

La communication efficace

Effective communication



Bilan de la réunion technique de Sirolo - Ancona (Italie)/ 7 octobre 2006

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INTRODUCTION

The issue

The relationship between periurban parks and information is different from that with protected areas of countryside or those far from big cities. Information is essential for creating a consensus with people living in these parks, making it possible to build and strengthen the identity of the management body in its area of influence and also to build and strengthen the cultural and tourist identity of the park itself. In any case, protected areas in close contact with urban and metropolitan areas have the same protection objectives, but with specific obstacles and difficulties.

Because of its territorial location, a metropolitan park is the focus of greater attention in terms of information. Information tools are general and easily accessible, which is an advantage (almost always more an apparent than a real one).

Aspects to be analysed

A first aspect that will be studied during the technical conference is the relationship with the communication media (particularly the general ones) and the capacity of protected areas to be "visible" and, therefore, to be considered as "a worthwhile source" of news.

A second aspect to be analysed are the tools used by protected areas which would otherwise be ignored to achieve and finance coverage from news spaces. To this line of investigation belong news, newspapers, magazines, videos, radio and television, websites and information channels used by associations linked to the protected areas.

A third aspect will be communication in the broadest sense (panels, visitor centres, publishing activities, corporate image, etc.).

Development

For each of the aspects dealt with, it is essential to identify the media used and the experiments carried out, analysing trends and assessing the development of the situation.

In particular, it is a matter of trying to fit this development into the context of trends in sustainable development policies in protected areas, as well as communication media trends.

Communication is essential for seeking resources. On one hand this must correspond to the capability of ensuring stable, sufficient financial resources in the long term. On the other, it must be identified with optimum management in terms of environmental conservation.

Information must meet the parks' objectives more than their needs, in a quantitative but also a qualitative way.

In the last few years, protected areas have created various innovative financial mechanisms, ranging from public to private resources, which could be complemented with various mechanisms for capturing funds (external or self-generated). The two types spring from the existing capacity to generate interest through communication around the idea of environmental communication, either because of the intrinsic values of the protected area or because of the cultural and/or natural aspects contained in it.

Prospects

The full comparative analysis of the views expressed during this conference will make it possible to define an innovative frame of reference at European level, based on which it is possible to draw up new communication strategies and national and supranational level, as well as creating the right forms for monitoring (observatories) and functional co-ordination (associations, committees, co-ordinators, etc.) among the various communication tools for protected areas.

The Italian Federation of Parks and Nature Reserves' Information Network: Collaboration without Suffocation or Homogenization

Mariano Guzzini, Italian Federation of Parks and Nature Reserves (FederParchi)

The abuse of the term “network” shouldn’t stop us from making the most of the current situation or from analyzing its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

If we subject this network—made up of news, daily press reviews, a web site, a magazine *Parchi* (published three times each year), and the more than fifty periodicals produced by Italian parks and reserves—to a SWOT analysis, the results are as follows:

1. Strengths

- a) identifies an association with a rich identity
- b) provides information regarding events and good management practice
- c) the magazine promotes “protected-area management culture”
- d) locally based periodicals respond to visitors’ and residents’ expectations
- e) beats the competition

2. Weaknesses

- a) rarely (if ever) is a part of the media circuit on a major scale
- b) not a true system
- c) appearances aside (the magazine and the periodicals are on the web network), the network doesn’t catch the “big fish”: it doesn’t play a role in national opinion

3. Opportunities

- a) provide permanent content in the “new nature marketplace “ so that “the new town square” can begin to be the source of new public policies
- b) clearly explain the new concept of protected-area management before it is scrapped or forgotten
- c) respond to clichés and overcome distrust, eliminating the network of banality that predominates today

4. Threats

- a) the new town squares may become places of collective amusement area or the site of a new, aggressive form of powerlessness.
- b) minimalist approaches prevail (bell jar parks) or those “done for the sake of doing them and we’ll see how it goes,” placing no limits on use/visitation
- c) protected-area management as a concept will not exist
- d) may become an undifferentiated mass of wild and untended growth

Here are a few proposals from my SWOT analysis:

- a) Get back on the right path, starting with an awareness of the scope of the problem, not squandering funds in useless communication efforts and aiming, instead, for the big targets.
- b) Keep the lessons of the past well in mind: some networks never bear fruit and remain “a voice crying in the desert.”
- c) Implement an inventory of funds that are available (and often wasted); this might be the “ERMES Project.”
- d) Coordinate and redirect our forces, finding the courage to jump onto the media bandwagon and to carve a space for ourselves there, as both a right and a duty (subject to careful eco/encoding: knowing when and how to say what you’ve decided to say).

A few provocations leading up to a conclusion

- a) Every park is extremely protective of its own communications.
What, then, could be shared collectively? A “European” part?
A part tied to the work of Fedenatur, the European Federation of Metropolitan and Periurban Natural and Rural Areas?
Examples of good practices to emulate?
Collective demands?
Nothing?
- b) Could a small subgroup be created to whom we could ask an acknowledgement of communications resources and proposals regarding the concrete possibility of providing ourselves with European and Mediterranean tools, overcoming the obstacles presented by language differences (establishing a reporting deadline at a subsequent meeting and a responsible party capable of coordination) and by the “Babel” of tools and approaches?
- c) Can we imagine drafting a final document that represents a step forward in theory, that helps us in practice, and that could be included in future “acts,” whether in electronic or paper format?

Miribel-Jonage Great Park: optimising communication strategy

Didier Martinet, managing director of SEGAPAL and Anne Moignard, director of SYMALIM

In 2003, elected representatives wanted to modify the image and positioning of the Park.

Context: much landscaping carried out

Image deficit: "scruffy suburban park".

The decision was made in order to launch a 3-year communication campaign with a communication agency from 2004-2006. The chosen positioning was:

- Water and nature park
- Welcoming all residents of the metropolitan area
- All year round
- Offering relaxation or the chance for activities
- Alone, as families, school groups.

Leading to a unified vision of the Park and a communication strategy that is not only commercial but also institutional.

Identity

Cost = €15,000 including graphic identity

Objective: To fix the segmented identities with different audiences: SYMALIM, SEGAPAL, PLANETE TONIQUE



New single name + single logo based on the physical dimension of the Park. This is the biggest park in the conurbation, with 2200 ha just outside Lyon.

Historical reference "Miribel Jonage" preserved. It refers above all to the water dimension as it corresponds to the 2 canals surrounding and bounding the park.



The launch of the new image was made through the New Year card for 2006. It was backed by a specific project from the park general assembly, marking the birth of the future Directive Plan sent out in an institutional note in the spring of 2006.

GRAPHIC IDENTITY: an example of THE DESCRIPTIVE

It was a big, expensive job. The strategy used was to gradually implement it, preserving mobile supports in good condition.

In 2006, the priority was : The boards at the entrance, the visitor centres, the vehicles, cost € 7,000

Launch of a study to put in boards giving priority to the most frequented sites.



Consultation

Communication is sharing. Sharing is internal and external consultation.

Desire to share the Park project. 2 years (2003-2005) of consultation on the directive plan with the elected representatives, technicians, associations and institutions established in the Park. Different methods: Presentation in the towns and villages, round tables.

Holding of a General Assembly in November 2005 with the aim of:

- Giving an account of the consultation
- Formalising a 10-year project.

SIGNING in June 2006 of the Directive Plan on the occasion of the Park's institutional festival, publicised by Press conference.

PRINTING of the Directive Plan in summer.

SENDING of 1,000 copies of the directive plan in October 2006 to the members of FEDENATUR, elected representatives, technicians, associations...

DOWNLOAD from the website for the public

Finally an on-line forum.

Other examples of consultation: agricultural map 2005
local security agreement 2004.

New publications

- Transversal information plan/guide, maps, commitments, missions, activities
- Publicity: TV mag insert/download/available at centre
- "L'écho du Parc" twice-yearly publication. Circulation: mailing and website
Composition: state of progress of the Directive Plan
zoom to a double page on the project
briefs/agenda/contacts
Approach by thematic committee
- Creation of a visual review, notably of the plan/guide. Different visuals will be defined over time, depending on targets and seasons.



Establishment of a cultural aspect

Choice of a "lasting event" (rather than a concert, for example)

Implementation of a Land Art work adapted to the image of the park at the same time as other Land Art promotional events in the Allivoz Garden or for Destination Nature day.

Desire for the general public to have access to culture.

Set of ideas submitted to a jury. 1st project chosen because of the fame of the artist and his approach to the site: Daniel BUREN Implementation planned for 2008.



INSTITUTIONAL WEBSITE

- NEW 2006 repositioning context: interactive solution, speed of dissemination, extent of dissemination tree
- Presentation of the Park/the agents/the adjustments
- Documents to be downloaded or consulted
- Press space (press packs)
- Public audiences/jobs
- Agenda/plan/services

COMMERCIAL COMMUNICATION

Communication by Internet

With our new website, Internet communication has come of age. We want to communicate about all the park's functions – and there are a lot of them. We highlight downloading – everyone can either download institutional documents or commercial documents with prices or forthcoming events.

Commercial Communication

Following the new graphic identity, our commercial documents for the general public rely on images recalling nature and the family. We print a quarterly agenda with our events, school and business brochures, with a product file for each activity.

Customer file

To improve our commercial strategy we have file classification software. Our subscribers or customers are entered on computer, which allows us to find out where they come from and their activities in the park and to give them information depending on their choices. All the e-mail addresses allow us to send material out fast, using names. At the end of each subscription, the customer is relaunched.

Shows

For 3 years our communication has relied on organising shows: bio market, golf show, culinary festivals... We choose the events in relation to the philosophy of the park providing communication at the same time about the event and about the park.

Commercial partnership

We have established a strong commercial relationship with all park partners. We choose our partners after a tender process, we check their references them and associate them with our strategy. From the point when their references are checked, they have exclusive rights to the market in the park but, in exchange, they participate financially in our communication actions and during consultation and we negotiate a percentage share depending on their turnover. It is a win-win commercial partnership.

Internal communication

The objective we have set for ourselves, SEGAPAL, the company in charge of managing the Miribel Jonage Great Park, is to use the new logo to sell



better.

At the level of park staff, we have relied on internal communication, bringing out a little internal newsletter "La Feuille" every month, talking about the park's projects and staff.

We also have an intranet for SYMALIM (owner of the park) and SEGAPAL (manager of the park) which allows optimum operation between the 2 structures.

Adjustment

Our communication strategy is, in the first place, organised to tap our customers living in the Lyon conurbation, who form the bulk of our users. But we also use our image to communicate outside this area and pick up jobs or commissions when towns or organisations find they have the same problems as we do (managing an area, gravel extraction...). We sell our know-how outside.

The new graphic identity has enlivened our commercial activity and we have taken advantage of this opportunity to modernise our communication tools.

“The park in the heart of the people: between mass media and interpersonal communication”

Tomaso Colombo, communications manager Parco Nord Milano
Riccardo Gini, director Parco Nord Milano

Let's begin, as one often does, with our title: “The park in the heart of the people: between mass media and interpersonal communication” and with the definition of a few key terms. First of all, “heart”: urban parks are definitely one of the city's “hearts” (in an ecological, natural, and, frequently, social sense), but they are often not in the “heart” of its citizens or of public opinion, distracted as they are by million-dollar publicity, the values and models of consumer society, and global issues.

With regard to parks and communication, we use “heart” to mean that internal core that is related to human rationality and irrationality ... a word that epitomizes themes that are fundamental to the metropolitan city, such as the concepts of “identity,” of “sustainable development,” of “quality of life,” of “psycho-physical well-being”... arriving, more or less, at the concept of “consensus.”

Invito all' Assaggio



Parco Nord Milano

Per info e inviti: www.parconordmilano.it o al numero verde 800 20 20 20. Per info e inviti: www.parconordmilano.it o al numero verde 800 20 20 20. Per info e inviti: www.parconordmilano.it o al numero verde 800 20 20 20.



Secondarily, it's appropriate to pause for a moment at the word “people.” The word wasn't chosen randomly: Who, in a broad sense, are the visitors of an urban park? Users? Clients? Citizens? Voters? With the word “people,” on the one hand, we wanted to recognize these four dimensions that are involved in being a park visitor. On the other, we wanted to underscore the dignity of a story that is worth listening to and/or worth telling, because the meaning of the word “park” in a metropolitan context multiplies with the stories of those who experience it.

The park as a metropolitan town square: that is, as a place for people to come together and to share stories.

In order to enter into “the heart of the people,” as our title says, we need to examine and to understand the role of communication (does it precede or follow park construction ... management ... environmental quality?). And, within that role, what weight should be given to the *kinds* of communication that are implemented? We'll attempt to respond to these questions not so much academically, but reflecting on the park's last 20-25 years and considering the distance it has traveled.

Let's go back to 1999 when, together with Mariano Guzzini and FederParchi, we organized a conference, “The Parks Speak,” one of the first on this theme. On that occasion, the then-Park Director expressed the position that distinguished and which continues to distinguish our experience: the park communicates above all what

it is, “with its gestures and its actions.” The park, that is, isn’t simply an “empty space” between the houses. It’s a valuable area because it is cared for on a daily basis, because, in its evolution, it is purposely conceived, planned, built, and supported. A well-tended meadow is better than a brochure. A tree-lined lane, a pond, is more effective than a picture.

Because economic resources are not endless, the choices that a metropolitan park must make have to do, first of all, with the degree of accessibility of its spaces ... with public consensus measured in terms of the amount of “use” that the park produces.

But it is also true that every historical moment chooses and focuses on the content of its communications. In the first fifteen years of the park’s life, up until the end of the 1990s—though this was not planned—its entire communication effort was directed at communicating the idea of the park itself, at demonstrating that “creating a park in a large metropolis is possible”: the volunteer events, the park festival, the posters that showed the progress of the project year after year....

Beginning in 2000, when this work had been completed, the park felt the need to hire a staff member specifically dedicated to developing and planning the park’s communication efforts. The park management, indeed, wanted to modify perceptions of the park.

Given that the park was there and was visible, that it had grown, and that it was managed and cared for, what was needed was a way to bring it into the “heart of the people” with a different message: That it was not simply a local asset, that it belonged to everyone, that it had wide-ranging importance ... both within its metropolitan setting and because it is a concrete example of the sustainable development of an entire metropolitan area.

Changing the mission of communication

Up until that point, “creating a park in a large metropolis is possible”

From 2000 to the present: “The park in the heart of Milan”

From today onward, “The park should not be taken for granted ... the park covers a vast area (between the pre-Alps and the Po River plain)

How communications style changes:

Institutional communication, territorial communication, mass media communication, and inter-relational communication

We’ll present our experience with regard to the last two kinds of communication: the mass media campaign and inter-relational communication, posing

A FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION

What is the relationship between the two, and what purposes does it serve

Tools of our inter-relational communication experience
= creating community

Environmental education in the schools

Environmental education as a part of extra-curricular activities

Young people, the ADCI, and civil service

Work opportunities for those with physical disabilities

Parties and instant messages (SMS)

Photography or art exhibits

Botanical gardens

Bocce ball

Velodrome/cycling track

Agenda 21

User Satisfaction



Mass media communication tools = establish the park as a place for culture and entertainment
 Every day a new emotion—posters, advertisements, radio spots, MM (Metropolitan Milan)
 “Vivigiocando,” the *Corriere della Sera* special newspaper insert: in every family in Milan
 The butterflies return
 The big worm: a tramway through the city

Affect opinion leaders, reveal a European Milan, valorize direct experience (you can only get to know it if you visit)

Assuming a cultural role: from the value of nature to communicating the value of sustainable development

PARCO NORD MILANO
OGNI GIORNO UN'EMOZIONE

1 - 2 luglio 2006
 In collaborazione con
coop
Cascina Centro Parco
 Ingresso gratuito

NATURA DAL MONDO
 Sabato 1 luglio

Domenica 2 luglio

VIVI IL PARCO VIVI MEGLIO
Parco Nord Milano

PARCO NORD MILANO: OGNI GIORNO UN'EMOZIONE

La manifestazione, organizzata in collaborazione con
Fondazione Donata e Milano - ONLUS
 si articola in diverse aree tematiche:

AREA ARTE
 Esposizione di quadri e sculture a cura dell'Associazione Milo Cultura

AREA SALUTE
CAMPER DELLA SALUTE: in collaborazione della Società Italiana Osteotica e Ginecologia.
STAND DI ALICE: in collaborazione con l'Associazione Lotta Ictus Cerebrale.

