

## **AdriaClim**

Climate change information, monitoring and management tools for adaptation strategies in Adriatic coastal areas

Project ID: 10252001

# D.2.2.7. Texts for the leaflet and other material to be distributed during the info-days

#### PP6 – PI RERA S.D.

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| Project Acronym:                              | AdriaClim   |
|---|---|
| Project ID Number:                            | 10252001  |
| Prject Title:<br>adaptation strategies i      | Climate change information, monitoring and management tools for n Adriatic coastal areas                      |
| Priority Axis:                                | 2 - Climate change adaptation   |
| Specific objective:<br>measures tackling spec | 2.1 - Improve the climate change monitoring and planning of adaptation cific effects, in the cooperation area |
| Work Package Number: WP2                      |   |
| Work Package Title:                           | Communication   |
| Activity Number:                              | 2.2.7.  |
| Activity Title                                | Texts for the leaflet and other material to be distributed during the info-days                               |



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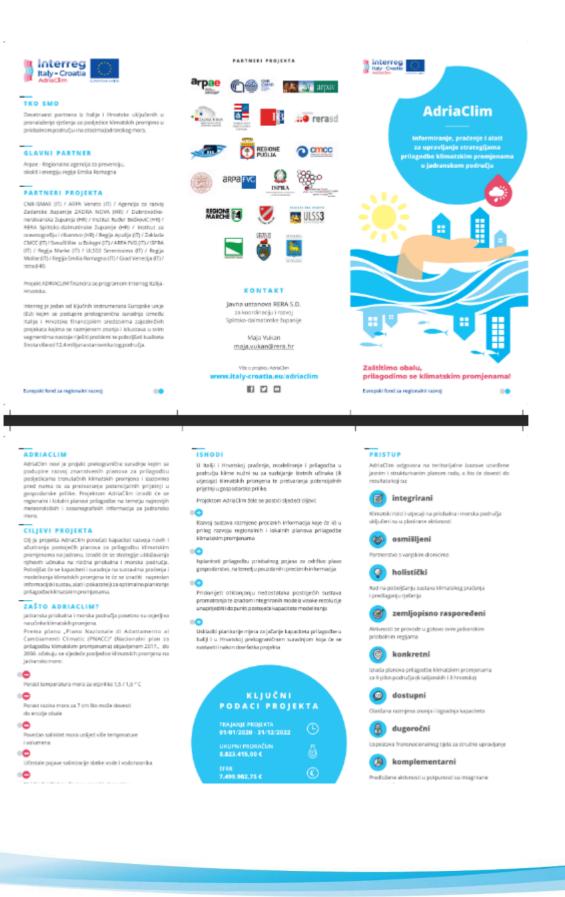


#### Texts for leaflet

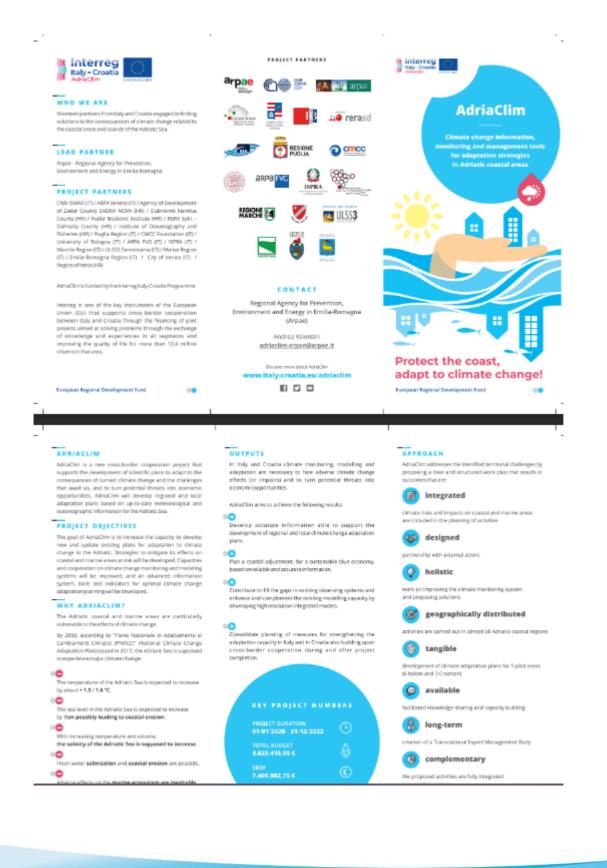














#### Text for other materials





# CORALS IN THE NORTHERN ADRIATIC SEA

THE FATE OF CORALLIGENOUS HABITAT IN THE FACE OF CLIMATE CRISIS





# KEY INFORMATION





Research on the topic of "Modeling distribution and fate of coralligenous habitat in the Northern Adriatic Sea under a severe climate change scenario" was conducted by the following scientists and experts: Maria Letizia Vitelletti, Elisabetta Manea, Lucia Bongiorni, Antonio Ricchi, Lorenzo Sangelantoni, and Davide Bonaldo.

