



## 4th INFORMATION PANEL – March, 2012

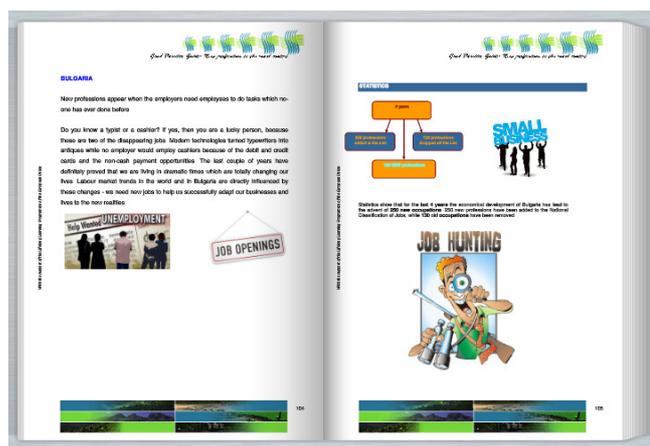
### PROJECT PROGRESS

#### 4th PROJECT MEETING, SÖDERHAMN, SWEDEN

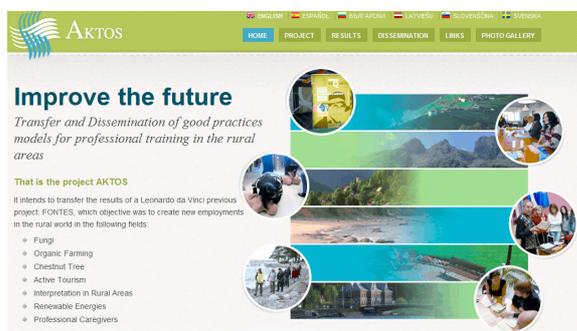
The 4th project meeting took place in Söderhamn, Sweden, on 21-22 February, 2012. Partners discussed the project progress and achievements. As the project is about to come to its close the final results and products were emphasized.

### FINAL RESULTS

The production of the contents of the main product of the project, the multilingual **Interactive Good Practice Guide**, has been completed. The guide will be produced in the form of CD. It contains information about new employment opportunities related to the endogenous resources of rural areas and it will be a useful tool to promote these new possibilities in disadvantaged areas.



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Information about the project has been spread via the **website**, [www.aktos.org](http://www.aktos.org), as well as at many dissemination events in the different partner countries. The **broschure** and **information panels** have also helped to spread information about the project during the whole project lifetime.

**Collaboration agreements** with different entities and stakeholders in the partner countries have been signed.



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The activities of the AKTOS project has also been documented in the **ADAM Database**. Project description, tasks and objectives as well as results achieved have been presented there. Additionally, information on dissemination events, information panels, partner meetings, and project web site link have been provided in this database.

### DISSEMINATION EVENTS

During each partner meeting dissemination events have taken place where the host partner has given an overview of the project and where local representatives have presented interesting local initiatives connected to the themes of the AKTOS project. Local stakeholders and entities as well as the local press have been present at these meetings.



### STUDY VISITS

At each partner meeting there have been a number of different study visits in order to show how employment has been created in various ways by using local resources.

Examples of such visits are local entrepreneurs, eco centres and heritage sites.



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## TESTING ACTIONS

All partners have conducted a pilot course using the material of the Interactive Good Practice Guide produced in the AKTOS project. Each partner has chosen one of the themes of the guide and delivered a testing action, which are being described here below.

**The Rural Development Centre Valle del Ese-Entrecabos, Spain**, has given a 120-hour course on mycology. The course consisted of both classroom and online sessions and dealt with picking wild mushrooms and identifying them. The course also covered aspects concerning legislation and the cultivation of mushrooms and there was a great interest in participating in the course as picking wild mushrooms is a way of increasing one's economic resources. However, it's difficult to make a living out of it, since one depends on external factors such as weather conditions and other people harvesting the mushrooms. On the other hand cultivating mushrooms and marketing them can be a source of employment in rural zones.



**ADESPER – Association for Sustainable Development and Promotion of Rural Employment, Spain**, has given a 30-hour theoretical and practical course on chestnut cultivation. The course dealt with the chestnut tree, its ecosystem, the cultivation work and the care needed. Some of its contents were the ecology and physiology of chestnuts, cultivation practices, animals and fungal diseases affecting chestnuts. Additionally the course also included the the harvesting, preserving, processing and marketing of the important chestnut products.



