

Paths and ICT apps for self guiding tours in Biosphere Reserve “Alto Molise”

Contact name

Paolo Di Martino

Institution name

Riserva M “Alto Molise”

Region & country

Molise Region - Italy



Summary

The management plan of the Biosphere Reserve set the development and valorisation of network path to visitors. The fruition of path network within the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserve “Alto Molise” has been implemented with a pdf guide for mountain biking, maps and a downloadable application for IOS and Android self guided tour.

The result has been extremely satisfactory in terms of interest shown, considering the number of tourists, the sustainable use of paths and the valorisation of Natura 2000 sites.



MAB Reserve Collemeluccion-Montedimezzo Alto Molise. Photo by EUROPARC Federation.

Background of the project

The paths identified were located mainly in only two forests areas within the Reserve, with an obviously limited of enjoyment for tourists and visitors.

- Expand the range of trails and mountain bike trails.
- Increase the offer to tourists of routes of **different difficulty level**, including in the Natura 2000 site. This was a need highlighted by questionnaires and interviews conducted in the Reserve in the past.

Solution and actions taken

Intensify communication and tourism offer by identifying some specific needs related to visitors requiring a greater knowledge of the Reserve territory.

ICT self guided tour has been implemented in IOS and Android operative system for smartphones and tablets: it is an offline (no cell and no data signal, only GPS) application realized to offer a smart guide to visitors. In the application, visitors can found information on 10 paths for trekking and/or mountain bike, point of interests, pdf guides.

The different paths cover around 117 kilometres with various difficulty levels. Each path is well described also in a pdf guided and visitors can download kml or kmz files to use with google earth app. The cost of building the app and realise the pdf guides is around 20,000 euros.

Other institutions or parties involved

Individuals and organizations involved:

- INTRAMONTES a.p.s., an association of young people in the area of Alto Molise devoted actively for the protection, enhancement, and promotion of the natural, scenic and cultural of the interested area;

- Molise Explorer: specialized guides;
- Farms and rural dwellings with a significant distribution of material downloaded from the website.

Results

The visitors, according to some indicators provided by the host operator (agro-tourism structures, B & Bs, rural dwellings) have appreciated and used even in small groups, the material and supplied applications. Around 1000 visitors per year use the ICT apps and ancillary guides covering seven municipalities (total area covered is around 15,000 hectares).

Challenges

Problems related mainly to the lack of widespread acceptance in the Reserve for specialized visitors and / or wishing to enhance individual experiences or in small groups.

Lessons learned

Apps in addition to the implementation of www.riservamabaltomolise.it site are an excellent form of promotion of the natural and cultural landscape the Reserve and can complement the offer dedicated to a sustainable and responsible tourism.

The apps can be downloaded using the following links:

Android: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=it.nextopenspace.assomab&hl=it>

IOS: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=it.nextopenspace.assomab&hl=it>

Contact name

Paolo Di Martino

Institution name

Riserva M "Alto Molise"

Website(s)

<http://www.riservamabaltomolise.it>