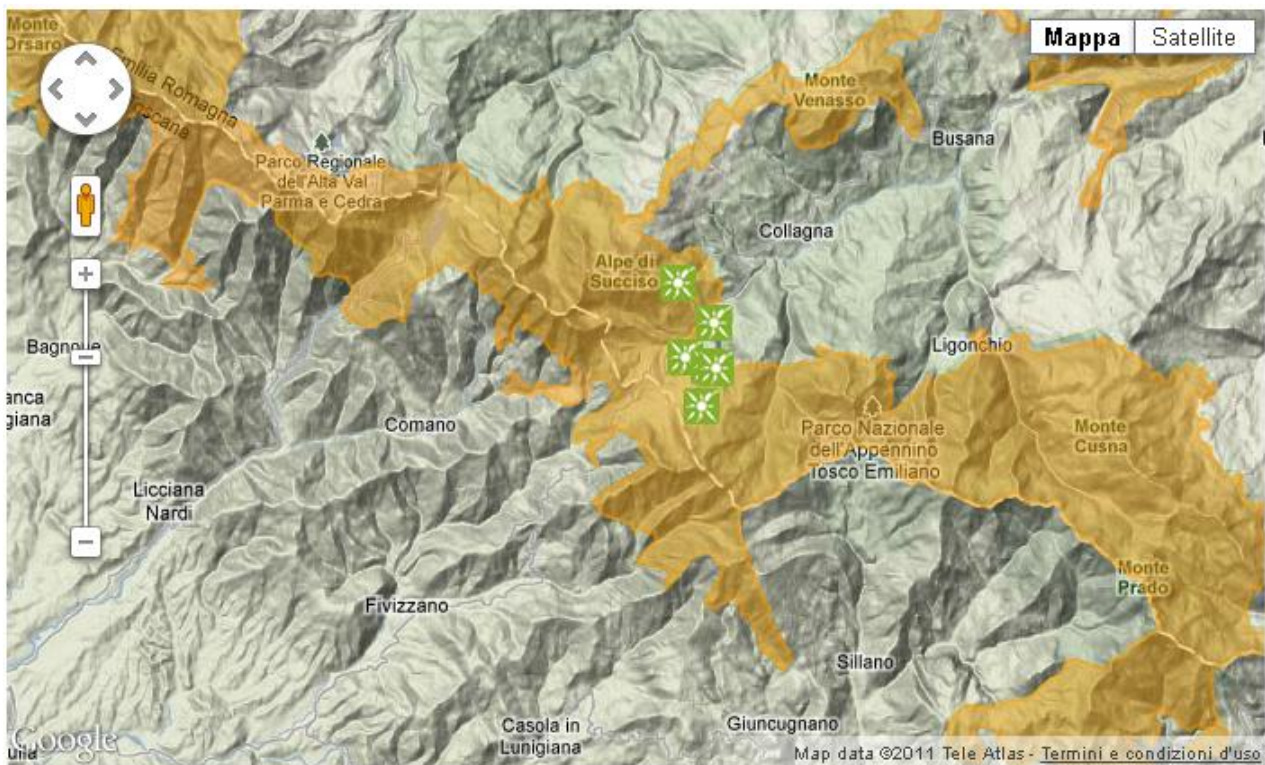



LIFE09ENVIT000188-EnvironmentalCOoperation model for Cluster - Acronym: ECO-CLUSTER



Action 29: After LIFE Communication Plan Deliverable action 29



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Giuseppe Vignali – project manager

Municipality of Collagna (RE) – associated beneficiary

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Coordinating beneficiary:



Associated beneficiaries:



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Coordinating beneficiary:



Associated beneficiaries:



The ECO-Cluster Project

Eco-Cluster - Environmental COoperation model for Cluster – is a project coordinated by the Appennino Tosco-Emiliano National Park and co-financed by the European Union within the Program LIFE+ Environment 2009 (LIFE09ENVIT000188).

Inaugurated on 1 October and concluded on 31 March 2014, the project had the aim of developing an environmental management system model for Cluster.

The model was developed on the basis of existing environmental management and certification instruments (ECAP Directive, EMAS, Ecolabel...), using each time the most adequate features in order to develop a versatile management system, specifically studied to meet the needs of Small and Medium Enterprises.

