



In collaboration with



ALPBIONET2030

Integrative Alpine wildlife and habitat management for the next generation

Breeding, guard dogs and possible interactions

Concrete experiences in progress and the possibility of spreading them in a cross-border context

Meeting room of the Visitor Center of the Cornino Lake Nature Reserve
FORGARIA NEL FRIULI (Ud), Italy

Monday 28 May 2018, 15.00 - 18.00

SUMMARY REPORT

Stakeholders' involvement can entail success or failure in nature conservation. The Regional Nature Park of the Julian Prealps, which was not born through a participatory process, has strongly felt the importance and the need to know and deepen some of the problems that characterize its territory in order to seek and find common and shared solutions. ALPBIONET2030 project performs an excellent opportunity to undertake this process, even in a cross-border dimension. Hence, the protected area, also in collaboration with different partners has activated a set of initiatives in order to face the problems identified and propose some strategies for managing them. Among these, one of the most significant are Workshops.

Workshops are the ideal place to debate and elaborate in a participative way proposals and strategies; they give the possibility to bring together the various stakeholders to allow the comparison of different opinions. In particular, the first meetings allowed the achievement of the following results:

- 1) A proposal to create a map (both in GIS and in paper format) about transhumance and the location of main man-nature conflicts;
- 2) A proposal to develop both awareness-raising activities for the public, before the flocks transfer in order to increase social acceptance (reduction of complaints) and targeted information and educational activities, in collaboration with the Slovenian side.

The last workshop described below, highlighted the need to support the breeders in the guard dogs purchase and integration in the flocks.

It started with a speech by a regional administration member who described the Large Carnivorous situation in Friuli Venezia Giulia region. Then she went on with the topic of compensation in following Large Carnivorous damages on flocks. She showed also a report about damages caused by Bear, Wolf and Golden Jackal (only one damage by this species). She went into detail speaking about the prevention and protection methods useful for shepherds and beekeepers. She argues that the most effective method for the protection of flocks is the presence of the shepherd along with the guardian dog. She spoke about the actual preventive methods (electrified fences, fixed electro welded networks, etc ...) illustrating their technical characteristics. During the debate, emerge that shepherds not be so agree with dogs' utilization because they represent a problem: they could attack tourists, local people and others dogs (hunting dogs and pet dogs). This is the main problem.

The second speaker, the president of The Black Wolf dog centre, presented an explanatory presentation about the differences between the "shepherd dog" and the "guardian dog". They are structurally different and these differences require different dog management strategies themselves. When a shepherd buy a dog, it is very important: he made be himself sure about the origin of the dog and its management in the first months of its life. Furthermore, it could be useful to set up a sort of information point as a support of pastors/shepherds during the important dog-training period.

At this workshop took part also the scientific director of the Project Wolf Ethology of the University of Studies of Teramo and the President of the Movement for the Protection of the Pastoral Community of Abruzzo (Mo.Tu.Ci.P.A.). They spoke about the guardian dog ancient origins and about their experience in the utilization of guardian dogs in Abruzzo as a protection from the wolf attacks on flocks. For their situations and conditions guardian dogs are very efficient as a prevention and protection method.

Some shepherds, exposed their point of view about guardian dogs' utilisation as protection method from Large Carnivores attacks. They said that to protect flocks from bear's attacks, the dog is not necessary; instead, it could be useful if there was wolves. The main problem in guardian dogs' utilisation is that they are aggressive and consequently the probability and the possibility that dogs attack other people. In addition, dogs are an extra-cost for shepherd.

Davorin Koren (Triglav National Park, referent of the Association Slovenian farmers spoke about his experience in Slovenia. In his area, are several problems that affect different stakeholders; their challenge, however, concerns the conservation of the landscape in the broadest sense and of fauna, and it is not so easy. It spoke about the flocks in the Upper Soča Valley: here the sheep remain on a high level without any protection and without the presence of the shepherd for all summer season and the environmental conditions not allow the use of prevention methods. Their problem is not predation in itself but the consequences that the presence of the bear on a flock then carries, or the sheep get scared, run away, disperse and arrive in areas where they should not go (such as near the centres inhabited). They are experimenting new methods and strategies to protect flocks from bears and wolves attacks but they not use guardian dogs.

The workshop it was very useful to highlight problems and doubts about guardian dogs' utilisation as a prevention and protection methods from potential Large Carnivorous attacks on flocks. The topic have to be deepened, gathering experience from other areas. A collaboration between stakeholders, politicians and all categories involved it is necessary in order to reach a common goal and enhance ecological connectivity.

During the conclusion of meeting, was highlighting the final objectives of the ALPBIONET2030 Work Package 5 project regarding the Regional Natural Park of the Julian Alps area:

- ✓ Implement a transhumance and conflict map in order to draw up some management and mediation strategies
- ✓ Develop a set of best practices for the management of conflicts arising in the area of interest

The initiatives taken by the Regional Natural Park of the Julian Prealps with its collaborators and together with the stakeholders, is aimed at building a network in which all involved protagonists can be activators and managers of operational tools for coexistence between man and nature. This set of activities certainly will go on in the years and can be an example to follow for other regional, national and transnational contexts.

Forgaria nel Friuli, 28 May 2018