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The Salt of Life

Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation

The “Salt of Life” project was implemented in the area of Lake Atanasovsko, one of the main biodiversity hotspots in the Black Sea biogeographical region. The lake is part of the Burgas wetland complex, one of the three most important wetland complexes for waterbirds along the Bulgarian Black Sea coast. The beautiful and colourful Lake Atanasovsko, as it is known today, is largely the result of the symbiosis between man and nature: a major modification for the purpose of salt production has made the site rich and significant. At a time when the coast is undergoing increasing urbanisation, the lagoon is of strategic importance for the conservation of biological diversity on the Black Sea coast.



The actions carried out have made it possible to halt the long-term trend that was leading to the degradation of these lagoons, priority habitats for many species. Work was developed to raise public awareness of the high value of the salt marshes (Natura 2000 network sites), hence the project’s motto, “Salt of Life”. The project has involved a wide range of people who are now aware of the richness of the region and the benefits that result from protecting the area. The understanding and respect for the processes taking place in the lake, the biodiversity, the Bulgarian sea salt and the fascination for the process of salt extraction have improved. Most valuable of all, an emotional connection between the people and the lake has been nurtured.

The operation achieved the preservation of the landscape of the coastal lagoon of Atanasovsko Lake, a witness of the symbiosis between man and nature. It has strengthened the public’s attachment to the ecological, social and cultural values of this exceptional landscape that has undeniable aesthetic appeal. The hydraulic system has been carefully restored. This attractive site has become the preferred venue for cultural and artistic events, such as the salt festival. Born from the involvement of the scientific world, local associative organisations, inhabitants of the region and political decision-makers, the achievement has revealed a landscape that improves the quality of life for the populations of both people and birds, while supporting the local economy.

Recognised for its great value, the Project is part of the Landscape Award Alliance of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, as a source of inspiration.