



PALÙ
— QDP —

Prati, siepi e canali
tra uomo e natura

Progetto LIFE17 – NAT/IT/507 “PALU QdP”
co-finanziato dal programma
LIFE dell'Unione Europea

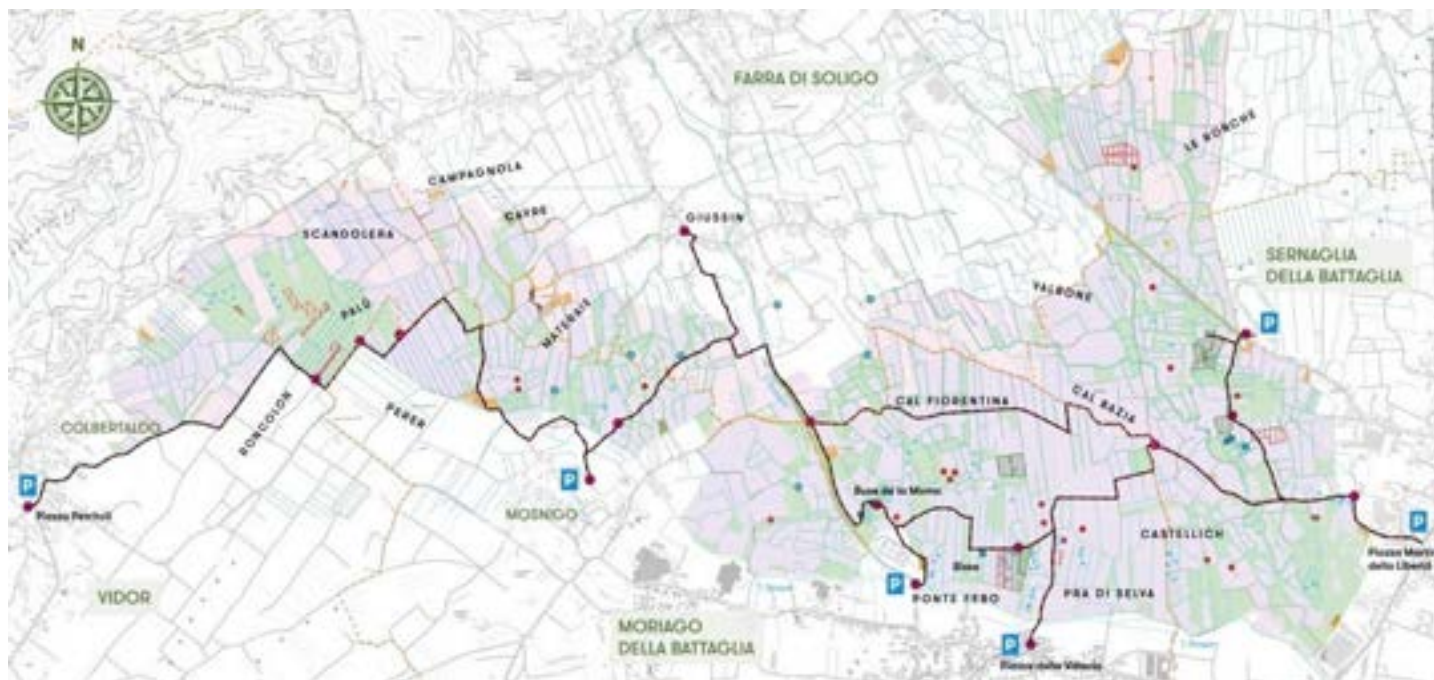


Participatory Agroforestry deveLopment: a tool for
restoring and sUstaining the Palù del Quartier del
Piave site LIFE17 NAT/IT/000507

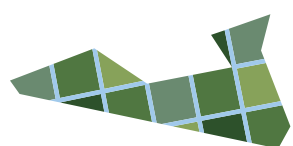
Nuova vita ai Palù del Quartier del Piave:
una rinnovata alleanza tra agricoltura e conservazione per la
valorizzazione economica e la tutela della biodiversità

LAYMAN'S REPORT





SCI IT3240015: Quartier del Piave



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The reasons behind the project

The Palù del Quartier del Piave (SCI IT3240015) is a complex mosaic of small meadows plots bordered by hedges and canals rich in water. Within these systems, numerous species of conservation relevance can be found.

