initially a few prototypes in Albania
- The ability of the new presented technology to spread through the Albanian market in terms of transferability and ease of deployment.

At the end, participants received a handful of promotion materials such as leaflets, notepads, pens, folders, bags and usbs. They were invited to follow through the activities of the project.

# **“Green Growth through the capitalization of innovative Greenhouses”**

## **(MED Greenhouses Project)**

**Minutes – 2<sup>nd</sup> Consultation, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019, Samaticë, Ura Vajgurore, Albania**

The Regional Council of Berat, in collaboration with Living Prospects Ltd – the contracting company for the external expertise – organized the first Consultation “*Innovative measures for sustainable agriculture- Obstacles & Needs*” and the Seminar *for the use of Innovative Geothermal Greenhouses* in the context of the Interreg MED Greenhouses project.

The consultation was organized at a private venue in *Samaticë, Ura Vajgurore*, an area well known in the region for the development of agriculture and greenhouses. There were around 35 participants including greenhouse farmers and agriculture specialist. The registration process started at 11:00 (the participants list is attached).

According to the agenda, representatives of the Regional Council of Berat, welcomed all the participants. Mr. Evis Plaku – communication manager of the project – welcomed the participants and informed them about the purpose, objective, and expected results of the consultation and seminar. Then, Mr. Fatlli Adilaj – Chairman of the Regional Council of Berat – delivered the welcome speech by highlighting the importance of the MED Greenhouses project and launching the invitation to all participants to engage actively in the activities of the project.

The consultation meeting was followed by an overall presentation of the MED Greenhouses project, its main objectives and expected results, especially in the context of the Berat region. Participants were informed about the main objective of the project which is to stimulate environmental awareness on issues related to energy & water efficiency & sustainable production, contributing to Green Growth & promoting sustainable development. Key objectives were presented, such as:

- **Improve eco-innovation** capacities of public & private actors in the greenhouse/agriculture sector through stronger **transnational cooperation, knowledge transfer & better networks** between research bodies, businesses, public authorities & civil societies.
- **Improve** the existing innovation framework conditions on the **MED agricultural** sector.
- **Strengthen & empower** innovation clusters & networks in the field of **agriculture/greenhouse production**.

Attached is the powerpoint presentation used to present the MED Greenhouses project

Between 11:30 and 12:15, participants were actively discussing issues related to the overall presentation of the project by providing their valuable input and feedback, alongside with

discussions regarding *innovative measures for sustainable development and obstacles & needs of the agriculture sector*.

Farmers and specialists of the agriculture discussed actively. Several issues were raised for awareness and further actions, such as:

- The need of farmers to have fast, reliable and useful information regarding policies and possibilities of developing greenhouses. They shared the concern of formal bodies that represent the farmer's best interest and bridge the gap between farmers and national institutions
- Difficulties faced by the farmers in constructing effective greenhouses due to the large costs of constructions and operations. Farmers noted that greenhouses are family-run businesses and as such they need support from other agencies as well
- The need to identify and be able to pursue financial support from different projects and opportunities. Farmers strongly agree that efficient greenhouses are costly and they are in need of help from other agencies and institutions as well.

After these discussions, at around 12:45 – 13:30 a light lunch was served to all the participants. During the break, participants informally discussed topics of interest.

At the second session of the consultation / seminar, which started according to the agenda at 13:30, a presentation of innovative greenhouses was followed by the presentation of the project's e-learning platform and closing remarks and discussions. This part of the consultation / seminar was moderated and performed by the external experts Mr. Spiros Vasiliadis and Mr. Kristofor Muka.

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Afterwards, all participants were able to walk through a newly constructed greenhouse, to observe its usage and technology and to see in person the main facilities and operations made at that greenhouse. Such visit led the stage for further discussion in the role of technologies in achieving cost efficient and high performance greenhouses.

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## **“Green Growth through the capitalization of innovative Greenhouses”**

### **(MED Greenhouses Project)**

**Minutes – 3<sup>rd</sup> Consultation, July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019, Kozare, Kuçovë, Albania**

The Regional Council of Berat, in collaboration with Living Prospects Ltd – the contracting company for the external expertise – organized the first Consultation “*Innovative measures for sustainable agriculture- Obstacles & Needs*” and the Seminar *for the use of Innovative Geothermal Greenhouses* in the context of the Interreg MED Greenhouses project.

The consultation was organized at a private venue in Kozare, Kuçovë, an area well known for the qualitative farmers and greenhouses. There were around 40 participants including greenhouse farmers, agriculture specialists and representatives of the Regional Council. The registration process started at 11:00 (the participants list is attached).

According to the agenda, representatives of the Regional Council of Berat, welcomed all the participants. Mr. Saimir Plaku – project manager of the project – welcomed the participants and informed them about the purpose, objective, and expected results of the consultation and seminar. Then, Mr. Fatlli Adilaj – Chairman of the Regional Council of Berat – delivered the welcome speech by highlighting the importance of the MED Greenhouses project and launching the invitation to all participants to engage actively in the activities of the project.

The consultation meeting was followed by an overall presentation of the MED Greenhouses project, its main objectives and expected results, especially in the context of the Berat region. Participants were informed about the main objective of the project which is to stimulate environmental awareness on issues related to energy & water efficiency & sustainable production, contributing to Green Growth & promoting sustainable development. Key objectives were presented, such as:

- **Improve eco-innovation** capacities of public & private actors in the greenhouse/agriculture sector through stronger **transnational cooperation, knowledge transfer & better networks** between research bodies, businesses, public authorities & civil societies.
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Attached is the powerpoint presentation used to present the MED Greenhouses project

Between 11:30 and 12:15, participants were actively discussing issues related to the overall presentation of the project by providing their valuable input and feedback, alongside with discussions regarding *innovative measures for sustainable development* and *obstacles & needs of the agriculture sector*.

Representatives of the regional directorate of agriculture and food safety after highlighting the importance of the project in creating a network of bodies and interested parties in the field of agriculture, mentioned that they are very open to collaborate with the Regional Council in order to gather input and formally redirect the issues raised by the farmers to higher authorities such as the Ministry of Agriculture.

Farmers and specialists of the agriculture discussed actively. Several issues were raised for awareness and further actions, such as:

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