CEETO

Sustainable Tourism Action Plan: Po Delta Regional Park

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1. Description of the Park

The Regional Park of the Po Delta of the Emilia Romagna region was set up in 1988 through a special Regional Law (Regional Law 27/88) and is part of the system of the protected areas of Emilia Romagna. The park is divided into six “stations” around the southern area of the Po Delta, whose northern part belongs to the Veneto Region, along the coast of Ferrara and Ravenna and near Argenta. In 1999 the northern part of the territory was included in the Unesco site as World Heritage “Ferrara, city of the Renaissance and its Po Delta”.

Until 2011 the park was managed by a Consortium that was made up of the two provinces of Ferrara and Ravenna and of the nine municipalities (Comacchio, Argenta, Ostellato, Goro, Mesola, Codigoro, Ravenna, Alfonsine, Cervia) whose borders are within the park. Since January 2012, according to regional law no. 24 of December 23, 2011, the Park has been managed by the Managing body for Parks and Biodiversity – Po Delta”. The park has a consolidated and successful experience in the management of international projects, in particular in environmental protection and in the preservation of biodiversity. The abilities of the park and the scientific knowledge of the environment grew in the past few years, thanks to the contribution of universities and many scholars. Over the years the park has managed to ensure a higher sustainability of the different human activities, but it is also trying to reduce the conflicts between social and economic players. The park also carries out activities aimed at protecting biodiversity, carrying out many scientific studies and surveys aimed at increasing naturalistic knowledge, it also carries out activities aimed at teaching the value of biodiversity to new generations.

The “stations” of the park are characterized and differentiated by particular environmental and landscape features: “homogenous territorial areas”, according to the definition of the founding law. All areas are characterized by the presence of water, with different levels of salinity, water created wonderful natural evironments and led to the development of all human activities linked to fishing, agriculture, tradition, culture and art throughout the centuries.

The extraordinary presence of birds, with more than 300 species, among which nesting birds, wintering birds or migratory birds, together with some mammals, such as the “dune deer” of the Mesola wood, characterizes a precious fauna, and all the “green” elements of the park, such as lowland woods or hygrophilous woods, pine forests and dunes are the flora of the Po delta.

The park includes extraordinary environmental, artistic and naturalistic evidence of what is around the Po Delta area, both of its history and of its current lively activity.

1.1. Flora

The Delta has a high variety of vegetal species of great interest, although there is a heavy human intervention in the area. On the coast line Italian cocklebur and searocket can be found, while going to the inland the landscape is covered with wheat grass and marram grass; another typical plant of the dunes is sea holly.

In the Comacchio and Bertuzzi Marshes, where flamingos stop in spring and autumn, there is very peculiar vegetation due to the salinity level of these sites. The typical plant that is used to grow in this type of environment is the salicornia; among other plants able to grow that can be listed are the common ditch reed borders, tufts of sea rush and limonium which stands out with its showy flowers. The Great Mesola Woods, located in the northern part of the park, is what remain of natural woods in the Po Plain and includes some very large sized trees. The most common species found in the woods is the holm-oak, while narrow

leaved ash, white poplar and common elm grow in the shallow parts between the dunes. English oak and European hornbeam grow in the western wooded area.

Figura 1: some species of flora in the Po Delta Regional Park

The Oasi di Punte Alberete near Ravenna is a perfect example of flooded forest, this part is the last in this region, and its woodland area is of great natural interest. White water-lily, frogbit and floating plants grow near the ponds and ditches of sweet water, while tree species typical of humid areas grow on the crests of the dunes – so called "staggi". In the Argenta Valleys there is also the Traversante, an example of woodlands which are regularly submerged.

The coastal landscape is characterised of pinewoods as the ones in Ravenna, San Vitale, Classe and Cervia, which are composed mainly of umbrella pine, white poplar, holm-oak, and European hornbeam. Very common flowers which can be found easily are orchids; along the coastline, the pinewoods are made up of maritime pine. In the north area there is the Volano Pinewood, a Nature Reserve on the mouth of the homonymous branch of the Po River. The humid areas (Argenta valleys, Punte Alberete, and Mandriole Valley) where there is sweet water represent very important habitat where to preserve the typical vegetation of this type of land.

1.2. Fauna

Figura 2:flamingos

In the last decades protected species protected species have returned here to nest such as the slender- billed gull, sandwich tern and the lesser crested tern, spoonbill, Mediterranean gull. Moreover also typical land predators such as badgers, foxes, etc. have also returned. Po Delta is better known for the high variety of birds. More than 250 species of birds can be sighted here. In the quieter beaches oystercatcher, little tern and snowy plover can be identified; common redshanks, seagulls, terns, black-winged stilts and pied avocets can be admired in lagoons and embanked areas. In reed thickets marsh harrier, common tern, red heron, nightingale, great bittern and other species found their ideal home.

Figura 3: Mesola Deer

Bosco della Mesola is mainly characterised of mammals, such as fallow deer (a non-native species) and deer. The other well-known animals typical of the Po Delta are eels, which live in inland water areas and when they get the sexual maturity go to the Sargassi Sea.

2. Description of pilot area

2.1. Boscone della Mesola

Figura 2:Boscone della Mesola

One part of the wood is a Full Nature Reserve, an area fully protected and left to its natural evolution, while the rest of the area is a Nature Reserve. The terrain is of alluvial origin and is irregular, a symptom of ancient dunes which in parts form pools of water with marsh vegetation. At one time, the wood, being surrounded by marshes, was frequented by numerous bird species typical of the wetlands; the drastic reduction in fauna, caused by the drainage works, has been halted by the creation of a wetland area inside the wood, called Elciola, generally closed to the public, where duck species and herons find sanctuary. Of great beauty is the Taglio della Falce, on the northern edge of the Gran Bosco, from which it is possible to admire the mouth of the Po di Volano and the Sacca di Goro. The main characteristic of the Boscone della Mesola is the presence of "Mesola deer", the last nucleus of the ancient deer of the Po Valley, a unique native species and is the subject of important scientific studies as well as an important museum exhibition on the second floor of the Castle of Mesola.

2.2. Salina di Cervia

The Cervia Salt Pan is a unique environment, from the naturalistic point of view and for the landscape, it offers, suggestive and particularly magical at sunset. During the opening season, the Visitor Centre offers guided tours and excursions on foot and by electric boat. In fact, it is not possible to enter the Salina independently, but only accompanied.

An environment such as the Salina di Cervia has no equal extension in the upper Adriatic, if you consider the depth of the water, which does not exceed a few centimeters, and the high concentration of salt, which selects and specializes in a flora and fauna suitable to survive in extreme conditions. Almost 100 species of birds, even in such an extreme environment, find the best conditions for feeding, nesting and stopping. The most frequent are the waders, small waders such as the Avocet and the Knight of Italy, but you can also see herons, such as the Egret, the Great White Heron and the Grey Heron, and anatids including the Mallard, the Shoveler and Shelduck. The tanks are also populated by the many larids, i.e. the seagull species.

3. A five-years-long development strategy for sustainable tourism in the Delta Po Regional Park

The Po Delta Regional Park up to now has not defined a specific strategy for the sustainable development of tourism, although in recent years several projects have been carried out on this subject. Seizing the opportunity offered by the CEETO project, since a reflection on the objectives that the Park intends to pursue as a priority in relation to the development of tourism in the area has been launched. Though these objectives cannot be defined as a real strategy, they guide the activities within the CEETO project and are pursued by the Po Delta Regional Park in the development of its functions.

