

Permaculture Approach to Water Flows in the Tentyris Region of Damanhur



Michal Hendrych, an engineer and permaculture designer from the Czech Republic, was here on the ground, guiding a team of volunteers and permaculture students in the development of the wetlands.

The intention of the wetlands project is to create a special place for meditation, relaxation, and quiet walks, which will enhance the area of the Agorà (a course and hospitality space that is currently being developed in Tentyris). Throughout the month-long permaculture course in Tentyris, work has been done to clear the thorny brush in the area, reintroduce water flows connecting the wetlands area, the natural pools, and the streams leading to the nucleo community houses of Tentyris: called Magilla and Dendera.

A permaculture approach was used throughout the project. One of the principles in permaculture is to care for people as much as you care for the Earth, while also considering the future as well. In this sense, **the design was conceived of not only respecting the natural elements present, but also elaborating on what would best serve the people who will be utilizing the space.**



Working with existing elements that are present in the wetlands, the team transformed them to reflect a more natural order. **Trees were never cut, and stones were used to create walking paths. Tree trunks were also used to create areas for sitting and relaxing, and observing Nature.**

Areas of water dissipation were harvested to be channeled into the streams and collected in the ponds, or directed to the community houses for sanitary water use or solar panel heating. The water flows were altered to bring them into above ground, visible streams, restoring the natural flows of the waterways as an alternative to a pre-existing piping system.



Clay from the land was used to seal the base of the ponds for water retention. A protecting layer made of natural resin will also be introduced into several of the ponds. Simple techniques were used to level the ground so that all the water is now directed into the streams and ponds; which fill quite abundantly when there are heavy rains.

The long term vision of the project includes introducing plants that are suitable to the area, such as Angelica and Water Cress. The roots of the plants will serve to further stabilize the banks, along with branches that were placed to prevent soil erosion. Then tents will be hung in the trees of the area, that can be used for housing friends and guests in a manner that keeps people above the ground-level humidity. Terraces are also planned, that can be used as a kind of outdoor tea house where we, and visitors, can sit and enjoy tea while listening to the calming sounds of flowing water. A beautiful dream that we will continue to nourish... and water, in time!

About the Community

Damanhur is a thriving spiritual eco-society of nearly 600 people, located in the foothills of the majestic Italian Alps.

More than 55,000 people worldwide are connected to the community through courses and ambassadorial outreach. For almost four decades, Damanhur has been a living laboratory dedicated to the development of solutions for a sustainable future for humanity.



The Popolo of Damanhur

Damanhur, the cornerstone of the Ecovillage movement, is in constant evolution with a goal of eventual complete sustainability.

The Community utilizes its own currency system, exemplifies application of the Earth Charter, and has been named by an agency of the United Nations as a model for a sustainable future.

Damanhur is famous for bringing out the artist present in every individual. A world famous example of this is the collective work of art, The Temples of Humankind, a magnificent (8,000 cubic meter) underground Temple constructed collectively by the community as a tribute to the diversity, history and potential of the human spirit.



Often called the Eighth Wonder of the World, the Temples are open for visits, hosting more than 3,000 guests from all over the world per year.

Damanhur's artistic reach also extends into the frontier of cutting edge media production. As Damanhur increases its ability to communicate with a world-wide audience, its goal is to be a model for sustainable solutions that can be easily replicated by mainstream society.

