



LifeMedGreenRoof Project
After-LIFE Communication Plan - Italy

LIFE12ENV/MT/000732



LifeMedGreenRoof Project
MEETING ENVIRONMENTAL TARGETS

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Introduction

The encroachment of the urban into the rural is having a negative effect on the natural environment due to habitat destruction, pollution and erosion. It is also having a negative effect on human health. Densely populated urban areas suffer from high pollution levels, increased ambient temperatures, reduced biodiversity to mention but a few. Such issues are causing both psychological and physical problems to urban dwellers especially children and the elderly. Unfortunately these issues are not readily perceived by the public and living in highly urbanised areas has given the impression that people are distinct from what is natural. This has resulted in urban areas devoid of biodiversity. Biodiversity in urban areas provide what is termed ecosystem services, defined as those benefits enjoyed by people and provided by the ecosystem. These benefits are unfortunately often underestimated and underappreciated. This lack of awareness is also prevalent even with professionals such as architects and policy makers who have a substantial impact on the state of urban areas.

Since the latter half of the twentieth century an effort has been made in a number of European countries to mitigate and resolve such urban issues using green infrastructure. It has become an accepted concept that the ecosystem could help in rendering urban areas more hospitable to residents and visitors. Green roofs have been identified as an important tool in rendering urban areas more sustainable.

In Malta green roofs have never been adopted and implemented within the urban fabric even if buildings are well suited for green roofs with flat-roof and sturdy concrete construction. In Italy green roofs are a known technology mainly due to the influence of northern European countries especially Germany. The Italian climate is more Mediterranean than it is temperate, and the use of temperate technology and specifications could be considered as not being the most ideal. This is especially true when it comes to plant selection and substrate composition.

Project Background

The LifeMedGreenRoof project was established mainly to:

1. test green roofs in a Mediterranean environment and assess their performance in terms of plant survival, substrate performance, insulation properties and storm water management.
2. construct a green roof for demonstration purposes and disseminate information to increase green roof awareness.

Although the project could be hailed a success in terms of green roof performance and awareness raising, the efforts undertaken during the course of the project period should not terminate with the completion of the project. Awareness raising should be carried out at various levels so as to establish an understanding of the need to implement green roofs for their benefits and to further research on the technology to appreciate limitations, strengths and opportunities. This after-LIFE plan is being drafted to better understand and increase the opportunities created by the project with the limited human resources and finances available and a strong collaboration between the different faculties of the University of Malta and the partners involved in the project. Both the University of Malta and Fondazione Minoprio are in a strategic position of influencing students in favour of green infrastructure especially green roofs.

Project description

The LifeMedGreenRoof Project was a demonstration project dedicated to increase awareness on the benefits of green roofs in the Mediterranean region. The project aimed at the creation of a baseline

study to illustrate that green roofs could be successfully implemented using plants native to the region and disseminate such information to the stake holders.

Communication is considered an effective tool in increasing awareness on the need to integrate green roofs within the urban environment to reduce and mitigate problems within towns and cities. The European Commission has in fact developed a Green Infrastructure Strategy which aims to safeguard the protection, restoration, creation and enhancement of green infrastructure to become an integral part of spatial planning and territorial development.

Target audience

The project targeted different stakeholders during implementation. Stakeholders were divided into different groups: those with direct relation to the site of the green roof such as employees and students of the university and secondary schools, those who in some way would benefit or influence the dissemination of the technology, including the public in general and the design profession, and finally those who may be considered part of the production chain (nurseries, agronomist, building constructors, growing media producers).

Communication objectives

The objectives of the LifeMedGreenRoof project were:

- To illustrate that green roofs could be successfully implemented in the semi-arid environment of the Mediterranean
- To illustrate that native vegetation is appropriate to cultivate on a green roof
- To raise awareness on the benefits of green roof vis-à-vis the insulation and storm water management performance.
- To disseminate technical information on the construction of green roofs
- To provide an example of what a green roof could look like through the demonstration green roofs

These objectives were implemented using different communication campaigns. Initially campaigns related mainly to articles in newspapers and magazines, the creation of a Facebook page and a website. Following the installation of the demonstration green roof, the campaign intensified with TV interviews, public lectures, featured articles, visits by dignitaries, school children and entrepreneurs.

Activities and impact on the target audience

Communication actions

Press releases in local/national press targeting the general public. The press releases were mainly issued either by the project but occasionally also by other entities.

Articles were also published in various new papers and magazines, mainly targeted at the design professionals, agronomist, nurseries, and landscapers.

Local TV news items. These targeted mainly the general public.

Visits to the demonstration green roof and project site. These visits included over 100+ students, school teachers, plant nursery representatives, growing media producers, and landscaper. The demonstration green roof was and is open to the public by appointment. Fondazione Minoprio students visit the site on a regular basis.

