O2 - Best Practice Data Sheet

People and Water NGO, Slovakia
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Name of the Project: BIOCLIMATIC PARC DRIENOVA in Rajec

Carrier of the Project: City Rajec

Country: Slovakia / Žilina Region

Contact: City Rajec, https://bioklimapark.com/

Duration: study and construction from 2011-19

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZUan1IC5z4&fbclid=IwAR06t3U4RDNvDD1CewmC2BmiBSEOcUjk0UZy8dcv9WNgrwLZqytkbtMVqGI

Reference:
https://bioklimapark.com/en/bioclimatic-park/

https://www.european-environment-foundation.eu/en-en/environetwork/profiles/zidek-ladislav

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Origin and Context of the Project

The area of agricultural land is almost 2.4 mil. ha (48% of the area of Slovakia). In the second half of the last century, Slovakia experienced the greatest transformation, especially the agricultural country. The fragmented agricultural landscape allowed for the balks to be ploughed down, groves and wetlands were removed and more than 1 mil. ha of land was drained.

This started industrial agricultural production, which for several decades dried up the agricultural land so much that without systemic change, the soil is unable to recover and regain fertility.

One of the few examples in Slovakia that starts the regeneration of agricultural land is the initiative in the Bioclimatic Park Drienová in Rajecká dolina in the Žilina region, where life is being returned to the area of 26 hectares of damaged soil. One of the first steps was to retain the water that falls on the area in the form of rainfall in the dried out agricultural land.

For this reason we built dams, water pits and lakes, which are the basis for biomass production and at the same time contain enough water for the herd of breeding animals, which grows from year to year.

The basic principle is the recycling not only of water but also of nutrients with enrichment of biological and chemical processes in the soil, support of biodiversity of vegetation and improvement of microclimate on the farm.

The basic thesis is that retaining more water on the farm will not only increase photosynthesis for biomass production, but also reduce temperature extremes, especially in summer by increasing water vapour through vegetation.

This system is proving to be successful, as the production of biomass on the farm increases from year to year, increasing the amount of livestock feed, the number of which is also increasing year by year. More than 300 native

species of fruit trees grow on the farm, beekeeping and fish farming is developing.

The farm is often visited by groups of school children, they are provided with environmental education and the possibility to observe animal behaviour. This means that there are several elements linked together - restoring soil fertility, promoting biodiversity, developing farming, preventing floods, drought and climate change.

The initiative to establish the Bioclimatic Park, as well as its development, is based on the idea of Ladislav Židek, who urges the local community and raises funds from domestic and international sources. The experience gained will soon be a very good and attractive example of innovative comprehensive restoration of damaged ecosystems, human skill and the return of a new generation of young people to the old roots of responsibility for land, water and biodiversity.

Photo: Michal Kravčík