

ERASMUS Summer School on Education for Sustainable Development in Protected Areas



SUBJECT

“The effectiveness of education of people on sustainability through the medium of agricultural products and related practices from the Park of Parnassos and the surrounding area.”

GROUP MEMBERS

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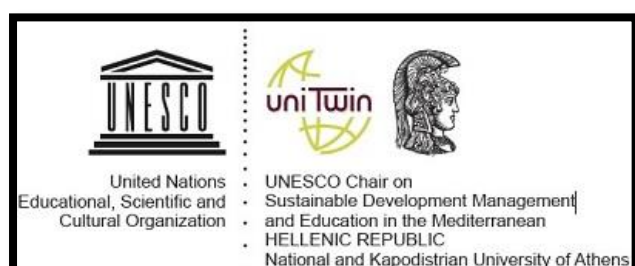
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06 – 19 July 2014

Amfissa, Greece



INTRODUCTION

The scope of this project was to compile a set of guidelines for the development of educational programmes with the specific aim of education on ESD utilizing the medium of food.

The American Public Health Association (APHA) defines a sustainable food system as one that:

“... provides healthy food to meet current needs while maintaining healthy ecosystems that can also provide food for generations to come with minimal negative impact to the environment. A sustainable food system also encourages local production and distribution infrastructures and makes nutritious food available, accessible and affordable to all. Further it is humane and just, protecting farmers and other workers, consumers, and other communities.” (APHA, 2007)

This provides a good guideline as to how an effective, education on sustainability should be constructed. Starting from there, it can be enriched to include specific elements on culture, ecology and biodiversity adapting to the specific audience, locality, seasonality and availability of resources.

Sustainability is also about involving the younger and older generations, learners and educators, locals and visitors, national and international communities in the economical and environmental issues that relate to food production and consumption (e.g. water and energy footprints, food miles). As such, diverse groups of people could benefit from education on sustainability. Such groups could include:

- ☞ professionals in the cosmetics and pharmaceutical industries (including such practices as aromatherapy or homeopathy) – e.g. beauticians, yoga instructors, scientific researchers etc
- ☞ organizations specializing in nutrition, health education and consumer awareness
- ☞ Ethnography or Cultural association enthusiasts (customs and traditions of the area, feasts and special occasion food, music to accompany food)
- ☞ professionals specializing in athletic education and coaching
- ☞ foodies
- ☞ school children and official educators – locally, nationally and internationally
- ☞ NOGs (e.g. Slow Food, Locavore Movement)

At the beginning of any educational approach it is imperative to define clearly two things:

- Who is the learner (audience)
- What are the desired outcomes

Having determined the intended group of learners, the educational approach should then set some clear scopes or guidelines.

Education can be loosely defined as *“a form of learning in which the knowledge, skills and habits of a particular group of people are transferred from one generation to the other through teaching, training or research.”* (Wikipedia Online Encyclopedia, n.d) Any experience that has a formative effect on the intellectual and emotional development or actions of a person could be considered *educational*. It can be inferred from the definition that there are many ways through which such a transfer, or formative effect, can occur. It could be under the guidance of third parties (professional teachers or not), or autodidactic. It could be intentional or unintentional from the learner’s point of view.

Among contemporary educators, the prevailing generic categories are the Formal, Informal and Non-formal ways of learning. The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Decefp) defines Formal, Informal and Non-formal Education respectively as:

“Learning that occurs in an organized and structured context (in a school / training centre or on the job) and is explicitly designated as learning (in terms of objectives, time or learning support). Formal learning is intentional from the learner’s point of view. It typically leads to certification.” (Cedefop, n.d.)

“Learning resulting from the daily work-related, family or leisure activities. It is not organized or structured (in terms of objectives, time or learning support). Informal learning is in most cases unintentional from the learner’s perspective. It typically does not lead to certification.” (Cedefop, n.d.)

“Learning which is embedded in planned activities not explicitly designated as learning (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support), but which contain an important learning element. Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner’s point of view. It typically does not lead to certification.” (Cedefop, n.d.)

Thus, a holistic education that aims at a spherical, effective *paideia* should incorporate methods from all three categories above.

This project’s scope was aimed at developing educational guidelines towards raising awareness on sustainability of a diverse group of learners, from school children to seasonal tourists and visitors, from leisure seekers to dedicated professionals. The pedagogical approaches should incorporate various didactical processes, from the traditional lecture and presentation method to experiential workshops and projects, adjusting to the aforementioned parameters audience, locality, seasonality and availability of resources.

To consider the final parameters of locality and availability of resources, this essay focused on the locality of Mt. Parnassus and the surrounding area, utilizing agricultural products and existing infrastructures into the development of guidelines (e.g. tourism and its related industries).



