



EUSALP AG7 22nd MEETING

Genova, 29-31 May 2024

Plenary discussions

To kick off the 22nd group meeting, AG7 members were updated by the co-leaders Annalisa Cevasco and Miro Kristan on the discussions that took place during the last **Board of Action Group Leaders** and on the **events of the Slovenian Presidency**. This was followed by a *tour de table* that involved all members, who shared information on **activities and projects** in which they are involved. The EUSALP Technical Support Structure was also present and was able to update members on the news regarding internal structuring and the **revision process of the Strategy's Action Plan**.

Discussions then focused on the **GI goes business award**, which will be launched in June 2024 for the third edition. The competition is open to start-ups, companies, institutions, association, private persons or teams that are able and willing to propose innovative ideas and sustainable products, services and business models with positive impacts on Green Infrastructure in the Alpine macroregion. The 2024 edition, in particular, calls for solutions with benefits for **wise water management, climate change mitigation and adaptation**. The winners receive tailor-made business coaching for the further development of their ideas, products, services or business models, and will be awarded during the EUSALP annual forum (November 14 and 15, 2024).

Another important item on the agenda was the state of the art on the **nature restoration law**. AG7 members are indeed engaged in collecting successful projects and practices related to biodiversity preservation and restoration that can potentially be used to conduct reasoning about the implementation of the law, if approved. Independently from this, AG7 members reiterated their willingness to continue to focus on the topic of **nature restoration**, and to cooperate closely

with the **Alpine Convention** - and specifically the **Alpine Biodiversity Board** - in this effort.

Study visit

ANCI Liguria also took advantage of this moment of gathering to organize a visit to the **EMYS center**, a center for the breeding and reintroduction into the wild of the European Pond Turtle (*emys orbicularis ingauna*) located in Albenga and funded by the LIFE + instrument of the European Commission.

On this specific occasion, some specimens were released in the WWF Oasi located in Località Valloni, a Natura 2000 site. Their new habitat in the Oasi has been restored in the framework of the LIFE project **URCA PROEMYS**, coordinated by WWF Italy, whose duration is 5 years (October 2022-September 2027). The project aims to improve the conservation status of the turtles in Italy and Slovenia, and apart from habitat restoration, it also engages in other actions such as the control of other invasive species, trainings for technicians and volunteers, information and awareness campaigns. Località Valloni is also included among the intervention sites of the **LIFE Seedforce project**, which aims to recover and reinforce the populations of native Italian plants in danger of extinction thanks to seed banks.

After visiting the oasi and enjoying a delicious lunch based on sustainable local products in Montegrosso Pianlatte, AG7 members moved on to Mendiatica. Accompanied by the mayor, they visited the **Maison outdoor experience** and the **flight room**, two projects aimed at strengthening and introducing new tourism innovation models implemented under the Interreg **Alcotra Program** (Italy – France).



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