

Project Update: December 2002

During the project's period 12 public debates on forests restoration and predator's protection were organized in local mountain villages. On these debates nearly 300 local inhabitants participated.

In October and September 2002 we organised two ten day forest protection camps in our Forest Education Centre in the Beskydy Mountains. 53 people, mainly locals, took part in these camps. With participation of experienced experts from Czech Republic, Slovakia and Germany almost 30 lectures were organised. The participants of the camp were also trained in practical skills (tree planting, trapping and monitoring of hunter's activities). About 25 people who attended the debates and forest protection camps are now active and help us in terrain.



'Wolf Patrols'- groups of volunteers who monitor the occurrence of large predators (wolves, lynx and bears) and hunters activities- were active from January to March and then again from the end of November 2002. More than 30 people volunteered in wolf patrols and about 60 wolf patrols days were organised. We know about one illegal killing of a lynx. Several proofs of illegal hunting and poaching (especially the meat baits for predators) were documented and handed to Landscape Protected Area Administration and the District Veterinary Administration which has now prohibited using of meat baits for predators. The monitoring proved that 15-20 lynx are living in Beskydy Mountains. At the end of the year we successfully shifted the co-ordination of wolf patrols to locals so that they will continue as long as there will be enough snow in Beskydy Mountains this year and hopefully even in upcoming years.

Forest brigades were the last but crucial components of the project. Several hundreds of thousands of native tree species (fir, beech, ash, maple, and mountainous spruce) were planted on clear cuts or damaged forest stands to restore natural tree composition and this renew ecological stability of forests and landscape. 76 working days were organised with over 160 people working in small alternative tree nurseries.

We have strongly worked with media in the region during the project. About 15 articles were published in local, regional and even national newspapers about our activities. The planting of trees on top of the highest peak of Beskydy Mountains was reported in national radio broadcasting and shown prime time in the Czech TV news. We have published special info sheets for the use of journalists and eight press releases about important events.