AREA RELAX E BENESSERE
 Massaggi ayurvedici e trattamenti di benessere

AREA ARTIGIANATO
 Mostra laboratorio in collaborazione con **L'Arte di Casa**
 sabato 13 maggio dalle 15.00 alle 18.30

MATTINA: Spettacolo di musica popolare in collaborazione con Provincia di Milano
POMERIGGIO: conferenze, approfondimenti e altri spettacoli ricreativi.
 Dalle 17.00, **RASSEGNA CANORA ROSA D'AUTORE**

AREA BAMBINI
 Giochi e laboratori a cura dell'Accademia del Gioco dimenticato.

AREA ENO-GASTRONOMICA
 Punto ristoro con le ricette "della nonna"

14 maggio 2006 Dalle 10.00 alle 21.00 Cascina Centro Parco
La Domenica Delle Donne

ore 17.00: Concerto di Claudia Pastorino con la partecipazione di Marcella Garuzzo e Irina Sossu.
ROSA d'autore
 Ingresso 1 Euro (gratuito se porti una lattina vuota)
 Cascina Centro Parco

VIVI IL PARCO VIVI MEGLIO
Parco Nord Milano

Network of Natural Parks: the communication plan of the network of parks.

Assumpta Gorriz, information support unit for nature sites of the Barcelona Provincial Council

1 The Network of Nature Parks of the Barcelona Provincial Council

The 12 parks which make up the Network of Nature Parks (*Xarxa de Parcs Naturals*) of the Barcelona Provincial Council are for the most part located in the metropolitan area of Barcelona and in the immediate green belt surrounding it. Two thirds of the inhabitants of the Catalan region live in the metropolitan area, and so these parks have a potential pressure of 4,000,000 people. An example of this pressure is the fact that Montseny Natural Park is the most visited nature site in the Iberian Peninsula.

The Barcelona Provincial Council manages directly six of the twelve parks which form the network, and the six remaining ones are managed by consortiums made up of the same Provincial Council, town councils and other supra-municipal corporations. In total, the managed surface area of the Network of Nature Parks is 100,632 ha, and covers 99 municipalities.

2 Communications in the Network of Parks

Taking into account the strategic situation of our parks, and the type of public who use them, the communication plan of our network seeks to develop programmes which help towards an efficient management of the public use of nature sites and which promote their values among the general public and, in particular, among schoolchildren.

2.1 Types of users:

Families

Weekend or on public holiday visitors who particularly value the facilities and services available, both of the park itself and private facilities

Hikers, naturalists or other civic bodies

Highly aware public who value the quality of the landscape. They are opinion leaders and know how to access the mass media

Schoolchildren

More than 7,000 schoolchildren visit the parks, and if they have a good time, this results in future visits with the family

Scientific community

Researchers, demanding in terms of conservation and, also, opinion leaders

Resident population or persons with economic interests

Inhabitants of villages, farmers and livestock raisers, restaurant owners, traditional food producers, etc. They value fundamentally the infrastructure services and they are closest to the management bodies

2.2 Lines of communication:

To transmit the natural, landscape and cultural values of the Network of Nature Parks

To favour the good public use of nature sites through educational, cultural and leisure actions

To promote civic activities in collaboration with a range of organisations, particularly with those located inside the parks

To encourage the craft and food products produced and made in the parks

To publicise the scientific work done by specialists or in collaboration with different bodies (universities, administrations, etc.)

2.3 The instruments

2.3.1 Publications



The Network of Natural parks produces publications about the parks aimed directly at their users: schools and, also, the public interested in their management.

Park guides: To date five guides have been published which cover seven parks. These are high quality books both in terms of their design and the information contained in them.

Catalogues: these publications concentrating on a single theme are brought out for the general public. Three have been published so far: one with general information about the network, a second about the facilities and a third about routes. They have been distributed with the provincial newspapers and are also available in the information centres.

Leaflets: with information on the essential information on each park.

Flyers: with specific information, widely distributed and in a small format. Generally with recommendations or warnings: rules for the prevention of fires, for mushroom picking, etc.

Annual reports of the parks: these annual publications summarise the activities and actions of the park's management.

Information panels and maps: these are educational supports which summarise the most important features of the park, with special reference to the flora, wildlife and its geographical features.

Books and monographs: fruit of the study sessions carried out on a periodic basis in the parks, in which scientists discuss about their work. This is gathered together in monographs. Work is also done with organisations and publishing houses in order to publish books of interest.

2.3.2 The internet portal

In recent years, a very considerable effort has been made in building a web portal to provide information useful to all the different profiles of the parks' users.

The web portal <http://www.diba.cat/parcsn> is both a working tool for managers and experts, and an information reference library for users who wish to find out about culture, natural history or other areas, or to download documents.

The web portal houses 29 webs: 12 corresponding to the parks, 9 to webs with varied subject matters and 8 to information webs about other sites or specific programmes.

There are more than 1,300 pages of information in both Catalan and Spanish (a special version is planned for English)



One of the most visited webs of the portal is “Information about the parks”. This is an electronic magazine which publishes daily news about the parks and which includes an extensive agenda with all the activities programmed.

On a monthly basis, an electronic bulletin is published which includes the news from the last month, along with the agenda of activities for the next thirty days. This bulletin is sent out to 5.000 emails: press, organizations and private individuals who can sign up voluntarily from the same web.

Another of the most popular areas of the web portal are the pages for the monitoring and conservation of the Bonelli's eagle in the Parc del Garraf, which includes two webcams located in two nests. Visitors can also watch film archives of the eagles and other species of animals.

The total number of pages visited in 2006 was 4,400,000.

2.3.3 Document Centres

The document centres of the parks are a joint initiative between the parks and the local councils. These centres have documents related to the parks of the network closest to the centre.

The aim of these centres is to promote research, knowledge and management of the parks. These same centres act as information points on resources of the parks (routes, educational programmes), also promoting educational programmes (seminars, courses, conferences, exhibitions).

A project is underway to digitalise the documents of the document centres so that they can be consulted through the web portal of the Network of Nature Parks.

There are 11 document centres in total.

2.3.4 Facilities

These are the information hot points which act as transmitters of information. Some of the facilities are managed as franchises or agreements with environmental organisations or specialized companies.

Offices of the park: these are administrative centres of the parks. The network of parks has 12 offices.

Centres and information points: these are information centres for users. Some are located in town hall buildings. The network has 61 centres and information points.

Schools and nature classrooms: these are teaching centres where courses are given and activities organised with the schools. The network of parks has 35 of these centres.

Activity centres: these are also nature-based activity centres where participants can stay the night. The network of parks has 35 activity centres (*casas de colonias*).

Recreational areas: these are places where visitors can make use of bars, barbecues, etc. The network of parks has 21 of these areas.

Other facilities: museums, accommodation, restaurants. The network of parks runs together with local organisations and private companies cultural and economic activities within the parks. The Barcelona Provincial Council, the managing body of the network of parks, subsidises cultural facilities in the municipalities, promotes rural accommodation and sets up programmes to help restaurants which promote food products grown or made in the parks.

2.3.5 Exhibitions and participation in fairs

The network of parks puts on a number of exhibitions on questions related to nature sites. These exhibitions are located generally in the facilities of the parks. Some of these exhibitions are centred on specific themes while others are general in nature. There are also temporary travelling exhibitions.

The network of parks also promotes exhibitions organised by associations and groups which work with the network of parks, along with exhibitions by local artists who show their works in the facilities.

The network of parks also lends aid to festive and cultural events organised by the different local councils in the network of parks, promoting the activities and natural products made in the parks.



2.3.6 The press and TV

Information is regularly published in specialised magazines (hiking clubs, farming and tourist organisations) which publicise the activities going on in the parks. Advertising features are also regularly taken out in regional newspapers and the parks' forest fire prevention campaigns are covered in the mass media and, in collaboration with other bodies, TV adverts are produced.

2.3.7 International relations

The Network of Nature Parks establishes links with parks from different countries in order to interchange experiences. One method of linking is the twinning of towns, which involves visiting "in situ" other parks on a periodic basis with the aim of comparing methodologies and management parameters.

The Network also participates in international forums and organisations such as FEDENATUR, EUROPARC and the UICN, and has signed collaboration agreements with federations of parks from other countries as in the case of FEDERPARCHI in Italy.

2.4 Specific programmes and products

- Leisure-cultural programmes
 - "Live the park" programme
 - "The park on the table" sub-programme
 - "Poetry in the parks" sub-programme
- Educational programmes
 - Programme "Getting to know your parks"
 - School programme: "Live the Park"
- Circle of Friends of the Natural Parks
- Day courses and seminars
- Collaboration with civic bodies (Forest Protection Groups, etc.)

2.4.1 The "Live the park" programme

This is a cultural programme which seeks to invigorate the relationship between nature and culture, establishing a leisure relationship between nature sites and the general public.

The programme of activities is programmed together with the municipalities inside the parks and the park's managers. The events are aimed equally at the local population, visitors and schoolchildren.

It includes stage performances, musicals, and literary, folkloric, artistic events, explaining the natural and cultural heritage also with the aim of associating the concept of "natural space" with the provision of "quality products".

Each park has its programme with three essential areas: actions carried out by the municipalities, the main events in the park and the school programme.

2.4.1.1 The "Park on the table" sub-programme

This is a cultural – gastronomic programme which seeks to popularise and value the natural products produced in the cuisine of the restaurants in the parks' different municipalities. This programme includes producers, restaurants and wineries which produce wine with designation of origin.

2.4.1.2 The “Poetry in the parks” sub-programme

This involves poetry routes through different nature sites. Poetry readings are given related to the natural site visited. Both local poets and poets from other areas take part. At the end of each season, a book is published with an anthology of the poets involved.

2.4.1.3 The school sub-programme of “Live the park”

This is an educational programme for the schools in the municipalities of the parks. It is aimed at fifth-year primary-school children (10 -11 years old) and seeks to bring the park closer to pupils in a fun and educational manner. In the 2005 programme, 3,875 schoolchildren took part. The children study nature in classrooms helped by an educator through play: “Getting around the Network”. An end-of-course fun event is held with all the schoolchildren in a representative site in the park.

2.4.2 The “Let’s find out about our parks” programme

This is an educational programme for the state schools in the province of Barcelona for schoolchildren of 11-12 years old. The objective is to explain to them about the natural and cultural heritage of the parks. This programme has been running to 23 consecutive years, and in 2005, 7,132 students took part from 230 schools from 56 municipalities. The study work was done both in the schools themselves and in the parks, and educational materials were published for the students and teachers alike.

2.4.3 The Circle of Friends of the Natural Parks

The Circle of Friends of the Natural Parks is an association of users and sympathisers of the parks promoted by the Barcelona Provincial Council. Founded in 1994, it offers its members services, information, activities and voluntary participation in the management and maintenance of the nature sites.

The organisation has 4,500 members (3,200 are full members), 90 % of whom live in Barcelona capital and in its metropolitan area. 350 of these members are volunteers who help with the information and maintenance work of the parks.

The Circle publishes an annual magazine called “Amics”, a quarterly information bulletin and a quarterly agenda of activities.

2.4.4 Courses and seminars

With different frequencies during the year course and seminars are organised both for training park workers and managers of the network of parks and for exchanging scientific knowledge between the specialists working in the nature sites.

The work presented in the courses and seminars are published in thematic issues, and can be found on the web portal of the Network of Nature Parks.

2.4.5 Working with civic bodies

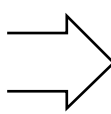
The network of Natural Parks of the Barcelona Provincial Council works together with associations linked to the management of the territory, and with associations of users and ecological organisations with the aim of promoting or carrying out conservation programmes of the territory or in order to promote good practices in public use.

Among others collaborative work done with other groups is that of the Forest Protection Groups (ADF) and the Federation of Hiking Clubs of Catalonia (FEEC)

The ADF are associations formed by owners of woodland and local councils whose aim is the prevention and fight against forest fires. Every year, at the end of the fire prevention campaign, the Barcelona Provincial Council organises an event in which awards are given to the ADFs which have done the best job.

The FEEC is a federation which groups together all the hiking clubs in Catalonia. This federation produces proposals for routes linking the GRs which cross the different parks of the Network. These routes can be looked at in the web portals of the FEEC and the Network of Nature Parks.

2.5 Budget

"Live the park"	275,000	
Civic bodies	200,000	
Publications	150,000	
Catalogues in newspapers	150,000	
"Let's find out about our parks"	150,000	
"The Circle of Friends of the Natural Parks"	110,000	
Agreements with the press	90,000	
Website maintenance	20,000	
Communication actions	1,145,000	
Global budget	34,300,000	
		3.34%

Nature in the City, RomaNatura's Communication Tools and Models

Paolo Giuntarelli, Director, RomaNatura Regional Park Authority

Every individual in today's society aspires to communicate effectively. If we can't communicate, we don't exist—or, at best, the spectrum of our potential listeners, the audience that is ready to give us their attention, is significantly reduced. If this is true for individuals, it is even more true for institutions and public entities. The development of effective communication is the chief task of every public administration, company, or business. The quality or quantity of our "product" is unimportant if we aren't capable of communicating with those around us. As a result, it's through communication that we define the very essence of our society: to share, transmit, and make visible the information that concerns our work.

Communication has always been present, in one form or another, in the history of human evolution. Indeed, we can identify a series of "epochs" in which our progenitors progressed in their ability to exchange, transmit, preserve, and disseminate information by means of which we can read the story of human evolution. In each of these epochs, daily life was profoundly changed by communication systems—so much so that one could define human evolution as a history of "Transitions": *The age of signs and signals, The age of speech and language, The age of writing, The age of the printed word, The age of mass communication*. Each step along the way was a stage in a cumulative process and not a distinct period. Communication systems combined and mixed together rather than being passed down whole.

Thus, though communication has always been present in human social history, it is only now that communication has reached the relevance that is attributed to it. Communication forms have represented the very structure of our societies or, better said, the structure and principal functions of every society have been represented by unique forms of communication.

Our current social structure is characterized by an "*interpersonal*" form (P. Donati, 1998), a "*modular*" form (G. Osti, 2005), or a "*liquid*" form (Z. Baumann, 2002), that is, by a marked, structural-functionalist representation of a Parsonsian matrix in which systems of networks—constructed of modular individuals or institutions (functionally distinct but interconnected and substantially unstable)—completely explain its functioning. According to Donati, all social phenomena can be seen and described as social relationships: "*social realities may be understood by means of the social relationships that make them up*." Thus, the identification of *social relationships*, which preexist every social phenomenon, is possible using Talcott Parson's AGIL Paradigm. Within the field of relational theory, this paradigm is understood as "*the compass of sociological theory and analysis*." The AGIL Paradigm, devised by Parsons at the beginning of the 1950s, identifies four internal components of social actions: means, ends, norms, and values. This paradigm can be generalized as a way to understand social reality as a whole: a specific functional subsystem and a respective functional imperative corresponds to each action. The four quadrants of the paradigm are identified thus: Quadrant A (*adaptation*), whose functional imperative is adaptation while the functional subsystem is the economy; Quadrant G (*goal-attainment*) with the achievement of ends and the political system as functional imperative and functional subsystem, respectively; Quadrant I (*Integration*), whose functional imperative is integration while the functional subsystem is the corporation. Finally, Quadrant L (*latency pattern maintenance*), with the maintenance of the model as a functional prerequisite and the cultural system as a functional subsystem. In relational sociology, however, the use of the AGIL paradigm doesn't stop with the identification of the four internal components of an action: "*what lies within each square of the AGIL Paradigm (the categorical type) is less important than the distinction/bond, that is, the relationship, which emphasizes and produces it*." In other words, the application of AGIL as an analytical model is useful as a function of its relational logic. According to this logic, the paradigm is constructed on the basis of two axes: the structural axis A-I, regarding coordination standards, or "*re-ligo*," and the referential axis L-G, regarding value orientations, or "*re-fero*." As a consequence, the social relationship takes solid form in the combinations between the two axes: "*Indeed, the orientation axis, which represents the subjectively intended meaning of the action, creates norms. The cultural normativeness of the action, which consists in attributing intentional meaning, is connected to structural normativeness*."

