

Le projet LIFE STEMMATHOS LIFE19 CCA/GR/00185 a été financé par le programme LIFE de l'Union européenne.

The LIFE Programme is 30 years old!

The monastery of Solan organized two events on its estate to celebrate this memorable anniversary

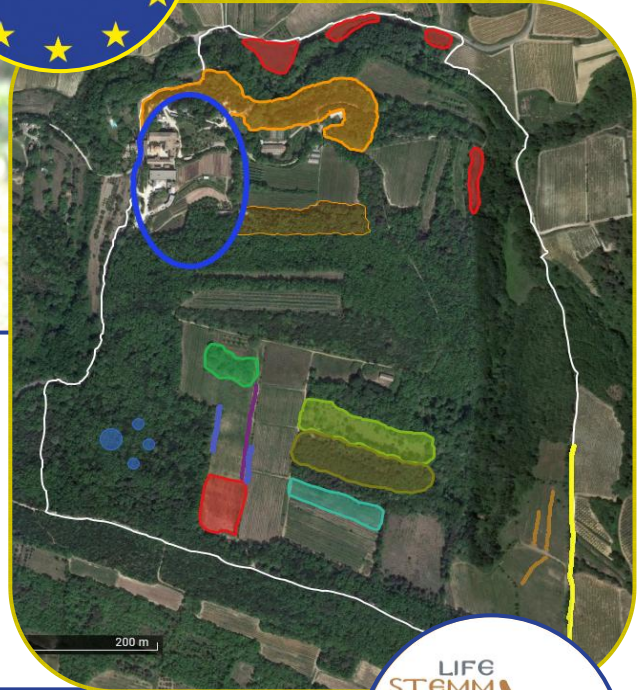
In April, a group of about 40 students from the Nature Management and Conservation department at the Cours Diderot (Montpellier - South of France) were welcomed at the monastery for a one-day presentation of the LIFE Stemma Athos project with visit on the field. We hoped to be able to organize this event in May, nearer to the actual date of the LIFE birthday, but this was not possible due to the approaching exams period, for the students.

The day was split in two parts: in the morning the youngsters concretely put their shoulders to the wheel and enthusiastically helped with the sowing of green manure in the plots of land where oleaginous trees or chestnut trees will be planted in the frame of the “Development of sustainable agroforestry systems” action.





In the afternoon, after a detailed presentation of the LIFE programme as a whole and the LIFE Stemma Athos actions at the Monastery of Solan, the focus was put on the work already progressing in the chestnut grove: cutting of shoots, pruning, and creation



of carbon wells. Here also, the students contributed in a practical way, helping to culture the carbon wells with microbiological life. Through this little experimentation, we wished to remind them of the fact that any work for a better resilience to climate change necessarily



requires the restoration of a balanced microbiological life in the grounds. Part of the youngsters also recorded the GPS positions of all our chestnut trees, which will be of tremendous help for our future works in the chestnut grove.

The second event was organized on May 7th by the Friends of Solan Association for its members and any other interested person. The group of about 30 people gathered in the morning at the monastery and, following a short overall presentation of the LIFE Stemma Athos project, left joyfully for a



big outing on the estate.

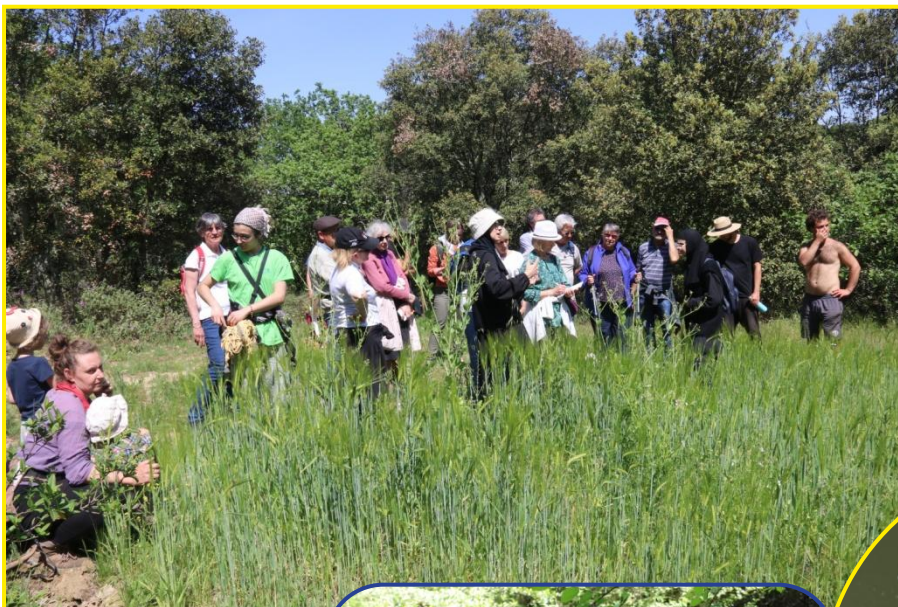
A first stop in the vineyards allowed us to show and explain the importance of covering the soils in the cultivated parcels, in order to prevent erosion, fertilize the ground and lower its temperature. It took us many years to get all the plots covered, but the result is really commensurate with our expectations.





The next stop took place at the old chestnut grove, where all the enrichment actions foreseen in the project were presented. The walk went on through the pinewood, which will be reshaped little by little in a chestnut grove protected by the shadow of the pine trees.

After a convivial picnic at the monastery, the group visited the plot of hedgerows, which work as protection corridors for many species, will be planted or restored in the frame of the agroforestry action. This will contribute to an increased biodiversity, on the one hand, and will help retaining water in this plot upstream the sources of the Valat stream.



A last educational stop allowed us to show the plots where green mature had been recently sown for the future oleaginous tree plantations.

This memorable tour ended with a visit to the pond where we assisted to an amazing metamorphosis:

all the participants suddenly became children, gazing with wonder at the frogs, newts and tadpoles. This truly was a charming vision for a LIFE birthday!!!