Nowadays, the regression of the habitats and the general loss of biodiversity in the area is clear: most meadows are undergoing a natural process of reforestation following their abandonment or forestation. The extensive network of canals is no longer maintained. It is now filled with soil and fragmented, losing its capacity to receive water and, therefore, support the rich aquatic life and amphibious depending on them. In addition, in the last decades, the intensive agriculture practices within the SCI caused a simplification of the complexity of the ecosystem (hedges reductions and cuts, reductions of open canals) together with the increase in fertilizers and pesticides in soil and water.



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Project's scope and objectives

To to stop the reduction trend of Meadows properly managed, characterized as habitats 6510 and 6410. The interventions planned acted at different levels and targeted the owners of the Palù plots (mostly private citizens) and the local farmers, breeders and other entities with a potential economic interest in the Palù resources.



- (i) **Increase** the presence of numerous species in the Palù area that have their elective habitat.
- (ii) **Strengthen** the presence of amphibians, reptiles and butterflies of conservation relevance.
- (iii) **Develop**/demonstrate agroforestry management models that foster economic sustainability of the traditional Palù plots and, simultaneously, protect habitats and species.
- (iv) **Demonstrate** the efficacy of a participatory approach, based on the experiences on the "river contracts", to preserve ecosystems and correctly exploit the Palù resources.
- (v) **Promote** communication means reinforcing the local natural and cultural heritage and increasing awareness of the Palù area and on the Natura 2000 network.



Palù Habitats and biodiversity.

The restoration works

Field works in Actions C2 and C3 resulted in the **restoration of 10.7ha of Palù.**

The interventions consisted of managing the hedges, cutting down the inappropriate trees (plane trees and black poplars) and returning them to their original single-line condition to contrast their expansion to the detriment of the lawn, bringing. The bushes that had colonized the abandoned meadows have been removed. Polyphyte meadow was reseeded on all the areas previously occupied by the bush.



In the **areas purchased with the project funds**, the hedges already started to take the form of the traditional ones of the Benedictine reclamation, meant to produce forage and firewood. These meadows will be managed with the sole purpose of maximizing biodiversity and habitat conservation. **This land is permanently devoted to nature conservation purposes.**



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In the other **areas owned by private citizens** and targeted by restoration activities, shrubs rich in flowers and berries have been introduced to support the local fauna. These meadows will be managed with the aim of finding a balance between forage quality and floristic richness. The owners signed a **commitment to maintain the interventions for 20 years** after the project interventions.

Herbaceous and forest species produced and planted

Overall, around **1,200 forest seedlings** were planted along the perimeter hedges and **more than 7,000 herbaceous seedlings of conservation value** during the restoration works under the supervision of the experts of the nursery centre of Montecchio Precalcino.

As part of the activities related to implementing the Palù Contract, the project distributed, free of charge, seedlings to the owners of about 10ha of Palù. These activities resulted in the distribution **of more than 11,600 herbaceous seedlings** for the meadows and **more than 1,200 forest seedlings** to increase the biodiversity of the hedges.