The coralligenous habitat is widely distributed in the Northern Adriatic Sea and is known for being an important ecosystem services provider and a hotspot of biodiversity thanks to the many species composing it.



Multiple stressors are threatening the coralligenous presence and its functioning, the effects of climate change are recognized as being among the main hazards affecting it.

the safeguarding of this habitat is considered by two of the main recognized Directives designated for marine environment safeguarding:

- the Habitat Directive (92/43/EEC)
- the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC)



# ABOUT THE STUDY

This study employed Habitat Suitability Models (HSMs) to investigate the distribution of habitats which are known for their capacity in correlating the occurrences of habitats with the environmental patterns characterizing the area of interest.

HSMs are capable to predict the future distribution of habitats under climate change scenarios by employing ocean model simulations. This ability permits to foreseen the potential variation of suitable conditions for the habitat presence in the study area.

This study implemented two of the main known algorithms able to conduct HSMs: Random Forest and MaxEnt.

Even if differences in the suitability maps emerged, both Random Forest and MaxEnt predicted important variations in the ideal conditions for the presence of the coralligenous under a climate change scenario.

HSMs are useful tools in comprehending the potential evolution of areas if environmental alterations occur and can be employed in marine spatial plans in order to maintain and making coexisting human and environmental needs.





Marine ecosystems have a variety of functions:

- · they themselves contain a large portion of the world's biodiversity
- provide many fundamental benefits to humans through resources and activities that they support (such as: fishery, tourism and transportation) which greatly contribute to the whole of the world economy
- they considerably contribute to buffering the effects of climate change and in doing so stabilize the Earth's climate system.

At the same time they have proven to be rather sensitive to matters of climate change and the effects it has on processes that regulate the structure and functions of marine ecosystems such as: oceanographic, biogeochemical, and hydrological. More specifically since the 70s it has influenced or caused:

- · abrupt shifts in current climate patterns
- · alteration of frequency or intensity of environmental phenomena
- increase in temperatures
- ocean acidification

All of the changes mentioned can contribute to:

- · higher probability and frequency of catastrophic events
- mass mortality
- food webs alteration
- · abrupt shifts in the seasonality of ecological processes
- · decline in ecosystem diversity and productivity

Furthermore, shifts in marine organism populations, variations in species phenology, and interactions with serious impacts on ecosystem functioning have also been reported as cascade effect of climate change.

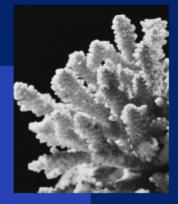
This issue has been recognized as a complex and important one, and were first time properly addressed in the Assessment Report (hereby AR) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 2007 (fourth one).

Global warming, as one of the main elements of climate change, and the temperature rise related to it are likely going to result in one of two options: marine species adapting to the new conditions or migrating into suitable ecological niches, causing significant shifts in habitat distributions.





#### HABITAT SUITABILITY MODELS (HSMS)





Habitat Suitability Models are developed to predict the distribution of habitat in response to a given set of environmental factors, are becoming important tools biodiversity management. Specifically their roles are:

- · identifying priority areas of conservation
- assessing the spatial distribution of suitable habitats for a species or a community to live within protected areas
- predicting sites at risk of invasion by exotic species
- investigating the distribution of possible diseases

These models can be grouped in two main categories:

- Mechanistic methods aiming at reproducing the ecological dynamics by explicitly describing (and formalizing into equations to be solved by mean of numerical techniques) their driving processes (e.g. energy fluxes, biological interactions, dispersal);
- Correlative methods aiming instead at reproducing the distribution of species and habitats by addressing their probability of presence (or absence) under prescribed environmental parameters (this method tends to be more efficient in complex systems)



MEDITERRANEAN

Mediterranean Sea, one of the world's biodiversity hotspots, has been predicted to become one of the most impacted by global warming. Many of its species may be negatively impacted by these changes, in particular, the growth and survival of calcifying organisms (corals and coralline algae), are threatened by the alteration of their optimal conditions.

Coralligenous outcrops are scattered on the sandymuddy seabed of the Northern Adriatic Sea (the northernmost region of the Mediterranean basin) and are locally known as tegnue, trezze or grèbeni.

They are observed to be associated with methane vents and hypothesized to be cemented by methane seeps mostly originating from microbial decomposition of fossil plant material, a characteristic that makes these outcrops unique in the Mediterranean Sea. They host highly diverse benthic communities, play a fundamental role as reproductive and nursery areas and attract and protect numerous demersal and pelagic fish species.