In the view of the sustainable development of tourism, the Regional Park of the Po Delta shall:

- Guarantee a sustainable development of tourism in the Park by safeguarding environmental and cultural qualities of the Po Delta (which are also elements that attract tourists), while maintaining its ecological characteristics and aesthetic qualities.
- Reduce the overall environmental pressure generated by tourism on the territory, by supporting local authorities in territorial planning and in particular by promoting a more effective environmental management of mobility, waste, water and energy consumption.
- Contribute to transforming the Po Delta into a destination of excellence in terms of sustainable tourism and ecotourism, especially by encouraging the development of forms of "slow" fruition and mobility (such as trekking, cycling, canoeing) that allow an immersive experience in the area of the Park and a connection between the various locations and natural emergencies encompassed.
- Stimulate and support local tourism operators so that they understand and follow the principles of sustainable tourism, both by qualifying facilities and services from the standpoint of eco-efficiency, and by characterizing their offer on the naturalistic and cultural values of the Po Delta.
- Promote the deseasonalisation of tourism and a more balanced distribution of tourist flows on all areas of the Park, so that sustainable tourism can become a significant economic sector for the local community.
- Encourage the visit to the Po Delta by visitors eager to live ecotourism experiences offered by the territory
- Strengthen the link between the Park's environmental education functions and activities and sustainable tourism development. Environmental awareness and education to tourists can be a major vehicle to convey the principles and values of sustainable development and the importance of conservation of Protected Areas to tourists. In fact, by promoting the qualification of the experience of visiting the natural areas of the Po Delta in terms of knowledge of ecological values, tourists will be more sensitized and involved in the objectives of conservation of these values, thus becoming "important allies" for the proper management of protected areas.
- Inform and engage visitors on the behaviour and the code of conduct to be observed in the Park (by detailing the differences between the various areas) in order to minimise the impact on the ecosystems and the biodiversity existing in the Po Delta.
- Track and understand how the effects of climate change can affect the Po Delta also in terms of tourist fruition, thus favouring a process of adaptation and resilience of local communities and tourism operators.

4. Towards the Action Plan

4.1. The methodology

The methodology applied for the development of the CEETO pilot action in the Po Delta Park has been chosen among those indicated by the project in the Handbook on successful/innovative practices in Europe (DT1.2.3).

The "Analysis of the strategic visitors' flows " was chosen according to the St. Gallen method, as this technique responds to the need to know the characteristics of the existing tourist flows in the area of the Cervia Salt Pan and the Mesola Woods, in order to better manage them, reducing their impact, encouraging better distribution throughout the Park (even to those areas that are almost unknown) and throughout the year.

The analysis of the strategic visitors' allows to collect a large amount of information involving the tourist stakeholders of the territory that, thanks to their knowledge of the visiting behavior of tourists, can draw on maps the movements and activities that they perform within an area. By drawing tourist flows on the maps, stakeholders also bring out information both of a qualitative nature (such as the characteristics of visitors, their travel motivations) and of a quantitative nature (such as maturity or seasonality). The experience of stakeholders and the mutual comparison that the application of the method allows, also allows to highlight evaluations on services related to flows as the critical points and possible points of improvement.

On the maps, available on different scales to allow to represent both "macro" flows (which concern and cross a very wide territory) and "micro" flows (often connected to emergencies or specific activities), stakeholders had the opportunity to describe, for each flow, the resources and territorial services required by guests, actors and operators involved in the provision of services, but also the challenges related to that particular flow and possible interventions to improve the visit experience.

On the basis of the information obtained from the maps in which the main tourist flows have been drawn, it is therefore possible to obtain information and stimuli that can allow to build the CEETO Action Plan to improve the management of tourist flows.

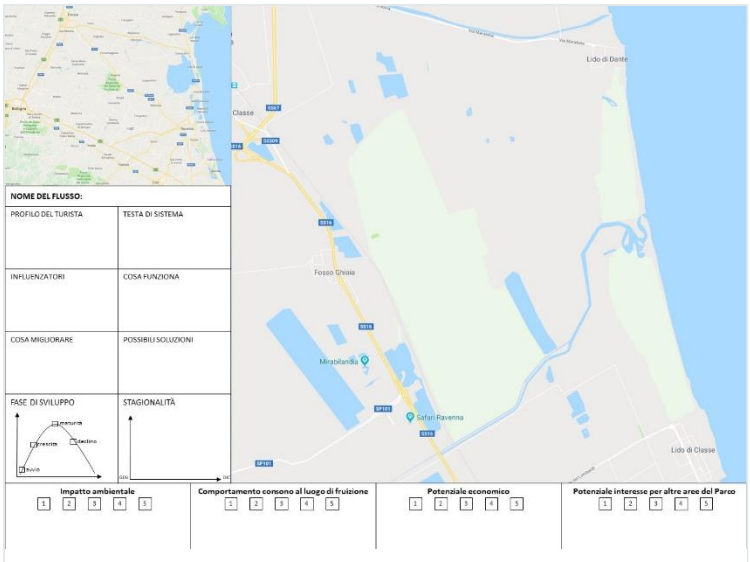


Figura 3:example of map used during workshops

4.2. The participative process

The implementation of the analysis of the strategic visitors' flows within the framework of the pilot action of CEETO in the Po Delta Regional Park, has been designed to define the CEETO Action Plan shared with the local tourist stakholders to understand and improve the management of tourist flows in the pilot areas, areas gravitating around the Woods of Mesola (Boscone della Mesola in the Northern area of the Park) and the Cervia Saltpans (Saline di Cervia in the Southern area of the Park).

To achieve this objective, 8 participatory meetings were organised (4 in Mesola and 4 in Cervia) attended by a total of 37 different stakeholders joined by about ten private stakeholders interested in the topic.

The stakeholders who participated in the meetings in Mesola were:

- Municipality of Mesola,
- Municipality of Comacchio,
- Municipality of Codigoro,
- Atlantide soc. coop.sociale p.a.,
- Associazione culturale studiod'archeologia didattica museologia,
- COPEGO,
- FederParchi,
- Istituto Comprensivo Codigoro,
- Pro Loco Codigoro,
- AQUA SRL,
- Tourist Information Office Porto Tolle,
- Tourist Service Municipality Goro,
- B&B Penelope Mesola,
- Birding Italy,
- C.A.D.F. S.p.A,
- Consorzio Visit Ferrara,
- DELTA 2000,
- Fattorie del Delta,
- Pro Loco di Mesola,
- Il Bosco Officinale,
- Locanda degli Este,
- Spiaggia Romea srl,
- Oasi Canneviè,
- Navi Mondo,
- Ostello bar Gorino,

The stakeholders who participated in the meetings in Cervia were:

- Municipality of Cervia,
- Municipality of Ravenna,
- Federparchi,
- Argenta Tourist Information Office,
- Ascom Confesercenti Cervia,
- CNA Cervia,
- Confartigianato,
- Ecomuseo delle Erbe Palustri

- Associazione Festa,
- Associazione WWF Ravenna,
- Assohotel Cervia,
- Hotel Eros Residence,
- Simpatia srl,
- Atlantide soc. coop.sociale p.a..

