



COST Action ES1104 'Arid Lands Restoration and Combat of Desertification: Setting up a Drylands and Desert Restoration Hub' focuses on practical measures that can be used by practitioners, stakeholders and authorities to restore degraded drylands and manage their recovery.

Training School 5

Plants, ecology and management for enhanced vegetation establishment for arid land restoration

26 – 30 April 2015 – Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

Background

Land degradation and desertification is a global problem with numerous ecological and economic consequences. As self-repair mechanisms of degraded ecosystems are usually very slow, active restoration projects become necessary in order to combat desertification. This training school will focus on the use of plant species, their ecology and management for enhanced vegetation establishment for arid land restoration. Selection of appropriate plant species is essential for successful restoration as it is directly related to the capacity of a species to colonize a degraded area. Vegetation establishment can be enhanced with the use of specific techniques, and sustainable management should ensure ecosystem services recovery.

The training school will consist of a number of classroom lectures on the most important methodologies for arid land restoration and will include case studies from various restoration projects. There will also be a field trip to visit restored degraded areas. The training school will be delivered by Eleni Abraham (Assistant Professor of the Department of Forestry and Natural Environment, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki) and Apostolos Kyriazopoulos (Assistant Professor of the Department of Forestry and Management of the Environment and Natural Resources, Democritus University of Thrace) in collaboration and with trainers both from local and foreign research institutes.

Programme

Saturday 25 April

Trainees arrive in Thessaloniki

Sunday 26 April

8:30-9:00 Registration

9:00-11:30 Welcome and introduction to the training programme: Assistant Professor Eleni Abraham, Local Organizer

Welcome to the School of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Environment: Professor Dimitrios Koveos, Dean of the School

Welcome to the Department of Forestry and Natural Environment: Professor Christos Vlachos, Head of the Department

The trainees will present themselves, their background and their research objectives

- 11:30-12:00 Coffee break
- 12:00-14:00 Lecture: The relevance of provenance for selecting vascular plant species for restoration, Professor Ruediger Prasse, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universitaet Hannover, Germany
- 14:00-15:30 Lunch break
- 15:30-17:30 Lecture: Vegetation ecology in arid environments: The case study of serpentine vegetation, Assistant Professor Ioannis Tsiripidis, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

Monday 27 April

- 09:00-11:00 Lecture: Ecological indicators of desertification: where are we in drylands? Associate Researcher Cristina Branquinho, Faculdade de Ciências da Universidade de Lisboa, Portugal
- 11:00-11:30 Coffee break
- 11:30-13:30 Lecture: Restoration of degraded Mediterranean rangelands, Emeritus Professor Vasilios Papanastasis, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece
- 13:30-15:00 Lunch break
- 15:00-17:00 Lecture: Ecotechnologies for improving plant establishment in degraded drylands, Dr. Alejandro Valdecantos, Centro de Estudios Ambientales del Mediterráneo, Spain
- 17:00-19:00 Lecture: Mycorrhiza at the extreme, Assistant Professor Michail Orfanoudakis, Democritus University of Thrace, Greece

Tuesday 28 April

- 09:00-17:30 Trainees will attend the international conference on 'Arid Lands Restoration and Combat of Desertification' organised and delivered by members of COST Action ES1104
- 21:00 Social dinner

Wednesday 29 April

- 09:00-13:30 Conference: Arid Lands Restoration and Combat of Desertification (continued)
- 13:30-15:00 Lunch break
- 15:00-17:00 Lecture: Effect of woody-plant encroachment on ecosystem services: Reconciling supply and demand, Professor Osvaldo Sala, Arizona State University
- 17:00-18:00 Review of the training school, Assistant Professor Eleni Abraham, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece and Assistant Professor Apostolos Kyriazopoulos, Democritus University of Thrace
- 18:00-19:00 Feedback session

Thursday 30 April

Field trip to visit various restoration projects in Northern Greece.

Friday 1 May

Trainees depart

Eligibility

Applicants should be graduate students, PhD-students post-docs, or early stage researchers enrolled in or affiliated to an Institution located in a COST country: Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Applicants from approved Near Neighbour country institutions are also eligible to apply: the Centre for Ecological-Noosphere Studies, Armenian National Academy of Sciences; Al Hussein Bin Talal University, Jordan; Ibn Zohr University, Morocco; Al-Quds University, Palestine; and the Institut des Regions Arides, Tunisia.

The area of study of applicants should fit with the topic of this training school.

Logistics

Rooms have been reserved at a cost of €240 for the week (bed and breakfast). Trainees must pay for their rooms upon arrival.

It is the responsibility of each participant to provide adequate insurance cover (personal, travel and medical) for the whole duration of the training course and travel period.

Financial support

COST Action ES1104 is offering 23 places on the training school on a competitive basis. Successful applicants from Thessaloniki will be offered a maximum grant of €150 as a contribution towards the costs of meals. Successful applicants from abroad or other Greek cities will be offered a maximum grant of €1000 as a contribution towards the costs of travel, accommodation and meals. The exact award offered will depend on the cost of travel as this differs considerably across eligible countries. Please note that the grant will be paid by bank-to-bank transfer **after** the course has been completed.

How to apply

Send the attached application form to Eleni Abraham (eabraham@for.auth.gr) and Apostolos Kyriazopoulos (apkyriaz@fmenr.duth.gr) by **16 March 2015**.

All applicants will be informed by email of the outcome. Successful applicants will be responsible for making their own arrangements for travel.

APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE COST ES1104 TRAINING SCHOOL:

**Plants, ecology and microclimate manipulation for enhanced vegetation establishment for arid
land restoration**

Full name

Age

Masters Student

PhD Student

Postdoc Researcher

Masters and/or PhD thesis topic or Postdoc:

Masters and/or PhD thesis or Postdoc supervisor:

Year of study:

Home institution name, COUNTRY:

How did you hear about the COST ES1104 training school? (internet, colleague etc.):

Short CV (max 300 words):

I would like to participate in the COST ES1104 Training School because ... (please add 3-5 lines):

I expect the COST ES1104 Training School to ... (please add 3-5 lines):

Sign in the following box (electronic signature)

Please send the completed and signed form to Organizers of the Training School (eabraham@for.auth.gr; apkyriaz@fmenr.duth.gr) by **16 March 2015 1700 CE time**.

All documents should be in pdf format.

