

THE ANATOLIAN SEED

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. Business Overview

Our project will commercialize Turkey's wild species and provide income opportunities for rural areas which will contribute to rural development. Turkey's geographic location makes it rich in biodiversity. The country houses more than 10.000 species, a third of which are endemic (native or restricted to a certain place). Considering the texture, color and form of these species, which are very common in nature, most are appropriate for landscaping. Only a small portion of these however, are available in the plant nurseries.

Turkey has imported 5.918 tons of ornamental plants and has spent 7, 502, 800 US dollars between 2004 and 2008. Last year, only Çankaya Municipality (one of Ankara's biggest counties) has purchased 350, 000 seedlings. The pilot scheme aims to cultivate 250, 000 seedlings, which would alone cover most of market demand.

The Anatolian Seed project aims to protect natural values by transforming their environmental presence to trademarks. Reclaiming the native plants of Anatolia which can be used in landscape designs and popularizing the use of these plants in urban design (parks and gardens) and rural rehabilitation projects (roads and railways, factories etc.) will encourage their production in rural areas. It will also constitute an income opportunity for the locals.

The probability of opening greenhouses in different parts of Turkey makes the product range wider and the project replicable. The know-how resulting from the pilot scheme will be transferred to the other regions. Using natural species will decrease water consumption, thus contribute to resource preservation.

Our project is in its planning and feasibility study phase and has been runners up in Ozyegin University Social Entrepreneurship Competition.

II. The Market Opportunity (the problem, the pain)

Finding the ideal plant presents some difficulties. Local plants available in markets do not meet the criteria of landscapers, such as length, form and other features. Landscaping therefore tends to rely on imported plant species. Imported species however, do not originally belong to the native flora, cannot adapt to physical conditions and thus require intensive care. As a result, irrigation, fertilization and cultivation costs increase by about 75 percent. On the other hand, the landscape designs of a limited number of species repeat themselves, leading to monotonous parks and gardens.

There are some alternative producers in the market such as ornamental plant cooperatives and other nurseries. Most of these however, are family owned businesses and lack the operational capacity as well as a sense of corporate identity. In addition such a breeding study requires serious scientific work and such initiatives don't have the capacity.

III. Market Solution

Considering the disadvantages of using imported species, the project aims to bring solutions by breeding wild species and commercialization of these species. Outputs of the project are; ground cover, which will serve as an alternative to grass and reduce water consumption; medicinal and aromatic plants, which are not currently available in the market and can be used for pest control; species to be used to prevent erosion; clutching and climbing plants and aquatic plants, which can be used in decorative pools.

IV. The Market

Our target market consists of municipalities and other public organizations, highway and railway projects as well as other nature-friendly projects. Municipalities will choose *the Anatolian Seed* because the species it offers will enrich the design of parks and will reduce water consumption. Using specially-bred species in highway and railway projects will avoid invasive species' dispersal throughout natural areas; making landscape restoration would be more successful. Nature-friendly construction projects will also benefit from the outputs which would give them an eco-friendly image and reduce their costs.

V. The Management Team

Semiha Demirbař Çađlayan will be responsible for on-site implementation of the project. Gl Nihan Sırıklođlu will be responsible for managerial and financial issues.

Senior officials from municipalities such as Dr. Kadir Topbař, Head of the Union of Municipalities of Turkey and Mayor of Istanbul as well as other relevant governmental representatives; senior experts from NGOs such as Hayrettin Karaca, TEMA Head of Board of Trustees; Dr. Ycel Çađlar, Forestry Engineer, Rural Environment and Forestry Problems Research Foundation and the pioneers in the landscape design and plant nursery sectors are invited to the advisory board.

VI. Financial and Social Impact Summary

The pilot scheme requires an initial funding of 130.000 US dollars. Seedlings will be ready for the market after the 3rd quarter of the year. We expect the project to turn a profit by its second year. The project will decrease imports and increase the local businesses.