Workshop on the spot
Castello di Mesola - lunedì 8 ottobre
Inizio ore 14.30, termine previsto 17.30

Obiettivo dell'azione pilota del progetto CEETO nel Parco del Delta del Po è individuare le più efficaci soluzioni, concertate con gli stakeholders locali, per favorire la redistribuzione dei flussi turistici sulle aree limitrofe del Parco rispettandone capacità di carico e specifiche esigenze di conservazione.

Saluti istituzionali dell'Amministrazione Comunale
Monica Palazzini *Regione Emilia-Romagna - Servizio aree protette, foreste e sviluppo della montagna* **Il progetto Interreg CEETO: Central Europe Eco-Tourism: tools for nature protection** Illustrazione degli obiettivi complessivi del progetto, partenariato e stato dell'arte
Maria Pia Pagliarusco *Direttrice Ente per la Gestione dei Parchi e la Biodiversità - Delta del Po* **CEETO: il progetto pilota nel Delta del Po** Obiettivi specifici del progetto pilota nel Delta del Po - illustrazione risultati questionari e dati su afflussi storici ad aree turistiche Parco
Paolo Grigolli *Direttore di Trentino School of Tourism and Cultural Management* **L'analisi dei flussi turistici strategici: metodo e risultati** Illustrazione, anche attraverso esempi di successo, dei risultati ottenibili con il Metodo "San Gallo" ed illustrazione di come esso si applica
Filippo Lenzerini *Punto 3 srl* **L'analisi dei flussi strategici dell'area "Boscone della Mesola"** Illustrazione operativa dei prossimi passi e di come verrà sviluppato il lavoro coinvolgendo gli operatori del territorio
Coinvolgimento dei partecipanti al workshop in un primo momento partecipativo *Luca Lietti* *Agenda 21 Consulting* **Mappatura Partecipata del Territorio - definizione condivisa dei valori, delle fragilità e delle potenzialità del Parco**

Figura 6: Programme of the Workshop on the spot held on the 8th October 2018 at Mesola Castle (FE)

The first workshops (workshop on the spots) held in **Mesola** on the **8th October 2018** and repeated on the **9th October 2018** in **Cervia**, started by a conference to present the project and deepen the topic of sustainable tourism in Nature Parks.
During this first workshop, participants were asked to designate which areas of the Park are characterized by:

- Considerable tourist flows and that can cause environmental pressures to some ecosystems protected by the Po Delta Park, especially in peak stages of the tourist season. In these areas, named "**under pressure**", a correct management of the flows shall be achieved through a strategy of seasonal adjustment and delocalization.
- Poor (or absent) tourist flows in the light of a significant ecotourism value and the possibility to benefit from it. These areas, called "**hidden**" areas, can be the subject of a growth strategy of tourism, always - clearly - in respect of the protection of ecosystems.
- Finally, attendees were asked to identify "**fragile**" areas, i.e. those areas where tourism can represent a threat to their protection and conservation.

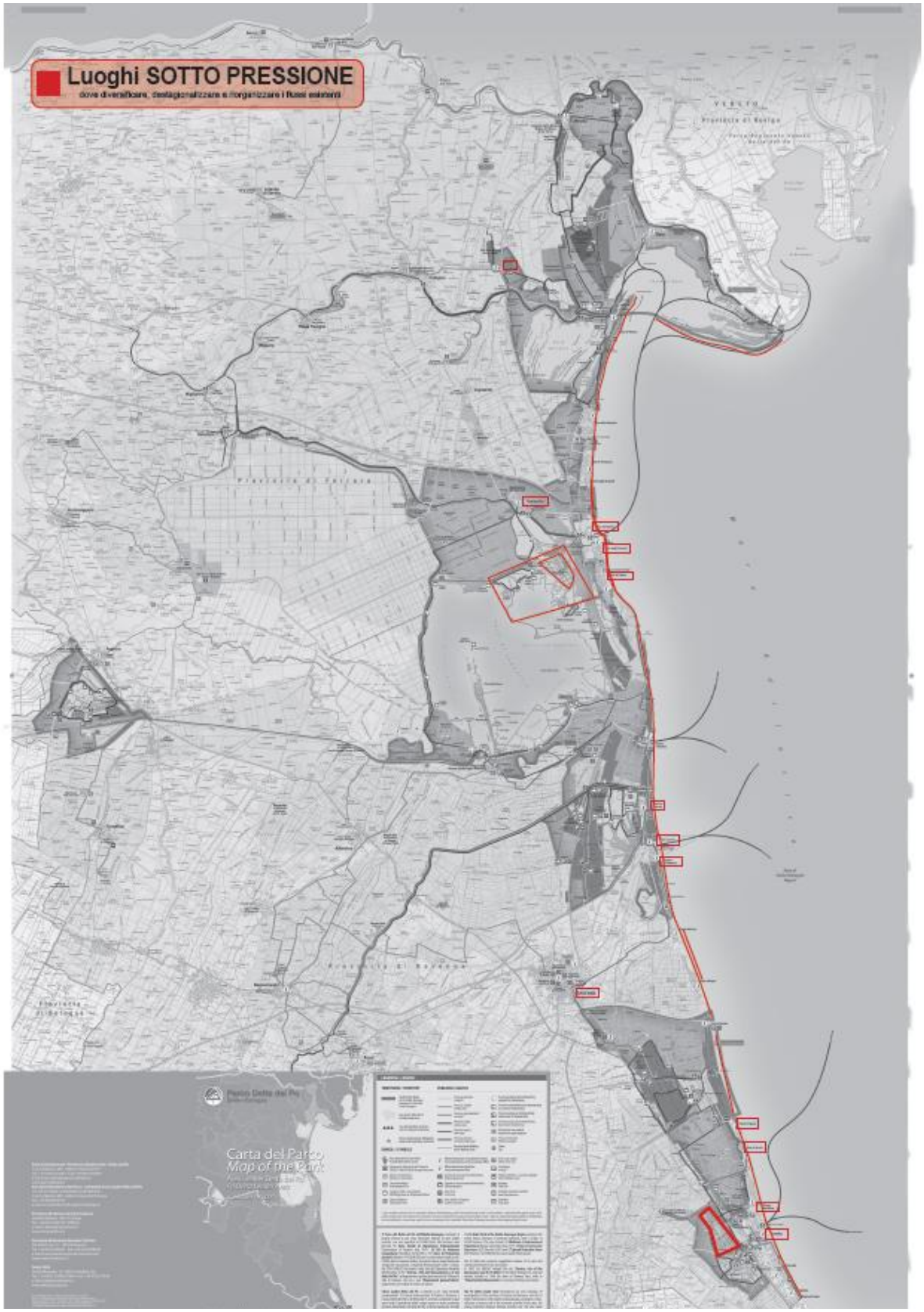


Figura 7: Map of the areas 'under pressure'

