

CASE STUDY

WOWnature



"We give anyone the possibility to do their part in taking care of nature around us"

Federico Pinato, Project Manager at Etifor



PROFILE SNAPSHOT

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Country Italy

Main sector Private

Uforest thematic discipline Socio-economics

Stage of development Implementation

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



By increasing urban green-finger involvement and participatory afforestation.

13 CLIMATE ACTION



By raising awareness on the role of the human-nature tandem for facing the climate crisis.

15 LIFE ON LAND



By protecting and improving forest ecosystems, and by greenifying areas prone to desertification or those affected by natural disasters.



START-UP

WOWnature is an initiative developed by Etifor, a spin-off of the University of Padova, that offers the possibility to adopt new trees to be planted, as well as existing ones to be protected through specific management activities, through a web platform.



WOWNATURE'S GOALS:

This project sets annual goals related to increasing:

- Adopted trees (new trees and existing ones).
- Project areas in every continent.
- Public tree-planting events.
- Tree-planting events participants and website users.
- Partner organizations.
- Media mentions and social media followers.



INITIATIVE MODEL

MAIN ACTIVITIES:

What does WOWnature do?

It designs, funds, manages, and implements participative reforestation, forest restoration, forest improvement, or tree-planting projects in Italy and all around the world.

BENEFICIARIES:

Who benefits from WOWnature's activities?

- 1. Private or public landowners/forest managers** that want to make ecological improvements.
- 2. Citizens** that want to adopt or plant trees themselves.
- 3. Companies and other organizations** that want to:
 - Implement their corporate social responsibility (CSR) or improve their reputation.
 - Achieve their climate-related goals.
- 4. Public administrations** that seek ecological improvements and increased ecosystem services in specific natural areas.
- 5. Environmental NGOs** that need partners to fulfil their missions.

PROMOTION:

What is WOWnature's promotion strategy?

WOWnature's communication channels and strategy:

- **Online and offline marketing:** creation of content (text, photo, video, graphics) to communicate WOWnature's main messages and boost trees' adoptions. Part of the strategy is to design horizontal campaigns on multiple media (website, social, newsletter, banners, printed materials, etc) to promote the tree's adoption as a gift.
- **Social media:** promotion of the different features of the projects through "science-based posts" and/or funny campaigns, as well as regular updates for supporters on the project's development and live streaming.
- **Press releases:** launch of press releases to disseminate the innovative features of projects that could be interesting for the press (web and printed).
- **Tree-planting events:** organized in each area with the aim to engage citizens and give visibility to donors and main actors.
- **Word of mouth:** maximization of customer satisfaction through efficient customer service and frequent improvement to our platform and strategy. Another big part of this strategy is represented by networking and strategic partnership activities. In this way WOWnature is able to satisfy both individuals and companies and reach a bigger audience.

GOVERNANCE:

How does WOWnature implement its activities?

- The **program coordinator** manages the team, defines and implements the vision, and develops the strategy.
- **Sellers** manage incoming requests, matching people and organisations that want to support reforestation with private and public actors that need to implement reforestation or conservation activities.
- **Project managers** assist the organizations that support WOWnature's projects.
- **Forest managers** deal with agreements, technical preparation and everything that is related to the forests.
- **Communication officers** develop, maintain and update the website, manage social media, prepare press releases, etc.

On a regular basis, the WOWnature team participates in **internal meetings**, where the vision is collaboratively defined and where everyone offers inputs for the development of the strategy. At the same time, consultations and updates with other Etifor's programs and units are constantly carried out in order to create synergies with other projects. In addition, **external consultations** are carried out with landowners and other local stakeholders to ensure that needs and expectations of local actors are being met. Indeed, every WOWnature project is tailor-made to the needs of the area involved.



FINANCES:

What are WOWnature's main resources?

- **Tree-adoption fees** (>85% of the total) paid by individual citizens, private companies, associations and public administrations.
- **Public funding** (<15% of the total) for specific, innovative tasks.

POLICY AND STANDARDS LEADING THE INITIATIVE:

- National (Italian) and other relevant legislation and regulations.
- Etifor guidelines related to science, innovation and governance.
- FSC® standards for forest management and FSC® Ecosystem Services Procedure.





UNIQUENESS

What makes WOWnature a one-of-a-kind project?

- The **forest-multifunctionality approach** ensures trees are planted according to each area's needs, combining science, innovation and good governance.
- The promotion of green fingers and **participative reforestation**.
- The **FSC® certification** implemented for most of the forest areas combined with the verification of positive impacts through the FSC® Ecosystem Services Procedure.



EXPECTATION

By 2025, WOWnature intends to be the reference initiative for the adoption of trees in Italy and to increase the number of reforestation projects in each continent. Also, it aims at increasing funds for protecting and improving existing forests.

What does WOWnature need to be successful?

- A stable, efficient, and flexible website and e-commerce structure.
- Expanding the team with value-driven, motivated, and competent staff.
- Increasing the physical presence at the international level.

What are today's main challenges?

- Constant difficulties with IT and website/e-commerce related issues.
- The project's high customization and complexity that demand long and time-intensive training to new staff members.
- Keeping efficient and effective communication in a growing team.

Promoted by:



In partnership with:

