



## ECODAY Festival Attracts Thousands, Promotes EcoTourism and Cypriot Traditions

In a uniquely Cypriot setting, thousands of people came together to celebrate village life—past, present and future. The community of Buyukkonuk/Komi Kebir organized a day of activities focused on promoting eco-tourism in the Karpas region, where Cyprus’ traditional ways and natural beauty are under threat by modern influences and mass tourism. Visitors enjoyed folk dancing and music; traditional foods; donkey rides; exhibits; demonstrations of traditional bread, cheese, macaroni, carob syrup and sweets making; and several other activities, including hiking and cycling tours using nearby trails that guide visitors through some of Cyprus’ most breathtaking landscapes. The community’s efforts to promote responsible tourism development have been supported by USAID through the Economic Development and Growth for Enterprises and Supporting Activities that Value the Environment projects and now the European Union.



## Art Inspires Communication: “Cypriot Puzzle” Exhibition Spreads Message of Togetherness



In conflict zones all over the world, art has been successful in bringing communities together. With support from USAID, this is the case in Cyprus as well. The first

island wide art competition resulted in a travelling exhibition that brightened the Cypriot landscape—physically and metaphorically—while using art to build bridges between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. The **Cypriot Puzzle** exhibition’s title was inspired by one of the winning works of art (shown above), entitled the “Human Puzzle,” created by a 7 year-old. The work shows how all people are different and separate, but equal and related. Pieced together, different individual parts create a bright, new picture. Each piece is important on its own as well as because it is part of a larger whole. This metaphor can be applied to the exhibition as well as to Cyprus more generally. The **Cypriot Puzzle** exhibition travelled around the island throughout 2008, focusing attention and sparking reflection on issues of concern to Cypriots. Its message was and remains that the Cyprus’ rich cultural diversity should be cultivated and shared, including through the visual arts.

*The mission of USAID/Cyprus is to encourage cooperation between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot individuals and organizations to reduce tensions and promote a climate that will foster reconciliation and a durable peace settlement.*

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### *Action for Cooperation and Trust*

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The Youth Aspirations Report, which was prepared as part of the Youth Dialogue Project, has been finalized and will now go to print. The Report will be launched at the start of the next academic year to encourage a more vibrant dialogue with and amongst youth regarding the role that youth can and should play in peace building. Escorted by the United Nations Forces in Cyprus (UNFICYP), ACT joined Ambassador Urbancic, a representative of the Bishopric of Larnaca, and the head of the Troulli Village Council, for a visit to the Ayios Neophytos church in the buffer zone. This church, which has been inaccessible since 1974 and whose wall paintings date to the 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries, was restored by ACT in partnership with the Department of Antiquities. The ACT cultural heritage restoration program brings all of the communities on the island together to protect and celebrate the island's rich multicultural heritage.



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### *Supporting Activities that Value the Environment*

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Working with key partners in the TCC, SAVE is fine tuning the program for the upcoming "Water Summit" to be held on June 29 and 30. The stone conservation training program continues in Famagusta where participants focused on Kuru Cesme Fountain and on the long-term care and maintenance of sites. The winner of the xeriscape park design competition was announced and work on the park has begun.

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### *Economic Development and Growth for Enterprises*

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Following discussions with the bankers and based on the current needs of the sector, the Banking team is adapting several training courses to e-learning and blended formats while continuing to design 'boutique' courses in critical areas such as AML and risk-based lending. The Agribusiness team continues to provide technical assistance to the pomegranate and potato farmers on their path to GLOBALGAP certification as well as to those participating in the passion fruit pilot activity. The winners of the logo and slogan competition for Famagusta were recognized at a ceremony on May 7. At this event, the competition and the efforts of the EDGE-supported Famagusta Destination Development Committee to improve condition within the walled city in order to attract business and visitors, received significant public and press interest.



*The winning logo for the Walled City of Famagusta*

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### *Capacity Development and Training*

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As part of its work to build the capacity and skills of tourist guides and in direct response to a request by them, CDP organized a training session on flora and fauna guiding. Given the island's unique flora and fauna, there is increasing demand for tours in this field. The session included both classroom and field-based activities.



## News from Nicosia

### May 6

Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage calls on the international community for financial and technical support

### May 14

Christofias and Talat meet and agree to review progress on Economic Matters on the 21<sup>st</sup>

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*On April 24, 2009, USAID Representative Alan Davis participated in a ribbon cutting ceremony inaugurating the “Cultural Heritage Conservation and Architectural Library” established by the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Architects with small grant assistance from USAID. The Library will serve the Chambers’ members as well as the community at large, providing an invaluable resource for anyone interested in conservation issues and serving as a center for information exchange.*

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## OUR PROJECTS

- The **Action for Cooperation and Trust (ACT)** program mainstreams the concepts of conflict resolution in over 120 projects that encourage Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots to work on issues of common concern and solve problems together. Projects are currently underway in the areas of youth, education and tolerance, civil society strengthening, sustainable development and cultural heritage preservation. ACT is funded through a cooperative agreement between USAID and the UN Development Program (UNDP).
- The **Cyprus Partnership for Economic Growth (CyPEG)** includes activities that support economic growth in the Turkish Cypriot community to decrease the disparities between the communities and promote reconciliation. CyPEG is implemented by U.S. contractors under different USAID contract mechanisms.
  - The objective of the **Economic Development and Growth for Enterprises (EDGE)** project is to strengthen the domestic and international competitiveness of Turkish-Cypriot small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and help restructure the financial sector so that SMEs can thrive.
  - The **Resource Efficiency Achievement Program (REAP)** promotes more efficient use of water and energy by conducting audits and upgrades of representative business establishments and households. REAP also provides technical assistance to Turkish Cypriot energy experts.
  - The **Supporting Activities that Value the Environment (SAVE)** project focuses on improving (1) the competitiveness, financial status, and quality of basic services and infrastructure to more easily meet international and EU standards and (2) Turkish Cypriot capacity to manage natural and cultural resources for economic growth.
  - The **Capacity Development and Training Project (CDP)** complements other USG-funded programs in Cyprus by providing capacity development and training in critical areas.