This habitat is subject to conservation by two Natura 2000 (N2K) sites: the SPA/SAC IT3330009 "Trezze di San Pietro e Bardelli"; and the SAC IT3250047 "Tegnùe di Chioggia". To accomplish the conservation goals set up by global and European strategies (the Convention on Biological Diversity, the European Biodiversity Strategy 2030, the Global Sustainable Development Goals), the N2K network will likely expand in the Adriatic Sea to.

Due to the potential effects of climatic change on this habitat, durable conservation efforts in the area and possible designation of new N2K sites, as well as expansion of the network into the Adriatic sea will be needed.





### POLICY FRAMEWORK

The coralligenous, is recognized as a priority for conservation under the Habitats Directive (EU, 1992; 92/43/EEC) and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (EU, 2008; 2008/56/EC) for its importance as a biodiversity hotspot.

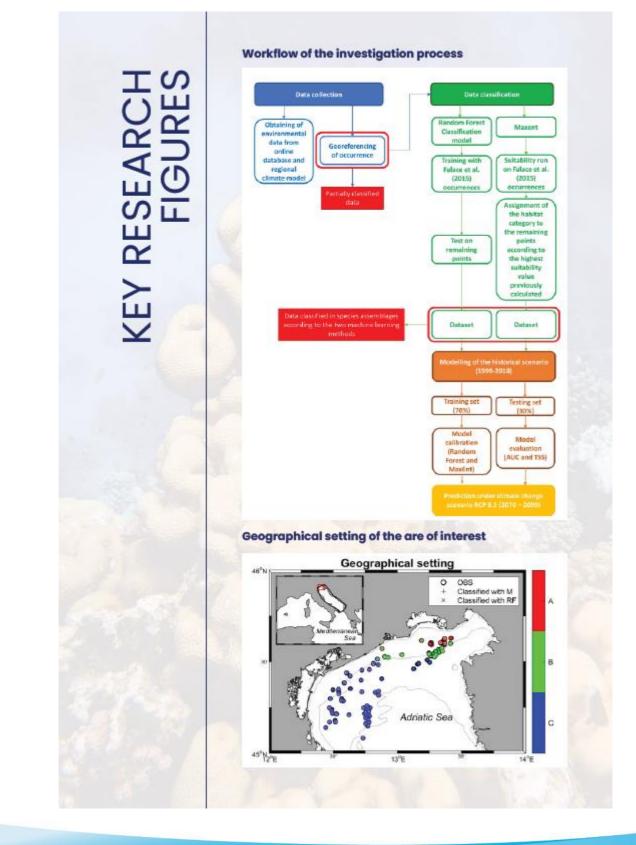
It is the result of a balance between bioconstruction and bioeroding processes carried out by the associated organisms. These complex biogenic structures, characterized by holes and cavities, provide different microhabitats, microenvironments, and ecological gradients that host numerous species, especially coralline algae, mollusks, polychaetes, madrepores, and macroalgae.

Dim-light, narrow thermal oscillations and low water turbidity (influencing the filtering capacity of organisms) are among the main environmental conditions determining coralligenous growth and the number of associated species.

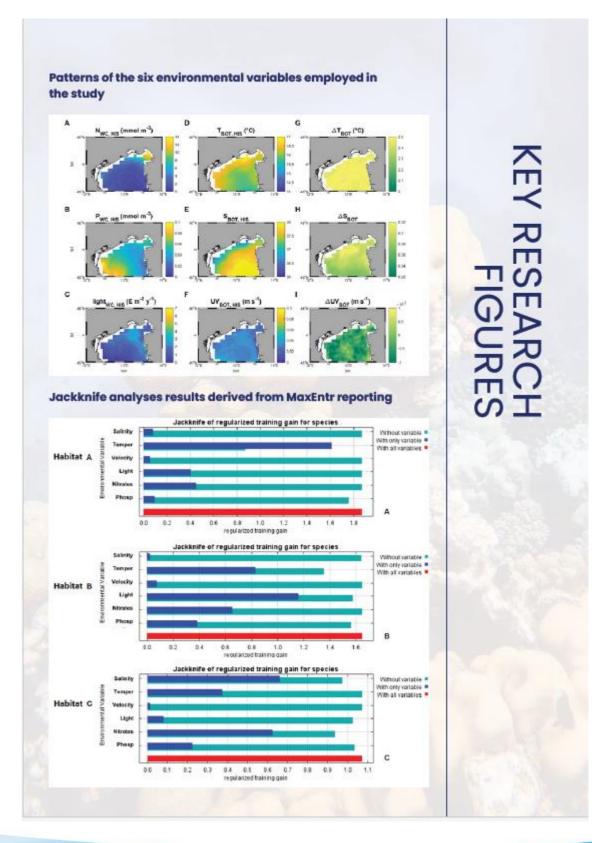
The United Nations has identified this habitat as an ecosystem services provider and has remarked the need for its protection due to its vulnerability to climate change. At the European level, the EU Council (Regulation n°1967/2006) reported guidelines for sustainable fishery practices in the Mediterranean explicitly referring to the need to protect coralligenous habitat.