Adding to this interrelational social scheme is the modular and differential model that Luhmann proposed in *Ecological Communication*. In Luhmann's model, the social system is a communications system, separated

from biological and mental systems, wherein the role played by individuals represents the most important element. These roles, therefore, determine *social differentiation*, which is to say that the complexity of the society-system is incremented by means of segmentary, stratified, and functional differentiation.

A differentiated and relational society can function only if it is able to put its structures and systems “in communication,” if they possess their own internal codes, and if these structures and systems are self-referencing with respect to such codes. In this perspective, communication represents a form of “power” because it is by means of communication that information can be transmitted via the systems of the structural-functionalist model.

Social structure is, therefore, built of structurally and functionally diverse systems, which also determine individuals’ roles and status (autonomous with respect to their own internal codes of communication). The great importance of communication resides in its ability to put these various social systems in contact with one another and to make the information that each one produces transmissible and understandable: post-modern society can only function by increasing internal reflectivity and communicative capacity among such systems.

For Luhmann, what occurs in the environment—environmental catastrophes, famines, etc.—have no social impact until they are communicated. In other words, according to the social-constructionist logic that sees environmental problems as *cultural artifacts*, that is, as an example of shared meaning, an environmental event exists for society when it is communicated. The concept is explained in the following quote from Luhmann: “*Fish or men could die, the seas or the rivers could be the source of illness, there could be no more gasoline available at the pumps, and the average temperature could rise or fall: until these facts are communicated, they have no social effect. Society is certainly a sensitive system, but it is effectively closed. It observes only by means of communication.*” Not going any more deeply into Luhmann’s theoretical apparatus, what I’d like to mention now is that environmental events—the *inputs* that the environment produces—must be communicated if they are to be perceived by society and must *echo* in every functional subsystem of the society. Environmental *inputs*, that is, must be translated into the codes and programs of each subsystem, because only in that way can society respond to ecological threats. The codes represent the way in which “the most essential functional systems structure their *communication*.”

Communication today has another important function, particularly in the environmental area: forming and informing in order to increase participation and consensus with regard to choice and public policy. Citizens, particularly with regard to questions that concern the environment and health, have an increasing desire to participate in the decisions that directly or indirectly influence their futures, notwithstanding the system of democratic delegation which, via free elections, identifies representatives on a national and local level. Ignoring this reality may lead to genuine conflicts that put a plan or a project at risk, even if it is technically irrefragable.

Participation and consensus building are intended to lead to shared solutions by bringing together, as nearly unanimously as possible, the interests of various stakeholders. All those involved have, at the same time, the right to assert their own interests and the responsibility to propose solutions that are satisfying to the others involved. Naturally, these are voluntary processes in which some stakeholders may consider it more advantageous to step aside. When a general convergence of interests or a financial relationship exists among the parties, consensus-building cannot be limited to informational and communicative approaches aimed at maintaining a conflict-free environment among the stakeholders. Where a dispute has arisen, the goal of conflict management strategies is to help the parties resolve the existing dispute. In that event, communication rises to the role of a tool for the construction of new forms of truly participatory democracy.

Social differentiation is represented and perceived first and foremost in urban contexts: cities represent sites where this analysis of social structure assumes form and substance and where, therefore, parks find themselves having to confront such an analysis if they want to communicate their information effectively. The environmental-system code, by means of which parks express themselves, may potentially be incomprehensible to economic systems or systems of power which are the systems that are largely dominant within urban centers. Park communication must be capable of penetrating the central nucleus of the “*urban paradigm*,” including by means of recourse to the well-known “*Magic Bullet Theory*.” This *linear concept* of communication’s effect presupposes an *active* “issuer” and a public that is substantially *passive* and which reacts uniformly and nearly automatically to the stimulus of the message. If this effect does not occur, one imagines that the message has failed to reach

its intended audience. As a result, communication is compared to the shooting of a *bullet*, in order to make it clear that pulling the trigger alone is not sufficient: one must aim and “hit” the intended audience. Another expression used to define this deterministic and mechanical concept is the *Hypodermic Needle Model*, which considers the effects of communication similar to a hypodermic injection: they produce a physiological reaction, whether or not the patient is aware and willing.

Communication, therefore, especially communication that is institutional or which is issued by a governmental administration, must be calibrated and constructed purposefully in order to reach the various “targets” or “social subjects” at which it is aimed. The complexity of the “*calibration*” is, thus, a function of social complexity: a differentiated and modular society offers a diverse and multicolored audience of social subjects and produces a significant difficulty for the construction of messages that can be decoded and selected by all subjects. The “*selection*” of the message is an additional difficulty and especially so in an urban setting. “*Urban dwellers*,” the residents, are subjected to a continuous bombardment of communications that provoke confusion and habituation. Excessive “hypodermic” penetration can cause such communications to be rejected and, thus, as a result of a self-defense mechanism, cause the message to be selected. Selection as an unconscious defense mechanism creates both a feedback system and growth in the flow of messages. If the social subject attempts to defend himself by rejecting my messages, I try to “*bombard*” him—which then leads to an increase in communication costs and the need to devise increasingly disruptive forms of communication capable of attracting attention. Social or individual “*reflexivity*” (U. Beck, 1986) is the only instrument that makes it possible to decode communications and to make a selection that is neither emotional nor unrefined or to avoid being subject to the manipulations of the mass media.

Communication on the part of the authority that manages a nature park is, therefore, a phenomenon and a specific product of public communication. Communication necessarily has to do with the interactions of social subsystems in which the social and environmental reality of the park is articulated. The park needs to find the correct *resonance* in each of its social and environmental subsystems. In addition, the park authority’s communications are either strongly public or strongly ecological (because they are inspired by the protected area’s fundamental *mission* to protect nature).

What is Communication ?

The term comes from the Latin noun, “*communicatio*” (communication, participation), a term that literally indicates the “placement in a common area” of what one possesses or “the inclusion of others” in that act. In fact, the term is formed by the union of two words: “*cum*” (together) and “*munus*” (gifts offered publicly). “*Communico*,” then, originally indicated “to place in a common space,” to create a shared space, an interpretation confirmed by the link that exists, from an etymological perspective, among the verb “*communico*”, the noun “*communio*” (communion, sharing), and the adjective “*communis*”. Here, we are not referring to “sending messages,” but to a social and reciprocal act of participation, an act mediated by the use of symbols that have meaning among different individuals and groups.

- Communication as transmission, as the movement of information
- Communication as relationship, “placement in common,” understanding

The fundamental elements of every communication process are:

1. sender: the subject (or subjects) who communicate the message
2. recipient: the subject (or subjects) who receive the message
3. message: the content of what is being communicated. It may be information, a fact, news, or simply a sensation.
4. code: the system of signs that we use when we communicate and without which the message cannot be transmitted. It may be a language, a gesture, a graphic design, a picture.
5. channel: may be understood as the technical method external to the subject by means of which the message arrives (telephone, fax, mail, etc.) as well as the sense that is involved in communication (sight and hearing, in the main).

6. encoding: the activities in which the sender engages in order to transform ideas, concepts, and mental images into a message that can be communicated by means of the code.
7. decoding: the corresponding set of activities undertaken by the recipient that transform the message from its encoded form back into ideas, concepts, and mental images.
8. feed-back: the interchange that takes place between recipient and sender when the information that is sent back to the sender allows him or her to perceive whether the message has been received, understood, etc.
9. context or environment: the physical or social "site" where communication is "exchanged." The site may stimulate or discourage communication

Communication may be:

Verbal communication: uses written or spoken words

Non-verbal communication: facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice, etc. Non-verbal communication is less easy to "censure" and thus betrays emotions, moods, opinions.

Symbolic Communication: Our way of dressing, the objects with which we surround ourselves, etc., constitute a significant part of our communication

A combination of these various communication modes produces the most effective results.

Learning varies as communication techniques vary (and, thus, with variation in the various channels of perception).

Communication Techniques	Channel by which Message is Perceived	Learning %
Verbal	Hearing only	20 %
Graphic-gestural-iconic	Visual only	30 %
Mixed	Hearing + visual	50 %
Mixed	Hearing + visual + discussion	70 %
Mixed + experimentation	Hearing + visual + discussion + use	90 %

It is, in any case, essential to be particularly attentive because not everything that is communicated arrives at the recipient.

Usually, in fact:

- the subject intends to say 100
- in fact says 80
- the recipient hears 50 (because of disturbances in the environment)
- understands 30
- remembers 20

RomaNatura's Communications and Information Activities

RomaNatura has made the difficulties that emerge in the context of urban communication its own. It is no simple task to communicate what a young (born some eight years ago) park authority does, particularly because the park was required to devote its initial efforts principally to establishing and to organizing itself within the social and institutional fabric of the city and to extricating itself from administrative, bureaucratic, and budgetary difficulties, and particularly from those related to social and political "*recognizability*".

We needed to choose the “message” that we wanted to transmit to residents, but first we had to deal with a number of contingencies. *The context* was the first critical issue—in the heart of the city, Rome’s parks represent the last vestiges of an environmental and rural heritage that is a testament to the strongly agricultural fabric of our city and which is to many, especially to the younger generation, unknown. *The instrument* was the Park Authority and a system of regulations that were unfamiliar and largely incomprehensible to the citizens, who couldn’t understand why rules and prohibitions valid for areas where wilderness reigns supreme should apply to an urban area. *The means* were traditional communication channels which, in order to be perceived adequately, required a diffusion and a persistence that the resources of the Park Authority have not often been able to guarantee. *The mission* was the protection and conservation of green spaces rescued from incipient real-estate speculation and the environmental education that this considerable heritage deserved.

By means of these elements we moved forward with identifying the institutional message that we intended to present: *preservation, protection, and enjoyment/use*. RomaNatura represents an urban environmental heritage that may be preserved not solely by being protected but particularly by being used. Urban areas that are not used by the public—obviously in a way that respects the environment—deteriorate and are abused. Consequently, the message that RomaNatura wanted to communicate attempted to connect the respectful use that these areas make possible and the social, economic, and health-related benefits that result from such use. Reading the style and content of RomaNatura’s institutional communication, one can see the will to combine the environment with the city’s historical fabric but also with the development of the city itself: RomaNatura’s parks represent an ecological-social network that is connected, for example, to the Parco della Musica (auditorium and concert hall), to the new Fiera di Roma (convention center), to the new “centrality” required by the new general zoning plan (PRG), but also to the settlements of Crustumerium and Cervelletta and to the numerous

agricultural holdings that are the remnant of an ancient aristocratic-papal plantation system.

The style, therefore, needed to be warm and friendly and built along lines that were light, simple, and easily “decodable” by young and old and by families in general, with “antiqued” fonts and colors that were as real as possible. Its content needed to recall the city’s flora and fauna, but also important historical features such as Saint Peter’s and the Coliseum: in short, urban biodiversity. What needed to emerge was the marriage between humans and nature, a harmonious co-existence that did not create obstacles to the development of a city that has been and will continue to be the capital of peoples, religions, and cultures.

Park Communications

Visitor Centers:

RomaNatura’s “Case del Parco,” welcome centers where visitors are first introduced to the protected area. Six such structures have already been opened in various areas managed by the Park Authority:

- Villa Mazzanti, visitor center and headquarters of the Park Authority (Monte Mario Nature Preserve)
- Torre di Perna, visitor center and branch office of the Park/Ranger Service (Decima-Malafede Nature Preserve)
- Casale Lucernari, visitor center and branch office of the Park/Ranger Service (Marcigliana Nature Preserve)
- Casale Scarpa - Casa del Fiume (Valle dell’Aniene Nature Preserve), visitor center and education center with permanent exhibition on the river’s ecosystem.
- Casale Alba, houses the LIPU Centro di Cultura Ecologica (Italian League for Bird Conservation Center for Environmental Studies) and a Park Authority visitor center (Aguzzano Regional Urban Park)
- Casaletto, center for visitors and for locally organized theme-based educational activities, managed by a local cooperative, is also the branch office of the Park/Ranger Service

Signage:

- street indications and signs, *information services*
- “dedicated” areas, *user information*. The case of the Proba Petronia Park within the Pineto Regional Urban Park, equipped with a playground and a dog run.
- nature trails, *information for understanding and properly appreciating the protected area*. The RomaNatura network:
 - “Le Querce” nature trail (Monte Mario-Collina dello Stadio Olimpico Nature Preserve)
 - “Collina dell'Osservatorio” Trail (Monte Mario Nature Preserve)
 - “Il Costone” nature trail, (Pineto Regional Urban Park)
 - “Valle dell'Insugherata” nature trail (Insugherata Nature Preserve)
 - “Il Fiume Porta” (Where the River Takes You) nature trail (Valle dell'Aniene Nature Preserve)
 - “La Cervelletta” nature trail (Valle dell'Aniene Nature Preserve)
 - “Conoscere il Parco” (Get to Know the Park) nature trail (Aguzzano Regional Urban Park)
 - “I Lucernari” nature trail (Marcigliana Nature Preserve)
 - “Valle di Perna” nature trail (Decima-Malafede Nature Preserve)
 - Fosso del Ciucco” nature trail (Laurentino-Acqua Acetosa Nature Preserve)
 - “La Torre” nature trail (Acquafredda Nature Preserve)

Informational and Trailside Notices:

- notices and warnings, *information for the enforcement of regulations and protection of the area*. The most recent experience: the newly inaugurated Natural Monument “Cellulosa Park.”

