

# BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



*VII International Scientific Agriculture Symposium  
Jahorina, October 06-09, 2016*



**AGRO** 2016  
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# SUPPORTING AND ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS IN PROTECTING PERI-URBAN AND REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT

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## Abstract

Environmental volunteering involves a number of activities including monitoring, restoration and awareness raising elements. Volunteers can sometimes be the backbone of systematic management and conservation works in numerous places, especially in areas where state deficiencies are mostly apparent. However, much of this work remains unacknowledged and discredited, while the lack of equipment and infrastructure complicates their further contribution.

This paper presents a methodology on establishing a holistic approach in organizing, training and equipping volunteer organizations in cooperation with local authorities, so that they can obtain particular specializations in the promotion and protection or enhancement of the landscape. Meanwhile, a key parameter in this methodology is the development of a sustainable and social economy around these groups that can allow collective job creation along with landscape enhancement. Greece presents a critical wealth in such groups which is growing in crisis times, however, lacks the ability to organize them and positively manage their contribution, especially in regional areas presenting environmental downgrade. The key fields of intervention are identified through surveying and monitoring the landscape involving digital tools to document the data and organize actions and the needed human resources. Training volunteers in various specializations and educating them on their interaction with local authorities can achieve an important contribution in protecting peri-urban and regional environment. Standardization of voluntary actions can also demonstrate a positive impact – if adopted by the relevant local administration bodies, which can lead to further workplace development and better performance levels.

**Keywords:** *Environmental volunteering, landscape enhancement, infrastructure intervention, Greece.*