



Aree protette  
**Alpi Marittime**



COUNCIL      CONSEIL  
OF EUROPE    DE L'EUROPE

Committee of Ministers  
Comité des Ministres

## ENTE GESTIONE AREE PROTETTE DELLE ALPI MARITTIME ANNUAL REPORT 2024/2025

Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)1  
on the revised regulations for the European Diploma for Protected Areas

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 20 February 2008 at the 1018th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> As amended by Resolution CM/ResDip(2014)2 on 2 July 2014 at the 1204th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies. Internet : <http://www.coe.int/cm>

## ENTE GESTIONE AREE PROTETTE DELLE ALPI MARITTIME

Annual report for the year 2024/2025

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Annual reports should describe the changes that have taken place since the previous year in dynamic terms of management and function and not be limited to basic data. Any new text or map introducing a change in the situation of the area should be attached to the annual report.

State: ITALY

Name of the area: ENTE GESTIONE AREE PROTETTE ALPI MARITTIME

Year and number of years since the award or renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas:

Parco Alpi Marittime was awarded the European Diploma with Parc National du Mercantour in 1993. Parco Alpi Marittime had its Diploma renewed in 2008. The verifier's visit took place on 27 and 28 June 2017. Il Diploma the European Diploma was renewed in 2018.

Central authority concerned:

Name: Ministero dell'ambiente e della sicurezza energetica  
Direzione generale Patrimonio naturalistico e Mare

Address: Via Cristoforo Colombo 44, 00147 ROMA

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Authority responsible for its management:

Name: Regione Piemonte  
Ente di gestione Aree Protette delle Alpi Marittime

Address: Piazza Regina Elena 30, 12010 Valdieri (CN)

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1. Conditions: List here all conditions which were attached to the award or the renewal of the European Diploma. Explain either how the conditions have been totally complied with or detail the progress in complying with the conditions. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

1. secure an adequate annual budget and ensure a reasonable increase in the management and administration staff to be able to carry out all the necessary work related to maintenance, conservation and sustainable tourism;

In 2025, regional funds allocated for the ordinary management of the Authority amounted to €534,000, while those for personnel amounted to €3,056,924. The former decreased by €55,000, while personnel expenditure rose as a result of contractual adjustments. The Authority's current staffing level is set at 57 employees, structured as shown in the attached table. In 2024, the reorganisation process begun in the second half of 2022 continued, leading to the recruitment of 21 new staff members, with a consequent redefinition of the Authority's macro-structure and reorganisation of its offices. In December 2024, two new female park rangers joined the service. In July 2025, following the renewal of the leadership of the Piedmont Region and as required by regional law, the new president of APAM and the Authority's board were appointed. The Authority's activities refer to the Piedmont Region's Regional Strategy for Sustainable Development, which is based on the UN's 2030 Agenda. The ordinary management of the Park Authority and that carried out through various projects funded at European, national and regional level contribute mainly to the achievement of goals 4/6/8/11/12/13/15 of the 2030 Agenda.

In this context, the Authority is continuing four projects launched in 2023 as part of the three-year INTERREG VI-A Alcotra Italy-France 2021/2027 Programme, in which the Protected Areas are partners.

Specifically, these are the following projects:

“ACLIMO - Climate and water: synergies for the future between Alpine parks”, which aims to analyse the effects of climate change on habitats and species that are sensitive to water resources, raise public awareness of adaptation and support the transition of agricultural activities, particularly pastoral ones;

‘BiodivTourAlps - Biodiversity and tourism: synergies for the future between Alpine parks’ with the aim of experimenting with new approaches that reconcile the reception of visitors with the real need to preserve fragile natural habitats, improving knowledge, management and awareness of human-nature interactions;

‘COGNITIOFORT - Raising awareness of cross-border fortified heritage and structuring cultural offerings’, aimed at promoting the cultural/tourist value of fortifications, barracks and military infrastructure in Alpine territories;

‘RivierALP: Cycle routes and walking trails between the Alps and the sea’, aimed at revitalising the socio-economic fabric of the cross-border territory through a proposal focused on innovation in tourism.

In September 2024, a new Alcotra project was launched, in which APAM is a partner. The PITER (Integrated Territorial Plan) ALPIMED+ consists of a project for coordination and communication and two individual cross-border thematic projects, ALPIMED+ECOTOUR and ALPIMED+ECOTERR.

PITER+ ALPIMED+ ECOTOUR, which has the overall objective of promoting the Mediterranean Alps as a destination, creating an integrated, resilient and sustainable socio-economic model, and strengthening innovative cross-border networks with a particular focus on city-mountain connections. The budget for APAM activities is €211,250.

PITER+ ALPIMED+ ECOTERR, which has the overall objective of implementing a sustainable model for the management and protection of natural resources, supporting the ecosystem services provided by nature, the resilience and connectivity of the cross-border territory, and promoting circular economy actions. The budget for APAM activities is €220,625.