Traditional Communication

Printed materials:

- Brochure series, “Rome’s Nature Parks,” created by each protected area (various editions)
- Brochure “A Bird’s Eye View”: *Rome’s Skyline from Villa Mazzanti*
- “RomaNatura” educational brochure (various editions)
- RomaNatura’s nature parks map (March 2003)
- *Photographic Atlas of Rome’s Natural Protected Areas* (June 2005)
- Brochure “A Trip to the City” (October 2005)
- Guide to the Services of the Lazio Region Natural Protected Areas — *RomaNatura’s Parks* (in preparation)

Publicity

- newspaper and magazine advertising (Metropoli Agricola);
- radio spots (Metropoli Agricola);
- posters/placards (Metropoli Agricola, for small-scale events as well);
- sponsorships (Agenda d'Ateneo 2007—“Tor Vergata” University)



Events

- Metropoli Agricola (Decima Malafede Nature Preserve, October 2005)
- It's Party Time in Rome's Parks (C'è aria di festa nei parchi di Roma) (December 2005-January 2006)
- Inauguration of the Proba Petronia Park (Urbano del Pineto Regional Park, March 2006)
- "Valorizzazione Creativa del Legno di Città" (Promotion of Woodworking Arts in the City). Workshops. (Valle dei Casali Regional Reserve, May 2006)
- "Local Action for Biodiversity" workshop (Villa Mazzanti, June 2006)
- RomaNatura's parks as a multi-site biodiversity museum (June-October 2006)
- Amor di Mare (Loving the Sea), Secche di Tor Paterno Marine Wildlife Sanctuary, June 2006
- RomaNatura's "Notte Bianca" (Villa Mazzanti, September 2006)
- AIGAE (Italian Association of Nature Guides) Conference (Villa Celimontana, October 2006)
- Fall in the Reserve. "I Parchi a Tavola" (The Park Dines Out), Decima Malafede Nature Preserve, October 2006

Programma Amor di Mare
Mediterranea - Via Litoranea Km 8

venerdì 16 giugno - ore 19,00
EX MARIS REBUS - opere e lavori - di Silvio Costabile
Presentazione Album Jazz "For the Sea" di Andrea Paganì Trio

sabato 17 giugno - ore 19,30
A Causa di Forza Maggiore - Spettacolo di teatro, cabaret e danza - con i Ragazzi del Sistina

venerdì 23 giugno - ore 16,30
Convegno sull'Area Marina Protetta delle Secche di Tor Paterno
a seguire
Cena di gala

sabato 24 giugno - dalle 20,30
Frittura di pesce in spiaggia
a seguire
Cocktail e selezione musicale - a cura del Solea Club

durante il corso dell'iniziativa

MOSTRE - presentazione ed esposizione di mostre e quadri sul mare e sul Mediterraneo

PROIEZIONI - i più bei filmati sull'area marina protetta delle Secche di Tor Paterno

SPORT - prova in acqua delle attrezzature subacquee e mini corsi di vela per vivere più da vicino l'ambiente marino

IMMERSIONI - alla scoperta dei fondali dell'area marina protetta

ESCURSIONI - visite guidate alle dune di Capocotta

Per informazioni sull'Area marina protetta
Ente Gestore RomaNatura - Villa Mazzanti, Via Gomenizza 81, 00195 Roma
tel. 06 35405310 - fax 06 35491519
www.romanatura.roma.it - posta@romanatura.roma.it

Autunno in Riserva

domenica 22 ottobre 2006
dalle 10,00 al tramonto

i parchi a tavola

Riserva Naturale Decima Malafede
Azienda Agricola Cooperativa Agricoltura Nuova
via Valle di Perna 315

- 🍷 Visita guidata alla scoperta dei funghi
- 🍄 Mostra micologica e riconoscimento dei funghi
- 🍷 Raccolta e spremitura delle olive, produzione dell'olio
- 🏠 Visita al caseificio
- 🌾 Presentazione del marchio **Natura in Campo**
- 🏠 La **Fattoria Educativa**: dall'olivo all'olio, dal grano al pane, visita agli animali della fattoria
- 🌿 Visita guidata lungo il Sentiero Natura
- 🎧 Inaugurazione del percorso naturalistico audio-guidato
- 🍷 **Punto Ristoro** vendita di panini e bibite
È possibile prenotare il pranzo a pagamento entro il 20 ottobre tel. 06.5070453

Ente Regionale **RomaNatura**
Viale Mazzanti - via Gomenizza, 81 tel. 06.35405310
www.romanatura.roma.it

Azienda Agricola Cooperativa **Agricoltura Nuova**
via Valle di Perna, 315 - tel. 06.5070453
www.agricolturanuova.it



Fairs

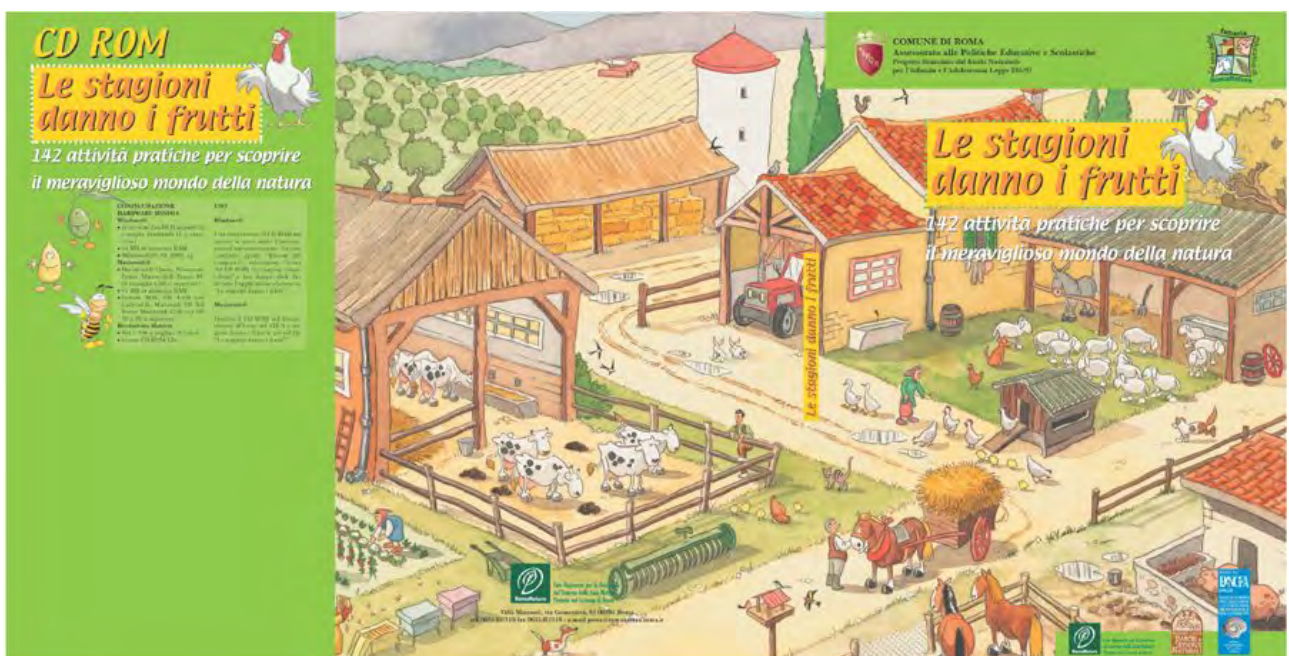
- "Natura in Viaggio (Nature on the Road), Environmental Protection Agency (ARP) for the Lazio-Gaeta Region, March 2006
- ParkLife 2006 "Salone dei Parchi and del Vivere Naturale" (Parks and Natural Living Showcase), Rome, April 2006
- Parks in the City (FederParchi—Rome, May 2006)
- Parks Festival (Rieti, May 2006)
- Forum on Travel Writing (Italian Geographic Society - Rome, June 2006)
- Mediterre 2006 (Bari, September 2006)



The Press Office:

- press releases (aimed at generalist or "niche" media). With respect to sector media (nature, environment, tourism, scientific), most relevant are printed periodicals, web sites, and newsletters in electronic format
- twice weekly press review regarding the Park Authority's activities but also regarding current events in the region's protected areas and topics of environmental interest

Communication in the Internet Age



Multimedia products:

- video "I parchi naturali di RomaNatura" (RomaNatura's Nature Parks) (DVD)
- CD ROM "La Natura in città" (Nature in the City), multimedia version of the *Photographic Atlas of Rome's Natural Protected Areas*
- "Roma: Capitale di Risorse" (Rome: Resource Capital) DVD created for the Lazio Region Office for the Promotion of Agriculture
- The organization's web site: <http://www.romanatura.roma.it/>
- The Park Authority's web pages on the sites dedicated to the Regional Park Authority and FederParchi: www.parchilazio.it and www.parks.it, respectively.

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A Po River Communication Project

Piergiorgio Bevione. President of the Po Torinese Regional River Park (Turin) (Parco Fluviale del Po Torinese)
Ippolito Ostellino. Director of the Po Torinese Regional River Park (Turin) (Parco Fluviale del Po Torinese)

Introduction

On the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the Po Torinese Regional River Park (Turin), a communication project was undertaken on the park's behalf in order to move beyond what has, unfortunately, become the contemporary image of the river in the collective imagination. The project's aim, in other words, was to represent an area that had been forgotten by the community because it was considered both to have little to offer and to be the source, broadly speaking, of hazards. At the same time, the project was seen as an occasion to bring attention to the activities in which the Park Authority has been involved over fifteen years of managing the protected area.

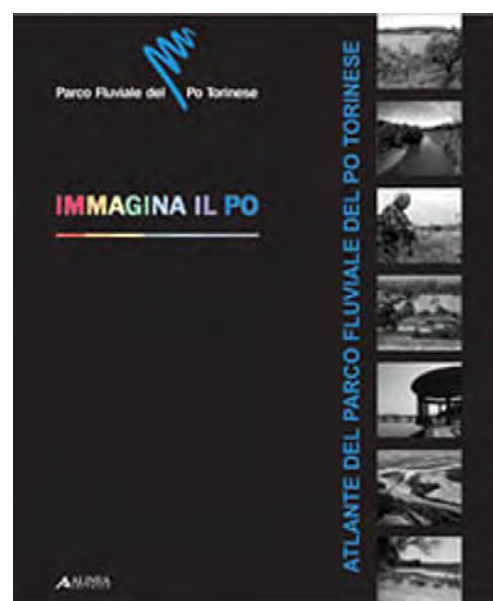
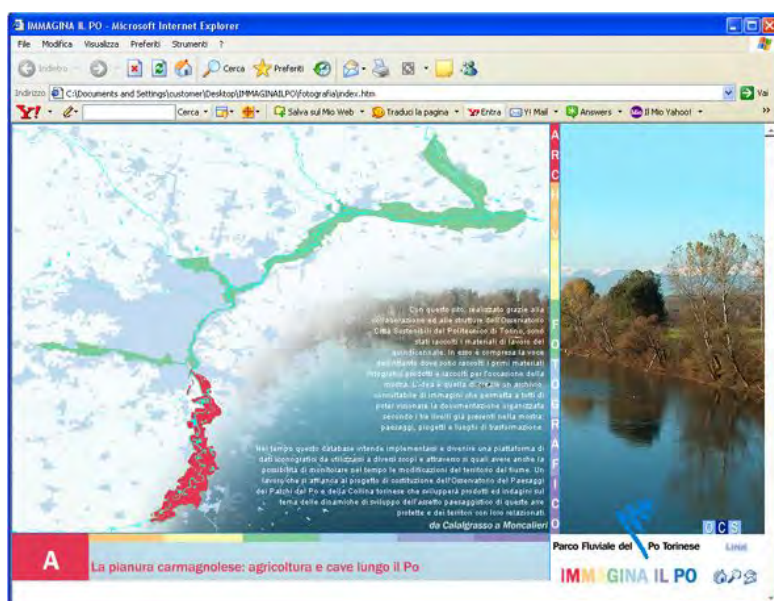
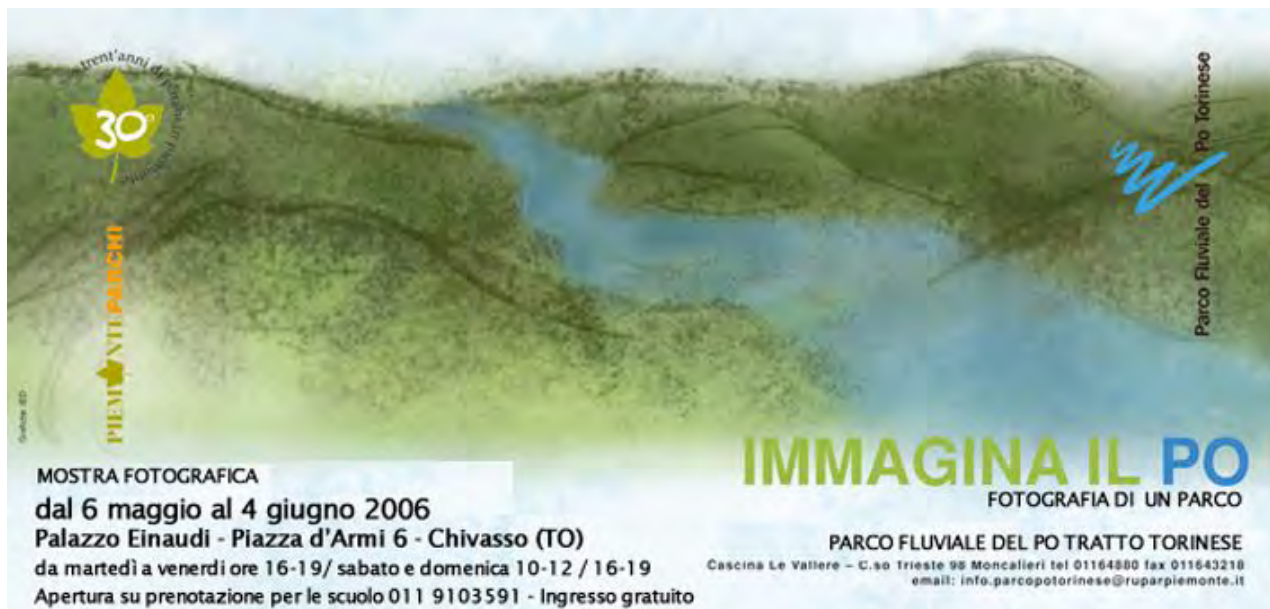
Here, the two objectives were demanding and complex, particularly for a protected area that had sprung up in connection with an urban landscape marked by significant anthropization and in which the river's "culture," on the one hand, and, on the other, the Park Authority's commitment over the last fifteen years, have no equal in contexts subject to less intense pressures.

At the same time, the project was carried out via a number of different partnerships, which significantly enriched the diversity of approaches and, more globally, of the products created. The web site, developed with the Politecnico di Torino Osservatorio Città Sostenibili (Turin Polytechnic Institute's Sustainable City Observatory) made it possible to create a permanent and modifiable record of the effort to document the area. It is important to emphasize how this initiative further succeeded in becoming a communications laboratory in which a variety of individuals and institutions could work contemporaneously: the Polytechnic Institute, the Fondazione Italiana di Fotografia (Italian Photography Foundation), the school, and the European Design Institute (IED). The work done by the Turin Polytechnic Institute's High Quality Laboratory in creating a video in digital 3D of the protected area was a unique occasion to use new technologies representative of the area.

The audience for the communications project was defined as the general public (including schools) that has had little opportunity to reflect on the river and to perceive its essence and character. That obviously did not exclude that essential category of individuals who, in various technical and other capacities, work in the area on a daily basis and in whose hands lie significant responsibilities regarding what takes place in the river area.

Communication Tools





We began with images of the river and of the area that surrounds it, entrusting the evocative ability of photography—with all the applications that digital manipulation of images today makes possible—to describe the river's current reality, including its problems and its potentials, practically and sensitively.

We began, then, with a photography campaign conducted in seven areas reflecting the seven perspectives into which the protected river area is divided and where the area's features as well as its two main problem areas could be described: control and monitoring of ongoing transformations and the projects directed by the Park Authority. The choice we made was to offer an interpretative framework in an effort to bridge the distance between the protected area and our intended audience, to provide them with a specific compass, and, in so doing, to increase their understanding of the reality in which they live.

At base, this project also intended to provide a work opportunity for schools through the development of two initiatives: a project undertaken with the European Design Institute (IED) and another with the Silvio Pellico Elementary School. In the IED collaboration, the work was twofold: graphics and publicity, with the creation of a graphic identity for the communication products, and photography, with a campaign aimed at documenting

the river areas and related quarries. The project with Pellico Elementary, instead, proposed to create an articulated multimedia and photography project, in cooperation with the Fondazione Italiana di Fotografia (the Italian Photography Foundation).

The images were collected through commissioning three professional photographers (Sergio Beccio, Stefano Beccio, and Claudio Penna) to undertake a photographic survey along with a group of students from the IED whose work was coordinated by their teacher, the photographer Bruna Biamino.

The communication project was born from the conviction that only an approach that was diversified along diverse channels of communication would be able to build a proper management model for the message that the protected area intended to offer. The material produced, then, had to find a diversified representation all its own, which was then transferred to different communication platforms: a photography exhibit, a conference, a web site, and the production of a promotional film in digital 3D and of a book that brought the images from the exhibit together with the conference proceedings.

These five different communications objectives reached different audiences and, at the same time, made it possible to achieve an integrated set of objectives:

1. the creation of a product to be distributed within the trade but also as a general environmental-interest item (the book, *Immagina: Il Po* (Imagine: The Po) edited with the publisher, Alinea Editrice)
2. the creation of a website on which images of the river are constantly available (www.immaginailpo.it)
3. the production of promotional and educational materials (the 3D video, *Navigare sul Po* [Sailing the Po])
4. the organization of an opportunity for debate and direct interaction for the various interested parties (the conference organized in June 2005)
5. an opportunity to visit the Park Authority headquarters and to view the photographs (the exhibit at Vallere and at Chivasso which coincided with the International Festival of Literature dedicated to Mario Soldati and the Po).