The developed model will be tested in the “Cerreto Laghi” tourist cluster within the national park, involving the local tourist operators in a management committee.

Context

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play a substantial role in Europe’s economy, accounting for 99% of all enterprises and 57% of the economy’s added value. As such, their involvement in the adoption of new and more sustainable models of production within Europe’s economy is crucial.

Given the scale of their contribution to the economy, the environmental impact of SMEs cannot be ignored. The problem is not so much with single entities, although certain enterprises may have a powerful impact on the environment and the local community, but with their combined effect across a range of sectors. SMEs are frequently unaware of the environmental impact of their activities.

Due to their complexity and the resources they require, environmental management systems and instruments (Environmental Management System - EMS) are used less commonly with SMEs than with large-scale companies, but where they are implemented they generally make a significant difference.

Il Cerreto: model area

The “Cerreto Cluster” is an important environmental and touristic attraction within the boundaries of the Appennino Tosco-Emiliano National Park.

The area includes the historical town of Cerreto Alpi and the town and ski resort of Cerreto Laghi, which are located in the vicinity of a network of glacial lakes at the feet of Mount La Nuda, the Cerreto Pass, and the Ostello della Gabellina.

The ski resort of Cerreto Laghi has a cable transport system with four chairlifts and one skilift (for a total capacity of 6,500 people per hour), hospitality facilities (thirteen hotels for a total of more than 800 beds), and over 25 kilometres of slopes with an enhanced system of snow-making

Coordinating beneficiary:



Associated beneficiaries:



facilities to ensure sufficient snow-cover. The development of the resort began in the '60s with local enterprises showing scant environmental awareness; the Park itself, initially regional and now national, was established only after the creation of the tourist resort. Unlike the majority of communities in the Upper Appennines, Cerreto Laghi is a small community which is still in a process of consolidation.

Objectives

The project aims at developing an environmental management system model for "Cluster", meaning with Cluster a territory characterized by the presence of economic activities similar for size and type.

The model was developed on the basis of existing environmental management and certification instruments (ECAP Directive, EMAS, Ecolabel...), using each time the most adequate features in order to develop a versatile management system, specifically studied to meet the needs of Small and Medium Enterprises.

The developed model was tested in the "Cerreto Laghi" tourist cluster, involving the local tourist operators in a management committee.

According to the results of the test, an ECO-Cluster environmental management standard was set and the guidelines for its implementation were elaborated.

Once having set the standard, the management system of the "Cerreto Laghi" cluster underwent a compliance assessment procedure to qualify for the ECO-Cluster certification.

The elaboration and implementation of the model was assessed by a monitoring group formed by experts in the field who followed its development and validated key steps in the project.

Coordinating beneficiary:



Associated beneficiaries:



Communication strategy

The ECO-Cluster project has carried out numerous communication activities grouped into six specific actions:

- Action 10: implementing the Eco-Cluster communication management model for the environmental results of the Cerreto Cluster
- Action 15: creating webpages
- Action 16: information panels
- Action 17: broadcasting on the mass media
- Action 18: creating information material regarding the project for the local community in the Park
- Action 19: final publication of project results

The project's communication activities are aimed at two distinct target groups:

- A general target group of stakeholders, sector experts, mass media, and all parties potentially interested in developing the model and ECO-Cluster standards (actions 15-17-19-20)
- The local Cerreto Cluster community consisting of operators, second-home owners, tourists, and the surrounding areas that make use of Cerreto (for the most part the provinces of La Spezia, Massa Carrara, and Reggio Emilia (actions 10, 16, 18)

What follows is a brief description of the main communication activities which have been implemented

Implemented communication activities

Project website www.ecocluster.it
Action 15
Date of publication: 7 March in Italian, 15 March in English; still active (at least until 2019)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13 static pages in Italian • 12 static pages in English • 12 welcome pages for operators in Italian, English, and French • 70 news bulletins published at the end of the project
Target: general, sector experts, local community of the Cerreto Cluster
<p>The project website is the principle online communication instrument for the ECO-Cluster project. It has the following sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presentation of the project, with a description of project, partners, deliverables, expected milestones, and a section dedicated to the ECO-Cluster environmental model • Cerreto Cluster: containing a presentation of the area and links to the “welcome pages” of the economic operators who have participated and will participate in the project, as well as a

Coordinating beneficiary:



Associated beneficiaries:



section dedicated to the pathways of Cerreto (action 18). The Cerreto Cluster currently contains 12 operators

- Materials, containing downloadable documents (management plan, presentations, press releases, deliverables, training materials)
- News: updated continuously with project-related news
- Contacts
- Gallery: containing image galleries
- Links: containing links to institutions and projects related to ECO-Cluster.

