

CYPRUS

Carbon conservation & sequestration

Location

Troodos Natural park

Programming period

2014 – 2020

Priority

P5 – Resource efficiency & climate

Measure

M08 – Investments in forest areas

Funding (EUR)

Total budget 108 363.61

EAFRD 53 000

National/Regional 47 000

Private 8 363.61

Project duration

2016 – 2019

Project promoter

Federation of Parents
Associations of the Limassol
region Schools

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A camp site used Rural Development Programme (RDP) support to increase its capacity to accommodate visitors and upgrade its infrastructure and improving accessibility.

Summary

The 'Polycarpus Vlachos' camp site is considered to be the best in Cyprus. It is located in the Troodos National Forest Park and is operated by the Federation of Parents' Associations of the Limassol region schools. The site has been continuously expanding over the years to welcome increasing numbers of children every year.



Given the growing demand, RDP support was used to purchase new accommodation tents; set up accessible accommodation and facilities, including special vehicles, ramps and wheelchairs for visitors with disabilities; upgrade wastewater and sewage infrastructure; as well as to install a lightning rod to minimise the risk of fire due to thunderstorms.

Results

The new waste management system significantly reduced nitrogen and phosphate residues. The processed water covers 100 % of the water needs for plants within the camp and 100 % of water required for fire-fighting.

Upgrading the facilities will enable people with disabilities to use the campsite benefiting from its accessible and safe environment which promotes social inclusion for all.

Installing a lightning rod was an absolute necessity for the protection of the infrastructure, as well as for the protection of the campers themselves, as sudden storms and lightning are quite common during the summer season in Cyprus.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ There was a particularly strong level of motivation amongst all those involved in the project. With much dedication, and a real love for the project, the team invested their limited spare time, working long hours to ensure that the upgrade was delivered as planned.
- ❑ What the team did not anticipate was the huge rush of applications once the extra spaces were announced. Children were very keen to join their friends in enjoying the campsite and an experience that they will remember for the rest of their lives.



Context

The 'Polycarpus Vlachos' camp site was built in 1976 on a piece of land, leased from the State, close to the Pano Platres community in Limassol. It is located within the Troodos National Forest Park and is operated by the Federation of Parents' Associations of the Limassol region schools. The camp site is considered to be the best on the island. It has been continuously expanding over the years, welcoming an ever-increasing number of children every summer.

During its annual two-month season (July and August) it hosts approximately 130-140 5th grade students (aged 10 and 11) in each of its eight one-week programmes. Outside of the summer season the facilities are used by other groups after obtaining the necessary authorisation from the Federation of Parents' Associations.

The campsite includes nine buildings, including a restaurant, kitchen, administrative office, mini market, nurse's station, events hall, boys' and girls' toilets and bathrooms, power, storage and refuse collection rooms.

Campers stay in 19 separate tents, each with a metal frame and tiled floor. The tents are located in specific areas and are easy to set up to allow visitors to stay close to nature and experience living in the forest.

The camp site staff live in separate accommodation. There are set rules regulating duties, a clear chain of command as regards to responsibilities and a safeguarding code of conduct for both the education and administrative staff.

Children have the opportunity to enhance their self-confidence through structured activities focused on environmental protection and connecting with nature. Forestry public policy objectives underpin the young people's introduction to environmental and biodiversity issues, carbon footprint awareness and forest protection.

Objectives

The owners of the camp site aim to create memorable experiences that the visitors will cherish forever. The goal of the upgrade project was to improve the services and management of the camping area; making it safer, more comfortable and more accessible to the campers and guests, whilst at the same time adhering to the principles of environmental protection.

Activities

Given the increasing demand for places at the camp, RDP support was used to purchase new accommodation tents. Greater capacity to accommodate visitors with disabilities

is providing by special vehicles and improved wheelchair access.

The wastewater and sewage infrastructure was upgraded and became more environmentally-friendly.

To protect the camp and surrounding natural park, a lightning rod was installed to minimise the risk of fire due to thunderstorms.

Main results

The new waste management system significantly reduced nitrogen and phosphate residues. The cleaned water is used for the toilets, the fire-fighting system and for watering the plants. The processed water covers 100 % of the water needs of plants within the camp and 100 % of fire-fighting needs, which is required as the camp site is located in the heart of Troodos National Forest Park. This means no drinking water is used for these purposes.

Upgrading the facilities will enable people with disabilities to use the campsite benefiting from its accessible and safe environment which promotes social inclusion for all.

Installing a lightning rod was an absolute necessity to protect the infrastructure and the campers themselves, as sudden storms and lightning are quite common during the summer season in Cyprus.

To meet the increased demand and improve conditions in the current tents, more tents were set up according to the campsite's standards.

Improving the accessibility network/infrastructure has improved the everyday traffic between the tents, facilities and activity locations. Repairing pedestrian paths and road pavements has significantly helped mobility and reduced the number of small accidents.

Key lessons

The need to deliver the project on-time was a cause for concern at first, but there was such a strong level of motivation amongst all those involved that everything worked out well in the end. With dedication and a real love for the project, which offers so much to so many children - the team invested their limited spare time, working long hours to ensure that the upgrade was delivered as planned.

What was not anticipated was the huge influx of applications once the extra spaces were announced. Children were very keen to join their friends in enjoying the camp site and an experience that they will remember for the rest of their lives.