These diverse representations had the identical objective: to render visible the diversified geography of the area and its river which, despite its longstanding continuity, continues to be perceived with difficulty.

But we made use of yet one more tool: contemporary art and theatre. Faber Teater, a theater company based in Chivasso, was charged with the inauguration of the exhibit, and the company staged a performance dedicated to the theme of the Po River in the Turin area (which also included a contribution by Lorenza Zambon on the river's geological history). This tool of cultural "mediation" on behalf of the river and its image proved to be very effective, using simple, deeply felt techniques to bring the river closer to participants. Piero Gilardi's contemporary art with the contribution of Tea Taramino's interactive art were featured as well. In short, we used a combination of coordinated activities aimed at providing a variety of readings and interpretations of the Po River context.

Details of the Territory.

Perspectives and Landscapes

Any area is made up of a variety of realities. Those realities are even more complex in the case of a river—and especially so when that river crosses the urban fabric as the Po does in and around Turin. Here, natural areas and questions of landscape and perspective assume even greater value because of their rarity in this specifically periurban context.

The images we collected had the scope of giving a concrete reality to these unexpected worlds, in the very heart of the urban area, as well as of suggesting the various dimensions of the surprises and discoveries that the river environment can hold in store.

A web itinerary that moves among the various subregions, enabling images to follow one another in succession and carrying the viewer through the various problem areas that are, nonetheless, connected within a single context: the river. This representation also intends to provide concretely for the representation of the concept of territorial networks and their dynamics within the area: an accumulation of themes whose even more synthetic version is found in the brief names given to the various spheres into which the protected area is subdivided:

1. The Carmagnolese Plain: agriculture and quarries along the Po River
2. Il Sangone: the stone river
3. The Po River in the city: between nature and architecture
4. The Stura di Lanzo: aggression on the river
5. The Po River beyond the city—from San Mauro to the San Raffaele Cimena Plain
6. The Waters of the Po: between Chivasso and Verrua Savoia—canals and confluences
7. The “torrent” in the Po: the Dora Baltea

Areas of Transformation.

It would be difficult to describe an overall plan or urban-planning instrument for the park simply by inspecting the status of the area's transformation. Such an attempt could easily become overly technical and incomprehensible to a general public. Thus, we chose to document the areas that had been the subject of requests for opinions presented to the Park Authority by third parties. In so doing, we provided a glimpse into what is taking place in the area, starting with examples from outside the park—that is, with those provided by private and public concerns whose work in the area is motivated by a wide variety of interests.

For each of these areas, then, examples were chosen that were intended to portray the extreme expression that current transformations represent. The goal of such a description was to make it possible to understand that “work” need not mean simplistically the erection of a building but many other different kinds of work as well, whether they are “constructions” or other “interventions.” The creation of a lake in a quarry and the restoration of a rural building, rather than the modification of a river mouth or the construction of a new thermoelectric plant, taken together, produce transformations whose reverberations are felt throughout the area and constitute the aspects toward which attention to their evaluation should be drawn.

The effects of such “work” on the landscape in general, then, cannot be overlooked, nor can the ways in which such work and such interventions cause the perceptions of those who live in the area (insiders) or outside of it (outsiders) to change.

It is, moreover, from such considerations that the need to develop a new project was born, bringing to life the concept of a documentary portal for the river and its surrounding area and, through the creation of a “Landscape Observatory,” extending that reality to the hills around Torino. Indeed, it cannot be even minimally sufficient to offer a balanced judgment, even if well contextualized, with regard to individual activities. Likewise, it is fundamental to equip oneself with tools with which to evaluate overall effects, the sum total of actions undertaken, in order to verify the effectiveness that wide-area planning tools, where they are used, can provide.

Projects and construction-site operations

But a second area of intervention exists that is today certainly less efficient and powerful but which has enormous potential in a two-fold sense. This involves the Park Authority's direct actions—in other words, all the actions that are born from the character of planning in the protected area and which are specialized in their implementation by direct extraction of design plans and by requalification processes. The park's open construction sites, often in active collaboration with city and area government, are no less sites for change in the environmental context that deserve a place in the area's transformational map.

The various types are illustrated in the area of environmental reclamation as well as in the area of user infrastructure. Alongside these, however, the actions taken in cooperation with private individuals have also been described—in other words, requalification activities carried out in partnerships: an area of enormous interest when one considers the scarcity of genuine economic potential that the public apparatus manages to mobilize autonomously. In this case, IED students documented ongoing mining activities that are and which will remain, over the park of the next fifteen years, guided by reclamation projects approved by the park. In short, a wide range of actions which, taken together and individually, made it possible to explain the coordination of the work undertaken via various funding sources

Final thoughts on the theme of environmental communication.

This summary is intended to describe our experience with a particular communication effort. That effort involved general principles which we believe can serve as an example for communication in protected areas and, in particular, in highly complex territorial contexts such as those in urban areas.

The first element was the choice of an image-based project and a reappraisal of the use of photography as a tool for documentation of a geographic area. Significant examples already exist in Europe, such as the French DATAR project, as well as various examples in Italy. In that connection, we recall the ministerial project for the creation of a territorial archive at the Italian Directorate General for Contemporary Art and Architecture (DARC). Our modern ability to manage images in multiple modes made it possible to provide video and photographic support through the use of multimedia stations at the exhibit. These stations made it possible to perceive the extraordinary potential that exists today to view the area, continuously and in multi-scale formats.

A second element was the effective undertaking of a program that involved many different individuals. This aspect succeeded in making a large number of people aware of the unique experience provided by a protected area, at the same time bringing other products to the attention of groups of individuals with very different interests. This is a vital moment in promoting environmental awareness and should not address itself to a few, limited categories of individuals. Instead, if it intends to establish itself in the heart of the community and not remain solely the intellectual exercise of a few specialists, its message must be widely diffused.

Through the use of various tools, the project intended to reach a different kind of park user. It was not content to be self-contained or merely commemorative, but aimed to provide the opportunity for new relationships, for the development of future projects, and for the stimulation of new ideas. Our work was also meant to test out the utility of a variety of communication and graphics methods in the narration of the area and its geography. Here, we should emphasize the role of the web and the creation of a digital platform for making images of the park area as visible and accessible as possible. Today, this tool must be combined very wisely with what remains the other technique for getting to know an area intimately: passing through it in person and walking around within it, a technique that should never be abandoned and which cannot be replaced by the latest-model GPS.

From the appreciation of the parks of Seine-Saint-Denis to communication

Claudia Lerin-Falliero, head of visitor's reception and promotion of Sausset park
Véronique Delmas, head of partnership studies

The *Département* of Seine-Saint-Denis has a Communications Department in charge of promoting the *département's* parks on a large scale. Considering the profile of the parks, the Open Spaces Department (Direction des Espaces Verts) has chosen to emphasise local promotion based on the argument of the environmental quality of its parks. For this purpose, environmental education is an important promotional tool essentially carried out in the parks and co-ordinated based on a central core.

Through the example of the visitor reception and promotion structure of the *département's* park at Sausset, the target audience and actions carried out within the parks will be presented. The balance of these actions is essentially positive with the school audience, whose awareness has already been raised, but the impact remains small considering the means deployed.

Based on this situation, the Open Spaces Department of Seine-Saint Denis decided to establish a new communication strategy consisting notably of expanding the audience reached and adapting methods of disseminating information. For this purpose, new "pilot" tools for this strategy are in the process of being created or adapted, as with the website, or Natura 2000 communication plan, both aimed at developing the profile of environmental quality improvement actions in the parks of Seine-Saint-Denis.

The organisation of the promotion of the *département's* parks

1. The *Département's* Communication Department and its competences
The Communication Department is in charge of the large-scale promotion of the *département's* parks
2. The profile of the *département's* parks: 4 million people visit the parks of the *département* of Seine-Saint-Denis every year. They must, then, have a very high profile, because overall the inhabitants of Seine-Saint-Denis spontaneously highlight the *département's* open spaces as their best-known open spaces. Courneuve Park is most often mentioned (47%).
3. The Open Spaces Department's guidelines: local actions. Considering the profile of the parks, the Open Spaces Department has chosen to emphasise local promotion based on the argument of the environmental quality.

A means of promoting the parks of Seine-Saint-Denis oriented towards environmental quality

The Open Spaces Department has chosen to direct its action towards improving its natural heritage, organising itself as follows:

1. A co-ordinating pole in charge of making the link between outside organisations (such as education authorities, the *département's* tourism centre, the Press, etc.) and the *département's* different parks. Driving the establishment and management of common promotional tools: website, calendars of events, etc.)
2. The parks' visitor reception and promotion structures carry out their own actions.



Orientation of promotion:

Almost all the Open Spaces Department's promotion is centred on the environmental quality of the sites managed from a point of view of sustainable development. For this purpose, environmental education is a useful promotional tool.

Promoting environmental quality within the parks: the example of Sausset park

1. Actions undertaken in each park (target audiences, broad types of action: exhibitions, promotional activities, etc.).



2. Example of raising the awareness of a school age audience of a differentiated management action in Sausset park: Rabbit management at Garenne
 - a. Description of the development of the activity.
 - b. Educational objectives: food chain, animal biology, operation of an ecosystem affected by humans and management of it.
 - c. Promotional objectives: local. Improving knowledge among the public living very near the park and its surroundings, respect for and appropriation of public land and "dissemination of this information from children to adults".

Assessment of these actions:

In 2005, 27,000 people came to visit the exhibitions offered in the park visitor centres and more than 10,000 children took part in the promotional activities.

Positive awareness-raising among the schoolchildren, but limited impact considering the means used. In fact, only 8% of the people questioned as part of the user satisfaction surveys had taken part in at least one educational activity offered in Sausset park during 2005.

Communication necessary to open up to a wider audience.

Little media resonance of environmental education actions: recognition of these actions (48% of people interviewed in Sausset park did not know about these actions).

Balance of the promotion currently being carried out:

A positive impact but with an audience whose awareness has already been raised and with schoolchildren. The key ways for optimising this type of activity above all lie with the information and communication media associated with them.

1. Communication plan concerning the environmental quality of the parks.
2. Adapting the promotion by the Open Spaces Department and its implementation
3. Example of development: The website and Natura 2000 communication plan as "pilot themes".



Conclusion:

Environmental education actions constitute a means of encouraging very good awareness of the environment, but are not sufficient for becoming raising the profile. The impact of these environmental education actions is quite limited, essentially reaching an audience whose awareness has already been raised.

Aware of this problem, the Open Spaces Department decided to put a real communication strategy in place based on certain pilot themes or tools.

What will the results be? How can the theme of the environmental quality of parks be adapted for a wide audience?

Portofino Park: Using the Web to Provide Information about the Park

Alberto Girani, Director Parco di Portofino
Franca Balletti, University of Genova

Portofino Park finds itself in the position of having to communicate its information in an extremely unfavorable context. The park is frequently the subject of communication that depersonalizes its identity and fails to correspond with the aims of the Park Authority. The name "Portofino" always makes the news and the reactions it produces can be extraordinary: ("At the Mercy of the Wild Boars: Genoa Prefect Intervenes" and "Ronaldo the Sea Gull Saved from the Clutches of Gelsomino the Octopus at Portofino Aquarium"). At times, the news content is purely manipulative ("Let's Donate the Monte di Portofino Goats to Children in Sarajevo").

Unfortunately, the resources available for communication are modest and following a rigorous policy is often not viewed favorably by the media ("Portofino at the Mercy of Concrete" and "Concrete in the Park: It's all a Lie—Building Regulations Explained"). As a result, it becomes both necessary and indispensable to defend oneself against media overexposure: since talking about Portofino makes the news, it's easy to find us in the press or on television.



IL SECOLO XIX

10 febbraio 2003, Lunedì • 7

Proposta solidale avanzata da un gruppo di volontari impegnati da anni nei villaggi della ex Jugoslavia

Rischiano di essere abbattute a fucilate. Invece, potrebbero essere salvate e potrebbero aiutare la vita nei villaggi. Qualche perplessità, ma l'idea fa discutere

Portofino, diamo le caprette in dono ai bimbi di Sarajevo

The Park Authority decided to promote a "communication culture" by creating a web site, designed according to the guidelines set out in the park's communication plan. The plan's goal was to create loyal citizen-visitors by working more incisively on the local scene to improve and enhance the Park Authority's image. The plan (though it has not yet been submitted to the governing board), suggests a possible communication process aimed at defining a visual identity for the Park Authority: one that was unequivocal and non-contradictory, that offered distinctive and easily understood features, and that was clear and easily recognizable to those outside the park.

Four objectives were identified, including the creation of the web site:

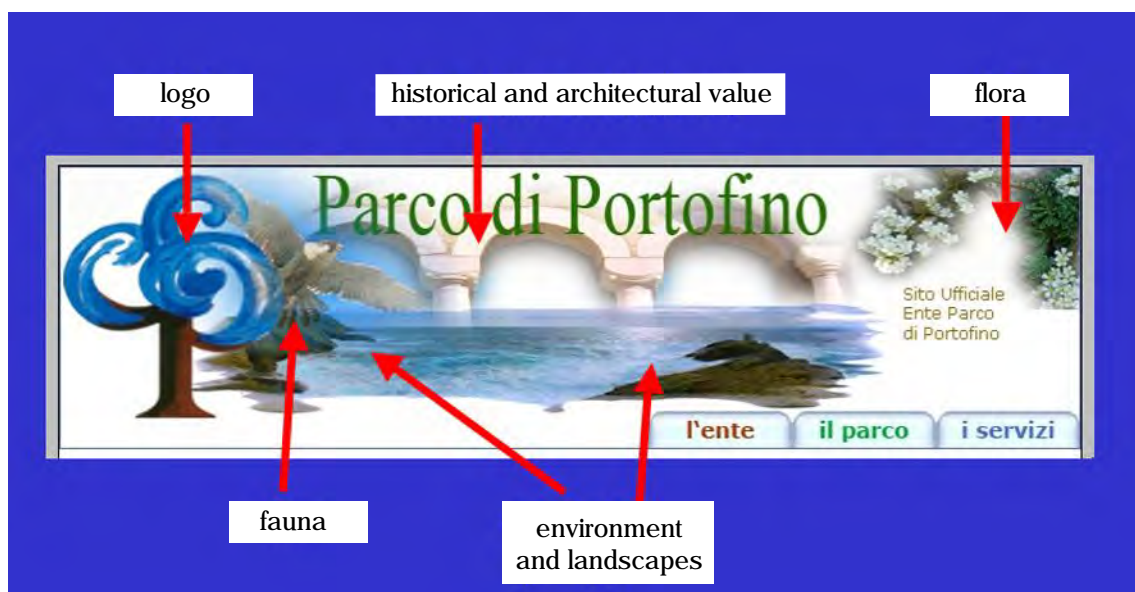
1. satisfy as far as possible residents' needs for information,
2. make the Park Authority known as the area's protector and promoter of its environmental value,
3. encourage participation and sharing of the park's activities with the user,
4. publicize the new web site.

As a result, the Park Authority decided to make appropriate tools available and, with the scarce resources available, a web site was created. Its structure is subdivided into four main pages—Home, Park Authority, Park, and Services—and calls attention to the Park Authority's mission, to the area itself, to its historical and cultural assets, and to the services that are offered.

The site is updated daily in order to respond dynamically to users' needs, whether they are internal (news updates, data, etc.) or external (option of downloading files, photos, forms, etc.). Maintenance is performed daily for content updates (news, data, services) while the structure of the site itself (graphics, resolution, administrative problems, etc.) is updated less frequently. These tasks can be undertaken directly by the Park Authority staff, since the Park Authority is equipped with an online content-management program that permits the site to be managed by those who are not IT specialists.

The concept

The concept chosen for the web site embraces, in the park's logo, Portofino Park's principal identifying elements: the fauna (the peregrine falcon); the flora (Saxifrage); the environment and landscapes (Mount Portofino, the ocean, Punta Chiappa), and its historical and architectural value (the triple-mullioned windows of the Abbey of San Fruttuoso—three to recall the three sections of the site: the Park Authority, the Park, and Services).



