



Piscinas/Arcuentu - Dune di Piscinas-Monte Arcuentu

LIFE97 NAT/IT/004140



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#### Project description:

##### Background

Three municipalities (Guspini, Arbus and Gonnosfanadiga) and the Province of Cagliari have joined together in a LIFE project which will take on a sweep of land along Sardinia's west coast, ranging from the Piscinas dunes, one of Italy's most significant and picturesque dune complexes, to the holm oak woods on the summit of Monte Arcuentu and the steppic habitats of Pordu Atzei.

The four subsites proposed as Sites of Community Interest include habitats classified as priority under Directive 92/43/EEC, such as the endemic Mediterranean forests with Juniperus and the pseudo-steppe with grasses and annuals (*Thero-Brachypodietea*), as well as priority species like the little bustard (*Tetrax tetrax*), and the Sardinian red deer (*Cervus elaphus corsicanus*). Although 200-250 individuals of this deer occur here, the lack of protection poses a serious threat for this population, which is of strategic importance in terms of the overall conservation of the species. Furthermore, the Piscinas dunes are threatened by the increasing impact of tourism, with a consequent degeneration of the vegetation, while the Mediterranean scrub on Monte Arcuentu is at risk from wildfires.

##### Objectives

The project's principal target was to create a protected area and set up a structure to elaborate an integrated management plan for the four subsites, thereby guaranteeing the conservation of one of the most vulnerable ecosystems on Sardinia.

Among the measures foreseen there was the prohibition of access to the dunes complex, work to restore the dune vegetation and, in the interior, on the slopes of Monte Arcuentu, setting up of a system to detect and monitor fires and keep the Sardinian red deer and little bustard habitat under surveillance.

In addition, an information and awareness campaign, with the involvement of NGOs, was to be launched to underline not only the ecological value of the area, but also its potential for socio-economic development - this area was, until a few years ago, a very important mining zone on accounts of its resources of lead, zinc and silver. It is now undergoing reconversion and the municipality of Guspini, where the last mine was closed in 1992, intended to establish a major cultural centre, using the abandoned mine infrastructures as an example of industrial archaeology.

## Results

A great part of the foreseen actions were carried out as foreseen. The changed attitude of local population towards the Natura 2000 network is testified also by the request of enlargement of the pSCI ITB000031: 2000 ha which were identified on the basis of a request of local shepherd. The extension will include the whole slope of a valley, including the entire hydrographic basin.

The establishment of a protected area has not been obtained, even though several forms of conservation do exist in the area and the recent establishment of the Geominerary Park could give a chance of establishing a management authority which would be responsible also of the proposed Site of Community Importance. The main achievements of the project are listed below.

- A management plan was elaborated, approved and presented in public. The document included sections relative to territorial and legal framework, faunistic inventory, vegetation and flora aspects, geomorphology, mining activities and territorial damages, public and private property, major zoo-technical activities, studies, cartography, photographic materials, maps) and an Operational Plan. The Operational Plan included sections on general management, protection and maintenance, environmental recovery, dune protection, wildlife management, vegetation protection, environmental monitoring, awareness raising. In total 45 actions were described. For each action the plan gave indications on motivations, kind of intervention, site of intervention, responsible actors and a timetable for the period 2002-2004. The plan was approved, with the commitment to implement it immediately, by the Cagliari Province with a deliberation signed on September 30, 2002. According to the inventory of species carried out it was established that the little bustard and the Bonelli's eagle were not present in the site any longer (the first one due to a contraction of the main distribution area linked to agricultural intensification and the eagle due to a general disappearance of the species in the island).
- About 430 ha of land were rented to allow the pasture of deer. Meetings with shepherds were held and the procedure for compensation to allow

Sardinian red deer pasture was also provided to the regional administration for its implementation in other areas. The action would continue with regional funds.