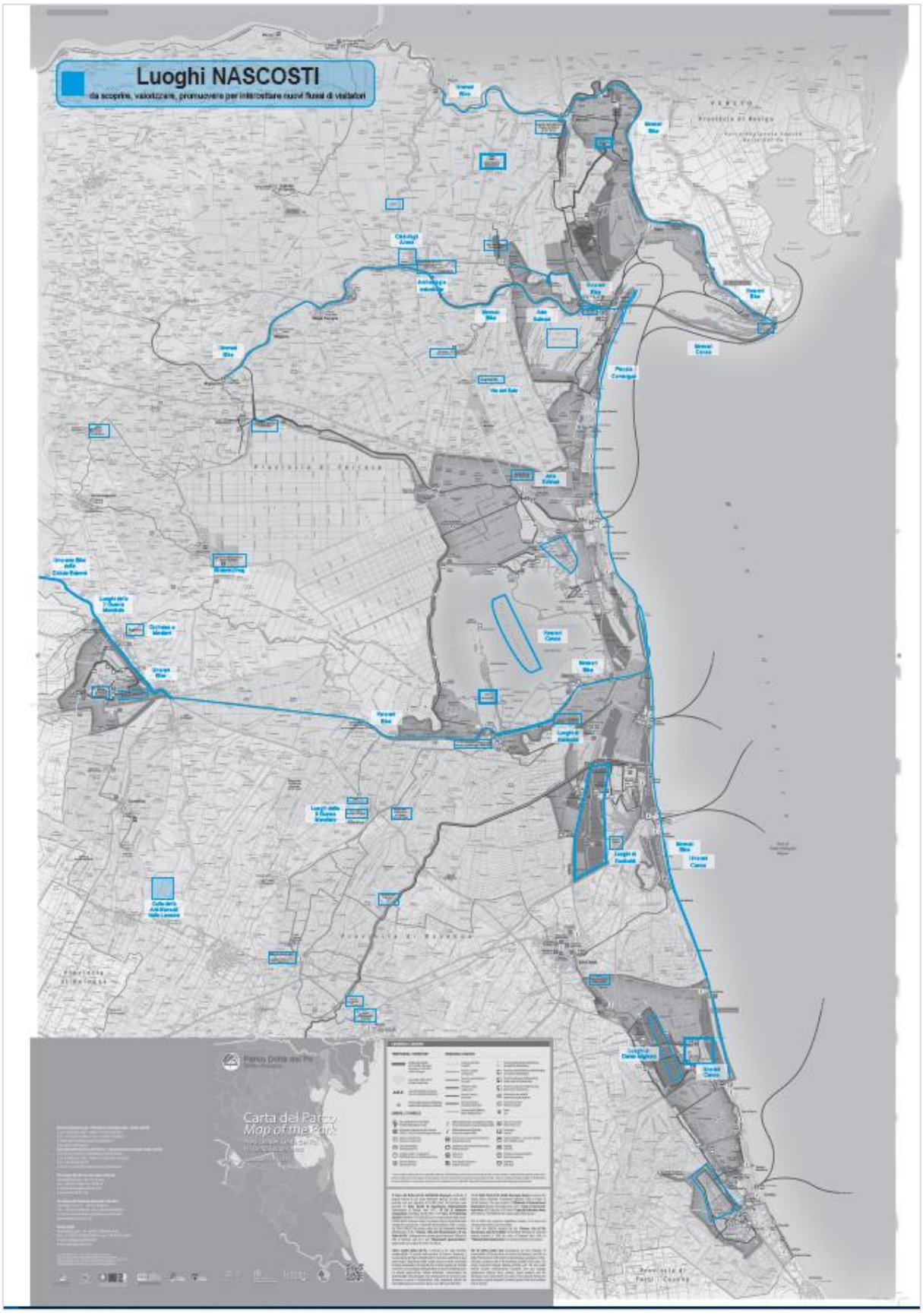
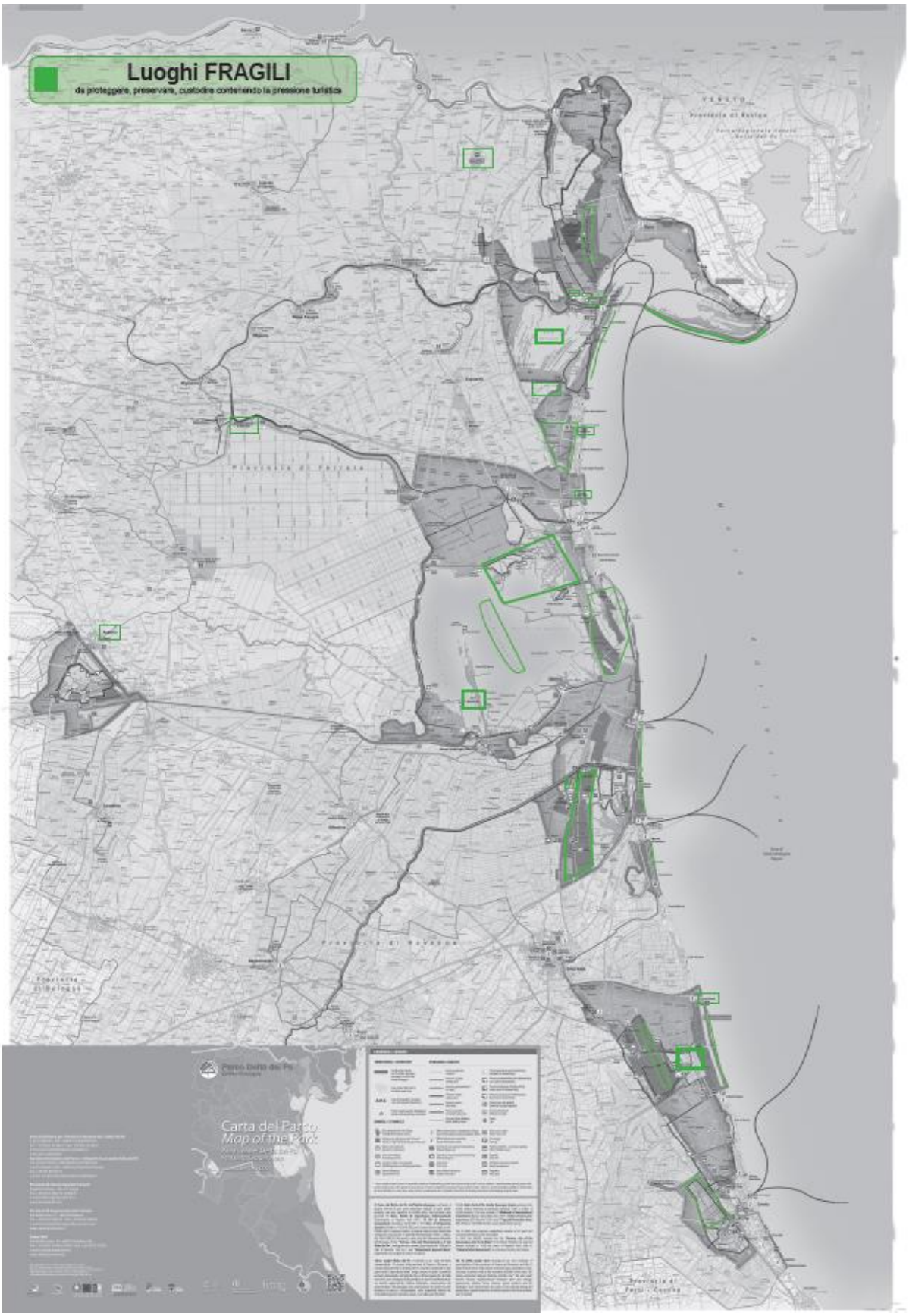


Figura 8: Map "hidden sites"



1. Figura 9: Map of 'fragile' areas

The second workshop was carried out on the 30th October 2018, during the morning in Mesola and in the afternoon in Cervia. This workshop started the identification and analysis of the existing tourist flows that characterized the areas indicated in the first workshop as "under pressure", as well as those related to "hidden places" according to the chosen methodology.

