



Aree protette
Alpi Marittime



COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE
Committee of Ministers
Comité des Ministres

ENTE GESTIONE AREE PROTETTE DELLE ALPI MARITTIME ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021

**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)¹

¹ 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 2020/2021**

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 della Transizione Ecologica**
Direzione generale per la Protezione della natura e del Mare

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Authority responsible for its management:

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

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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 the year 2021, the allocation of regional funds for the ordinary management of the organisation amounted to €550,000.00, with a reduction of €25,000.00 compared to the 2020 allocation of €575,000.00. In relation to personnel, the allocation for the year 2021 was €2,726,549.00, in line with the allocation for the year 2020. The Authority's current staffing plan is 59 as per the attached table. The organisation of the authority is shown in the annex. Procedures have been approved for the filling of staff positions deriving from personnel turnover, and 6 seasonal workers were hired for the 2021 summer season for the maintenance of the area and for work on the paths and signage.

Besides the ordinary management the Park Authority continued the implementation of actions of several European projects:

1) the following European projects financed within the ALCOTRA Programme ended at the end of the year 2020 and in 2021 were subject to final reporting:

INTERREG TRACES PROJECT

which has enhanced sites of particular archaeological importance in the cross-border area by means of enhancement, promotion, education and animation for the general public.

INTERREG IBEX PROJECT

which provided for the monitoring of radio-collared animals (Capra ibex) in order to study their spatial behaviour and ethology.

INTERREG CLIMAT PROJECT

with research actions on alpine species particularly affected by climate change and with awareness-raising actions on climate change for the general public.

INTERREG JARDINALP PROJECT

with actions to enhance the value of alpine botanical gardens.

2) During 2020 and 2021 actions connected to the project LIFE18 NAT/IT/000972 LIFE WOLFALPS EU continued. The Park Authority is the coordinating beneficiary. The project implements actions aimed at favouring the coexistence between the wolf (Canis lupus) and the alpine pasture farming activities. The project involves 20 Italian, French, Austrian and Slovenian partners and more than 100 supporters. The study area is the entire Alpine region. During 2021 a new partner joined the project, the University of Turin, Department of Life Sciences and Systems Biology. Please find attached a presentation on the project status. It should be pointed out that this project has been financed by the Cappellino - Almo Nature Foundation for € 600,000.00 and by the Prince Albert of Monaco Foundation for € 237,000.00. The Park Authority has also stipulated two conventions with the Veneto Region (€ 100,000.00) and with the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region (€ 27,000.00) to carry out synergic actions always related to the conservation of the wolf species.

3) In the year 2020/2021, the actions of the Integrated Territorial Project "ALPMEDITER" continued, which consists of five sub-projects: COORDINATION, HERITAGE, INNOVATION, CLIMATE, MOBILITY. The number of actions is considerable and they have been started. The Park Authority is the implementer of several actions and the EGTC "European Maritime Park Mercantour" and lead partner of the project on Natural and Cultural Heritage.

4) In the course of 2021 the Park Authority has had projects approved under the Rural Development Plan. The first one amounting to € 269,860.74 is linked to actions to restore the damages to the forests of the Pesio Valley caused by Storm Vaia and the second one is linked to the improvement of the access to the Ciciu del Villar Nature Reserve managed by the Park Authority. A third project amounting to € 125,000.00 will enable work to be carried out in the Crava Morozzo Reserve on the banks of the Pesio Torrent for river bank protection and the enhancement of wetlands to encourage the reproduction of amphibians.

5) In the course of 2021, the Piedmont Region allocated resources for the enhancement of the Centre for Plant Biodiversity.

6) A new research project with Amherst College (USA) was launched in 2021 to continue research into the spread of fungal diseases.

All these projects, together with other smaller ones financed under the Rural Development Plan, have enabled the authority to carry out actions for the conservation of habitats and species.

In the years 2020/2021, the activity of specific centres designated by the Piedmont Region in our organisation continued:

PLANT BIODIVERSITY CENTRE GERMPLOSM BANK

The Centre carried out activities related to the habitats and plant species envisaged in the various projects. The management of the Alpine Botanical Stations and the Valderia Alpine Botanical Garden and the Phytoalimurgical Garden continued, and support was provided to Piedmont Region for the project ALCOTRA PITEM BIODIVALP.

LARGE CARNIVORES CENTRE

The Centre coordinated and carried out activities related to the project LIFE18 NAT/IT/000972 LIFE WOLFALPS EU. The Centre has supported the activities of Piedmont Region and all the Piedmont Protected Areas.

VULTURES AND BIRDS OF PREY CENTRE

The activities related to the monitoring of the lammergeier in the Piedmont area were followed through the Regional Observatory Network. A specific monitoring project was carried out on the griffon vulture.