The Homepage

The Homepage is the space where we can communicate, on a daily basis, who we are and what our identity is. Because it is a dynamic site, the central area, where news is found, is updated daily, while the section to the right is static and contains links to the internal areas that are considered most important.

section is fundamental because it communicates our local situation to the online universe, providing information about guided excursions, the flora and fauna, local celebrations, etc.



The Park Authority

The Park Authority section includes an institutional database where the main regulatory documents pertinent to the park can be found (regional laws and statutes, the Plan, sector regulations, resolutions, decrees, etc.).

In order to maintain an active relationship with users, an area has been created in which the park, the President, the Director, and the Technical Office respond directly to citizens/users online. For the user-voyeur, a search engine on the Library page makes it possible to search available materials by title, author, publisher, year of publication, ISBN number, or simply by typing a key word into the "Topic" field. Materials may also be searched by medium (CDs, books, magazines, videos) or by Protected Area.

are available of research studies and theses that can be consulted, or more in-depth study of a topic can be undertaken thanks to the bibliographic guides that are available.



The Park

This section allows the visitor to take a look around and provides photographs, maps, trail guides, and information about the wildlife, the culture, and the traditions of the park.

number of maps may be found (park map, geological map, relief map) which can be sized and scrolled in order to allow the visitor to better know the park.

Tourists who would like to visit the Park find, in this section, all the information they need: a map that explains how to get to the park, numerous “Virtual Tours,” and an interactive page designed to assist in choosing a trail. This page provides information about the extensive network of trails (60 km in all), including estimated hiking time, description of inclinations/steepness, GPS coordinates, and images representative of the various itineraries.

In addition, there is a section dedicated to photographs of the most striking views of the area, which can be downloaded, and another where visitors can publish photos of their own visits.



Services

In the “Services” section are guided tours that can be chosen or scrolled through (with maps that describe the itineraries).

The section entitled “The Park Speaks” (Voci del Parco) includes one of the most interesting features: “Il Parco in Tavola” (The Park Dines Out): cuisine, in fact, is one of the park’s identifying features. Typical Ligurian recipes are accompanied by historical and cultural information from the area.



Certifications

The park's web site is certified as accessible and suitable for all users. In creating the site, the Park Authority followed the guidelines provided by Italian and European standards and, in particular, the circular promulgated by the Ministry of Public Administration (13 March 2001, No. 3) which regulates the organization, usability, and access of public administration web sites, and Italian Law 9 May 2004, No. 4 ("*Increasing access of disabled persons to information resources*"), which guarantees disabled access to public information services. The Recommendations formulated by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) are no less essential and provide a reliable basis for technological or applications development that constitutes the foundation for interoperable systems.

The W3C is an international consortium which, through the contributions of its members, guides the evolution of the Web and defines common protocols that foster evolution and assure interoperability. One of the W3C's objectives is the promotion of Universal Access. "Web access" refers to the ability of a web site to be used easily (both the user interface and the content) by different users in different contexts. Making a web site accessible, then, means providing access to those with various physical disabilities and to those who have limited hardware and software capabilities.

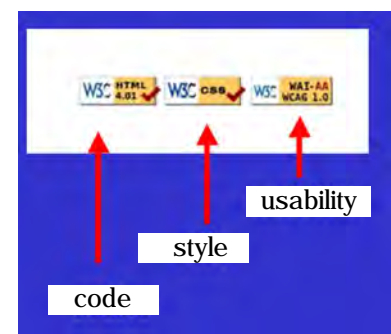
In this context, the Portofino Park Authority website is offered as a communication tool that can effectively interact with users and which responds to residents' and the Park Authority's new demands, with the objective of:

- providing exhaustive information regarding the Park Authority's activities and services, park procedures and areas of authority of the park offices, and promotion and protection of the park area.
- promoting the Park Authority's role in environmental protection, ecosustainable development, and cultural and tourist promotion.
- increasing access and ease-of-use of park information and services.
- providing information regarding the area's Park Authority (the parks' history, park regulations, environmental policies affecting development and use), its environmental, historical, and anthropological assets.

Thus, communication must be directed to citizens as a whole; to those who live in the area; to potential visitors; to those who work in environmental protection, tourism, and culture; and to a national and international public.

The site complies with the two fundamental criteria of accessibility and usability, which can generally be summed up as follows:

- Readability and clarity guaranteed through the use of visual and graphic elements.
- Complies with W3C accessibility requirements, where applicable.
- Creates usability by including text help and navigation bars on each page.
- Maximum accessibility with the use of standard browsers, particularly of the Home Page (minimum requirement Internet Explorer 5.0, Netscape 4.0) and limited use of frames and advanced graphics, including navigation languages that limit accessibility.
- Resolution optimized for 800x600 pixels, with higher-resolution images re-scaled automatically.
- Navigation and download speed even with analog connections.
- Editing and updates via online administration (the Park Authority can directly update the site without an outside site manager).
- Expandability, ongoing maintenance, and implementation of functions and content as the Park Authority's needs evolve.
- Makes it possible to insert structured databases, archives with dedicated search engines, forms, maps, forums and related management, images, film clips, and downloads.
- Interactivity with users.
- English translation of web pages
- Access statistics.



Portofino Park: A Web Project

The technical personnel who participated in the Métropole Nature project, coordinated by Professor Franca Balletti, instructor in the Department of Architecture at the University of Genoa, built an identity-map simulation of the Portofino Promontory.

Parish Maps, or community maps, were born in England in the 1980s as the result of the environmental organization, Common Ground, with the intention of enhancing awareness of local assets by actively involving local communities. Cultural maps are systems by which the relationships between individuals and physical spaces are narrated and are tools by which a community can tell its story to others, outlining the contours of its own cultural and environmental heritage.

This cultural map, which may be consulted online, was devised with the intention of making residents conscious of their historical and cultural heritage.

The SWOT analysis of www.parcoportofino.it in brief

Strengths:

- ideas and structure;
- low cost;
- dynamic and interactive;
- ease of use;
- planned and built to make use of new communication technologies.

Weaknesses:

- incomplete;
- involves Park Authority staff;
- administrative involvement.

Opportunities:

- makes wide-ranging diffusion of information possible;
- involvement of those outside the park;
- links;
- sponsorships.

Threats:

- poor management;
- bias and lack of homogeneity.

Parc de Collserola: Communication strategies to improve public enjoyment of the park.

The Bicycle Project as an example.

Isabel Raventós, Head of the Service of Public Use, Environmental Awareness and Education.

THE COMMUNICATION PLAN OF THE CONSORTIUM OF COLLSEROLA PARK

20 years of management.

The perception of Collserola among citizens has evolved in parallel with the communication and participation work carried out by the Consortium. The ideas have prospered in society for the defence of the environment and the protection of nature and wildlife, with the later appearance of approaches based on sustainable development.

Collserola Park currently represents a vital component in the materialization of these concepts at a metropolitan level, and many citizens are at the same time involved as volunteers in the conservation of the park, its chief capital for its defence.

The communication plan of the Consortium of Collserola Park seeks to spread awareness of the natural values of the Park, and at the same time aims to offer citizens the chance to enjoy it, while showing a responsible attitude in relation to the fragility of these natural surroundings.

Using the Public Use Plan and the Communication Plan, the different strategies have been drawn up to adapt the wide-ranging messages in function of the public, a key element in achieving good results in the communicative work.

The situation of the Sierra de Collserola lying as it does in the midst of the Barcelona conurbation makes it an atypical park where the involvement of citizens and their help is totally indispensable in making the park's use compatible with protection and conservation.

The natural, cultural and architectural heritage of Collserola offers us a huge range of resources to meet the diverse demands on the part of citizens, from leisure and simple contact with nature to education and research. Likewise, the conservation of the park's heritage will depend, in part, on its correct management, but also, evidently, on the proper use which is made of it.

For this reason, the communication strategies of the park must facilitate knowledge and awareness which will enable over time the enthusiastic collaboration between citizens and the authority which oversees the natural area.

The communication plan together with the plan for public use of Collserola must ensure that each and every visitor and citizen has enough information and awareness to guarantee the conservation of Collserola and, at the same time, promote its sustainable and responsible enjoyment.

The public facilities of Collserola Park are the central points in order to coordinate and invigorate the public use plan and the communication strategies (the Information Centre of the Park and headquarters of the technical services, Can Coll, the Environmental Education Centre and The Centre of Documentation and Educational Resources).

Communication strategy 2006 (Annual budget 2006: € 83,000)

At the present time, on the point of celebrating 20 years of management of the Special Plan for the Planning and Protection of the Sierra de Collserola, it can be seen that there has been a very significant evolution in the park's communication actions in terms of information, public awareness and environmental education.

An example of this is that the communication strategies were in the past more aimed at the park's visitors and schoolchildren from environmental education centres, but now the communication strategies go beyond the borders or limits of the park. The communication work is aimed at a different public and, as a result, different communication channels and different tools are used, at each moment, in order to achieve the strategic objectives pursued.

Ordinary Communication:

- Raising awareness of the natural values of Collserola Park
- Explaining the objectives of the special plan (Conservation-Public use- Enjoyment of the Park)
- Publicising the work done by "Collserola Natural park"
- Bicycle Project (*Projecte Bici*).

Special Communication:

- Effects of snowfalls
- Conflicts with wild boar,

Internal Communication

- Institutional relations. Corporate image.
- Government bodies: institutional visit by politicians to the park
- Municipal staff: Coordination in projects, advice for local councils on nature sites.
- Employees: Informative sessions on issues, information clips, etc

External Communication

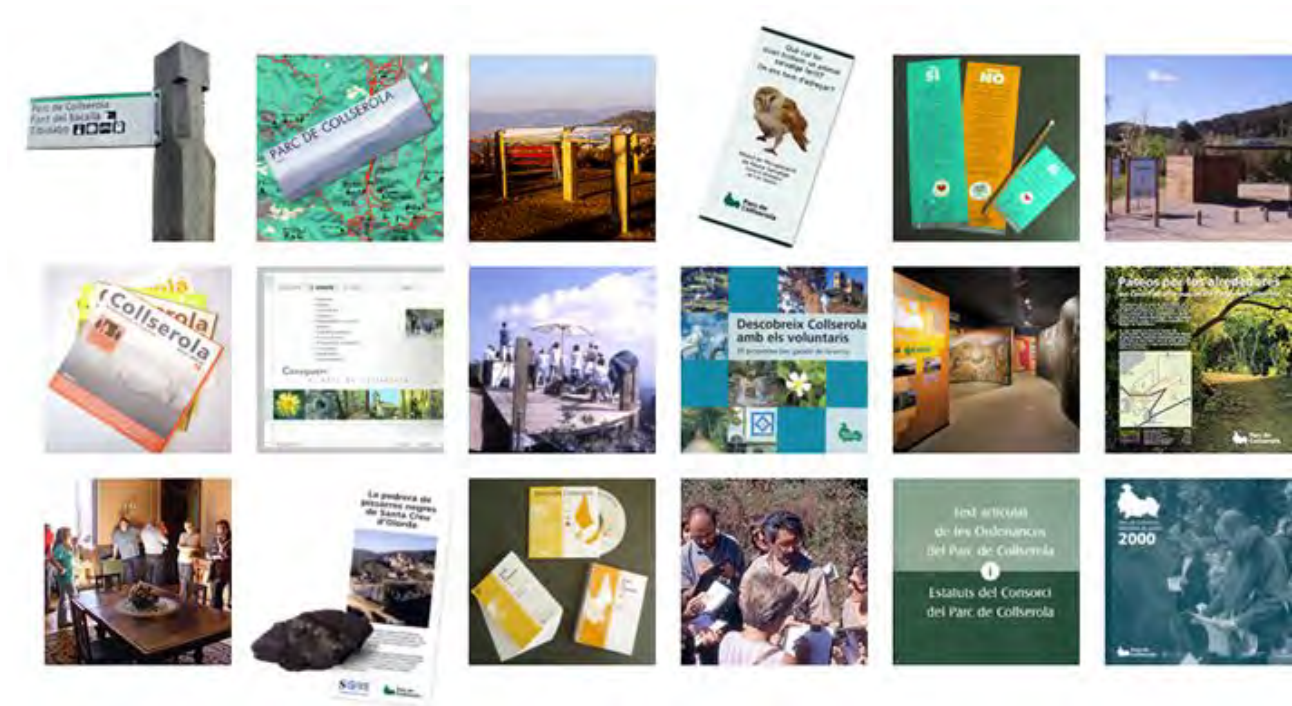
- Direct.
Addressed to: general public, schools, organisations, journalists, municipal staff
Communication channels: Internet, mass media (TV, radios, press, etc)
Tools: Publications, bulletin, pamphlets, articles in magazines, presentations, conferences, participation on the radio, quarterly agenda, exhibitions, awareness campaigns
- Indirect.
Signposting in picnic areas, hiking routes, etc.

Among the objectives of the communication plan is the promotion of knowledge of the natural values of Collserola and its conservation, by linking in this with the public enjoyment of the park. This educational and awareness raising work is done particularly in the mass media, TV, radios, newspapers, but also in the public points in the park itself such as the picnic areas.

The external communications carried out by the Collserola Park Consortium enables a coherent line in the messages launched from Collserola, allowing a closer communication with the visitor. Precisely because of the ease of access to the park by the general public, and the fact that they can be approached easily, means that all the information published must be coherent and adapted to the type of person visiting.

This work is carried out for both the general public who visit the park, and with local council employees, journalists, schoolchildren, etc. and involves aspects such as the designing awareness campaigns, press releases, educational TV programmes, radio interviews, etc. Given the diversity of people involved in publicising messages, it is vitally important to establish an institutional position.

It is worth noting the role of signposting in the park as a fundamental tool in the implementation of a communication plan. Thus, all the network of spaces such as picnic areas, park gates, information panels, train stations, are a fundamental tool for coming closer to the visitor, both because of their visibility and because they are easy to reach.



THE CYCLE PROJECT

Faced with the reality of an increase in the use of bicycles in Collserola, the park has set up the Cycle Project to foresee and plan this very popular activity in periurban nature sites. This project seeks to re-plan the use of bicycles in Collserola through a communication campaign and with public participation.

In this sense at the end of 2004 representatives from organisations linked to cycling were invited to work together with the Collserola Park Consortium in order to contribute towards the implementation of a series of habits for the sustainable use of bicycles in Collserola.

The project entailed a year's work in which the following was carried out: meetings to study the behaviour of cyclists, proposals for work done improving cycle routes, proposals for signposting, communication campaigns, and writing a guide of cycling routes in Collserola.

The organisations which took part in the project were: the Catalan Federation of Cycling, hiking clubs, cycling clubs, the Civic Platform for the Defence of Collserola, the Association of Bicycle Shops, and shops and restaurants in the park, etc.

Communication campaign

A campaign was designed with the aim of improving awareness among visitors, which had a duration of 4 months (of 1st March to 1st June) under the slogan “Good practices for cycling in Collserola Park. What you do counts: for your own safety, combining cycling with other users of the park, and for the impact on the natural environment.”

A key moment of the campaign was a public awareness day, which took place on 17th April 2005, when almost 5,000 cyclists were counted at the visitor attention points organized for the event. The aim was not to attract even more users, but instead involved a series of information points which the cyclists came upon on their habitual Sunday ride.

Pamphlet

Face 1

10 reasons for using a bicycle



Face 2



Posters:



In the news:



Milan South Agricultural Park: community communication

Bruna Brembilla, Environment and Natural Resources Director for the Province of Milan, Director of Milan South Agricultural Park

Communication is destined to have an increasingly important role in park management and to involve different contexts from the local to the European level. The examples provided by other parks, such as those in the United States, demonstrate how national choices have determined communication approaches that have become codified and accepted and which make parks better known.

As we all know, the National Park Service in the United States, by adopting a centralized system, coordinates the image of its national parks. The same is true in France. On the one hand, strategic choices of this nature reinforce the park's image through a communications system that increases visibility. On the other hand, they lead to a rigid system that keeps individual parks from adopting more creative and personalized communications approaches.