**The Development Center of Litija, Slovenia**, has given a course with teachers from schools in the Heart of Slovenia on the subject "Interpretation in Rural Areas – Cultural Heritage". The course was delivered in the form of workshops and other topics it included innovation as a driver of development, the impact of knowledge on the success of the local environment as well as the role of schools in the development of modern society and innovative ecosystems.



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**The Latvian Country Tourism Association “Lauku ceļotājs”** focuses on sustainable tourism. Their training course included creating a sustainable tourism model where you make an inventory of tourism resources, develop tourism products and offer training for service providers. Other themes in the course were the conservation of authentic environment, traditional architecture and cultural environment.



**Infocenter EOOD, Bulgaria**, offered a training course in heritage interpretation in rural areas. The course consisted of both theoretical lessons and practical sessions. The theoretical seminars consisted of discussions, pair work, problem solving and study of videos and internet material. The practical part of the course included project-oriented work on interpretation planning using local natural and cultural resources. The trainees were a mixed group of some unemployed participants and people active in the tourism and entrepreneurial sector.



**CFL – Centre for Flexible Learning, Sweden** offered a course on renewable energy integrated in two courses at a local upper secondary school. In one course, called Technical Communication, the students were asked to focus on one of the renewable energies; windpower, solar energy, wave energy, hydro-electric energy, pellets and to produce a logo as well as to write a technical report on how these energy systems work, to be presented at a later occasion.

In another course, called Design and Construction, students in different groups were asked to construct a device producing renewable energy such as solar panels to produce electricity, solar panels to heat water, turbines for water power or wind propellers. The different constructions were then tested to check their efficiency.



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## COMPREHENSIVE RURAL PLAN – VÄXHUSET ECO CENTRE

Växhuset Eco Centre is an organic development and demonstration project in Mobodarne in Söderhamn. Växhuset's ambition is work for increased growth, both in terms of knowledge as well as increased awareness regarding the production of food.

They work in different ways, in theory and practice, for sustainable development. The business has steadily been built up over the years and today the centre consists of a study centre, café, shop, twelve-angular hostel and a summer and winter greenhouse. Everything is built with great care and with materials selected to avoid destroying people and environment.

### *Café and shop*

In the café homemade cakes and vegetarian meals are served to visitors, as well as breakfast for hostel guests. Most of the vegetables served are organically produced in the centre's own garden. The shop sells items such as teas, spices, chocolate and crafts.

### *Conference Activities*

Växhuset offers a beautiful and peaceful conference environment year round. They arrange their own conferences and training courses in permaculture and sustainable development, and let the premises for rent.

### *Energy Solutions*

In order to secure the energy supply several systems have been installed to meet the needs during the different periods of the year. On the roof of the main building there are solar panels warming up meeting rooms, café and shop. In periods when the heat is not sufficient, they complement the solar energy by burning wood.





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As the building's south side consists of a greenhouse, plenty of heat is produced during the greater part of the year under the window panes, which spreads to the rest of the building.

To get the best effect out of the sun's energy, they also use accumulation tanks, solar air heaters and an air intake through the land, which provides the house with fresh air of constant temperature.

### Hostel

The hostel is open during the summer season and offers accommodation based on ecological thinking. Last year it was appointed "Eco-hostel 2010" by the Swedish Tourist Association.

The hostel is built as a unique, twelve-angular building with small rooms in each corner. It offers guests a basic standard with shared shower and toilet.



The reason for building a house with twelve corners was that the almost round shape provides energy-related benefits. With a fireplace in the middle of the building, the whole house is easily heated. The distance from the fireplace to any room in the house is the same and it is easy to keep it warm and avoid cold corners. In addition, the exterior wall area is smaller per square foot of floor space than in a square or rectangular house, which saves energy.

Here guests can stay in a thoroughly ecological environment. Electricity for lighting comes from solar panels on the roof, the shower is solar heated and composting toilets are used instead of conventional toilets.

### Activities

Canoes and rowing boats are for hire, as well as bicycles for exploring the surrounding area. One popular destination is the trail up to the Deep Valley Mountain with the exciting Troll Cave. Coffee or lunch baskets are available for purchase in the café. Quiz walks and permaculture walks are also organised.



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