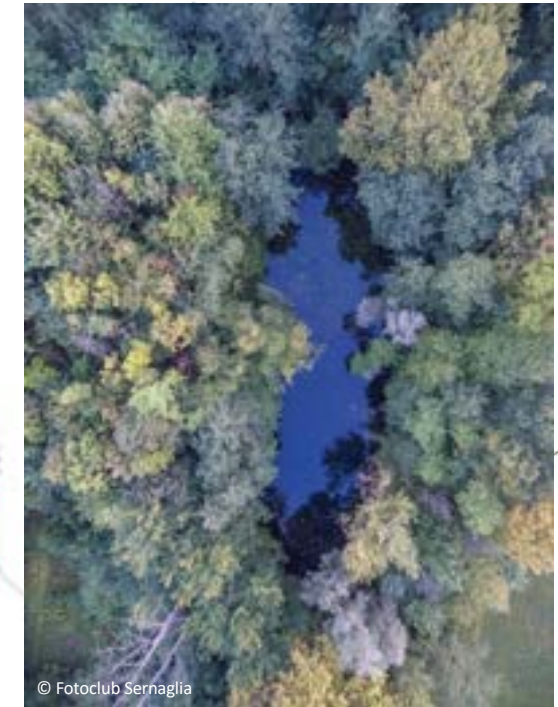
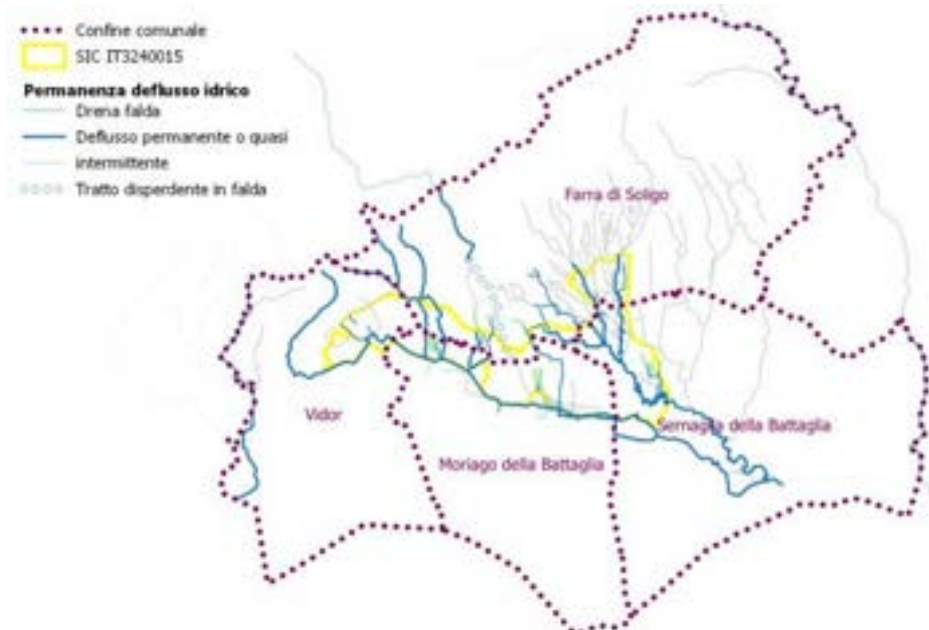
Forest species: *Quercus robur*, *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Ulmus minor*, *Alnus glutinosa*, *Salix alba*, *Carpinus betulus*, *Acer campestre*, *Malus sylvestris*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Sambucus nigra*, *Cornus mas*, *Ligustrum vulgare*, *Cornus sanguinea*, *Prunus spinosa*, *Viburnum opulus*

Herbaceous species: *Iris sibirica*, *Inula salicina*, *Gentiana pneumonanthe*, *Gratiola officinalis*, *Valeriana dioica*, *Selinum carvifolia*, *Succisa pratensis*, *Lychnis flos cuculi*

The minor hydrographic network, the Palù canals

With the filed works of Actions C2 and C3, perimeter canals of the Palù, clogged by the deposit of soil and organic matter, were **cleaned and reopened**.

As part of Action C6, the Consorzio di Bonifica Piave drafted the project to reopen an additional 1.1 km of canals which, added to the 3.4 km of canals reopened with Actions C2 and C3, allows for **flow continuity in the natural grid of 11.4 km**.



The work on the canals is essential because the prolonged stagnation of water on the Palù (originating both from rain and the natural flooding of the natural network) is harmful to the conservation of grassland habitats and the quality of the hay that can be produced. Furthermore, the **temporary water ponds inside the canals are a habitat for the many amphibians** of the Palù.

The “Palù contract” and the participatory process

The purpose of the Palù contract is **to start economic supply chains** and coordinate the work of various subjects, most of them private, creating a link so that they can tune in and collaborate to achieve common objectives.

This voluntary agreement has an **independent duration from that of the Life project**. It will continue to apply and act after its conclusion, gradually implementing all the necessary measures to ensure the conservation of SIC IT3240015 over time and the sustainable use of agroforestry resources.



