



FA.RE.NA.IT - Networking on
Nature 2000 sites in rural areas of
Italy

LIFE10 INF/IT/000272



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Project description:

Background

Agriculture is the starting point for many highly biodiverse ecosystems, and can contribute to the maintenance of species diversity and a large gene pool. Halting the loss of biodiversity cannot be done without the active commitment of farmers, the principal land managers in Europe. Italy is the EU country with the highest percentage of cultivated land. Approximately 30% of the total Natura 2000 area of the country is farmland. Therefore, the Natura 2000 network offers a unique opportunity to manage and monitor progress in the conservation of biodiversity within rural and farm areas. According to the Italian institute of agrarian economy, INEA (Istituto Nazionale Economia Agraria), approximately 218 000 agricultural firms are located within the Natura 2000 network in Italy. Despite this, the European ecological network is

still scarcely known, or fully appreciated, by farmers and public administrators in agricultural/rural areas. This represents a threat to the future development of Natura 2000. The benefits of the Natura 2000 network in terms of service to society and as a potential source of employment and income are not fully appreciated in Italy, or in other European Member States. The main reasons for this are: limited communication between public administrators and stakeholders; insufficient co-ordination between public administrations responsible for the network and those in charge of agriculture; and inadequate funding towards sustainable forms of farming and difficulty in accessing the funds.

Objectives

The overall project aim is to support the implementation of EU biodiversity policy and the 2020 target and strategy, by increasing awareness, understanding and support among stakeholders and people living and/or working in agricultural/rural areas of the Natura 2000 network as a means for their further involvement in biodiversity protection. All the Italian regions will be involved in the project.

Specific project objectives are to:

- Raise awareness of Natura 2000 and its benefits among public administrators, farmers and cattle raisers in Italian agricultural and rural areas and contribute to the development of new synergies with the Italian National Rural Network (RRN);
- Offer opportunities for collaboration and harmonisation at national and regional levels of environmental and agricultural departments, as well as with other departments that have an influence on the way land is managed (i.e. energy, infrastructure, transport). Participation will be with the goal of promoting policy level integration for the development of the Natura 2000 network;
- Facilitate access to regional, national and EU funds aimed at sustainable development in Natura 2000 sites in agricultural and rural areas; and
- Promote exchanges of experience and practices among public administrators, farmers and the people living and working in agricultural and rural areas within Natura 2000 sites.

Expected results:

- At least 1 200 members of local administrations, drawn from all 20 Italian regions, will take part in seminars (60 in total) on improving links

between agriculture and biodiversity policy;

- Communication between public administrations and stakeholders will be improved through the dissemination of a communication plan, information and assistance services and tool kits;
- Communication with at least 10 000 farmers, with at least 1 000 actively participating in regional level workshops, seminars or other events (60 in total); and
- Greater harmonisation and synergies between departments that deal with the environment and agriculture in Italy.

Results

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Environmental issues addressed:

Keywords

protected area, rural area, environmental training, local authority, nature conservation,

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Beneficiaries:

Coordinator	Centro Turistico Studentesco e Giovanile
Type of organisation	NGO-Foundation
Description	The Centro Turistico Studentesco e Giovanile (CTS), founded in 1974, is the largest Italian institution for the promotion and organisation of youth tourism. Its environmental branch, CTS Ambiente, was established in the late 1980s and today mainly focuses on the implementation of studies and actions for the

protection of endangered species and habitats.

Partners

Istituto Superiore Protezione e Ricerca Ambientale (ISPRA), Italy
Comunità Ambiente, Italy
Regione Lombardia, Italy
Coldiretti, Italy

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Administrative data:

Project reference	LIFE10 INF/IT/000272
Duration	03-NOV-2011 to 31-OCT -2014
Total budget	1,919,348.00 €
EU contribution	959,674.00 €
Project location	Lazio

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