The Italian situation is very different—perhaps more creative and, in any case, located in a context that is the opposite of what we've just described. This means the creation of a highly diverse communications approach whose effect is often to “atomize” communications.

Surely, this approach coincides with the Italian creative personality, but perhaps it also implicates an undervaluation of the strategic importance of communications with regard to a protected area, and of their role in keeping the area's objectives and aims firmly in hand.

In preparing these remarks, as well as in my work over the last two years, I looked carefully at the issue of communication. In addition, I analyzed the local guidebook created by Milan's parks in keeping with the European “Metropole Nature” project. There, in the more general context of governance, an entire chapter is dedicated to communication. If one considers the communications materials prepared by and for parks as a whole, the resulting analysis may be both surprising and disorienting: a vast array of content, styles, and approaches is involved, from simple brochures or flyers to complex monographs, videos, multimedia productions, publicity campaigns in daily newspapers, etc. It is no easy task to identify a through-line with regard to this multitude of communications products. In the main, even if they are extremely well done or interesting, the materials fail to create an image and establish continuity over time. Many, in fact, are materials published for specific events, though they may be of interest beyond the specific occasion.

It is rare, in addition, to find a “common code” in these materials (in the colors of the layout, for example) that would make them recognizable as the product of a particular park service or authority and which refer to a coordinated image.

Added to this analysis, which is perhaps somewhat severe, is the difficulty of communications tied to the specific kind of park in question—that is, a periurban protected area.

A park of this type, in fact, is subject to greater information “noise” and benefits from general as well as “niche-based” information tools. The park is easy to contact because it operates within the area itself, but the outside perception of the vast majority of people remains limited or unclear.

This once again creates a problem of interception of interest by the recipient of the communication, and thus the need for periurban parks to adequately develop their ability to become authoritative sources of information on their own behalf.

Beginning with these considerations, a communications plan was developed over the course of the last year that involved the entire agency that I direct and, in particular, the park that I manage. One of our chief objectives was to communicate on behalf of the park area.

Based upon these premises, we began to work with precise strategies that involved the following criteria:

- **KNOWLEDGE.** Getting to know the area in order to love it and, therefore, communicate about it; enhancing its historical, cultural, rural, and natural heritage;
- **SENSE OF BELONGING.** On the part of residents of the various municipalities in the park area and of the entire Province;
- **USE BY THE PUBLIC.** The park is not solely “agricultural” but also offers recreational, cultural, and sports opportunities in addition to large green spaces and natural and agricultural areas

Once the strategic criteria were defined, the communications project was launched within the park. The project included the creation of “*park information centers*” located throughout the area. The goal of these information centers is to reach park users and to provide them with detailed information, and the centers involve local operators from municipal government, from organizations, from local farms, etc.

The concept of the park information centers is also tightly connected to one of the fundamental themes of the very law that established the park and which, in Art. 2, requires that: “cultural and recreational use of the environment by citizens” should be the mainstay of the park’s activities and that the park develop in a way that is in harmony with protection and conservation.

Their main objective is to bring the park closer to the citizens, rapidly creating park “posts” in places that are visible and often visited, but it is also to open up a new, widespread, and more direct channel of communication and participation.

The main figures in this channel of communication and participation are local government administrations, organizations, cooperatives, etc., who have direct contact with citizens’ needs and requests. In order to carry out activities that are in harmony with the park’s objectives and to provide a site where the park’s initiatives find “*fertile ground*” and respond to demands already sensitized to such questions, the park information centers are located in existing structures that are already in use and which are thus considered reliable.

They represent a kind of “*doorway*” into the park’s features (dairy farms, park information centers, natural reserves, etc.) that are little known by users and which represent the first step in reaching those users who still don’t know the park well or who are indifferent to the themes the park offers.

The general objective of the park information centers is to provide information about the area in which the park is located (sixty-one municipalities make up the park’s territory) and to communicate with the community in order to increase awareness of the park’s multiple facets, ranging from exquisitely environmental themes to questions of historical, cultural, or agricultural heritage.

The project requires the distribution of park information centers throughout the park (Fig. 1), depending upon the services they provide, and gives all available structures responsibility for participation in the project. Consequently, the functions and services offered were subdivided into “*park information centers lite*,” (where simple information is communicated) and “*full-strength park information centers*” (where, in addition to information, various kinds of initiatives, aimed at getting to know the area better or at providing services to park users, are offered).

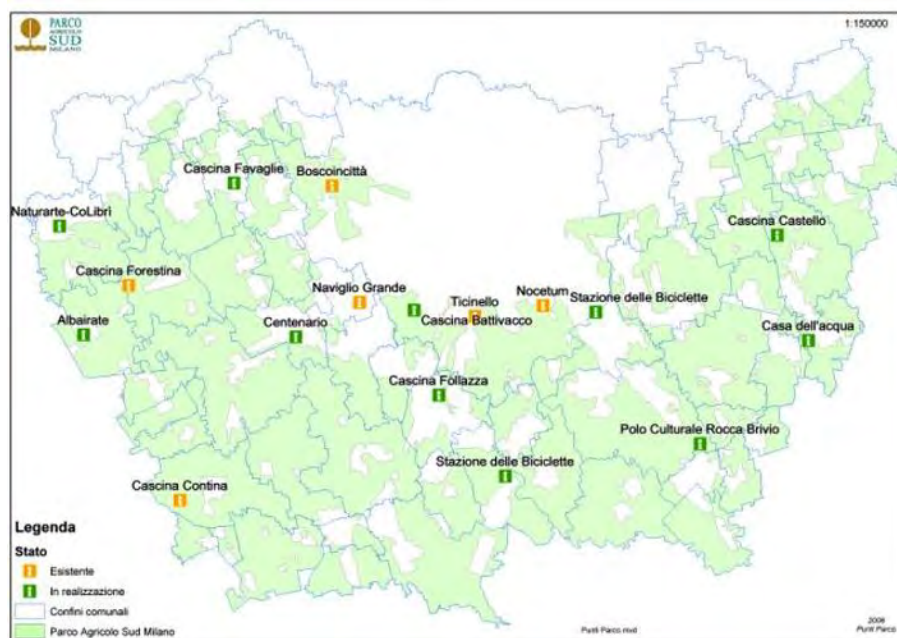


Fig. 1.

The sites are of various kinds, both public and private: municipal offices, associations, cooperatives, public libraries and private (but open to the public), bookstores and other sites for the dissemination of park-related cultural information. All of them make park publications available and are required to supply themselves periodically with newly produced park materials.

In addition to these sites, various kinds of social gathering places exist which, in partnership with the park, occasionally offer entertainment that is sponsored by the park and free to the public.

Other sites were chosen for their proximity to urban centers or public transportation in order to provide bicycle rental at a fixed price, and the intention is to create a network of rental centers that allow users to rent bicycles at one point and return them to another.

Another kind of information center was created by involving the agricultural and livestock producers who operate within the park. By working with these producers, within a year following the initiation of planning, we were able to involve forty producers whose job is to create, in partnership with the park, demonstrations of their customary agricultural and livestock activities as well as to provide their products for direct sale to the public. They are committed as well to distributing park materials and to providing space for signage and photographs of the park.

In the working phase of the project, which began during 2005, we sought to privilege those sites that had a direct relationship with the Milan metropolitan area, and especially those which, because of their potential, would be recognizable and dependable in the experimental phase.

Boscoincittà. Located within the “Boscoincittà” (Forest in the City) Urban Park, this site is already well known to Milan’s residents for the numerous events it hosts. For more than thirty years, Boscoincittà has provided a concrete example of technical relevance, and its 255 hectares of park and forest at Milan’s doorstep are all available for visitors’ use. The site has attracted outstanding interest (twenty collaborating organizations).

- Managed by the nonprofit organization, Italia Nostra, through the Center for Urban Forestry (CFU)
- guarantees that the park’s publicity and educational materials are distributed to the public;
 - guarantees that the park information center is well managed and accessible to the public;

Cascina Contina (Fig. 2) was born as a park information center in 1997 from the experience of a Volunteer Organization which, since 1981, has provided treatment and services for young drug addicts.



Fig. 2.

Formerly the site of the first park information center, it is located on a dairy farm in an agricultural area. The cooperative:

- develops initiatives aimed at increasing environmental education and awareness and organizes promotional, recreational, cultural, and educational activities, including within areas of the park reclaimed from environmental deterioration,
- promotes initiatives for publicizing park activities and products, including through informational-educational meetings with various social and community groups;
- manages the bicycle rental center at prices established with the park;

Cascina Forestina. An agritourism concern located very near the park's largest forest where ecofriendly agriculture is sustained; managed by the Nicolò Reverdini Farm:

- guarantees the public distribution of the park's publicity and educational materials;
- guarantees that the park information center is well managed and accessible to the public;
- organizes theme-based seminars on various aspects of agriculture, promoting interest in agricultural products and the management of GAS (free-trade and ecofriendly buying groups);
- promotion of the park's cultural and environmental themes, including art exhibits,

Naviglio Grande. Located along the Naviglio Grande Canal, the site is an antique mail station. It was recently restored in order to create an opportunity for informational and cultural exchange in the area south-west of Milan. The structure can house conferences, courses, exhibits, and small trade shows. The courtyard houses a restaurant and a play/educational area for children.

- guarantees that the park's publicity and educational materials are distributed to the public;
- guarantees that the park information center is well managed and accessible to the public on a regular weekly schedule;
- has organized events to promote the park's agricultural products.

Nocetum is located at Milan's doorstep, very near one of northern Italy's most prestigious abbeys: the Abbey of Chiaravalle. The organization's chief aims are to protect and preserve the area's historical, artistic, and natural assets, and to organize Christian educational and cultural events, particularly those focused on the theme of "Protecting God's Creations." Among its functions as a park information center, it:

- guarantees that the park's publicity and educational materials are distributed to the public;
- guarantees that the park information center is well managed and that exhibitors are accessible to the public;

Parco Ticinello (Fig. 3) Managed by an organization, the Ticinello Urban Agriculture Park is located on a still-active dairy farm about two kilometers from Milan's Duomo.

The entire area of the urban park is 800,000 square meters—in third place among Milan's urban parks. Its history is ancient and can be traced to the marvelous work of the Cistercians beginning in the late thirteenth century. The creation of an extensive irrigation network, completed some centuries later with the construction of the Naviglio Canals, and the resultant availability of abundant pasture lands favored the development of cattle and dairy farms and ultimately led to the building of the Cascina Campazzo, which contained the dairy's entire productive, social, and religious life within its



Fig. 3

characteristic closed-courtyard design. Beginning in the 1700s, with the advent of modern agricultural science, the cultivation of watermeadows developed, guaranteeing the existence of pasture for almost the entire year round. The Cascina Campazzo dairy and the entire complex that makes up this urban agricultural park provides a meaningful example of this kind of agriculture.

The park information center at Cascina Campazzo:

- guarantees that the park's publicity and educational materials are distributed to the public;
- guarantees that the park information center is well managed and that exhibitors are accessible to the public;
- guarantees an ongoing relationship with Milan's schools through educational outings intended to increase awareness of agriculture and related topics, awakening residents to the importance of the relationship between the city and the countryside.

The project I've described and the opening of six park information centers has made it possible not only to bring the park's communications closer to the community, but has also solidified the park's visibility. I feel it's important to mention one other aspect: the cost of the project itself. In 2006, financing for the park was € 72,500, which I consider an absolutely appropriate figure for reaching the goals we had set for ourselves.

Thanks to the success we experienced in the early phases of the project, the park has received a number of requests to open other park information centers. Because of their locations, because of their specific characteristics, and because of the cultural and public-use opportunities they offer, they represent interesting possibilities for proposals that might also be considered "pilot projects." As a result, the extension of the initial phase of the project is being considered, including the renewal of agreements for 2007 with existing park information centers and the acceptance of the proposals we received this year for opening another thirteen information centers. These additional centers, thanks to their specific characteristics, will serve to paint an even clearer picture of the numerous and varied opportunities that Milan South Agricultural Park represents.

Lille Metropolitan Natural Area: “Public participation, last stage of communication. Turning consumers into agents.”

Pierre Denhin, director general of the Lille Metropolitan Natural Area

The act of communication is an essential act. It is the driving force for parks in the context of sustainable development. We communicate to prevent the disappearance of Nature, to promote knowledge and respect, and to foster the desire to go further.

Beyond communication through the classical media (Press and audio-visual) and through marketing, today we are going to tell you about three experiments in communication based on three central features:

1- Visitors as agents of design: Example: MOSAÏC, the garden of cultures

In 33 hectares, this themed park includes a lake, woods and eight contemporary gardens. It offers a voyage of discovery of the diversity of the inhabitants of the Lille metropolitan area. From all over the world, from the Iberian Peninsula, central Europe, Mediterranean Europe, West Africa, South-East Asia and North Africa, thousands of travellers have established their families in the "Flat Country".

MOSAÏC, a federal concept

The concept of garden is based on the following idea: all descendants of immigrants have probably maintained a memory – an idealised vision of a garden attached to a smell, a perfume, a vegetable or a fruit used in traditional recipes. The idea was to create a garden where the inhabitants of the Metropolitan area could find themselves again.

A method: The search for community leaders capable of publicising and running the project. The representatives of the consulates were brought together. They were the source of information for contacting associations and residents from each community. Alongside this, we appealed to the university world and to French experts abroad. A steering committee was set up.

Since then, collaboration has been constant and has been developed in four stages:

- 1- The steering committee, the associations and representatives of the consulates found artists. They expressed their dream gardens, which served as raw materials for the creators.
- 2- These people were associated with the international competition phase. They met the 3 teams taken on for each garden and could exchange views over the creators' proposals. They became real "resources" for the creators, who had the chance to meet them again several times while the projects were being drawn up.



3- They were associated with the moments of decision-making within the different juries.

4- They were, and still are, in demand for drawing up programmes of promotional events.

Today, the residents run the garden. It is not unusual, for example, to see Laotians coming to MOSAÏC, to the Dragon Garden, which they contributed to creating, to hold weddings there!

The artists and cultural associations offer a workshop, a mini-concert or games each Sunday in order to share their culture with people out for a walk. 65% of the promotional events held there come through the associations.

This same approach is currently being followed for the British Isles Garden, which will see the light of day in 2007.

Only one garden escaped the rule. The First Garden, created this year, shows the results of archaeological digs – and we have not found any direct representatives of the Neolithic community!

Getting the communities to take part in designing the garden ensured that our profile was quickly raised. Word of mouth is a determining factor for communication and promotion.

2- The visitor as an agent in the creation of the park:

Example: The "articulture" operation: Land Art

From word of mouth.... to helping hands!

Alongside the opening of MOSAÏC, and as part of the festivities organised for Lille 2004, European capital of culture, we undertook a Land Art operation.

Carrying it out mobilised hundreds of residents for 8 months, and an exceptional budget of €600,000.

For eight months, the architect Jacques SIMON encouraged conferences, workshops, promotional events at businesses, administrations, architecture and agriculture colleges and schools, to discover the landscape.

Fifty hectares have provided the venue for the creations on sites at Wavrin and Houplin-Ancoisne, two villages in the park.
meant to arouse all visitors' senses.

The project was put into practice with local farmers and also with volunteers. This last point was a particular success. Pupils from all the regional agricultural and horticultural colleges, fine arts schools and the regional architecture college were joined by members of a dozen local associations, school pupils, youth club members, officers from the staff of the Lille Metropolitan Natural Area and, last but not least, five agricultural businesses!



Regularly on Sundays, volunteer artists and professionals met on the site, which, at the end, even hosted a concert bringing together all the musical and choral groups from the villages involved.



ARTICULTURE was a venture that went entirely smoothly. Despite all the skills of the farmers and the knowledge of the experts from the Northern Chamber of Agriculture, which was associated with the venture, Mother Nature played more than one trick: lack of water, cold, vandalism, etc.

Local representatives often had to take the creators at their word to face up to unforeseen events. But, in the end, enthusiasm was generated. The local associations, schools, students and artists managed to tame the site.