On September 2022, a public event witnessed the **signature of the MoU** by the Municipalities of Farra di Soligo, Moriago della Battaglia, Sernaglia della Battaglia and Vidor, the land reclamation entity (Consorzio di Bonifica Piave), the regional agency for agriculture (Veneto Agricoltura), Consorzio di Bonifica Piave, Farmers' Associations (Confagricoltura, Coldiretti, Confederazione Italiana Agricoltori), Consorzio Legno Veneto, Slow Food.



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The Action Plan of the "Palù contract" covering 2022-2025

- The **aggregation of the Palù owners** between the public and private entities to create synergies for implementing the management practices. Products of the Action: Landowners' Association; Implementation of the good practices for the management and use of Palù.
- The framework of rules that each citizen/owner of Palù must respect is derived from the good practices defined by the Project (grazing, cutting, plantings, cultivation). Products: **annexe to the Rural Police regulation** to harmonising the rules in force in the four local administrations of the SCI territory.
- Support service for owners and farmers for adopting sustainable agricultural and forestry practices with the creation of a helpdesk for sustainable agriculture fostering access to public funding. Products: **Helpdesk for Sustainable management of Palù agroforestry resources**; Promotion of the Palù area and its natural resources
- Sustainable **management and promotion of Palù resources**. Products: implement possible old/new activities that enhance the area and its products and attract sustainable tourism.



The sustainable exploitation of the meadow's, information and training

Quantitative-qualitative analysis of the meadow's composition and resources revealed the need for new management practices and operations, highlighted in the booklet "Meadows and trees in the Palù of the Piave district" and in the panels placed in the four municipalities' city halls, at the premises of local farmers' associations (Coldiretti, Confagricoltura and CIA), and in other sites.

The project investigated many **supply chains**, promoted meetings among interest actors and workshops with experts, prepared technical and communication materials and presented the measures of the new RDP (now Regional Complement of the Rural Development) that can be used once available.

