

Supernatural transforms a landfill into a park



21/01/2014

A sustainable community project run by a Serbian environmental NGO and supported by public and private funds has restored a degraded former river Danube beauty spot, close to Belgrade. There are significant environmental and social benefits.



Ada Huja, once an island on the river Danube – situated just four kilometres from the centre of Belgrade – used to be known for its lush vegetation and as an important site for wild birds. However, in the 1960s the site began to be used as a landfill tip.

Industrial waste

As a result, the free flow of fresh water from the Danube was blocked from entering this section of the river branch. For many decades, communal and industrial waste waters were being dumped on the other side of the river, turning it into an ecological and health hazard for the local population. Additionally, the tip of the newly formed peninsula served as an illegal depot for industrial rubble, thus, completely devastating the delicately balanced ecosystem of Ada Huja.

In October 2011, on behalf of the municipality most concerned (i.e. Palilua) the Serbian environmental non governmental organisation (NGO), Supernatural, began the project to clean-up the section of the Ada Huja; and to establish the 'Supernatural Park'.

The main objective was to restore the Ada Huja ecosystem, one of the most polluted water areas around Belgrade. This would be achieved by ending the dumping of illegal waste; carrying out hydrological works to clear the toxic sludge from the site; and by restoring the natural flow of water back into the original river branch. Another objective was to create an environmental centre.

Think tank

At the same time, a 'Think Tank' was created to oversee the works, comprising of representatives from national and regional authorities, water and environmental protection agencies and other experts. Funding for the project has been raised primarily from the private sector, including support from multinational companies, as well as public sector grants, including EU-Youth in action.

By April 2012 some 2,000 cubic metres of waste have been cleared from the site. Following on from this during 2012-13 an area once inaccessible to the public, has been transformed into the Supernatural Park, with the creation of five direct jobs and a further 10 created indirectly.

Over 3,000 square metres of gardens has been created, including a kids play area. In addition, a green classroom – to educate young people about environmental protection, and a green house – for the experimental cultivation and exhibition of plants have been created.

To date, more than 20,000 people have visited the park.

Supernatural Park

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