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„Tomorrow's Forest " continues: over 6,300 seedlings in National Park Calimani, Romania

- On 12th of May, The "Tomorrow's Forest" project organized the most extensive volunteering activity in National Park Calimani
- 6,340 fir, spruce and larch seedlings were planted
- Impressive mobilization: almost 600 volunteers

On 12th of May, "Tomorrow's Forest" brought together almost 600 volunteers who helped to reforest with 6,340 seedlings of fir, spruce and larch a surface of 2 hectares of land, situated in the National Park Calimani, in Poiana Negrii, Suceava County.

The "Tomorrow's Forest" project was launched in September 2017 as a partnership between the Association of Forest Administrators, the "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava and Holzindustrie Schweighofer, to help private and community forest owners regenerate degraded forest areas.

At that beginning of the project 4.7 hectares were planted with over 21,000 seedlings in Poieni-Solca, Suceava County and [this year](#) in spring 142,640 seedlings will be planted on 34.9 ha in Maramures, Bistrița-Nasaud, Brasov, Suceava, Harghita and Covasna counties.

"Tomorrow's Forest" supports small owners and provides seedlings, planting material, logistics, volunteers and specialists, covering all costs. Tomorrow's Forest actions take place with the support of Holzindustrie Schweighofer. The company will invest € 1 million to plant one million trees during the 7 years of the project.

Local community members, as well as volunteers from all over the County, Vatra Dornei Mountain Rescue, Vatra Dornei Youth Organization and employees of Holzindustrie Schweighofer Radauti and Siret joined the event last Saturday in Poiana Negrii. All volunteers were technically supervised by the specialists from the Private Management Unit Dorna, Forestry Direction Suceava through Management Unit Dorna Candrenilor, and also by the Administration of National Park Calimani.

"Călimani National Park has an internal zoning: a full protection area where there is absolutely no intervention and a buffer zone that tries to limit the impact of anthropic activities on the integral protection area. Today we are in the buffer zone and through the activity we are pursuing we aim to support nature in its steps to re-occupy its land. Local seedlings are used instead of saplings brought from elsewhere, so that the chance of gripping is very high," said Mr. Dan Grigoroaea, ranger within the Park.

Ionuț Apostol, project manager: *"I am glad that this spring we came back to Bucovina and that together we give life to a new forest. It is impressive that almost 600 people who believe in the aim of our project have joined us here today and that together we can help nature. It is gratifying that so many young people willing to learn about the forest have joined us in these actions, get involved and be an example to everyone around us."*

Apart from the environmental aspect, the project has also an educational part and therefore 8 high-schools and 1 University from Suceava County have shown interest and joined the event.

"We are glad that today so many people have the opportunity to be together. It is an extraordinary chance to share our passion for the forest to the youngest and we are glad that both pupils and students at the University of Suceava joined us. Although, of course, there are many opinions about the fact that we have less forest, we are aware that in such situations, however, this idea is beginning to become less prominent. We should also see this less visible part of forestry - the fact that many regeneration works are being carried out, and this is a constant concern of the foresters and this is implemented continuously. We hope that through Tomorrow's Forest project we will induce this idea that the forest is permanent, it is a renewable resource that can be used in a sustainable and responsible manner for many years now," said Mr. Ciprian Palaghianu, project director from "Stefan cel Mare" University of Suceava, Faculty of Forestry.

The 2-hectare area in Poiana Negrii is under private ownership, and has been affected in recent years by natural calamities. The reforestation project was developed by the Private Management Unit Dorna, which administers the area and will supervise completion and maintenance works for the installation of a healthy forest in the next coming years.

About Tomorrow's Forest "Tomorrow's Forest"

A multiannual project developed by the Association of Forest Administrators (AFA) and the "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava with the support of Holzindustrie Schweighofer. The project responds to an urgent need for reforestation on private or local administrations' properties. Forest lands were restituted in several stages and various situations have led to forest degradation in some cases. Subsidies are in place for afforestation of degraded agricultural land but not for replanting on such areas.

The replanting project is open to any private forest owner and village/city hall. Proposals can be submitted via www.padureademaine.ro, a platform where potential applicants and any stakeholders can find detailed information, the methodology and progress.

During the "Tomorrow's Forest" project, 1 million seedlings will be planted in order to:

- Support forest owners who cannot afford to regenerate degraded forest land
- Create a strong positive impact on local communities, which will be actively involved in the project
- Contribute substantially to preserving forest resources, preventing erosion, landslides and floods in those areas.

AAP background information

AAP is a non-governmental, apolitical, non-profit organization, the professional association of the forest administrators. The association was established in 2004 and it was granted public utility status in 2015. The members of the association are 109 private forest management units. The forest districts in the Association manage 1.5 million hectares of forest fund, property of local administrations (64%), legal persons (30%) and individuals (6%).

The "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava background information

The Forestry Faculty at the Ștefan cel Mare University of Suceava has forestry science and research as its main fields of activity. The institution prepares forestry engineers for forest management, wood exploitation and transportation, primary industrialization and wood harvesting. The Forestry Faculty in Suceava is very active in scientific research and it develops numerous research projects on a national and European level, acting as a founding member of the European Forest Institute's Regional Center for Central and Eastern Europe.

Holzindustrie Schweighofer background information

The Schweighofer Group has its roots in a traditional Austrian family company with over 400 years of experience in wood processing. Today, the Group is primarily active in the wood processing industry, bioenergy

production and real estate. The industry division of the Schweighofer Group operates three sawmills and two wooden panel productions in Romania and a saw mill in Germany. It takes a leading role in the European timber-processing industry, currently employing around 3,100 employees. Holzindustrie Schweighofer exports products to over 70 countries worldwide.

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