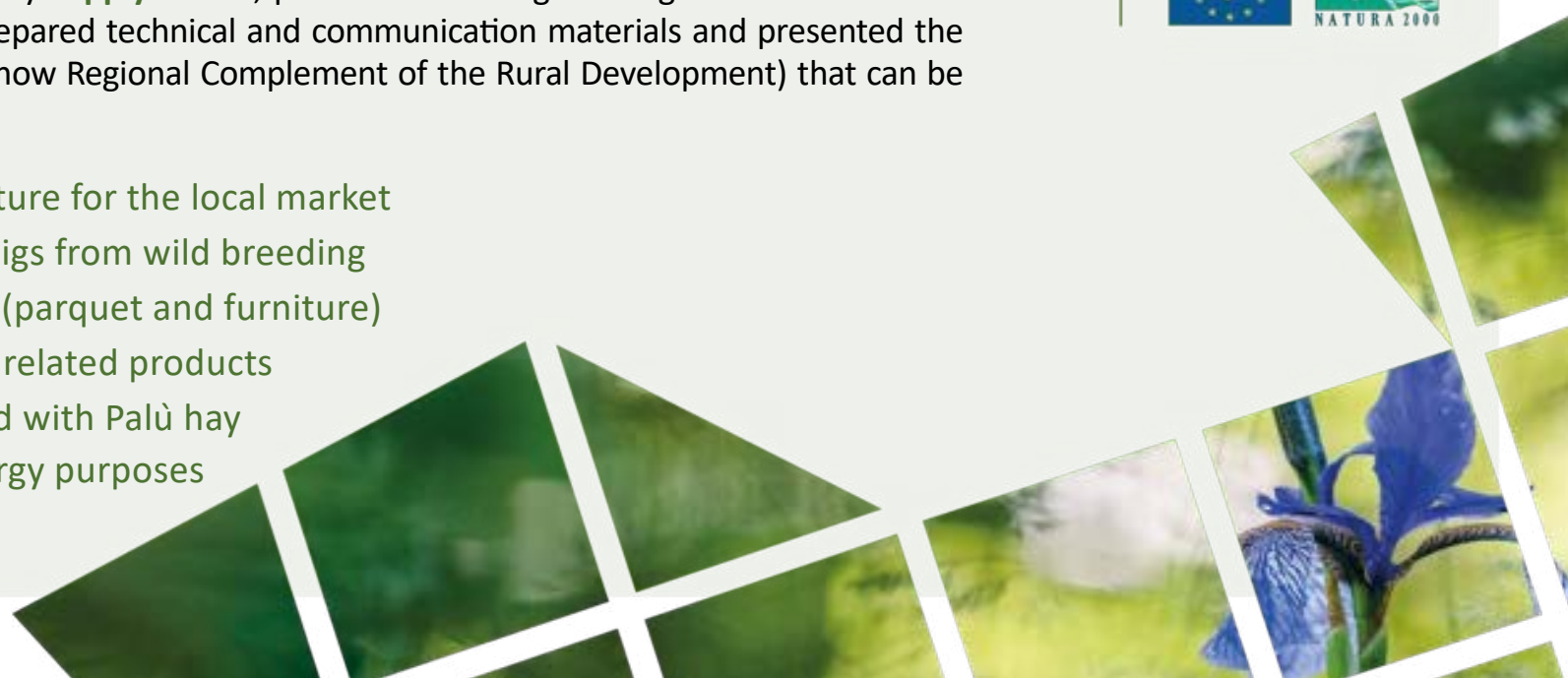
SUPPLY CHAINS

- Organic horticulture for the local market
- Cold cuts from pigs from wild breeding
- Valuable timber (parquet and furniture)
- Beekeeping and related products
- Organic meat fed with Palù hay
- Biomass for energy purposes



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Fostering and booster local supply chains.

What have been done:

- Preliminary meetings with health agency (ULSS) and veterinary experts.
- Meetings with experts and local actors (local breeders, beekeepers, Consorzio legno Veneto).
- Meetings with veterinary agroecologist, expert in sustainable grazing practices.
- B2B meetings for valorising local products.
- Workshops “Analysis of the needs”, “Energy use of biomass from hedges”, “Promotion of local and high-quality agricultural products”, “Improving the management of the meadows”.
- Distributions of herbaceous plants and young trees, years 2021 and 2022.
- Forage and hay analysis, years 2021 and 2022.
- Demonstration actions and realisation of technical videos
- Publication and distribution of technical sheets and reports
- Realization of technical videos.
- Set up of the electronic hive.