In January 2025, APAM, as lead partner, presented a new ALCOTRA project focusing on the issue of light pollution, entitled “Cieli stellati” (Starry Skies). The actions relate to the transfer of know-how from the Mercantour National

Park area to Italy, to bridge the current gap in understanding and combating light pollution, and the joint design and implementation of two types of practical measures to protect and conserve nocturnal biodiversity: pilot projects to mitigate light pollution and actions to improve sites that are critical for nocturnal species. The project has been funded (APAM share: €543,750) and the first activities began on 1 September 2025.

On 30 September 2024, the LIFE18 NAT/IT/000972 LIFE WOLFALPS EU project, of which the Park Authority was the coordinating beneficiary, was completed. The project implemented actions aimed at promoting coexistence between the wolf (*Canis lupus*) and human activities in the Alpine environment, with important communication and awareness-raising activities targeting different groups. The project involved 20 partners: 13 Italian, 2 French, 2 Austrian and 2 Slovenian, as well as over 100 supporters. The study area covers the entire Alpine region.

APAM is a partner of the "Margreen" Green Community, which uses PNRR funds to carry out actions in nine areas of intervention: agro-forestry resources and the wood supply chain; water resources; local renewable sources; sustainable tourism; facilities and infrastructure for a modern mountain environment; energy efficiency; mobility; and the development of agricultural activities. In particular, with €380,000 from APAM, a new visitor centre was inaugurated in June 2025 in the municipality of Vernante, and the design and refurbishment of the visitor centre in Terme di Valdieri was started. As part of the project, 35 tourist/hiking information panels were created and placed in tourist locations and at the entrance and exit points of the Maritime Alps Park and neighbouring areas. In addition, ebike battery charging points were installed.

At national level, the organisation has led or participated in projects run by local banking foundations.

Among the most important is "Bin n'tel bosc" (Feeling good in the woods, second edition), which promotes sustainable tourism in the forest, educational activities involving schools, and therapeutic activities with local health authority groups involving people with mental and physical disabilities. With *Viaggio nel Tempo Profondo* (Journey into Deep Time), scientific research was carried out in the Aisone Caves Nature Reserve and the archaeological sites of APAM were enhanced. With ToBio, wetlands and peat bogs in the Marguareis area were improved and, in some cases, restored.

With reference to the 2021-2027 ERDF Regional Programme, the most important access road to the protected area in the Marguareis Park, which was at risk of landslides, was made safe. As part of the €500,000 project, other land consolidation works have been carried out. Under the same programme, work began in 2025 on the land consolidation in Terme di Valdieri, for the Gesso della Valletta.

As part of the same programme, the executive design of two projects was launched, one in Valle Pesio (Marguareis Park) for the restoration of a forest track, and one in Valle Gesso (Alpi Marittime Park) for the reconstruction of the path to the Genova refuge, which was devastated by Storm Aline. The works will be carried out in 2026.

An important management decision was the adoption by the Authority of the Management Plans for the Natura 2000 sites Oasi di Crava Morozzo and Alpi Marittime and the Nature Plan for the Alpi Marittime Park.

In 2024/2025, the US research project (in collaboration with Amherst College, the University of Virginia and the University of Maryland), launched in 2020 and entitled "Resistance Variation to Endemic Diseases as a Risk Factor of New Disease Emergence: Anther Smut as a Model", was completed. The activities involved the study of multiple infections (by different pathogenic fungi present simultaneously on the host) in young *Silene vulgaris* plants from different genetic lines (more or less susceptible to anther smut disease). At the same time, new field investigations were launched to search for natural populations located at different altitudes and infected with smut disease (genus *Microbotryum* spp.). The research also focused on the ability of the target species (*S. vulgaris*) to create soil seed banks under different altitudinal and environmental conditions.

The activities of the Reference Centres identified by the Piedmont Region in the Protected Areas of the Maritime Alps continued in 2024/25.

#### Plant Biodiversity Centre

The Centre carried out monitoring and conservation activities for habitats and plant species, thanks in part to the support of the Germplasm Bank. Management activities continued at the Bicknell Alpine Botanical Station, the Valderia Alpine Botanical Garden and the Mattiolo Phytoalimurgic Garden. Activities were carried out to contain invasive alien plant species that are particularly dangerous for the conservation of native habitats and species. Measures to contain woody vegetation and grazing in some peat bogs in the Marguareis Park were completed. The centre also provided technical support for numerous ongoing European and local projects.

## Large Carnivores Centre

The Centre conducted and coordinated activities related to the LIFE18 NAT/IT/000972 LIFE WOLFALPS EU project at regional and international level, which were completed in September 2024. Subsequently, in collaboration with the Aree Protette dell'Appennino Piemontese Management Authority, it continued to coordinate the main activities developed in LIFE at a regional level: monitoring the wolf population, the activities of the emergency response teams supporting farmers, communication and information activities on large carnivores, and combating poaching with the Anti-Poison Dog Unit. The Centre supported the activities of the Piedmont Region and all Piedmontese Protected Areas.

