

16 April 2018

“Tomorrow’s Forest” Project reforests 10 hectares in Dumbrăvița

- **First planting session of the year for “Tomorrow’s Forest” project took place on 14th of April 2018 in Dumbrăvița, Brașov County (Romania)**
- **50,000 oak, ash and sycamore seedlings**
- **More than 200 volunteers helping out**
- **A continuation of village hall efforts to turn the area back into forest**

On 14th of April “Tomorrow’s Forest” Project gathered more than 200 volunteers that helped out with the reforestation of 10 hectares in Dumbrăvița, Brașov County. People from the local community joined forestry students from the Transilvania University of Brașov, forestry professionals, volunteers coming from different parts of the county and Holzindustrie Schweighofer staff from the Reci and Sebeș sawmills to plant a part of the 50,000 sessile oak, ash and sycamore seedlings. The “Tomorrow’s Forest” project was launched in September 2017 as a partnership between the Association of Forest Administrators, the “Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava and Holzindustrie Schweighofer, to help private and community forest owners regenerate degraded forest areas.

This *Tomorrow’s Forest* area was turned into pasture in 1950-1960 and land use was changed back to forest in 2004, with no funds provided for reforestation at the time. The Village Hall managed to plant 16 hectares of oak and ash in 2016-2017 and *Tomorrow’s Forest* takes these efforts a step forward.

The reforestation project was developed by the Măieruș Forest Management Unit, which administers the area and will supervise completion and maintenance works contracted to a specialised reforestation company for the entire duration of the restoration project, 2018-2023.

“The Dumbrăvița reforestation project is the first of six sites selected for this year in Tomorrow’s Forest. It will be followed by areas in Suceava, Maramureș, Bistrița-Năsăud, Covasna and Harghita counties, scheduled according to weather conditions. The Dumbrăvița site is unlike most others in our project, as it is not a case where we help restore a forest taken down by wind, insects, fire or lack of specialized care. Nevertheless, what better way to congratulate a local community and administration for having planted 16 hectares than by helping with an extension of the new oak forest”, said Ionuț Apostol, *Tomorrow’s Forest* project manager.

Until now, over 21,000 seedlings have been planted and this year 142,640 more seedlings will be planted on 34.9 ha. “Tomorrow’s Forest” supports small owners and provides seedlings, planting material, logistics, volunteers and specialists, covering all costs. *Tomorrow’s Forest* actions take place with the support of Holzindustrie Schweighofer. The company will invest 1 Million euro to plant 1 Million trees during the 7 years of the project.

About Tomorrow's Forest

"Tomorrow's Forest" – A multiannual project developed by the Association of Forest Administrators (AFA) and the "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava with the support of Holzindustrie Schweighofer. The project responds to an urgent need for reforestation on private or local administrations' properties. Forest lands were restituted in several stages and various situations have led to forest degradation in some cases. Subsidies are in place for afforestation of degraded agricultural land but not for replanting on such areas.

The replanting project is open to any private forest owner and village/city hall. Proposals can be submitted via www.padureademaine.ro, a platform where potential applicants and any stakeholders can find detailed information, the methodology and progress.

During the "Tomorrow's Forest" project, 1 million seedlings will be planted in order to:

- Support forest owners who cannot afford to regenerate degraded forest land
- Create a strong positive impact on local communities, which will be actively involved in the project
- Contribute substantially to preserving forest resources, preventing erosion, landslides and floods in those area.

AAP background information

AAP is a non-governmental, apolitical, non-profit organization, the professional association of the forest administrators. The association was established in 2004 and it was granted public utility status in 2015. The members of the association are 109 private forest management units. The forest districts in the Association manage 1.5 million hectares of forest fund, property of local administrations (64%), legal persons (30%) and individuals (6%).

The "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava background information

The Forestry Faculty at the Ștefan cel Mare University of Suceava has forestry science and research as its main fields of activity. The institution prepares forestry engineers for forest management, wood exploitation and transportation, primary industrialization and wood harvesting. The Forestry Faculty in Suceava is very active in scientific research and it develops numerous research projects on a national and European level, acting as a founding member of the European Forest Institute's Regional Center for Central and Eastern Europe

Holzindustrie Schweighofer background information

The Schweighofer Group has its roots in a traditional Austrian family company with over 400 years of experience in wood processing. Today, the Group is primarily active in the wood processing industry, bioenergy production and real estate. The industry division of the Schweighofer Group operates three sawmills and two wooden panel productions in Romania and a saw mill in Germany. It takes a leading role in the European timber-processing industry, currently employing around 3,100 employees. Holzindustrie Schweighofer exports products to over 70 countries worldwide.

For further information please contact:

Thomas Huemer

Head of Corporate Communications

Tel: +43 1 585 68 62 -24

E-mail: thomas.huemer@schweighofer.at