Mt. Parnassus / Internet

Mt. Parnassus is a mountain located in central Greece, across the prefectures of Viotia, Pthiotida and Fokida, north of the Gulf of Corinth. It is one of the tallest mountains in Greece, home to the archaeological site of Delphi and contains two ski resorts and a homonymous National Park. The area on and around the mountain has a great wealth of flora and fauna.

In particular in the prefecture of Fokida (including Mt. Parnassus) some of the most widespread, traditional products¹ are:

- Meat (sheep, lamb, goat, beef)
- honey
- milk and dairy (yoghurt, feta, formaela, mizithra)
- olives and olive oil (Elaionas olive grove near Amfissa)
- wine and tsipouro
- wheat and its derivatives (bread, paksimadi [particularly of Desfina], trachanas, pligouri)
- herbs (including oregano, lavender, rosemary, mountain tea)
- mushrooms (at least 150 recorded species in the Park area)

METHODOLOGY

For this essay a variety of research methods were used, including literature and desktop research (i.e. herbs and mushroom books and prospecta), interviews and conversations with experts and field research and observations.

Furthermore, degustation of a variety of locally sourced products took place over a period of one week (in-house and on selected locations in Amfissa, Agoriani and Galaksidi). During that time, a wide variety of different traditional foods and beverages were tried (including olives and olive oils, breads, dairy and wine).

For the composition of this essay, the research team in the initial phase implemented brainstorming in order to compile a list of, among other things:

- raw materials
- traditional agricultural products, practices and customs
- examples of good practices

that could provide the basis for the guideline compilation. Each member of the team was then assigned with a specific subtopic on which to expand the research (e.g. for the Introduction the subtopics included “Sustainability”, “People”, “Education” and “Food”). The final essay resulted from the combination of materials gathered on each subtopic.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The multicultural composition of the researchers’ group was beneficial, since through the sharing of personal observations and experiences elements from both the tangible and intangible cultural heritage were exchanged. This approach pinpointed similarities and differences in the perceptions of sustainability, education and food. These were then exploited in order to approach the scope from different viewpoints, simulating the different perceptions of diverse target groups.

¹Retrieved from <http://www.agro-tour.net/web/guest/8/~topic/247/213> [last accessed on 14/07/2014]

It is of utmost important however, that any resulting guidelines or educational activities especially consider the environmental and socio-economical singularities of each region, aside from the aforementioned generic parameters of target group and resource availability.

In particular, extra care should be given during stakeholders mapping, so that a balance can be achieved in accounting for local, national and international interests.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The unanimous conclusion was that food and agricultural products and practices, if correctly exploited, can provide a versatile medium through which long-lasting and effective education on sustainability can result, leading in turn to the development of environmentally responsible consumer behavior.

In developing the guidelines section, it was decided that the central guideline around which the list would expand (horizontally, vertically or in a web) would be:

“If an activity is said to be sustainable, it should be able to continue forever.” (Anon)²

Finally, some generic guidelines and examples of Good Practices (see APPENDIX I) were compiled.

Generic guidelines:

- Intergenerational workshops combined with social entrepreneurship (younger people learning skills, crafts etc from the older generations) , thus utilizing and managing the social capital
- Workshops and activities (year-round or seasonal) developed around themes such as:
 - Innovative recipes and re-invention of old recipes using the same ingredients
 - Homemade cosmetics from locally sourced materials (e.g. soap from olive oil and honey)
 - Healthy eating / Mediterranean dietary workshops for visitors
 - Culinary / green gastronomy workshops for preparing and eating food using local materials
 - Crafts and arts workshops (e.g. wood carving workshops using local wood such as olive wood from local grove)
- Create NGO about sustainable development through food – for activities such as fundraising, event organization/management etc.
- Create webpage / online catalogue for ordering and delivering agricultural products within a specific radius (“30 Kilometer rule”, minimal Ecological footprint)
- Local Food Bank (not just produce but also technique books, catalogues, audiovisual data) – wider network of local food banks (for local authorities)
- Database linking foods and products with festivals and events, localities, dates and travellers’ information following the template below:

FOOD / PRODUCT	FESTIVAL / EVENT	LOCATION	DATES / SEASON	LINKS
Honey	Honey festival	Amfissa
Wine and vine products	Grape feast	Rhodes
Wheat and Bread				
Meat				

² “What is sustainability” Retrieved from www.landlearnsw.org.au/sustainability/what-is-sustainability [last accessed on 17/07/2014]

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- Fundraising <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/cdp/fantastic-fund-hs.pdf>
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APPENDIX I

Please see “ A+Fundraisers.pdf ”