In total, more than fifty thousand people came to see the sites, in the heart of the Deûle Park, to the south of Lille, for which this was the opening.

All these are new sales representatives for our park!

In the raft of countless events for "Lille 2004, capital of culture", ARTICULTURE gave the opportunity to reconcile the city dweller and the countryside by taking a different look at nature and agriculture.

This operation, to which farmers made a great contribution, made it possible to open the first network of farms in the Lille metropolitan area, improving communication through flyers, plaques on the farms and markets for products of the land.

The national education system, finding the site welcoming, sent 1,800 primary school children who designed the LILLE 2004 logo! In total, more than 650 volunteers took part in constructing it.

The overall approach was recognised and supported by Europe, which financed a communication campaign and tools to the tune of €80,000 to publicise our actions among farmers, as well as producing a brochure and a promotional tool – our tricycle.

Communication as a promotional vector can generate finance.

Culture and nature - a blend rich in communication!

3- Visitors as agents of communication:

Visitors and users take on a management technique

Example: differentiated management

Communication to promote understanding of a form of management and make spectators and visitors into agents

Our structure maintains more than 1,000 ha of nature on very diverse sites which are very often right outside towns. Management is therefore adapted to different zones and different usages. This is not easy to explain to the elected representatives of towns and villages or to walkers why long grass is a source of life and biodiversity. We need strong communication and we have chosen to explain it in a fun way. On-site promotional activities must make it possible to appreciate this kind of ecological management.

For the 2006 season, we decided to choose a common thread running through and guiding all our communication operations: the butterfly, an animal that is easy to see and appreciated by everyone. Nothing original in that!



The butterfly must return to parks and gardens, but how? How can we make residents of our metropolis, into the agents of this return, agents of another way of maintaining their gardens, and agents understanding the management of natural environments? In fact, in order to get users to follow a form of management, it was necessary to find a means of achieving an emotional link. We will have a better understanding of something we love!

We have therefore organised all our promotional events and guided tours around the butterfly, as well as our communication documents, of course.

We associated ourselves with an "Operation Butterfly" initiated by the Paris Natural History Museum, through which the population is invited to take part in a butterfly census. Identification guides and an Internet address are offered to participants.

To help the volunteers, we have made available a sheet describing the butterflies of our region at our Relais Nature – our information points. And, above all, our promotional officers have organised site visits and offered events to help with observing butterflies. A promise of wonder! A pleasure.



We also needed to go to the open-air sites to explain. To do this, we used a new promotional tool – the tricycle. This tool allows us to move to the heart of the natural environments and to get walkers to take part in observation games, etc. In pictures, walkers could understand why and how to leave areas free of all interventions in their gardens: the butterflies are sure to come back!

Beyond this, we have created a show performed by a professional comedian: "a green part named desire", a show putting the issue of ecological management near towns into images through shifting wordplay. Dramatisation is a communication tool and participation vector. Laughing in order to understand and join in, still with pleasure!

Today, more than 500 people have played with us, have taken on the tools offered and are prepared to join in and do things "differently". More than a thousand people have seen the show, including a congress of eminent town planners... And in the parks, every week, our tricycle goes to meet users to get them to understand how important "weeds" are!

And tomorrow?

An association of friends of the Lille Metropolitan natural areas!

We have found community leaders, we are now "trendy", we have used "trendy" means, but we have not had a "trendy language".

Today, MOSAÏC is a trendy place, it is a place for meetings, lunches for business leaders' associations, decision-makers, etc.

We must mobilise private funds, as public money is becoming increasingly scarce. On this issue, the Lille Metropolitan Natural Area is opening a new site, with the launch of the Villeneuve d'Ascq open-air museum, where each house is financed by a business.

Communication and appropriation is a long job, where imagination and exchange must be the driving forces.

Our enterprise strategy is to lastingly enrich the biodiversity of the extended metropolitan area with and for its different residents.

At the end of 2005, between our information centres and guided tours and the different media used, we have had 266,714 personal contacts.

Even more than the Internet, we rely on word of mouth, helping hands...and pleasure.

Effective Communication for Periurban Nature Parks: The Montemarcello Magra Regional Nature Park

Patrizio Scarpellini, Montemarcello-Magra Park Director

The Montemarcello Magra Regional Nature Park is located in the extreme south of the Province of La Spezia, near Liguria's border with Tuscany. With 4,320 hectares, it extends across the borders of eighteen municipalities and is characterized by a variety and uniqueness that is both environmental and "logistical" given that, in addition to its natural treasures, it comprises a number of inhabited areas with historical centers (as many as eighteen, including Tellaro, Ameglia, and Montemarcello) and industrial areas. The area is divided into two parts: the river park and the Caprione Promontory. The river park includes the Ligurian stretch of the Magra River and the low and middle courses of its main tributary, the Vara River. The river area around the Magra, though it bears signs of intense human use, includes wetlands that are unique in Liguria and which provide stopover and nesting areas of major significance for migratory birds. A system of walking and bicycle paths makes it possible for visitors to use the river's banks. The Vara, which flows both across the narrow ravines of the Val di Vara Valley, rich in forest cover, and across brief tracts of flatland, remains healthy, fostering the presence of an important fish and amphibian fauna. Monte Caprione, which separates the southeastern portion of the Gulf of La Spezia from the Magra River flood plain, is home, on the summit of Monte Murlo, to the Montemarcello Botanical Garden and boasts a rich biodiversity.

Communication for Montemarcello-Magra Park

The Park Authority considers communication a fundamental tool for managing the park area properly and for advancing environmental conservation and preservation projects. With that as a premise, it becomes essential to understand first TO WHOM YOU ARE COMMUNICATING, WHAT, and WHY in order to employ tools, time frames, and methodologies that are specific and effective on a case-by-case basis.



Those at whom the park's communications are aimed include: the citizens who reside in the municipalities in the park area, tourists and potential visitors, institutions and administrative bodies (the region, municipalities, mountain communities, schools, universities, Tourist Information Offices, trade groups, etc.), businesses, project beneficiaries and partners, and the media. At the same time, the park's communications range from: information about events, meetings, and initiatives; difficulties and critical issues within the park; project launches and

results, opinions regarding questions of interest to the park community, general topics related to the environment and biodiversity.

Why Communicate

Park communication thus assumes major importance because its goal is no longer solely to provide information about and to promote the park, but also to educate, to increase awareness, and potentially to provide warnings in the case of problems.

In particular, the park believes strongly in environmental education because it represents an indispensable tool for enhancing the processes of cultural maturation by means of which human beings begin to experience themselves as an integral aspect of nature. Teaching about sustainable development takes on a strategic significance for a park in promoting a conscientious and proactive approach toward the park itself. In addition, communication becomes a priceless tool for locating funding partners.

The Park's Communication Methods

Our park uses a variety of communication tools, beginning with the channels created by the national park system, such as the FederParchi site (www.parks.it). In addition to pages specific to each park, FederParchi also provides extremely useful communication tools such as mailing lists; its magazine, *Parchi* (Parks); the Park Emporium, etc. At a secondary level, because we are a regional park, we depend upon the support of the Liguria Region in our communications. The Region's Parks Office is responsible for promoting and, with regard to specific projects, financing events, brochures, or initiatives of various kinds. Finally, another significant contribution in terms of publicizing and promoting the park comes from the Tourist Information Offices (IAT) which distribute park information and materials, making it easier for tourists to get to know the park area. With regard to communication methods specific to the park itself, we make use of: press releases which are sent to the media whenever something particularly important takes place or when we want to inform the public about an event; printed materials and publicity in targeted magazines; brochures and flyers dedicated to the park and its various projects; postings on bulletin boards and notice boards to advertise job openings, competitions, and related results; posters and educational-publicity displays; participation at trade shows/conventions/events with stands where park materials and technical information are available; radio and television interviews; targeted mailing lists; organization of events, meetings, press conferences, conventions, and roundtable discussions.

Looking to the future, our Park Authority intends to initiate the production and sale of products bearing the park's trademark in order to further promote the park's unique features and identity.



New Communication Technologies and Their Effective Use: The Park's Web Site

Our website, www.parcomagra.it, which was opened in 2001 and is constantly being improved and updated, plays a particularly important role in our communications. Recently, for example, we added two sections dedicated, respectively, to the park's Center for the Study of Protected Areas and River Environments, established at the end of 2005 (the "Study Center"), and to the environmental Management System inasmuch as we are the promoters of an important project aimed at environmental certification of the Val di Magra-Vara Valley district. I'll return to this topic later. A webcam open in the park is also available on the site, as is information regarding a special project called "e-census" whose goal is to catalogue new cultural and environmental features. Parcomagra.it is connected to a second site that is exclusively dedicated to the RetaNatura 2000 Project (<http://retenatura2000.parcomagra.it/>), created in 2006 in collaboration with the Liguria Region and the University of Genoa.

The advantages of internet communication mean that we can reach a greater number of users immediately and at low-cost. Given the enormous amount of information available on the web, however, the effectiveness of this method depends upon punctual updating and a winning graphical presentation which, via simple, clear pathways, provides all the information a user may seek.

Effective Communication

In order to be effective, Montemarcello-Magra Park communications must not only be "correct," which is obvious, but also "direct" in order to arrive at their intended audience without distortions or changes. They must be "punctual" in providing continuous updates on the park's activities and on any problems in the park area. And they must be "clear" to ensure that the message is received. Language that is overly technical may serve to make projects incomprehensible even though they concern residents directly and involve information that residents should receive.

Communication, in addition, must be "specific and diversified according to the recipient for whom the message is intended." In the case of tourists, for example, communication that promotes the park and makes a visit tempting provides a more winning formula. Conversely, when presenting a report to technical personnel, communication doesn't require a "framework" but can simply and completely report all necessary data.

Communication with Residents

Eighteen municipalities, with a population of around 104,803 or 40% of the residents of the Province of La Spezia, lie within the area of the Montemarcello-Magra Park. Such a large number of individuals ensures that they must necessarily be involved in the activities and the projects of the Park Authority. Consequently, the park's COMMUNICATION function with respect to residents is not simply to INFORM but also to involve others and to foster participation, to provide public education in order to encourage appropriate behavior (environmental education, e.g.) and make residents sensitive to environmental problems, and as needed, to censure and punish abuses and inappropriate behavior (pollution, illegal building, poaching, mismanagement, etc.). That said, the residents who live in and near a protected area are perhaps the most difficult target audience because they are directly "touched" by the projects that the park would like to carry forward and, as a result, need additional information. The difficulty, then, lies in explaining complex projects and, especially, in making potential prohibitions or regulations (e.g., for use of the park area) acceptable. In addition, because of the diversity of users and their interests/priorities, it isn't always possible to respond to every demand and to make every group happy. The objectives of environmentalists and hunters, for example, or farmers and industrial producers, are obviously different. As a result, care needs to be exercised in presenting a regulation/action/project in order to ensure that the park is perceived as an opportunity rather than as a constraint or an obstacle. Communication with the populace is also important in order to halt alarmism and to explain appropriate responses or behavior when problems arise—such as last year, for example, during an infestation of the park's oaks by defoliating moths. Having understood the difficulty of the situation and residents' fears, the park organized a series of meetings between experts and the public that were aimed at explaining what was taking place and exploring possible solutions under the circumstances. The same thing occurred regarding the damage that was being created by wild boars in the area and, more recently, following a die-off of fish in the river that naturally alarmed residents. In these cases as well, information was provided regarding what was occurring and what responses were appropriate. The park, one might say, functions somewhat as a mediator between human beings and the environment, bringing the two together in a way that is sustainable—a task made possible only by communication.

The Impact of Print Media

The **print media** play a decisive role in communication, particularly with regard to the residents of the park area and its surrounds. The local press represents a direct line to the area, and the park unfailingly uses this channel to send open letters and press releases that contain information specific to particular topics or events. The local newspapers are also a way to exchange opinions (a kind of sparring match) among all the parties who live and work in the area.

The national press, through editorials, publicity, or articles in specialized journals, is used only to publicize events and projects that are of wide interest or, more generally, to promote the park itself. The effects of communication are, as we've already said, first of all to involve all the residents, to educate and to sensitize, and to explain in order to avoid misunderstandings and inappropriate reactions. Secondly, its effects are to promote the park area and its projects, increase tourism, increase the value of interest centers, and foster comparisons with other parks/areas.

Communication: Strength in Unity

In order to obtain concrete results, communication involves an economic and practical effort on the part of the Park Authority. The system required to exponentially increase a communication's success, reducing cost in the process, is to create collaborations with other entities, whether they are other parks, local institutions and businesses, or regional administrations. The strength of the effort is thus multiplied by the number of partners involved and, with them, the results obtained, visibility and, naturally, communication. These collaborations make it possible to create unique, large-scale projects.

The Environmental Certification Project as an Example of Effective Communication

An example of effective, collaboration-based communication is the project dedicated to UNI EN ISO 14001 certification and Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) registration. This project, of which our park is the leader, began in 2001 and involves all the local and public bodies of the Val di Vara-Val di Magra district. The project involves twenty-five concerns (twenty-two municipalities, one Park, and two Mountain Communities) which, as a result of the activities involved in certification, had to increase communication efforts among themselves, toward the residents of the affected areas, and toward the media. This "communication" makes it possible to publicize positive examples: the "good practices" of the most deserving park authorities which, in managing their respective territories, become a sort of "guide" for others.

An area-wide project such as this has, thus, amplified communication of the message: in this case, correct planning for the management of environmental resources and the value of environmental certification.

Environmental Policy as a Communications Tool

In order to promote the Environmental Certification project—which, as the first and only example of its kind in Europe (in terms of the agencies involved), as well as the mentality and the ideology that led us to embark on this journey—the park employed its environmental policy as a tool, distributing copies of the policy to anyone who came into contact with the Park Authority (employees, partners, local concerns and institutions, suppliers, residents, park users, the media, etc.). In particular, this document delineates the Park Authority's environmental commitment over the coming years—objectives which, once they are achieved, will then be updated in the context of continuous improvement. For us, then, the environmental policy represents a major way to communicate not so much the certification project per se but the way of thinking that derives from it. Environmental certification, which the park obtained last July in the form of ISO 14001:2004 and which is a first step toward EMAS registration, intrinsically "communicates" our Park Authority's commitment to environmental management, our priorities, and our improvement objectives.

The Study Center: Communication Takes Concrete Form via Receipt of Financial Support

The Park Authority established the Center for the Study of Protected Areas and River Environments in the closing months of 2005 with the goal of promoting the connection between existing protected river areas and watershed areas, and of creating a "system" that would work together, providing the opportunity to exchange examples of "good practices," to discuss critical issues tied to the management of river areas, and to reach common goals and solutions. At first, the partners associated with the Study Center were those that had been involved in a previous project to enhance awareness of wetlands areas, created within the Rete 2000 project and in which the Study Center may well consider itself instrumental. Following official presentation at the Euroflora Fair, the Study Center's first real event was a national seminar held last May 22 entitled "Integrated

Management of Protected River and Watershed Areas: Operational and Regulatory Aspects.” The seminar saw participation by numerous experts in the field, including both presenters and the large number of attendees. This showcase, in addition to being a significant opportunity for communication, made it possible to begin to nourish the growth of the network that lies at the heart of the Study Center’s objectives. Following this event, which was publicized both on the web and via other media and which was very well received, a large number of businesses, organizations, and individuals—both those who participated in the seminar and those who were unable to attend—requested additional information about the Study Center and about ways to participate actively. Resultantly, in addition to the local concerns already involved, the Study Center has begun to receive support from prestigious Italian universities such as those in Genoa and Pisa, from environmental groups such as Legambiente (Italy’s largest environmental organization), and from social-cultural groups such as “Sentinelle dei Fiumi” (Guardians of the Rivers), an additional example of networking for the management and protection of the river environment. The administration of the Liguria Region and FederParchi, in addition, have also expressed interest in participating actively with the Study Center. Considering that association fees contribute significantly to the development of the Study Center and to the possibility of organizing future events, pilot projects, and initiatives, one can certainly say that the Study Center is a positive example that bolsters the importance of communication and of opportunities to share opinions and experience.