For each visitors' flow the participants identified:
- different tourist profiles;
- the transport routes taken;
- the definition of the flow on the map;
- the identification of the leading player and the influencers;
- identification of the major characteristics of the flow such as working components, improvements to be made and possible solutions;
- the current development phase;
- the seasonality;
- the degrees of environmental impact;
- the level of behaviour appropriate to the place;
- the economic potential;
- the potential interest in other areas.

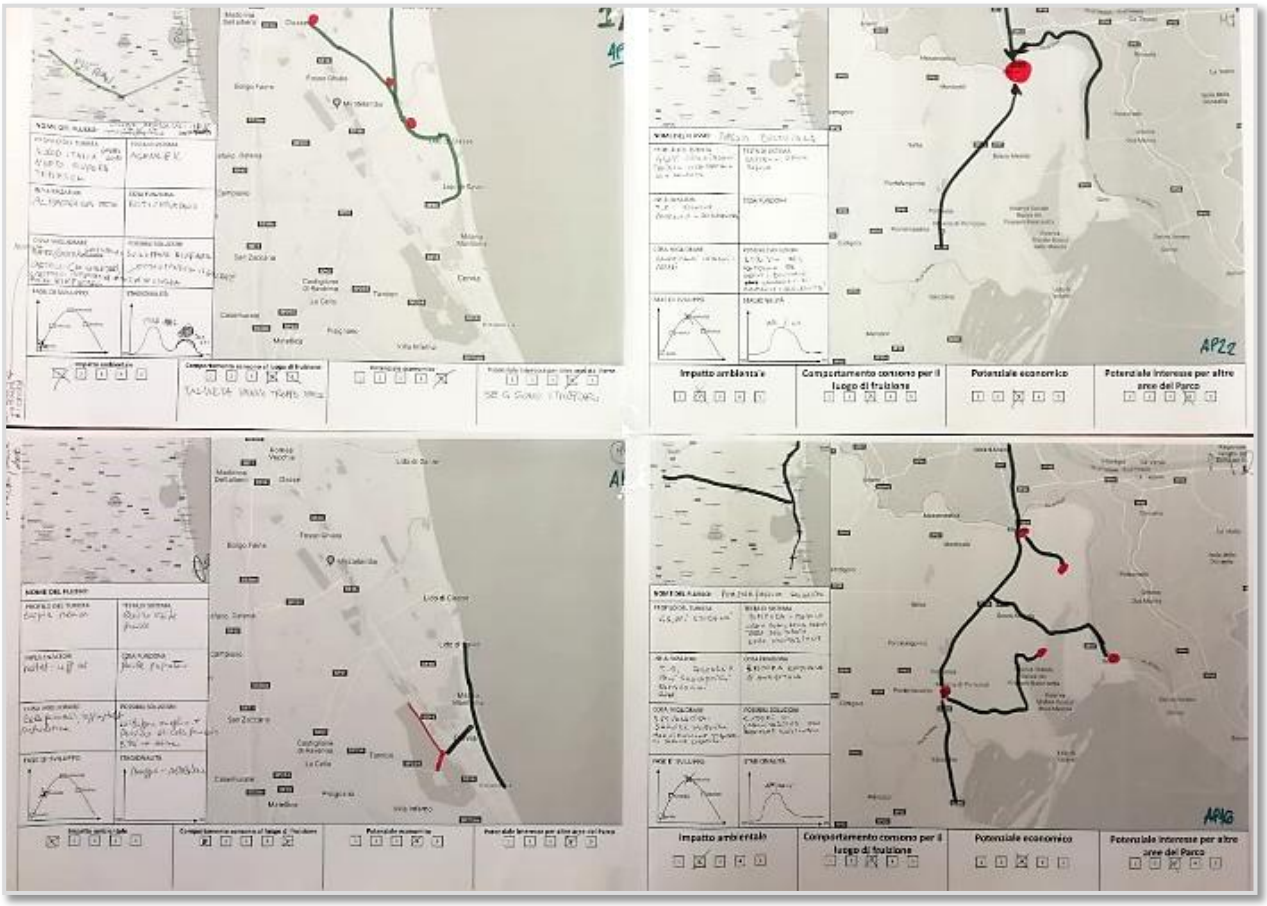


Figura 10: An example of maps developed during the Workshop

The third workshop, held on the 20th of November, the morning in Cervia and the afternoon in Mesola, continued the mapping activity of the flows set in the preceding meetings. Moreover, a discussion has been led with the aim of identifying several measures to improve the management of the mapped tourist flows, that is, to guarantee simultaneously the conservation of the habitats and a sustainable development of tourism.

Since the workshop, the measures proposed by stakeholders and tour operators have been collected by single visitors' flow or merged with different profiles of tourists who are users of places "under pressure" and "hidden". These measures were then analysed, grouped and illustrated at the last meeting held on the 4th of December (during the morning in Mesola and in the afternoon in Cervia) to the participating stakeholders and tour operators themselves, of the solutions/interventions proposed by the working groups according to their scale, divided between:

- **Strategic actions** (measures for the whole area of the Delta Po Park)
- **On-spot actions**, later arranged between punctual actions for areas "under pressure" and punctual actions for "hidden" sites.

This latter meeting determined the final phase of the participatory process, where attendees had the opportunity to make changes to the proposed actions or present new ones in the absence of them by refining the CEETO Action Plan, set out in the next chapter.

5. Sustainable Tourism Action Plan

5.1. Intoduction

As mentioned in the previous chapter, from the work carried out with the analysis of the strategic visitors' flows a series of actions emerged in response to seasonal adjustment or to the redirection of tourists, especially during peak moments, when the naturalistic emergencies of Boscone della Mesola and Salina di Cervia (Cervia Salt Pans) are under higher touristic pressure.

The measures were then divided into:

- **Strategic actions:** are those measures that will be implemented throughout the area of the Park as they are considered fundamental for a sustainable development of tourism that can ensure the preservation of natural excellence. They refer to needs that have emerged in both areas in which the participatory process has been carried out.
- **On-spot action**: refer to particular needs related to a location in the Park and thus require interventions that are more specific. On-spot actions have been identified among those concerning sites considered as "under pressure" or "hidden" during the first workshop.

In addition, a priority level has been identified for each action according to the timeframe in which it should be implemented: high, medium, low.

The CEETO Action Plan shall not be taken as exhaustive. The actions described in it can be furtherly explored and others can be tackled by broadening the analysis carried out on the whole Park area.

However, this Action Plan can be considered an important starting point to address and manage the impacts and opportunities that tourism has and can have on the area of the Po Delta.

