



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 2021/2022

**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 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 the year 2022, the allocation of regional funds for the ordinary management of the organisation amounted to €545,000.00, with a reduction of €5,000.00 compared to 2021. In relation to personnel, the allocation for the year 2021 was €2,733,099, in line with the allocation for the year 2021. The Authority's current staffing plan is 59 as per the attached table. The Unified Programming Document and organisation of the authority are shown in the annex. Procedures have been approved for the filling of staff positions deriving from personnel turnover, which led to the recruitment at the end of 2022 of five new park rangers and an education and entertainment officer. Recruitment is also under way for a Park conservation officer, and a veterinarian and a communicator for the Large Carnivore Centre early in 2023. The summer 2022 saw 7 seasonal workers employed for maintenance of the area and work on paths and signage.

Besides the ordinary management the Park Authority continued the implementation of actions of several European, National and Regional projects:

1) In 2022, the actions of the "ALPIMED" Integrated Territorial Project were completed. It was composed of five sub-projects: COORDINATION, HERITAGE, INNOVATION, CLIMATE, MOBILITY. The Park Authority managed several actions and the EGTC "Mercantour Maritime European Park" was lead partner of the PATRIM project linked to the enhancement of natural and cultural heritage.

2) In the course of 2022, most of the interventions provided for by the RECOVALX Project, financed within the ALCOTRA Programme, were carried out. In particular, several routes severely damaged by storm Alex were restored.

The construction of a new radio link (3 masts) was also started, which not only covers the entire territory of the Protected Areas but also allows cross-border radio links.

Among the communication actions we should mention the implementation of the Geotrek platform 'destination.marittimemercantour.it', focusing on the hiking possibilities of the Alpi Marittime and Mercantour Protected Areas.

Also in this project, a contract is being awarded for the adaptation of the statutes and regulations of the EGTC "Maritime Alps Mercantour European Park" to the new Community standards.

3) During 2021 and 2022 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. Please find attached a presentation on the project status.

4) 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 are underway. The Park Authority is the implementer of several actions and the EGTC "European Park Maritime Mercantour" and lead partner of the project on Natural and Cultural Heritage.

5) 4) In the course of 2022, the Authority, within the framework of the Rural Development Plan, completed actions in the forests of the Pesio Valley hit hard by Storm Vaia and the Crava Morozzo Reserve, where riverbank defences were built along the Pesio river, adjacent wetlands important for the reproduction of amphibians were also improved.

Funding was also obtained for the drafting of the Nature Plan. The parks maintained a high level of cooperation, returning after the long pandemic period to schedule in-person meetings with the management and various sectors. A meeting involving the entire staff of the two institutions was held in July, while in September, for the closure of the PATRIM and INNOV Alpimed projects, a large cross-border party was organised with the other partners in a symbolic location, the Colle di Tenda, on the border between Italy and France.

The aforementioned Alcotra Recovalx project made it possible to strengthen the common image of the Alpi Marittime and Mercantour Protected Areas, while the restoration of the cross-border paths after Storm Alex recreated the conditions for a combined use of the two protected areas, and the construction of the new radio relay implements the synergy between the two entities' surveillance personnel.

In terms of outlook, the assignment of a mandate to adapt the statutes and regulations of the EGTC "European Park Maritime Mercantour" to the new EU regulations should ensure that this joint management instrument best meets the needs of the cross-border territory.

In the field of tourism, the "Alpi Marittime Protected Areas" and the "Mercantour National Park", when renewing their candidacy for the European Charter of Sustainable Tourism, undertook to draw up a joint strategy, and many of the actions included in the Action Plan are of a cross-border nature.

The aforementioned Italy-France agreement will certainly allow an acceleration in the dynamics that should lead to the creation of a first true international protected area. Funds were also obtained to draw up the Nature Plan for the Alpi Marittime Park (€ 97,000) and the management plans, entrusted to IPLA (Institute for Trees and the Environment), for the Crava Morozzo Oasis (€ 47,210) and the Alpi Marittime SAC (€ 39,210).

5). Work has begun with Amherst College (USA) on the research project, launched in 2021, 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 2021/2022, the activity of specific Referral Centres designated by the Piedmont Region in our organisation continued:

PLANT BIODIVERSITY CENTRE GERMPLASM 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 Maritime 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. On several occasions in recent years, contacts have been made with the Ministry of the Environment to establish a national protected area. This course of action, also referred to in the recent agreement between Italy and France (Quirinale Agreement), will be submitted as soon as possible to the attention of the new Italian government, which took office in the autumn of 2022.

In the meantime, this prospect has been further debated at local level, finding consensus among the administrations of the municipalities that make up the management body of the Protected Areas of the Maritime Alps (copy of article published in the newspaper La Stampa attached).

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 2021/2022. 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 by Piedmont Region. The Alpi Maritime Forestry Plan came into force this year, while the necessary funding was obtained to draw up the Alpi Maritime Park Nature Plan and the management plans for the Crava Morozzo Oasis and the Alpi Maritime SPA. 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 Maritime-Mercantour International Park, to be agreed between the authorities of Italy and France; continue working towards increasing integration.

The parks maintained a high level of cooperation, returning after the long pandemic period to schedule in-person meetings with the management and various sectors. A meeting involving the entire staff of the two institutions was held in July, while in September, for the closure of the PATRIM and INNOV Alpimed projects, a large cross-border party was organised with the other partners in a symbolic location, the Colle di Tenda, on the border between Italy and France.

The aforementioned Alcotra Recovalx project made it possible to strengthen the common image of the Alpi Maritime and Mercantour Protected Areas, while the restoration of the cross-border paths after Storm Alex recreated the conditions for a combined use of the two protected areas, and the construction of the new radio relay implemented the level of synergy between the two entities' surveillance personnel.

In terms of outlook, the assignment of a mandate to adapt the statutes and regulations of the EGTC "Mercantour European Maritime Park" to the new EU regulations should ensure that this joint management instrument best meets the needs of the cross-border territory.

In the field of tourism, the "Alpi Maritime Protected Areas" and the "Mercantour National Park", when renewing their candidacy for the European Charter of Sustainable Tourism, undertook to draw up a joint strategy, and many of the actions included in the Action Plan are of a cross-border nature.

The aforementioned Italy-France agreement will certainly allow an acceleration in the dynamics that should lead to the creation of a first true 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.

The Protected Areas of the Maritime Alps, like the other bodies involved in territorial management, have been involved in the construction of the 'Piedmont Mountain Strategy'. This Strategy intends to systemise knowledge, collaboration, planning, policies and resources with a view to relaunching the development of mountain territories and combating marginalisation trends. A preparatory meeting with the presentation of guidelines and action scenarios was held on 10 November 2022.

With the aim of transferring the knowledge acquired in land management to sites where nature parks are still a very fragile reality, the Protected Areas of the Maritime Alps have joined an international cooperation project that envisages, on the basis of the experience gained with the European Sustainable Tourism Charter process, setting up visitor centres in the Cabo Verde archipelago (Africa). The work focusses on three islands (Santiago, Fogo, Sant'Antao) linked to the local parks, there will also be actions in favour of the local communities, through financing accommodation and catering points, and training for people intending to work in hospitality and accompanying activities.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Staff plan Park Authority
- Staff organigram
- Presentation Status of the project LIFE18 NAT/IT/000972 LIFE WOLFALPS EU
- Unified Programming Document
- La Stampa newspaper article