- Waste removal was completed with the removal of 48 tonnes of materials (including plastic, wood, glass and metal) dispersed on a total surface of 14,4 ha. Signposts of the project were placed on the cleaned sites.
- Restoration and cleaning of riverine habitats, aimed at reducing the water courses pollution, was carried out by Legambiente. 3,2 tonnes of waste material were collected, a ford was restored and 500 autochthonous plants were placed along the water embankments.
- Realisation of hedges was completed. 280 plants (Juniperus and Tamarix) were placed (one every three meters) on a total length of 875 meters.
- Restoration of pasturelands for red deer was carried out on 6 plots of land, on a total surface of 29 ha, through cutting of shrubs, sowing of grasses and fertilization
- Spring restoration for deer's drinking was completed through a fruitful co-operation with the local shepherds, who helped to locate old springs. Water was also brought during summer season, where needed.
- 14 signposts (and 3 stickers on signposts already existing) were placed along the main roads, as well as along 36 km of paths and trails and on beauty spots.
- The restoration of the natural vegetation was carried out through the placement of 2000 autochthonous plants on 3 dune areas.
- Two structures in Montevecchio and Ingurtosu were restored and were used. The first one as a central office and the other one as a logistic support for the control and monitoring.
- Surveillance and forestry works were carried out through the involvement of local people, on the basis of three months contracts, and were based in the centre of Montevecchio. Surveillance activities, aimed at avoiding illegal activities such as camping, driving on dunes, waste and sewage dispersion, were carried out by eight people with the support of vehicles, binoculars, radio transmitters and mobile phones.
- The beneficiary organised a series of public meetings: one conference in Arbus, and several meeting with stakeholders and schools were held.
- A specific tour guide service was organised and two people were employed during the summer season. The guides were provided of vehicles and other materials, as well as of clothes with the LIFE project logo. Some thousands of visitors were recorded during the project.
- Mass media were constantly informed by the press office of the Provincial Administration. A tape containing a 44 minutes documentary film, a part of which signed by a local broadcaster (Sardegna Uno Sat), was realised.
- Publications: a brochure and a leaflet were realised.
- Studies and work camps in collaboration with the associations CTS and Legambiente, aimed respectively at *Caretta caretta* monitoring and spring cleaning activities, were organised.
- Updating of the faunistic inventory. For each species of EU interest, faunistic status, conservation and legal status, main threats and other brief notes were provided. indications were also provided together with some faunistic maps.
- A 190 hours training course focusing on environmental issues and addressed at local technical personnel was completed.

Environmental issues addressed:

Themes

Habitats - Coastal

Keywords

integrated management, coastal area, waste collection, island, pollution control, management plan

Target EU Legislation

- Nature protection and Biodiversity
- Directive 92/43 - Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora- Habitats Directiv ...

Target species

*Aquila chrysaetos* *Cervus elaphus corsicanus* *Hieraaetus fasciatus*

Target Habitat types

- 9340 - *Quercus ilex* and *Quercus rotundifolia* forests
- 2250 - Coastal dunes with *Juniperus* spp.
- 2260 - Cisto-Lavenduletalia dune sclerophyllous scrubs
- 3290 - Intermittently flowing Mediterranean rivers of the Paspalo-Agrostidion
- 6220 - Pseudo-steppe with grasses and annuals of the Thero-Brachypodietea

Natura 2000 sites

|     |           |                               |
|-----|-----------|-------------------------------|
| SCI | ITB040030 | Capo Pecora                   |
| SCI | ITB040031 | Monte Arcuentu e Rio Piscinas |
| SCI | ITB040071 | Da Piscinas a Riu Scivu       |

## Beneficiaries:

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|----------------------|--|
| Coordinator          | Amministrazione Provinciale di Cagliari  |
| Type of organisation | Local authority  |
| Description          | Cagliari Province, located in the Sardegna Region, is a local public body. Provincial administrations are, in Italy, at the intermediate territorial level between Regional and Municipal administrations. They have specific competence for environmental management, including conservation of biodiversity: e.g. protection of the natural heritage, of the protected areas and of the landscape. It plans the conservation and the improvement of the natural spaces outside protected areas through an ecological network approach. |
| Partners             | Guspini municipality Arbus municipality Gonnosfanadiga municipality Comunità Montana n18 Legambiente Sardegna CTS (Centro turistico studentesco giovanile) ELAFOS GEM (Gruppo Ecologico Montevecchio) Arcinova Gruppo Territorio Ambiente e Lavoro Pro-loco di Arbus   |

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## Administrative data:

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|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Project reference | LIFE97 NAT/IT/004140        |
| Duration          | 01-SEP-1997 to 31-DEC -2001 |
| Total budget      | 788,030.37 €                |
| EU contribution   | 535,860.65 €                |
| Project location  | Sardegna(Italia)            |

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## Read more:

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| Brochure | Title: Dune di Piscinas Monte Arcuentu<br>Year: 2000 Editor: Provincia di Cagliari No of pages: 15 |
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