DESERT ADAPT

PREPARING DESERTIFICATION AREAS FOR INCREASING CLIMATE CHANGE

NEWSLETTER

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Field implementation actions: L6 Valverde del Fresno (SP)
Jara harvesting




DAM provides for environmental economic and social actions to contrast land degradation.
As part of its new land management plan, the L6 partner, minicipality of Valverde del Fresno (SP), has found an sustainable way to manage the rockrose (*Cistus ladanifer*, locally "jara").

Rockrose is one of the most significant natural shrubs in the Mediterranean basin. This plant shows high proliferation, occupying abandoned agricultural areas of Montado and Dehesa, and may represent a fire hazard. Rockrose is used in cosmetic and perfume industries as a source of resin (labdanum gum) and essential oils. The measure introduced by L6 partner is to harvest the plant and use it for the production of essential oils, rather than to destroy its biomass and disturb the soil as traditionally done. This measure benefits both local communities with creation of jobs and landowners with new income opportunities. At the same time, this measure represents an efficient firebreak and allow to minimize soil disturbance, maintain plant roots in place and limit soil erosion, while increasing soil carbon.

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LIFE Desert-Adapt

Field Implementation actions: L1 Lamp (IT)
Growing aids installation

Field implementation of Desertification Adaptation Model started in Municipality of Lampedusa and Linosa (L1) summer 2020

Shrubs have been planted with Cocoons, which are a biodegradable containers which can hold water and slowly release it around the plant roots. They help newly planted species to survive summer aridity in the first year or more. This first cocoon set was run in collaboration with the LIFE project 'The Green Link' which specifically analyzed use and replicability of cocoons. Now a second set of cocoons has been used for the new plantations thanks to th first promising results. The activity is coordinated on the island by the University of Palermo (regional FIPs). In field, cocoons are compared with more traditional and natural systems consisting in a tangle of branches that reduce evaporation and evapotranspiration and protect by sun and wind the plant seedlings.

Plant aids measure can be combined with a specific function (reforestation or climate resilient tree crops) to sustainably recover ecosystem services in arid and semi-arid areas and increase the environmental and economic value of degraded areas.