



## Food and Nature in Bulgaria Contributing to Green Sustainable Business

Development in Rural Regions through Conservation,

Sustainable Tourism, Organic Farming and Terroir

/Conference with international participation, with the support of the Embassy of France

at the Fifth Festival "Green Days , 2014"/

### Summary

The conference aims to bring together the experience and expertise of the most successful Bulgarian companies, NGOs and Bulgarian institutions in two main areas of green sustainable business (pro-biodiversity business): **organic farming** - producers and traders, and **sustainable tourism** - tour operators and guesthouses; experts and practitioners in the field of sustainable development in both business fields. With the long experience of France and other European countries, as well as several successful native entrepreneurs, we will highlight positive examples of business as well as the intersections between these two sectors of our economy, still too far from the opportunities for their development in Bulgaria. We are going to pay particular attention to the opportunities for production, certification and marketing of quality local food, and imposing local trademarks of a traditional agricultural area (terroir). Qualitative and pure (in the best case certified as "organic" ) locally produced food, with unique natural and cultural heritage of Bulgaria should be the foci for each local tourism product. Thus the products will create demand and gain access in the international market. According BAAT and the "Green Days" partners, this will ensure a steady upward economic and livelihood development for more local citizens across rural and mountain regions.

We set ourselves the task to join all the stakeholders that are relevant to the vision and the way to achieve a sustainable and balanced development of Bulgarian village and mountains. We aim to achieve a consensus in favor of the new market orientation of Bulgarian agriculture and tourism products, the protection of natural and cultural heritage of Bulgaria.

One of the most acute internal problems of Bulgarian society is the demographic problem. Most serious aspect of the demographic problem are young people leaving small towns, villages and the country in general. The conference will try to answer the question: Will the actively proclaimed by the government today "reindustrialisation" help to effectively manage the demographic problem? Whether the green sustainable business is not a better solution for Bulgaria as a member of the European family? Is to discuss and evaluate on May 9 , Europe Day.

The conference will begin with opening remarks by HE Ambassador of France Xavier Lapeyre de Cabane.

Objectives of the Conference :

- To follow links between ecotourism, organic farming and management of rural and mountain destinations as interdependent and complementary areas of green sustainable business - to create a unique local tourism product.
- To emphasize the importance of integration of qualitative and clean locally produced food and the natural resources of the country, to create a unique and expensive local tourism products with high added value.
- To provide guidelines for the formation of a profile of investors, of which Bulgaria needs - supporting the sustainable development and creation of livelihood for local communities, landing the big city and intergenerational responsibility.
- To promote the exchange of good practices between France, Bulgaria and other European countries in tourism, organic farming and regional development - at the institutional level and among the professional Bulgarian community.
- To present the prospects for detection of green jobs, livelihood and development of the inhabitants of deserted rural and mountainous regions in Bulgaria .
- To define the problems and to initiate changes in the legal framework in favor of organic farming and sustainable year-round tourism in Bulgarian municipalities and mountains.
- To provoke institutions responsible in agriculture and tourism, as well as the industry to a extended discussion about the necessary changes in policies and laws, mentality and ethics of entrepreneurs.

Conference Panels:

1. Organic Agriculture and Production

Quality solutions in agriculture and livestock – the organic certification and terroir as a possible model for Bulgarian producers to reach key markets and customers. Hospitable farms - farmhopping.

2 . Sustainable Tourism

Practices of sustainable ecological and rural tourism in Bulgaria. Sustainable tourism destinations and quality locally produced food.

3. Issues of Pro-Biodiversity Business

Issues facing the green sustainable business in agriculture and tourism – stakeholders, legal frameworks, national policy, protection of natural resources.

C O N F E R E N C E   P R O G R A M

09:00–09:30

Registration

09:30–10:00      Opening: Prelude Speeches by Lubomir Popyordanov, government representatives and the French Embassy hosts  
Moderator: Lyubomir Boyadzhiev, journalist

### **Panel 1: Organic Agriculture and Production**

10:00–10:15      **Stephane Robert**, expert at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food  
*Sustainable development and organic farming in Bulgaria and France*  
(draft title)

10:15–10:30      **Dr. Stoilko Apostolov**, Foundation for Organic Agriculture  
"Bioselena"  
*Organic Agriculture and Farm Products*

10:30–10:45      **Miroslava Dikova**, Bulgarian Society for Protection of Birds  
*Food Producing and Sustainable Tourism in West Balkan Mountain*

10:45–11:00      **Veselina Marinova**, editor in chief at Menu Magazine,  
editor at Di Vino Magazine, Gourmet Publishing  
*Bulgarian Terroir – Development Opportunities*

11:00–11:15      **Lubomir Nokov**, Bulgarian Traders of Organic Products Association  
*Development of Organic Foods Market in Bulgaria*

11:15–11:30      **Albena Simeonova**, Foundation for Environment and Agriculture, a  
board member of International Federation of Organic Agriculture  
Movements (IFOAM)  
*European Organic Production Policy and Its Future Implementation in  
Bulgaria in View of IFOAM*

11:30–11:45      **Rositsa Mitova**, Farmhopping  
*The Future of Organic Agriculture – how Internet will Change the  
Branch*

11:45 – 12:30      **Discussion**

12:30–13:00      **Lunch Break** (organic food meal provided by the Bulgarian-Swiss  
Project "Linking Nature with Biodiversity")

### **Panel 2: Sustainable Tourism**

13:00–13:15      **Christof Delaue**, French-Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce chairman  
*Cuisine and Destinations in Bulgaria*

- 13:15–13:30      **Blagovesta Vasileva**, “The Wild Farm”  
*“The Wild Farm” – a Modern Farm with Old Traditions or a Successful Example of Traditions Conservation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*
- 13:30–13:45      **Michaela Kircheva** , “New Thracian Gold”  
*“New Thracian Gold” – People and Nature Together for the Green Future of Rodopi Mountain*
- 13:45–14:00      **Dr. Dessislava Alexova**, New Bulgarian University, International Business School Botevgrad  
*Regional Brand “Strandja” – a Mechanism for Rising Quality with Responsibility to Nature, Local Culture and People*
- 14:00–14:15      **Rosen Vasilev**, Bulgarian Foundation “Biodiversity”  
*Belasitsa – the Youngest Nature Park in Bulgaria*
- 14:15–14:30      **Katerina Doncheva**, Bulgarian Association for Horse Tourism  
*Horse Tourism – Tradition and Challenge*
- 14:30–14:45      **Kiril Kaloyanov**, Bulgarian Association for Alternative Tourism  
*The Iron Curtain Bike Trail*
- 14:45–15:15      **Discussion**

### **Panel 3: Issues of Pro-Biodiversity Business**

- 15:15–15:35      **Lars Soeftestad**, Community Based Natural Resource Management Networking expert, Supras Ltd (Norway and Bulgaria)  
*Protecting our environment: from CBNRM and stakeholder analysis via networking to the Rio Conventions*
- 15:35–15:50      **Svilen Ovcharov**, Green Advocates  
*The Local Produce as a Distinguishable Tourist Attraction – Certifications and Geographical Indications*
- 15:50 – 16:05      **Borislav Sandov**, Green policies expert
- 16:05 – 16:20      **Lubomir Popyordanov**, Bulgarian Association for Alternative Tourism Chairman
- 16:20 – 17:00      **Discussion and Wine Supper**, provided by Villa Yustina and the Bulgarian-Swiss Project “Linking Nature with Biodiversity”