5.2. Strategic actions

5.2.1. S1 Training of Visitor centres' staff and Tourist Information Offices in the Park

Identified problem/requirement
During the workshops it emerged that the staff of the visitor centres and tourist offices advise tourists to visit mainly the Boscone della Mesola and the Cervia Salt Plans (Saline di Cervia), thus contributing to their greater attendance, especially during seasonal peaks. It would be very important that these players develop skills to direct tourists to different locations in the territory, both based on the profile of tourists and their ability of fruition, and the knowledge of the seasonal pressures that affect one location compared to another.
Solution proposed
Provide training to the staff of the visitor centres and tourist offices so that they can: • know in detail the locations of the entire area of the Park and have a clear understanding for which types of tourists they can be indicated and suggested for a visit experience. • At what time of the year is it most appropriate to recommend the visit (both in relation to the quality of use and the tourist pressure already present in the place). • Acquire methods for interpreting the expectations of the tourist and therefore suggesting the best experience of the visit. The aim of these meetings is to provide visitor centres and tourist information offices with continuous training on all aspects concerning the naturalistic features of the Park and their state of conservation and therefore of use. Moreover, the availability of informative materials all year round is important in order to have a continuous access to this information.
High priority

5.2.2. S2 Training of tourism offices

Identified problem/requirement
The tour operators who took part in the workshop expressed the need to have a greater knowledge of the naturalistic features of the Park, in particular those less known and currently less frequented by tourists. With respect to these hidden destinations, tour operators need to know the contents of the values and their correct fruition methods in order to direct their customers to a proper attendance of the entire area of the Park throughout the year.
Solution proposed
The proposed solution is the setting up of a series of events and guided tours starting from the hidden places of the Park, aimed directly at tour operators so that they can understand the values of the Park and be able to suggest to their customers: • places to visit; • adequate methods of visit;
High priority

5.2.3. S3 Monitoring and profiling of visitors by the visitor centres of the Park

Identified problem/requirement
It has been revealed that currently the Visitor Centres of the Park do not collect information about the tourists who are visiting them. Monitoring and profiling of visitors is also considered extremely important for: • the improvement of the visitor's knowledge • - the management of the situation in moments of pressure.
Solution proposed
Identify the most efficient and effective operational ways for the collection and the treatment of data provided by the Visitor Centres of the Park: • understand the number and typology of tourists who visit the Park during different periods of the year; • obtain information about the places they visit; • collect feedback on their experiences of visit. In particular, in all the visitor centres, the collection should take place in a systematic way, in order to receive from each one the same kind of information that will enable comparisons to be made, both on different cycles of time and between different places. This aspect should also be extended to subjects who operate other natural hotspots to provide for complete information. These data may be useful to: • predict the flow of tourists; • guarantee a better management of the issue; • guarantee a better visit experience. Questionnaires can be carried out either on paper or online, for example through apps that, in addition to providing information on the territory and opportunities, may also require feedback.
High priority

5.2.4. S4 Coordination among the Visitor Centres of the Park

Identified problem/requirement
During the workshops it became clear that there is not enough coordination between the Visitor Centres to ensure full and complete dissemination of information.
Solution proposed
It is thus proposed to launch a process of continuous involvement of the Visitor Centres of the Park in order to ensure coordination between them and hence the mutual collaboration and exchange of all useful and necessary information.
High priority

5.2.5. S5 Communication campaign on behaviours

Identified problem/requirement
One aspect that has been widely identified is the lack of knowledge and respect for the correct behaviour that visitors to the Park are required to adopt, especially in the most sensitive places and in periods of high tourist concentration, when it becomes even more difficult to control and manage possible impacts that tourism can have on nature conservation.
Solution proposed
Promote a communication campaign on the core values of the Park and the correct behaviour to be adopted within the naturalistic attractions. This campaign should focus on periods of tourism peaks, i.e. during the most critical moments for the conservation of the environment.
High priority

5.2.6. S6 Geocaching around “hidden places”

Identified problem/requirement
During the workshops, it was noted that, at times, it is not enough for a "hidden site" to be accessible in order to be accessed, but tools are needed to push the tourist to reach them. This is especially true during the high season when the necessity to shift tourist flows from areas under pressure is greater.
Solution proposed
A tool that is proving successful and that has as its ultimate goal to uncover "hidden sites" is Geocaching. Geocaching is sort of a treasure hunt in which participants, called "geocachers", use a GPS receiver to hide or find containers of different types and sizes which they can log to. In these caches one may also request actions such as taking a selfie by posting a hashtag(#). This simple action also allows for a straightforward first monitoring of the tourists to understand who is aware of the place and when it was visited.
Medium priority

5.2.7. S7 Tourism table

Identified problem/requirement
All the subjects taking part in the workshops stressed the importance that the Park also accredits its role in the tourism sector so that it can effectively and concretely steer its dynamics towards sustainability. At the same time, tourism operators present at the workshop reported the absence of a "place" for meeting, to get mutual knowledge and discussion space on issues related to the development of tourism in the Park.
Solution proposed
The Park is encouraged to set up a "sustainable tourism roundtable", i.e. a "place" where public and private subjects involved in tourism in the Park's territory can meet to discuss strategies and projects. This roundtable shall have the dual aim of promoting the Park's tourist appeal and at the same time guaranteeing the conservation of its environmental values and an overall reduction in the impacts of tourism. The "sustainable tourism roundtable" will also be an opportunity for the Park's tourism operators to get to know each other and foster possible collaborations. This table can be arranged: • at Park level to ensure a uniform and integrated communication of the Park • at territorial level to promote and ensure communication also at a more local level
Medium priority

5.2.8. S8 Communication campaign on "hidden sites"

Identified problem/requirement
Participants to the workshops, especially those who work in tourist offices or visitor centres, pointed out the lack of the necessary tools to redirect tourist flows to those parts of the Park, which are less known, albeit with significant natural features. This action can be particularly central especially in peak periods that would allow relieving the most visited spots often overloaded.
Solution proposed
To address this problem it is proposed to: • develop a communication campaign on social media to be activated at times of greatest tourist concentration in order to influence their choices towards less known areas • create specific paper communication tools for the "hidden sites of the Park" to be distributed at tourist offices and visitor centres.
Medium priority

5.2.9. S9 Masterplan for sustainable mobility

Identified problem/requirement
A shortcoming that has been highlighted by participants is the fragmented nature of the routes supporting slow activities that can be carried out within the Park. This issue determines a constraint in proposing the Po Delta Park as an attractive destination for fans of activities such as cycling, horseback riding, trekking, ... in addition to being a barrier the use of these routes by local communities for their sustainable mobility.
Solution proposed
The proposed action is the creation of a "masterplan of sustainable mobility", an action of research and analysis of all the paths of the Park dedicated to different slow activities, which by definition are those that best fit the purpose of the Park and therefore should be facilitated. Therefore: • the soluiton should start from the projects that have already been carried out on the area of the Park on this theme, in order to avoid overlapping but to gather all the existing results. • identify and collaborate with projects already underway on the subject of sustainable mobility to network and make planning and implementation more efficient by creating synergies • know the actual state of these routes • identify maintenance actions • identify and design the missing traits • connect different routes to each other in order to discover the area of the Park fully. • - promote in an integrated way the slow activities of the Park
Medium priority

5.2.10. S10 BikePark

Identified problem/requirement
One of the aspects emphasized during the meetings is the potential that the Park could have as a destination for cycling as, due to its morphology and natural and cultural peculiarities, it can have an important appeal for this form of tourism, which is a tourism that respects the environment and the territory in which it takes place and that is well suited to the objectives of conservation and enhancement of the Park and of seasonal adjustment and management of flows. However, this potential is still unexpressed since the territory is not sufficiently equipped with the services, even minimal, that cyclists require.
Solution proposed
The proposal to this need is to promote, with the collaboration of tourism operators in the Park's territory and public bodies, the creation of a network of services to be provided as: • bikehotel, • repairing points for bicycles • e-bike charging stations • Racks at strategic points of interest • water fountains • paper and online maps of the Park's cycle paths and their connection to the surrounding cycle routes • identify ways of conveying people and bicycles on the main routes. Subjects that pivot around cycling as restaurateurs and producers should be involved, so that cycling becomes a mean of promotion of the products of the territory. These activities can also be performed in collaboration with the associations that are most familiar with these needs. At the same time, however, actions must also be taken to raise awareness of the territory so that it can "learn" to host this type of tourist.
Medium priority