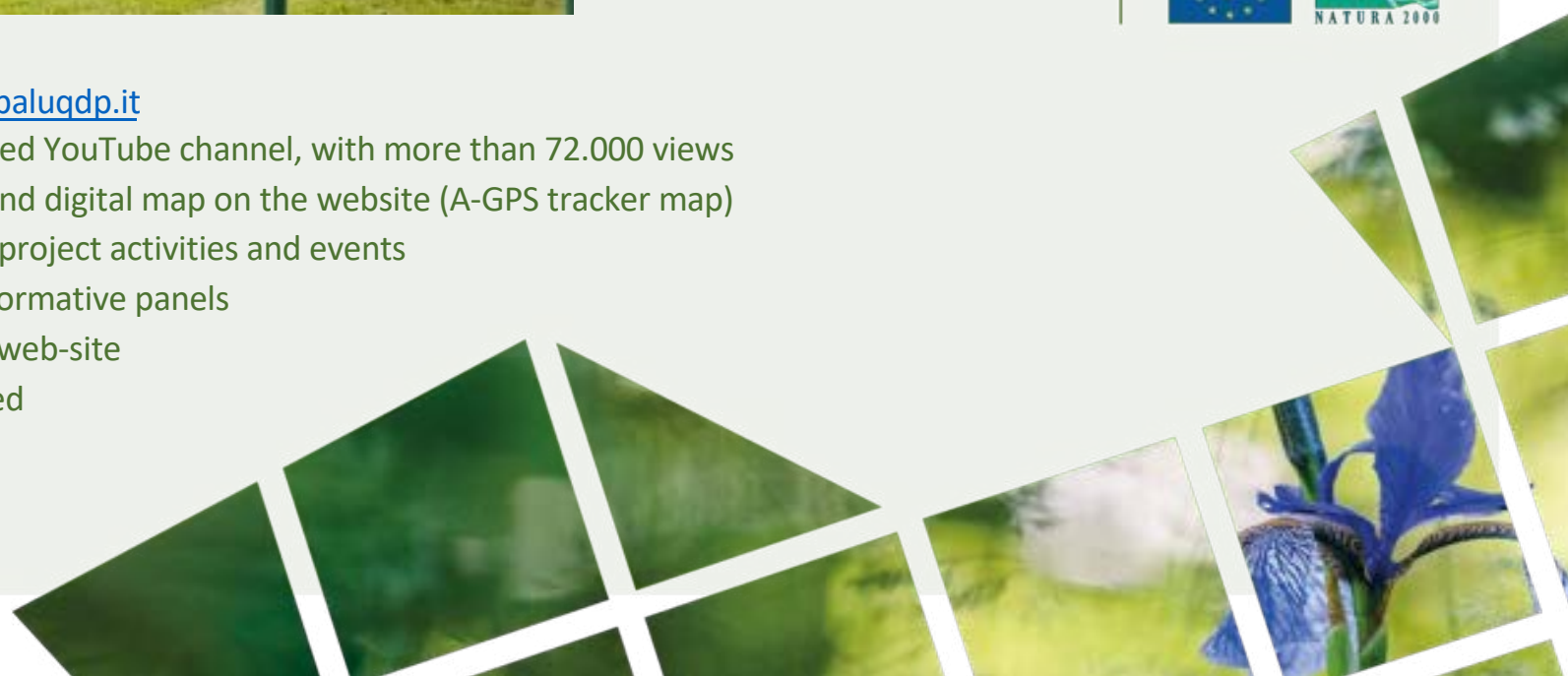
COMMUNICATION TOOLS



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- Project website <https://paluqdp.it>
- 10 Videos on the dedicated YouTube channel, with more than 72.000 views
- 10.000 Maps of the SCI and digital map on the website (A-GPS tracker map)
- 33 press releases on the project activities and events
- 39 Notice Boards and informative panels
- 106.381 visits to project web-site
- 22 Project Reports drafted
- 427 Facebook followers
- 3.000 brochures
- 21 Events



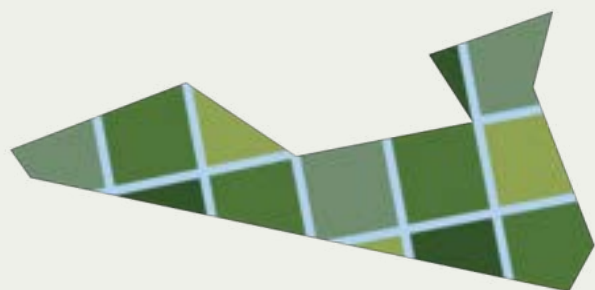
Transferability and replicability

The transferability of the project approach started in the two municipalities of Bretteville sur Laize and Fresnaye le Puceux in Normandy, part of the Natura2000 site "Vallée de l'Orne et Affluents" (SCI FR2500091). Similarly to what the Palù area is experiencing, in a bocage context of private plots, the abandonment of livestock farming is causing the regression of the grassland Habitat 6210 (Semi-natural Dry Grasslands and Scrubland Facies).

The owners of the most challenging plots have been identified and addressed to promote a collective approach involving the municipalities for the sustainable management of the area.



The booklet “Prati e alberature nei Palu’ del Quartier del Piave” crafted by Veneto Agricoltura reports a guideline of the **DOs and DONTs for operating in Habitats 6510 and 6410**, restoring and maintaining the rich biodiversity of the targeted areas. This document is free to download from the project website, and it is valuable for any site presenting the mentioned habitats.



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<https://paluqdp.it>

Partner di progetto



Comune di
Sernaglia della Battaglia



Comune di
Farra di Soligo



Comune di
Moriago della Battaglia



Comune di
Vidor



Partner finanziatori



ASCO HOLDING

Partner sostenitori