Lectures/presentations. These included organised lecture sessions at Fondazione Minoprio and site visits with presentations during specific seminars and school targeting professionals.

Communication tools

Communication material was also produced during the life of the project. Materials are available in both Maltese/English and Italian.

Production of 2 brochures (6000 copies). These highlight the importance and benefits of green roofs. They were published in Maltese/English and Italian.

A website (www.lifemedgreenroof.org) available in Italian and English and visited by XXX visitor.

A Facebook page with regular updates available in English and visited by XXX visitors.

A number of PowerPoint/Prezi presentations

The After-Life and future communication actions

The objectives of the After-Life communication activities are to provide a plan for extending and increasing the scope of the LifeMedGreenRoof Project beyond the project time frame and ensure a continuation of the project aims. The project aims are: to create a baseline study on green roof performance, establish the insulation and storm water management of green roofs in a Mediterranean climate and increase awareness on green roof benefits amongst stake holders.

The objectives of the After-Life communication plan are listed here under as 3 Actions:

1. To maintain the demonstration green roof, monitor activities and encourage further research action
2. To disseminate information on green roofs
3. To continue collaboration between partners

The plan is scheduled for a five-year period (July 2017 – July 2022),

Action 1: To maintain the green roof
Description (objectives) The green roof will still be utilised for demonstration and research purposes. The demonstration site will be open to the public by appointment. The green roof will be maintained and utilised for demonstration and research purpose, even with the involvement of companies working on green roofs (landscapers, agronomists, green roof producer companies and nurseries). The research activities could be implemented (use of different substrates and plant species) and extended to other issues (i.e. biodiversity, microclimate influences etc). Water runoff and substrates will continue to be monitored with the support of MAC laboratory.
Responsible institution Fondazione Minoprio, being the owner of the green roof, will see to the maintenance and upkeep of the green roof and to assisting visitors when needed.
Period Over the 5 year period.

Action 2: To disseminate information on green roofs (through the project website/facebook, participation at seminars and congresses, collaboration with secondary schools and University)

Description (objectives)

The website and Facebook pages are important communication tools to disseminate information on green roof performance. The website will be maintained online for five years. Any new information, including monitoring data, will be uploaded on the website.

Responsible institution

The website maintenance will be taken care of by Fondazione Minoprio with the University of Malta; a person will be responsible for carrying out the related activities.

The participation at seminars and congresses as speakers or with posters will be a very important instrument to disseminate Life project results and to involve future collaboration. Next September, Fondazione Minoprio and MAC, together with the Agriculture University of Milan, will present 3 posters on the LifeMedGreenRoof project results at the “Green Cities Seminar” in Bologna (September 12-15).

Moreover, Fondazione Minoprio will manage the communication with Minoprio students about the importance of green roofs and the way to construct and manage them. Lectures on the theme and visit to the site will be annually organized for Minoprio students.

Relationship with Milano Politecnico will be maintained, collaborating and organising events for the students. Students from the Milan University (Agriculture Department) will be encouraged to carry our work experience on the green roof.

Period

The content will be updated as and when required.

Action 3: To continue collaboration between partners

Description (objectives)

The collaboration between partners will continue following the end of the project. This action will reinforce knowledge transfer between entities in an effort to understand better the benefits and potential of green roofs. The partners will continue working together through over-the-net meetings and other means of communication. Occasionally meetings could be held in Malta or Italy for monitoring or/and testing purposes.

Collaboration in other research and demonstration projects will be sought.

Responsible institution

All partners

Period

All year over the course of the After-Life period. Travel to respective country or skype conference 2 x year maximum.

Audience targeted by the After-Life Communication plan

Actions	Students	General public	Policy makers	Professionals	Partners
Awareness with students	✓				
Maintenance of website/facebook	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Collaboration between partners					✓
Upkeep of demonstration green roof	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Estimated budget for the After-Life Communication plan (2017-2022)

Actions	Costs
Maintenance of website/Facebook	2,500.00
Upkeep of demonstration green roof	5,000.00
Collaboration between partners	1,000.00
Total cost	€ 8,500.00

Project Identity



Project data

PROJECT REFERENCE	LIFE12 ENV/MT/000732
DURATION	01-JUL-2013 to 31-JUL -2017
TOTAL BUDGET	837,647.00 €
PROJECT LOCATION	Malta, Italy

Beneficiaries:

COORDINATING BENEFICIARY	Faculty for the Built Environment University of Malta
PARTNERS	Fondazione Minoprio, Italy Minoprio Analisi e Certificazioni S.r.l., Italy Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority, Malta
CO-FINANCIERS	European Commission (LIFE+)



This project is partially financed through LIFE+ which is the EU's financial instrument supporting environmental and nature conservation projects throughout the EU.
[Http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/index.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/index.htm)