5.2.11. S11 Gastronomy tourism

Identified problem/requirement
2. The workshop participants stressed that a key method for promoting seasonal adjustment in the Park's territory is to leverage on an intrinsic characteristic to the territory, which thus requires greater structuring and networking: the food and wine sector. In fact, the Park's gastronomy is well known and can be promoted as an identifying element of this area, representing a possible factor of attraction in off-season periods.
Solution proposed
On the boost of the work already carried out in the past, the agri-food production of the territory of the Po Delta Park should be promoted through: • paper resources such as brochures and product maps • online and offline promotion campaigns during low season periods This work, however, cannot be disregarded without the willingness of subjects such as restaurateurs and hoteliers to join a project of this type.
Low priority

5.2.12. S12 Influencers in “hidden places”

Identified problem/requirement
Hidden places of the Park require a specific form of communication that is immediately directed to the tourist targets, who can grasp the value and guarantee a correct attendance.
Solution proposed
The solution proposed is the employment of influencers from different disciplines and sectors (sports, birdwatcher, etc.) to promote knowledge: • of the "hidden sites" of the Park • of activities that can be carried out during periods that are out of season The aim of the communication must be to narrate these places as niche places, as real treasures of the territory and as such must remain without transforming them into a "mass commodity".
Low priority

5.3. On-spot actions for “areas under pressure”

5.3.1. Saline di Cervia1 Code of conduct in the Salt Pan of Cervia (Saline di Cervia) during peak periods

Identified problem/requirement
The staff of the visitor centre has pointed out that, especially in peak periods, visitors hardly respect the place with behaviours unsuitable to the place they are visiting, causing the risk of significant impacts on biodiversity.
Solution proposed
Promote a code of conduct for the Salt Pan, which shall describe and narrate the appropriate behaviour to be observed during the visit, a code of conduct applied above all during peak periods when the management of the flow of tourists is more complicated.
High priority

5.3.2. Saline di Cervia2 Cyclo-pedestrian link between the Salt Pan and the city centre

Identified problem/requirement
During the workshops that took place in Cervia, it became clear that there was a lack of pedestrian and bicycle routes between the centre of Cervia and the visitor centre of the Cervia Salt Pan.
Solution proposed
Encourage the study and design of a cycle/pedestrian path that shall allow the access to the visitor centre in a simple, safe and autonomous way directly from the centre of Cervia.
High priority

5.3.3. Saline di Cervia3 Seasonal thematic paths

Identified problem/requirement
From the tables it transpired that the Cervia Salt Pans are frequented above all in some periods because they are considered the "only interesting ones".
Solution proposed
Establish thematic routes closely linked to the naturalistic/climatic characteristics at times of reduced fruition in order to attend the Salt Pans at other times of the year in order to encourage seasonal adjustment, also in integration with those already existing.
High priority

5.3.4. Saline di Cervia4 Educational programme packages specific for the low season

Identified problem/requirement
One problem that has emerged is the extreme concentration of school trips in spring to the Cervia Salt Pans.
Solution proposed
Design an educational offer to be proposed to the specific school for the visit of the Cervia Salt Pans in autumn and winter by grasping the distinctive elements of that season and creating connections with the other naturalistic and historical-cultural attractions of the area.
High priority

5.3.5. Saline di Cervia5 Birders tower hides

Identified problem/requirement
One of the needs that was expressed during the workshops is the lack of an adequate number of monitoring positions of the birdlife that rest in the Cervia Salt Pans. Birdwatching currently is carried out in a way that is dangerous both for the environment and for those birders who are on the spot.
Solution proposed
Design and implement new birdwatcher locations/ birding tower hides placed in such a way that they are easily accessible and equipped with all the necessary panels to encourage the correct behaviour to be kept during the monitoring and placing panels recalling the species of birds that can be observed. Moreover, projects should also include parking lots.
High priority

5.3.6. Saline di Cervia6 The Salinabus

Identified problem/requirement
It has often been pointed out that the only known naturalistic spot of this area of the Park are the Cervia Salt Pans, which are not linked to other naturalistic features of the area.
Solution proposed
The action proposed is the creation of a Salinabus, a shuttle bus that connects the town of Cervia to the Salt Pans, through a circuit that also touches other natural attractions of the Park. In this way it will firstly ensure a form of sustainable access to the Salt Pans, but it will also give visibility to other locations, thus integrating and enhancing the service already offered by Cerviaturismo during the summer, which, however, is carried out only once a week.
Medium priority

5.3.7. Saline di Cervia7 Communication campaign to raise awareness of the attractions at other times of the year

Identified problem/requirement
A need that has been identified is the presence of visitors only at certain times of the year and where seasonal adjustment is difficult.
Solution proposed
The offered solution is the design and realization of a communication campaign that promotes the naturalistic characteristics of Cervia Salt Pans all year round and that can be combined with other opportunities offered by the territory (food and wine, slow activities, culture, etc.) in order to have the Salt Pans as "ambassador" of the surrounding area.
Medium priority

5.3.8. Boscone della Mesola1 Code of conduct in the Boscone della Mesola during peak periods

Identified problem/requirement
Upon the Boscone della Mesola it was found that, visitors hardly respect the place with behaviours not appropriate to the place visited, with the risk of significant repercussions on biodiversity, which happens particularly during peak periods.
Solution proposed
Promote a code of conduct for the Boscone della Mesola, which shall describe and narrate the appropriate behaviour to be observed during the visit, a code of conduct applied above all during peak periods when the management of the flow of tourists is more complicated.
Medium priority

5.3.9. Educational programme packages specific for the low season

Identified problem/requirement
One problem that has emerged is the extreme concentration of school trips in spring to the Boscone della Mesola.
Solution proposed
Design an educational offer to be proposed to the specific school for the visit of the Boscone della Mesola in autumn and winter by grasping the distinctive elements of that season and creating connections with the other naturalistic and historical-cultural attractions of the area.
High priority

5.3.10. Boscone della Mesola3 Communication campaign to raise awareness of the attractions at other times of the year

Identified problem/requirement
A need that has been identified is the presence of visitors only at certain times of the year and where seasonal adjustment is difficult.
Solution proposed
The offered solution is the design and realizea communication campaign that promotes the naturalistic characteristics of the Boscone della Mesola all year round and that can be combined with other opportunities offered by the territory (food and wine, slow activities, culture, etc.) in order to have the Boscone della Mesola as "ambassador" of the surrounding area.
Medium priority

5.3.11. Boscone della Mesola4 Improve the direction panels to reach the Boscone della Mesola

Identified problem/requirement
Local practitioners have highlighted the inadequacy of the route directions towards the Boscone della Mesola and likewise the difficulties in reaching it.
Solution proposed
The solution proposed is to rethink the direction signs that guide tourists to the entrance of the Boscone delle Mesola in a clear and precise way, the signalizations should be supplemented by other natural attractions proximity the Boscone to encourage visits to other areas of the park.
Medium priority

5.3.12. Boscone della Mesola5 Physical accessibility

Identified problem/requirement
During the workshops, it emerged that a need for an easier access to the Boscone is necessary, even for those with limited physical abilities, accessibility that at present is complex or limited.
Solution proposed
Think, or rethink, of the trails inside the Boscone della Mesola so that we can also propose a path dedicated to people with disabilities to ensure accessibility and fruition for all.
Medium priority

5.3.13. Pomposa Abbey1 Intercept the potential flows that stop at Pomposa Abbey

Identified problem/requirement
Many tourists who travel along the S.S. Romea from Ravenna to Venice stop by the Pomposa Abbey car park. Although they are often on organised tours, and use this area only as a restroom stopover. They do not visit the Abbey, nor do they gain information about the Po Delta Park and can plan for a later visit to this area.
Solution proposed
Identify appropriate solutions to interact with these flows and provide them with stimuli for a future visit to the Park, stressing the natural characteristics and the correct methods of use of the territory. These actions must be carried out in particular from the departure point of their route (Venice and Ravenna) while also identifying an element that may raise interest and therefore the visit.
Medium priority

5.4. On-spot actions for hidden locations

5.4.1. Pineta di Classe1 – Signalization of the Cervia-Ravenna cycling route

Identified problem/requirement
The workshops have revealed the inadequate signalization along the route from Cervia to Ravenna as a strong criticality, this route in some tracts is missing or not effective and thus many are struggling to continue on the same route.
Solution proposed
The propose solution to this is issue is to complete the route and carry out maintenance of the route and signalling, thus making it more evident and clear so that the route can be followed simply and safely. These actions must be complemented and go hand in hand with more information and communication of the route in relation to the services offered and the behaviour to be maintained along the route.
High priority

5.4.2. Pineta di Classe2 – Map of the cycling route Cervia-Ravenna

Identified problem/requirement
During the workshop, many attendees highlighted the lack of basic tools to promote the cycling route that runs between Cervia and Ravenna. Few of those present were aware with it and almost no one has ever done it fully, since all indicating that the route has not been adequately exploited. In fact, if fostered correctly it can be a tool: - the relieve the congestion to the sites in critical periods as it allows to experience the Park in different ways; - to perform a seasonal adjustment because it is an activity that is carried out especially out of season.
Solution proposed
The solutions proposed for this issue are: - Create and distribute the map of the route in tourist offices and visitor centres; - Create a downloadable GPS trail. - Integrate the cycle route with other thematic routes: naturalistic, gastronomic, cultural,...
High priority

5.4.3. Ancient Harbour of Classe 1 Innovative tools of fruition

Identified problem/requirement
A need that arose from the workshops is to promote and innovate the use of the Ancient Harbor of Classe
Solution proposed
The proposed solution is to use augmented reality tools, which shall allow for a complete and immersive experience and that can represent an important form of integration with the naturalistic emergencies of the Park being able to represent an attraction above all in the perspective of the low season and the seasonal adjustment.
Medium priority

5.4.4. Ancient Harbour of Classe2 Connection with Ravenna

Identified problem/requirement
A problem highlighted by participants is the lack of connection between the Ancient Harbour of Classe and the city of Ravenna.
Solution proposed
Encourage the study and design of a cycle/pedestrian route that shall allow for an easy, safe and independent travel to the Ancient Harbour of Classe.
Low priority

5.4.5. Bevanella1 Enhancing accessibility

Identified problem/requirement
The workshop participants reported that the accessibility to the Bevanella is complicated and not always possible because the route that reaches the site in a poor condition.
Solution proposed
Bearing in mind the conservation needs of the area, in fact very sensitive, the solution proposed is a research study in collaboration with the managing body for safe routes that allow the accessibility of the area and/or the design of monitoring/spotting locations so the area can be used in a well-managed approach.
High priority

5.4.6. Bevanella2 Signalization

Identified problem/requirement
Workshop participants stressed that the signs that direct to the Bevanella are not sufficient and do not allow to arrive safely.
Solution proposed
Signalization allows to: - Manage touristic flow so that it does not affect the environment; - Give correct behavioural indications that are required in the area.
High priority

5.4.7. Bevanella3 Fruition of the visitor centre

Identified problem/requirement
During the workshops it was found that the visitor centre Cubo Magico at the Bevanella site has opening hours and periods that are limited in relation to the possible interest that the area could have and that the same visitor centres could play a role as a steward for the management of incoming tourists.
Solution proposed
The solution is to extend the opening hours of the visitor centre through a wider range of related services, such as educational and sports activities that allow greater control over the fruition of the site.
High priority

5.4.8. Mesola Castle1 Events that link the castle to the territory

Identified problem/requirement
A very strong exigency that was stressed by workshops participants is the implementation of Mesola Castle as premises of events and initiatives that are connected with the surrounding territory, especially in view of the historical value of the Castle.
Solution proposed
Identify subjects with whom to set up possible collaborations for the implementation of events and initiatives in the setting of the Castle of Mesola. These events should be closely related to the territory and conceived especially for the low tourism season, to foster seasonal adjustment.
Medium priority

5.4.9. Dunes of Massenzatica1 Inclusion in the Park's communication tools

Identified problem/requirement
The workshops showed that the Dunes of Massenzatica, currently not covered by the perimeter of the Regional Park of the Po Delta, are rarely promoted in the communication tools of the Park. This is a very important constraint as the Dunes represent an important element for the history of the Po Delta since they explicate and narrate the transformation of the territory.
Solution proposed
The proposed solution is to include in a systematic and programmed approach the Dunes of Massenzatica in the communication tools of the Regional Park, also due to the fact that this site is encompassed by the UNESCO MAB Biosphere Reserve, managed by the Park.
High priority

5.4.10. Dunes of Massenzatica2 Tools for landscape interpretation

Identified problem/requirement
The complexity of the environmental and geological value of the Dunes of Massenzatica is such that the visitor does not always understand their value and meaning, thus sometimes leading towards visitor's disappointment.
Solution proposed
The solution proposed is to realize tools for the interpretation of the Dunes' landscape Dunes that can effectively describe and give a sense of place by conveying to the visitor the meaning and importance of their conservation (e.g. panels, augmented reality, apps).
High priority

5.4.11. Goro1 Navigation routes

Identified problem/requirement
A problem raised during the workshops in Mesola is the navigation of the waterways, once possible from Ferrara to the sea, today these routes are limited if by no means impossible.
Solution proposed
Coordinate a round table to assess the possibility of promoting the navigability of the branches of the Po in order to provide visitors with the opportunity to explore the territory from another point of view, complementing this experience with other opportunities available in the area (gastronomy, cycling, ...).
High priority

5.4.12. Dindona Valley and the Island of Mezzano1 Birdwatcher route

Identified problem/requirement
Attendees to the workshops noted that the area of the Dindona Valley and the Island of Mezzano have been lately attended by several birdwatchers, but that the conditions for a proper and widespread use of this naturalistic attraction are lacking.
Solution proposed
The proposed solution is the creation of a path for birdwatchers that foresees the creation of proper installations with appropriate masking which allow for camouflaged birdwatching in respect to the surrounding environment.
High priority

5.4.13. Valle Dindona e Isola del Mezzano2 Percorso per birdwatcher

Identified problem/requirement
Along with the opportunity to practice birdwatching, there is also a lack of description of the surrounding environment and its features as well as descriptions on the species of birds that can be seen and monitored.
Solution proposed
Panels should be positioned likewise where the monitoring sites are installed, those should describe and narrate what can be observed and enjoyed from a naturalistic historical point of view.
High priority