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 Maritime and Marguareis Nature Parks as one national park;

Since 2016, the two parks of the Maritime Alps and Marguareis have been managed by the Alpi Marittime Protected Areas Management Body. In the National Framework Law on Protected Areas, the Maritime Alps and Marguareis area is foreseen as a future National Park area. In the course of 2019, contacts were initiated with the Ministry of the Environment to evaluate the possibility of having a single National Park. To date there do not seem to be any technical obstacles and the big problem seems to be of a political nature and above all of economic resources for the Italian State. At the end of 2020 an amendment to the State's Financial Law was tabled to establish the Maritime Alps National Park. The amendment was not discussed. In the recent agreement between Italy and France (Quirinale Agreement), which is attached, together with the operational protocol, there is mention of the establishment of the Alpi Marittime as a National Park and the impetus to be given to the EGTC "Marittime Mercantour European Park". We are currently in contact with the Italian Ministry for Ecological Transition.

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. No new developments have taken place during 2020/2021. We are waiting for the potential transition to a National Park in order to define the status of the various Managed Reserves.

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

The Regional Law 19 of 29/06/2009 concerning the Piedmont Protected Areas System was not modified in 2021. The Regulations for the protected areas managed by the Authority are still in the process of being approved and will be adopted in the first months of 2022. In 2021, the Park approved the Alpi Marittime Forestry Plan, while the drafting of the Alpi Marittime SAC Management Plan is nearing completion. These Management Plans will strengthen the conservation and sustainable management of the managed Parks.

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 Parks continued their close and strong cooperation during 2020/2021. This collaboration was achieved through the work of the EGTC "Marittime Mercantour European Park". The EGTC has the management of the NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE project within the "Alpimed" Integrated Territorial Project mentioned above. This collaboration leads to a common approach to problems and a unified planning. The activities of the "Chilopods" (terrestrial arthropods) research project were carried out within the Marittime and Mercantour Parks).

During the autumn of 2020, storm Alex seriously damaged the territory of the two parks: Marittime and Mercantour, causing incalculable damage to villages, roads, paths and signs. The worst affected areas were the Vesubie and Roya valleys in France and the Gesso and Vermenagna valleys in Italy. The two authorities and the EGTC requested that the ALCOTRA managing authority change the destination of the funds financed by the above-mentioned project in order to carry out the initial work of restoring roads and paths. These operations will be completed in the course of 2022.

The EGTC "Marittime Mercantour European Park" was mentioned in point 1 of the Quirinale agreement mentioned above, in the hope that there will be a commitment to its further development as a successful example of cross-border cooperation.

With regard to the Unesco World Heritage Site of the "Mediterranean Alps", contacts have been initiated with the Italian Ministry and with French and Monegasque partners to define a resubmission. Contacts have been made to evaluate the submission of a dossier for recognition as a "Geopark" and/or "Biosphere Reserve".

The frequently mentioned agreement between Italy and France will certainly be an asset to speed up cross-border processes in order to define the first truly international protected area.

3. 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 occurred since the date of the last Annual Report in relation to the areas covered by the European Diploma. It should be recalled that since July 2018, the Piedmont Region has assigned the management of several SACs, SCIs, SPAs of the Natura 2000 Network to the Authority. The total area managed exceeds 100,000 hectares.

4. 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.

There have been no changes to the boundaries since the last annual report.

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

We submit to the Council of Europe a problem that we believe can be taken into consideration and supported at the level of the European Commission:

Organisations that, like ours, work almost exclusively with funds from the European Commission and do not have large budgets find themselves in difficulty when European programmes (ALCOTRA and others) provide for a large advance payment of expenses for the management of project actions. Whereas European allocations are generally made once the expenses have been settled and certified. Organisations such as ours, and in particular the EGTC "European Maritime Park Mercantour", which should be the instrument of excellence for cross-border activities, are obliged to make heavy bank exposures, which are not always possible. In many cases, the implementation of actions suffers. A model would be desirable, especially applicable to EGTCs and cross-border bodies, which assigns the responsibility for coordinating projects against specific Agreements (on the model of LIFE project management) and against advances of expenses that avoid the use of bank loans. European projects would improve their implementation and the coordination of actions and accelerate their delivery. The above would be most desirable for cross-border bodies operating in the Alpine environment that have to implement the EUSALP strategy in areas that are particularly weak from an economic and social point of view.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Staff plan Park Authority year 2021
- Staff organigram
- Presentation Status of the project LIFE18 NAT/IT/000972 LIFE WOLFALPS EU
- Quirinale Agreement
- Operational Protocol attached to the Quirinale Agreement