Newsletter

Action 15

Target: sector experts, project stakeholders

19 deliveries, 157 subscriptions for the project

The project newsletter was not sent periodically, but each time something important relating to the project needed to be communicated.

LinkedIn Group

www.linkedin.com/groups/ECOCLUSTER-sistemi-gestione-ambientale-distretti-4051707?gid=4051707&trk=hb_side_g

Action 15, not a part of the project

Target: sector experts

The LinkedIn group is an important instrument for disseminating project-related information among select professionals and experts who might be interested in the Eco-Cluster management system.

The group has 188 members:

- 42% “environmental sector” sector and 10% “energy sector” professionals
- 45% “senior”
- 12% consultants

Coordinating beneficiary:



Associated beneficiaries:



Youtube Channel
https://www.youtube.com/user/ECOCluster
Action 15 not a part of the project
Target: general
3 videos uploaded
The Youtube channel contains clips filmed by an operator during the kick-off meeting of 14 February 2011

Press Office
Action 17
8 press releases during key moments of the project
Target: general, sector experts, stakeholders, Cerreto community
The Park has issued eight press releases: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 11 February 2011 kick-off meeting• 16 February 2011 kick-off meeting• 31 March 2011 meeting with Cerreto operators• 22 February 2012 publication of guidelines• 21 June 2012 signing of the agreement for the Cerreto Cluster• 4 January 2013 round-table 'Sustainable Wine and Food Tourism'• 10 January 2013 Round-table 'Sustainable Wine and Food Tourism'• 1 March 2014 Final ECO-Cluster Project event
Each press release was sent to the Park's press office mailing list and to the National Park mailing list
To date, the press office has published 10 printed articles and 52 online articles

Educational tour

Coordinating beneficiary:



Associated beneficiaries:



Action 17
<p>2 Educational Tours have been organized:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first on 13-14 January 2012 with the participation of 10 journalists • The second on 14-15-16 February 2014 with the participation of 18 bloggers
Target: journalists and bloggers
<p>On 13, 14, and 15 January 2012, an Educational Tour for journalists was organized in Cerreto. 10 journalists from specialized papers and magazines participated in the initiative, with the result that 7 printed articles and 15 online articles were published. The overall feedback from the journalists in regard of the potential of Cerreto as an environmentally sustainable tourist destination, expressed both in the articles and through a short questionnaire that every participant filled in, was positive.</p> <p>On 14, 15, 16 February 2014 an Educational Tour for bloggers was organized in Cerreto Laghi. The two tours were run separately (one for journalists, one for bloggers) in response to the growing importance of the internet as a means for broadcasting information and setting new trends, which in terms of sustainable tourist destinations is a particularly important factor.</p>

Participating in conferences and public events
Action 17
ECO-Cluster Project staff participated in 4 public events
Target: general, sector experts
<p>On 27 May 2011, the director of the National Park, Giuseppe Vignali, took part in the Green Week that was held in Brussels, where he presented the ECO-Cluster Project to the European stakeholders.</p> <p>On 16 December 2011, Dr. Filippo Lenzerini, the project's director general, presented the ECO-Cluster Project during the final conference of the LIFE ECCELSA Project.</p> <p>On 25 May 2012, Dr. Lenzerini also presented the project to the Assemblée del Coordinamento Agende 21 Locali Italiane during the 20th anniversary of the LIFE programme.</p> <p>To conclude, Dr. Cristina Barbieri presented the project at the final event of the LIFE ECOROTOUR Project</p>

Project flyer
Action 18

Coordinating beneficiary:



Associated beneficiaries:



<p>Two printed brochures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First run, 2000 copies (July 2011) • Second run, 3000 copies (March 2013)
<p>Target: local community of Cerreto</p>
<p>The first brochure presenting the ECO-Cluster Project in its early stages was issued to the local community in the area of Cerreto Laghi using a direct mailing service targeting all addresses in the municipality of Collagna, as well as being hand-delivered to all addresses in Sassalbo. The brochure was printed in July 2011. The delivery period was chosen to take advantage of the presence during the summer months of second-home owners.</p> <p>The second brochure presenting the results of the project was printed in February 2014 and distributed during the final event of the project and at the visitors' centres of the Appennino Tosco-Emiliano National Park. It is available in English in digital format on the project website.</p>

<p>The pathways of Cerreto</p>
<p>Action 18, activity not included</p>
<p>10 printed brochures corresponding to 10 paths in the area of Cerreto, with 500 copies of each</p> <p>15 Forex panels showing the pathways of Cerreto distributed among the main meeting points of Cerreto</p>
<p>Target: local Cerreto community</p>
<p>Although not initially included, this initiative has come to play a highly significant role in the eyes of the partners in terms of beginning the process of characterizing the Cerreto Cluster as a tourist destination with great potential from an environmental standpoint. The double intention is therefore to promote Cerreto's environmental qualities to its visitors while at the same time showing strong support for operators in the tourist sector in terms of the development of a product which is not linked solely to skiing.</p> <p>In December 2013, as part of the campaign to promote Cerreto Laghi as a sustainable eco-tourism destination, 15 Forex panels were printed showing the pathways of Cerreto. The panels were installed in the main hotels and meeting points of Cerreto Laghi.</p>

<p>Information panels</p>
<p>Action 16</p>

Coordinating beneficiary:



Associated beneficiaries:



Target: local community of Cerreto
3 panels were set up in the centre of Cerreto Laghi, and 5 posters were placed in each of the partners' headquarters.
Whereas, according to the project, at least 3 information panels were to be set up in areas that were strategic for the dissemination of information, the partners agreed that it would be more effective to focus on only one strategic location: the centre of Cerreto Laghi in front of the Lake of Cerreto just a few metres from the ski slopes, the locality's top transit and assembly point. The reasons that led to the decision were the following: optimizing the visibility of the information board and concentrating resources into creating a high-quality product that stands out more effectively. Instead of creating 3 identical panels in different places, therefore, the decision was made to create 3 different panels in the same place, so as not only to present the ECO-Cluster Project, but also to provide visitors to Cerreto with some useful information.
The panels show the pathways of Cerreto

Report on the environmental aspects and the programme to improve the Cerreto Cluster
Action 10
1000 printed copies of the report to be distributed among the operators and users of Cerreto
Target: local community of Cerreto
1000 copies of the report were printed (500 more than planned) and distributed among Cerreto's operators and users (residents, second-home owners, tourists) starting from 6 January 2014, when during the Epiphany celebrations, at the height of the tourist season, a presentation event was organized.
The report presents the results of an environmental analysis of the Cluster and a summary of the Environmental Programme.
The report contains maps of the 10 pathways of Cerreto which were created in collaboration with CAI with a view to making the document worth keeping. It proved to be a winning choice, since all copies were distributed very rapidly (within the first week).

Layman's Report
Action 19
5000 copies in Italian and 1000 copies in English

Coordinating beneficiary:



Associated beneficiaries:



Target: sector experts, stakeholders, local community

The Layman's Report was distributed among the participants of the final workshop on 6 March 2014, and was later placed in the visitors' centres of the Appennino Tosco-Emiliano National Park and the project partners' headquarters.

The Layman's Report will be one of the instruments of dissemination for the ECO-Cluster Project during the phases following the end of the project.

Coordinating beneficiary:



Associated beneficiaries:



After LIFE Communication Plan

The consortium of ECO-Cluster Project partners will pursue a programme of communication and dissemination even after the end of the project.

Website

The project website will be kept for at least 5 years after the end of the project.

The Appennino Tosco-Emiliano National Park has the task of managing the site, updating it, and publishing news relating to the ECO-Cluster model and the Cerreto Cluster, as well as publishing the contributions of other partners, especially Istituto Delta.

