



Forum Synergies

Linking sustainable practices throughout Europe

www.forum-synergies.eu

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NEWSLETTER

News

Forum Synergies embarks on ARC

Forum Synergies formulated its “Messages from the Countryside” during the GA held in May 2010 in Pierrerue, FR. These messages contributed to the ARC process and are also available on our website:

[Message from Pierrerue](#)

ERSG 2010

In cooperation with CELAVAR Forum Synergies held its annual European Rural Sustainability Gathering from 14-17 October 2010 in Vouneuil sur Vienne, Poitou-Charentes, FR.

The event was called “A glimpse to the future of rural Europe which was also held in the context of the ARC - The Agricultural and Rural Convention”. The event was our contribution to building a bridge between the world of people working in local projects and regional networks striving for sustainable rural development and farming practice, and people working , in governments and European institutions responsible for agriculture and rural development policies. Our conference report can be find on our website as “Messages from Vouneuil” www.forum-synergies.eu. The main messages will also be published as a photobook

The report is also available on our website!

ARC's Final Communication from Civil Society to the European Union Institutions on the future Agricultural and Rural Policy

Gathered in Brussels for a two-day conference on 4. and 5 of November, the ARC network has agreed upon its **Communication of Civil Society to the European Union on the Future of Agriculture and Rural Policies**. The final Communication was submitted to the European Commission, the European Parliament and other EU institutions the day before the Commission published its own Communication on the CAP post 2013.

The communication is available in FR, EN and DE at www.arc2020.eu



Announcements/ Events

Calendar of events

The new calendar of events is available on the FS website www.forum-synergies.eu.

News from Forum Synergies projects

Sustainable Development of Lake Areas

After workshops in Estonia, Poland and Slovenia, Forum Synergies and Global Nature Fund held their 4th workshop about “Sustainable Development in Lake Areas: Empowering Local Initiatives and Civil Society” in Greece from 22 to 26 Sept 2010.

With 48 participants from 15 countries this workshop was the largest so far. We met in the small fishermen

and tourism village of Keramoti in Nestos delta, a large river delta in north eastern Greece and part of the country's only national park

A "Declaration of Keramoti" as a summarizing political message from the findings of the "Sustainable Development in Lake Areas" workshops. The declaration was signed by the participants and later put on the ARC website (in the context of a "nature 2000" thematic group). www.arc2020.eu/pg/groups/4298/natura-2000/

New ways of Access to Land

Regarding the problems of young people to have **access to land** and support in starting farming, Forum Synergies started to cooperate with **Terre de liens** in France and the Goldsmith Foundation in the UK in order to work on sustainable solutions for generational change in family farming and related rural policies. The group on access to land for CCF started exchanging experiences in 2008. A European project was started to document existing initiatives of access to land for CCF as well as to study the scope, functioning, strengths and weaknesses of CCF in that context. It will conduct a mapping of existing experiences throughout Europe as well as in-depth case studies. [Mapping of existing experiences](#)

Farmers Ecology

Ecologie Paysanne Europe (Farmer's Ecology) had its 1st event in September 2010 in Odorheiu – Romania. The project was presented to Romanian and Hungarian local groups during the Conference organised by Civitas Foundation in the framework of its Fruit Festival. It was followed by a 2 days workshop on 25 et 26 September: the Spanish and French partners had the opportunity to discover in situ the work initiated by Civitas with local communities on traditional fruit trees knowledge both on land management and fruit processing. Participants also exchanged on common approaches of work, as for example a wiki website to share collected knowledge. <http://ecologie-paysanne.org>



Rural actors for Sustainable health

The project aims at strengthening a network of actors for sustainable health. Based on the existing knowledge and resources of rural actors this network shall: foster capacities in the field of multifunctional agriculture; safeguard and promote the local knowledge related to health care; advance and set up links to other stakeholders in the field of health care like medicines or scientists in order to develop concrete offers for the general public.

News from Forum Synergies members and partners

PREPARE

Representatives of PREPARE Network recently met with old and new leaders of the ELARD Network (www.elard.eu) and agreed to launch some common activities. In the near future both networks will check their capacities for the common project in the field of rural development



Sad news

Isobel Holbourn, our friend and former president has passed away

-> see annex



About Forum Synergies

Forum Synergies is a European non-profit organisation. Since 1994 our network of engaged citizens and associations has gathered rich and varied experience in sustainable practices, mainly in rural areas. Trying out the best ways to save resources and energy in our local communities, combining the intelligent use of modern technologies with traditional know how, and sharing our successes and weaknesses throughout Europe, have given us faith in getting involved in political decision-making on our future.

Forum Synergies is kindly supported by



Fondation de France

<http://www.fdf.org>



Fondation Charles Léopold Mayer
pour le Progrès de l'Homme

Fondation pour le Progrès de l'Homme

<http://www.fph.ch>

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Dear Friends and Members of Forum Synergies,

We have lost our friend and former President Isobel Holbourn.

She passed away yesterday at the hospital in Lerwick after a serious illness.

In July this year she had celebrated her 70th birthday with her family and friends on her home island Foula.



Foula, the most Western of Shetland islands is her home. She moved there with her family when she was nine years old. Her father was teacher and priest on Foula. At the age of fourteen she moved to Shetlands for secondary school, but came back to live on Foula after her schooling.

She was what we use to call the "fiery spirit" of the island, taking loving care for her neighbours, always ready to defend island needs and interests against some mainland ignorance. She made sure the island school was maintained as well as the ferry services. She fought for a proper landing field for small airplanes. And she was an engaged and well known nature heritage ranger over many years.

Isobel was one of the leading members of the Scottish Highlands and Islands Forum which we Europeans only discovered in 1996. Our European Network of Experiences in Sustainable Development was looking for engaged partners and success stories. We met her first when we visited the Highlands and Islands Forums' annual conference in Inverness. The theme of the conference was "A sense of place".

We understood what is meant by "sense of place" when Isobel organised one of our local workshops in June 1997 on Eigg island. We tried to grasp the meaning of living in a community which was "owned" by a foreign landowner and we tried to support the local people in shaping the future of their island.

Isobel was also one of our most active members during the "Sustainable Mystery Tour", which presented our ideas for a sustainable rural Europe. She took part in many of our events and taught us Scottish dances and songs.

Forum Synergies was founded as a European non profit organisation in 2000 in St. Michel l'Observatoire, Provence. Isobel was elected our first President on the island of Sardinia in November 2000. She successfully steered our organisation until 2005. She was well aware of her roots. She was an islander and a proud Scotswoman all her life. And she felt European with close links to people who love their place and have a spirit of community and mutual support.

Thank you Isobel for teaching us loving care and the strength of community. You have a place in our hearts in the future!

The Board and Team of Forum Synergies.