## Vultures and Birds of Prey Centre

Activities related to the monitoring of the bearded vulture in the Piedmont area were carried out through the Regional Observers Network, and the griffon vulture monitoring project continued. The Centre coordinated the monitoring of migratory birds of prey as part of the Migrans Project, as usual.

2. Recommendations: List here all recommendations which were attached to the award or the renewal of the European Diploma. Explain either how the recommendations have been totally complied with or detail the progress in complying with the recommendations. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

1. explore the feasibility of officially recognising the two Marittime and Marguareis Nature Parks as one national park;

Four years after the signing of the Quirinale Treaty between the French Republic and the Italian Republic, which laid the foundations for enhanced cooperation between the neighbouring territories of Piedmont, Liguria and ProvenceAlpes-Côte d'Azur, it has been reiterated on several occasions that one of the cornerstones of the future territorial structure is the creation of an international Alpi Marittime - Mercantour park. This emerged, for example, at the conference "Italy-France border: obstacle or opportunity", held in Turin on 26 November 2024, as well as at the signing of the Declaration of Intent for the creation of the Southern Alps Cross-Border Alliance, at the end of a meeting between local administrators held in Nice on 29 November.

These are important pronouncements that should have a positive impact on the Italian government's process of creating the Alpi Marittime National Park, a step towards the future establishment of an internationally recognised protected area.

2. explore the extent to which small, scattered reserves (Ciciu del Villar, Benevagienna, Crava Morozzo, Sorgenti del Belbo and Grotte di Bossea) which have very different characteristics, can be managed at a local level by municipal or provincial authorities;

The areas remain under the management of the Authority to date. There were no further developments in 2024/25. We are awaiting the possible transition to a National Park in order to define the status of the various Reserves.

3. ascertain that the amendment of the Law L.R.19 29/06/2009 does not jeopardise any of the park conservation regulations;

During 2024, Regional Law 19 of 29/06/2009 relating to the Piedmont Protected Areas System underwent a slight amendment, limited to the procedure for appointing representatives of environmental and agricultural associations to the boards of directors of the Protected Areas Management Bodies: appointments are now made directly, whereas previously they were the responsibility of the Park Community, on the basis of the candidates put forward. The Regulations for the Protected Areas managed by the Authority are still awaiting approval by Piedmont Region.

4. pursue the co-operation and the trans-boundary work with the Mercantour National Park and further explore the setting-up of an Alpi Marittime-Mercantour International Park, to be agreed between the authorities of Italy and France; continue working towards increasing integration.

The Alpi Marittime Protected Areas and the Parc du Mercantour have maintained a high level of cooperation. Together, they are carrying out numerous initiatives, including the projects funded under the VI-A Alcotra Italy-France 2021/2027 Programme mentioned above.

In the field of tourism, after obtaining the renewal of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism at the end of 2023, they are proceeding with the implementation of the Common Strategy and Joint Action Plan, which includes numerous cross-border actions. In 2025, Phase II of the CETS was launched with stakeholders in the accommodation sector. Similar to the PNM's Esprit Parc brand, our organisation has developed the APAM Park Quality brand, which has already certified 27 companies for 161 products based on a set of rules requiring operators involved to improve their quality and sustainability.

In 2025, the European Maritime Alps Mercantour Park EGTC supported the participation of a delegation of Junior Rangers from the two protected areas in the international camp held in the Julian Alps Park and the annual youth trek in the Park. During the year, a complete restyling of the EGTC website was launched.

The EGTC also actively participated in the ITALIAE project (lasting 15 months) of the Department for General Affairs and Autonomies of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers to carry out research and support activities for EGTCs with Italian participation.

With regard to the International Park project, please refer to the previous paragraph of this document.

1. Site Management: List here any changes to the European Diploma holding site management, in relation to both terrestrial and aquatic environments (as appropriate), and in relation to staff and finances, since the last annual report was submitted to the Council of Europe. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

No changes have been made since the date of the last Annual Report in relation to the areas covered by the European Diploma. Since July 2018, the Piedmont Region has assigned the management of twenty areas including SACs, SCIs and SPAs of the Natura 2000 Network to the Authority, bringing the total area under APAM's responsibility to over 100,000 hectares.

2. Boundaries: Give details of any changes to the boundaries of the European Diploma holding site since the last annual report was submitted to the Council of Europe. If there are any changes, please attach an appropriate map to this report. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

No changes have been made to the boundaries since the date of the last Annual Report.

3. Other information: List here any other information about the European Diploma holding site which you consider should be provided to the Council of Europe.

Da verificare gli allegati da mettere

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Park Authority staffing plan
- Staff organisation chart
- Unified Programming Document
- Articles

1. Staff organisation chart - 2. Management structure chart - 3. Unified Programming Document 2024 - 4. Activity report 2024 - 5. CETS - Strategy 2023-2027 - 6. CETS - Action Plan 2023-2027 - 7. Cross-border cooperation article 1 - 8. Cross-border cooperation article 2