

# Iberia Verde !

Regeneration  
of landscapes and  
Communities of plants, animals and men  
on the Iberian Subcontinent



On the occasion of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Children-of-Future-Congress  
Montes of Cork Oaks and Strawberry Trees in Alentejo – Portugal  
September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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**I B E R I A V E R D E !**  
**Appeal for the Regeneration of the Iberian Subcontinent**  
September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2005 – [www.kinder-der-zukunft.net](http://www.kinder-der-zukunft.net)

## Prologue

Nowadays, we realize more and more the possibilities of people and their conscious and subconscious actions. As can be proved, people are able to influence the climate of continents and even of the whole planet. Today, most people will agree to that. However, they probably think that human influence on climate has a negative effect only.

**Iberia Verde !** appeals for supporting positive ways of influencing our climate by immediate actions and by imparting theory and praxis. We can express our responsibility for our climate by immediate and practical actions.

*> Iberia Verde ! - the motive...< explains the textual and temporal context*



## The Motive

Each year, the countries of the Mediterranean area are afflicted with large-scale fires in drought-struck landscapes. Barring socio-economical influences, this fact underlines the ongoing ecological devastation and desertification of this large region. It is a special and necessary task to counter this devastation.

We are of the opinion, that naturally the region should be an oasis:

An oasis of species and habitat diversity (biodiversity)

A most important source for high-quality food for all Mediterranean people

An oasis for high-quality life for all Mediterranean people and their guests

We intend to participate in the resurrection of this oasis. It is still possible, but time is running out – we must act immediately!

We feel encouraged in our appeal by similar initiatives which are pushed by individuals, groups or institutions. **Iberia Verde !** is cooperative and aims for participation in a growing network.

## The Appeal

Like the whole Mediterranean, the Iberian subcontinent is threatened by growing ecological devastation and desertification. There certainly is a natural dynamic within the process, but it has been definitely enhanced by anthropological influence for more than 2.000 years. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the acceleration was even increased by new technical qualities.

This negative development has various forms of expression: It contains desiccation and therefore a devastation of soils, a decrease of biodiversity and a growing threat for human life: In deserts people have despite our evolutionary and technical progress only limited expectations for life

We are challenged to counter this negative development and to stop watching deedlessly! We do have several instruments with positive influence on the situation.

> **Iberia Verde !** – the aim < *shows what we want to achieve.*

Landscape dynamics were definitely influenced by men in the past. Therefore, this influence should still be possible!

For the future, this influence does not have to be a negative one anymore which is of immediate human interest!

**The positive change can begin immediately. We do NOT have to end negative influences first before we start the positive change.**

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Every small contribution e.g. the handling of soil, development, treatment and usage of gardens and agricultures has an effect.

**Iberia Verde !** therefore recalls that we are not only capable of negative effects on our environment but also of a positive one!

*Information about the necessary steps* > **Iberia Verde !** - the road to success



## The Aim

Within the next decade, possibly large parts of Iberia shall be affected by agricultural methods which are scientifically proved and demonstrably natural or semi-natural.

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An important subordinated goal is to cover soil as completely as possible with vegetation in order to counter erosion and excessive heat by sunlight.

**Iberia Verde ! – partners and areas** should be spread over Iberia like a mosaic. Every small area is needed and welcomed. Naturally, companies covering large areas such as farms, forestry offices and nurseries which handle their cultures by semi-natural methods are needed.

By supporting **Iberia Verde !** a network is built up and grows together with similar working groups. **Iberia Verde !'s** effect is the greater the more players are involved.

## The Road to Success

We do not have to make new inventions to realise **Iberia Verde !** All ideas and especially all “technical support and devices” are proved and available.

**The crucial device, the vegetation**, has proved itself since the prehistoric times of the palaeozoic era.

**Vegetation** – in its ecosystematical context with habitats, animals and men (!) – has always played the role of a “natural plaster” for inanimate soils and all accompanying site and habitat conditions. This process has been so since plants colonised land 400 million years ago. And this process healed Central Europe in its time of devastation from the 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> century.



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## **Who participates and how is **Iberia Verde !** organised?**

**Iberia Verde !** addresses all people who enjoy nature and a systematic maintenance and development of gardens, plantations, forests and all kinds of “protected areas”.

There is no minimum size for **Iberia Verde !** areas, no special education and no other prerequisites are needed. Everyone who owns areas – even terraces or small gardens – may right now participate! Of course, we especially appeal to owners of larger areas as efficiency grows with larger parts of Iberia under semi-natural development. Therefore, companies, organisations and communities which own larger areas are asked to participate! Participating groups should spread like a mosaic all over Iberia!

**Iberia Verde !** is no conventional society. **Iberia Verde !** is a system for helping, supporting, consulting and performing. Every participant keeps their independence. Transfer of knowledge and praxis will be available for everyone who is interested.

As far as an organisational system will be required, it will certainly develop itself shortly after our appeal from September 11<sup>th</sup> 2005 and will undergo further development along with our new gained experiences (contact below).

## **Praxis**

Praxis of **Iberia Verde !** has two basic tasks:

- **Planting** of shrubs and trees
  - = in gardens, plantations and parks using regionally proved and genetically stable, not manipulated plants for all sites
  - = outside agricultural or horticultural sites in the open landscape and forests using plants typical for the regional
- **Information, advice and practical support** for the realisation and transport of the idea and achievements of **Iberia Verde !**

Therefore we need to

1. find people, groups and institutions who want to participate in **Iberia Verde !** , to inform them and begin the practical realisation of **Iberia Verde !** These groups should be evenly spread about Iberia.
2. give practical support, which will be realisable under local economic and social conditions.
3. use methods, which are consequently soil conserving and stimulate the agri- and horticultural wanted species and breed variety and also the typical vegetation of the regional woods.
4. counter soil erosion systematically. Where there already is erosion, we need to take steps using suitable bio-engineering. Methods of land use and maintenance must provide that there will be no more problems with erosion in the future.
5. encourage the use of handicraft and physical engagement of the cooperating people. Machines will be used insofar as they are compatible with the local conditions and plantations. On larger areas the use of machines can be useful if they are needed for mowing, mulching and grubbing, preferably with light machines instead of heavy bulldozers or caterpillars. Local companies have to be supported which offer soil conserving machines.
6. encourage the breed of grazing animals if they are/were part of the particular ecosystem. Species, breed and density must be related to the landscapes' bearing capacities (which is generally lower than in conventional pasturing).
7. accomplish a possibly complete soil coverage or shading by vegetation so that excessive heat, drought or erosion can be avoided.
8. make use of the local sites mosaics and establish low-maintenance cultures and allow a succession which is accordable to land use.
9. take notice more than economic aspects when choosing trees and shrubs: they must be a) nature-orientated and b) with at home with the local site conditions. Therefore monocultures will be almost excluded from our plans (with the possible exception of extreme sites).
10. add edible plants to our cultures and stands. These stands should provide a wide range of immediately edible species: "The edible landscape" which is what men are expecting due to their genetic heritage. The personal relation to one's landscape can be deepened this way.
11. exchange experience, learn from our predecessors' experiences quickly and to realise our newly gained knowledge in praxis.
12. inform those people who are not yet immediately involved about our tasks, problems and successes. To accomplish this, we need to lecture on all levels of education and inform steadily.

