

Macedonia **Eco-DRR** Newsletter

Capacity Building For ECO-DRR Through Sustainable Forest Management In MACEDONIA _ Nov 2017 - Oct 2022

Capacity building project for ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction (Eco-DRR) through sustainable forest management

The purpose of this Project is to develop Ecosystem-based Disaster Risk Reduction (Eco-DRR) model against floods, landslides, soil erosion, and forest fires by the utilization of multiple forest functions. With the increasing natural disaster risks around the world, expectations for Eco-DRR have risen in recent years.

Project activities under the COVID-19

Due to travel restrictions imposed by the spread of the coronavirus epidemic, dispatch of Project Experts has been postponed from its original schedule of spring 2020.

According to a WHO report (Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) situation reports), the total number of persons affected in North Macedonia is 3,902 and 179 deaths as of June 16. As for Japan, the total number of affected persons stands at 17,429 (excluding the cruise ship cases) and the death total is 925 for the same date. The restrictions placed upon both countries are gradually relaxing, but there is still no prospect of resuming normal travel. In response to this situation, Project Experts communicate with Counterparts (C/P) from time to time through remote meetings, etc. to check the local situation while conducting some activities that can be done in Japan, such as preparing a training manual.

Plantation in Radovish South observed by the remote methods



Terrace and jute mats for gully slopes

In March 2020, we checked on the plantation status at the Radovish south site through monitoring reports and photos. Final inspections will be conducted after the Project Experts are dispatched. About 11,000 nursery trees were used for this plantation, and the species were Oak, Black pine, and Ash. These seedlings were raised at the Public Enterprise National Forests (PENF) Nursery facility in Sveti Nicole, where the project has provided mechanization support. For this plantation, we applied terrace works such as sand backs to reinforce gully slopes, which were created by rainfall.

The surface between the terraces were covered with jute mats in order to prevent soil run off. At the next Radovish North site, we are planning to use locally available tree logs and stones for the terraces. Technologies and materials are applied based on the local conditions which will be consulted with C/P. We believe that proceeding with discussions with the C/P will deepen the understanding of the general process and the technology.

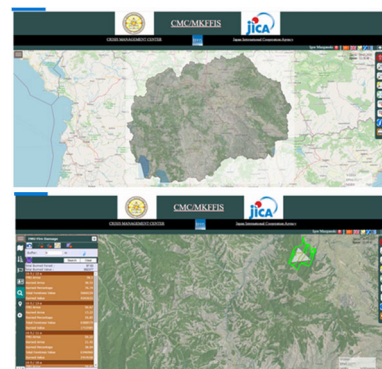


Planted nursery trees

MKFFIS&GFIS Developments

Macedonian Forest Fire Information System (MKFFIS) and GIS Forest Management Information System (GFIS) were upgraded and inspected in April 2020 through remote operations. Final inspections will be conducted after Project Experts are dispatched. Disaster data other than forest fires i.e. floods, landslides, and soil erosion were added to MKFFIS, which was originally developed in 2014 by the previous JICA project. For GFIS, map creation functions such as data editing, map printing, and editing historical recordings have been added.

We are going to provide operational training for these newly developed functions for MKFFIS/GFIS users. Timing of the training will depend on the travel schedules of Project Experts.



Outline of MKFFIS

An Exchange student from North Macedonia.

Mr. Ognen Onchevski from North Macedonia has been studying in Japan since April 2019, through a foreign exchange student program sponsored by Japanese government. Mr. Onchevski majored in Forest Science at Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje prior to his arrival in Japan, and majored in Agricultural Engineering at the graduate school of the Tokyo University of Agriculture. The following is the summary of the interview with Mr. Onchevski.



Mr. Ognen Onchevski

Q. What made you decide to study in Japan?

A. I was able to continue my education in Japan because I received scholarship from the Japanese government, specifically the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology - Monbukagakusho (MEXT). My decision to apply for this scholarship was because I knew that the educational system in Japan is one of the best in the world and the universities provide excellent environment for students to gain knowledge and skills in order to advance their research and careers.

Q. What specific research would you like to do in Japan?

A. My passion and main area of interest is landscape restoration. With my research, I would like to analyze suitable measures for landscape restoration of dry areas, that receive the least amounts of precipitation in my country. Agroforestry is one of these measures that I explore.

Q. How do you feel about living in Japan?

A. So far, my stay in Japan is very pleasant, and I'm very satisfied with the life I have here. I have opportunities to meet interesting people, to explore different places and to learn more about the Japanese culture. I'm very grateful for the continuous support from my professor, other colleagues from the university, and all my friends that I spend my time with.

Q. What are your future goals?

A. The MEXT scholarship program provides opportunity for students to continue the educational process until they gain doctoral degree. My plan is exactly that. After I complete my master studies, I would like to apply for doctoral research at my university. In future, I hope to work on development and implementation of landscape restoration projects in my country and around the world. I'm interested in working in academia as well.

Eco-DRR's project is now considering the application of a landscape approach, including windbreak forests. The current situation is that research materials in North Macedonia are very limited. We hope that the efforts of Mr. Onchevski and our project will generate synergy effects and lead to fruitful results on both sides.

Main activities in the past half year

Overall Activities

- ◆ Revising the schedule due to the dispatch postponement
- ◆ Sharing information with C/P through remote meetings

Output 1: MKFFIS strengthened and expanded

- ◆ Progress inspection of MKFFIS/GFIS
- ◆ Consideration on the method of the nationwide hazardous area reading

Output 2: Strengthening of Forest Management Plan

- ◆ Consultation on the FMU for the next term activities

Output 3: Capacity building in land restoration + afforestation technology

- ◆ Progress inspection of Radovish South
- ◆ Designing and bidding preparation of Radovish North

Output 4 : Public awareness on Eco-DRR

- ◆ Public relations activities through SNS, etc.



Macedonia Eco-DRR Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/MacedoniaEco-DRR/>

Events in the next half year

- Manual preparation and implementation for the forest restoration plan
- Monitoring the afforestation effects
- Designing and bidding preparation of Radovish North
- Socio-Economic Survey in Lisiche

※ This schedule is subject to change

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