Newsletter

The National Park shall continue to send out periodical newsletters with updates relating to the ECO-Cluster model and the Cerreto Cluster, showcasing in particular the most important items published on the ECO-Cluster website.

LinkedIn Group

The news published on the site will be republished on the ECO-Cluster LinkedIn group.

MaB UNESCO Candidature

The results of ECO-Cluster shall be used by the PNATE within the framework of the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserve candidature. More specifically, in the event of governance as a biosphere reserve, the proposal is to create a management committee on the model of that of the Cerreto Cluster within the framework of the ECO-Cluster Project.

Coordinating beneficiary:



Associated beneficiaries:



Layman's Report

Layman's Reports shall be used as one of the main methods of disseminating the results of the ECO-Cluster Project.

The Layman's Reports in both Italian and English shall be sent:

- to the visitors' centres of the Appennino Tosco-Emiliano National Park
- to fairs, conferences, and events in which the park shall participate
- to all coordinating beneficiaries of LIFE+ projects over the next 3 years

ECO-Cluster installations inside the Palalupo

The National Park shall continue to use ECO-Cluster Project installations for the mobile and inflatable structure known as the Palalupo (itself financed by the LIFE ExTRA Project), by means of which the Park carries out communication and environmental education initiatives on its own territory and in various Italian towns.

Depending on the nature of the event and where it is held, the Palalupo can be used as a multimedia hall for schools, families, and nature-lovers generally, where slideshows, lessons, and conferences on the wolf and its habitat, with a spotlight on environmental education, can be held. Alternatively, the structure may be used as a meeting point and a large-scale stand where the National Park can promote initiatives aimed at the preservation and promotion of the environment, the landscape, and typical local products. Events organized inside the Palalupo have always been open to all, whether schools or the general public, and free of charge. The Palalupo is a versatile communication and dissemination instrument which addresses the "problem" of organizing a range of events, or even just taking part in them, resulting from the lack of adequate facilities, and suitable stands and halls.



Coordinating beneficiary:



Associated beneficiaries:



In the months of April and May 2014, the PalaLupo was in the following locations:

- Acquapendente, in the vicinity of the Natural Reserve of Monte Rufeno (VT);
- San Lazzaro di Savena (BO), along with the Regional Parks of the Eastern Emilia macro-area, and the CRAS Monte Adone;
- La Spezia (SP), for the Parchi in Piazza initiative. A journey amidst the knowledge and flavours of the Sea and Appennine Parks in conjunction with the Cinque Terre National Park, the Municipality of La Spezia, the Province, and the various CEA; but also the ancient port of Genoa (GE) and the Regione Liguria;
- Parma (PR) for the Emilia Romagna Park and APT (Agency for the Promotion of Tourism) initiative, 'L'Appennino scende in città'.

Technical assistance

Istituto Delta contributes its expertise to technical aspects of the project, and more specifically:

- Assistance in adapting the cluster's environmental policies;
- Updating the initial environmental analysis and defining the environmental indicators on the basis of data gathered by the Park and the assessment of the significance of the environmental aspects
- Updating the register of environmental obligations and conducting legal conformity audits;
- Assistance in updating the environmental programme and assessing progress in the achievement of the objectives;
- Assistance in re-examining the management system.

Coordinating beneficiary:



Associated beneficiaries:



Dissemination by Istituto Delta

The Istituto Delta shall promote the environmental management model and the developed standard among potentially interested territories with whom it has or aims to have commercial ties.

It shall also participate with the Committee for Ecolabel and Ecoaudit Italia, and especially with ISPRA on the theme of Homogenous Productive Districts and Areas as a result of the collaboration with the manager who took part in the project's monitoring group (action 21).

With this end in view, it participated in a round-table discussion organized by ISPRA on 9 April 2014, presenting the survey on the implementation of EMAS in Italian districts, in the context of which it was invited to present the case study of the Eco-Cluster Project.

It will also publish technical-scientific articles on the ECO-Cluster environmental management model, its implementation in the Cerreto Cluster, and the developed standard.

Coordinating beneficiary:



Associated beneficiaries:

