GOOD PRACTICE CASE STUDY

PANORAMA PROJECT

Maristanis: an integrated coastal and wetlands management

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LOCATION

Oristano, Italy

BENEFICIERIES

Fisheries and farming associations, territorial authorities, local companies, fishermen, farmers, tourism operators

CHALLENGE

The coastal area of the Gulf of Oristano includes six Ramsar sites, 19 Natura 2000 sites in 11 municipalities and one Marine Protected Area across approximately 7,700 hectares along 140 km of coastline. The presence of 11 municipalities creates a challenging context for wetland management resulting in overexploitation and ecosystem degradation. The project objectives focused on developing a single governance model that could balance the demands of the range of economic activities (artisanal fishing, agriculture and tourism) alongside maintaining ecosystem integrity.

APPROACH

The proposed intervention was part of a larger project, Maristanis, funded by the Mava Foundation and coordinated by the MEDSEA Foundation. Maristanis developed activities regarding governance, water quality and saving, restoration (sea- and land-based), and agriculture and fishing involvement. In the governance framework, the project focused on creating an integrated management model offering a long-term management strategy for

Oristano Wetland © Egidio Trainito

the coastal wetlands found in the Gulf of Oristano – a new regional park. It contributed to balancing social and environmental needs and paved the way to recognise the economic and cultural potential of the wetlands.

INTEGRATED IMPACT: ADAPTATION, BIODIVERSITY, MITIGATION

The governance model strengthens the conservation of coastal and marine habitats, reinforces resilience to climate change impacts and reduces water consumption, abstraction, pollution and contamination. The area that has benefited from the restoration measures developed in the project is estimated at about 600 hectares. The new island for bird nesting has a surface of 110 square meters, a building with 143 cubic meters of mussels inside to 1100 jute sacks. Precision agriculture measures were tested on more than 200 hectares, mainly with drones on maize and rice cultivation. Sub-irrigation technologies were tested on nine hectares cultivated with (organic) artichokes and strawberries, and surface micro-irrigation on three carrot hectares. A precision agriculture project with satellites on 5000 hectares, mainly used to cultivate maize for feeding cattle, was developed.

KEY SUCCESSES

Stakeholder engagement: More than 400 stakeholders were involved in the activities directly or indirectly, particularly from the agriculture, fisheries and tourism sectors. An important awareness-raising action was developed with the schools on World Wetlands Day and Coast Day, with clean-up, training events, competitions and the creation of an educational kit.

Integrated governance and legal foundation: The adoption of the Oristano Coastal Wetlands Contract (CWC) by the 11 municipalities provided an important legal basis and framework to advance the integrated management of six wetlands in the Gulf of Oristano. An integrated and unique system of governance was needed to improve a fragmented wetland management framework (between regional and local government) with similar problems and ecosystems.