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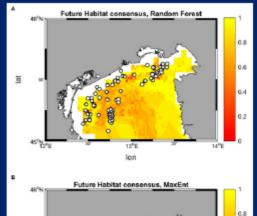


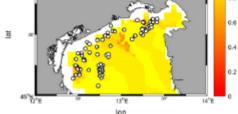
### **KEY TAKEAWAYS**

Through usage of HSMs we achieved a great step in estimation of distributions of potential habitat which allowed for informing conservation strategies. These modeling tools are of great benefit when it comes to supporting planning of environmental surveys as well as the organization of the management itself by suggesting suitable locations for further conservation efforts.

At present neither of the HSM applications proved to be of higher performing value than the other, which suggest that the best strategy for this type of research would be application of different approaches.

Consensus between projected habitat distribution in the sensitivity analysis and the SCE run for Random Forest and Max Ent





Both Random Forest and MaxEnt achieved satisfactory accuracy metrics for the analysis of coralligenous habitats in the Northern Adriatic Sea. However, a tendency of overfitting was reported in the former (together with its higher sensitivity to uncertain input data), which suggests that caution needs to be implemented when interpreting its results.



### ABOUT INTERREG ITALY -CROATIA STRATEGIC ADRIACLIM PROJECT

AdriaClim aim is to improve climate resilience in the cooperation area, by increasing the capacity to develop new climate adaptation plans and update existing ones and develop mitigation strategies based on high resolution, more accurate and reliable climate information focussed on the coastal and marine areas (threatened by risks such as sea level rise, sea temperature and salinity anomalies, coastal erosion and salinization of freshwater) and related economic sectors and ecosystem services.

AdriaClim aims at developing an Adriatic scale regional plus local scale for each Pilot integrated information systems composed by hydro-meteo-marine climatological databases (model scenarios and observation) and knowledgebased tools (e.g., indicators) for advanced dynamical implementation of regional climate adaptation plans relevant and accessible for entire the Programme area and Countries.

Additional information and updates on the AdriaClim can be found at <u>Italy-</u> <u>Croatia AdriaClim</u>

The entire research can be found at: <u>Modeling distribution and fate of</u> <u>corlligenous habitat in the Northern Adriatic Sea</u>



rerasd JAVNA USTANOVA ZA ROORDINACIJU I



#### Scenario for video - text

#### Climate crisis impact on cultural heritage and Adriatic habitats

| Time | Text  | Description/potential visuals  |
|------|---|--|
| 00:  | Aquileia in Friuli-Venezia Giulia region is one<br>of the largest and wealthiest cities of the Early<br>Roman Empire.   | Kao naratore staviti dva lika, mladića i<br>djevojku. Ona neka bude znanstvenica, a<br>on primjerice novinar ili student. I neka<br>budu zajedno naratori teksta. A kroz video<br>neka skupa prolaze kroz sve prizore koje<br>ćemo |
|      | Unfortunately, it was destroyed by Attila in the mid-5th century.   |  |
|      | Most of it still lies unexcavated beneath the fields, and as such it constitutes the greatest archaeological reserve of its kind.   |  |
|      | The patriarchal basilica, an outstanding<br>building with an exceptional mosaic<br>pavement, played a key role in the<br>evangelization of a large region of central<br>Europe. |  |
|      | However, today, Aquileia UNESCO site faces real threats due to climate crisis.  |  |
|      | The site is affected by weather and climate<br>related impacts, and scientists are<br>investigating the connections between<br>different hazards.                               |  |
|      | From sea lever rise, heavy rains, and ground water level.   |  |
|      | Most of Aquileia's area is already below sea<br>level.  | Tu staviti animaciju potopljenja primjerice<br>čitavog arehološkog nalazišta ili grada za<br>staviti fokus na ozbiljnost klimatskih<br>promjena.   |



| Embankments prevent lagoon water                |  |
|---|--|
| ingression, and several water pumps keep the    |  |
| area dry.                                       |  |
| Some water pumps are specifically devoted to    |  |
| protecting some of the deepest archaeological   |  |
| excavations.                                    |  |
| When heavy rains occur, some parts of the       |  |
| site can be flooded - including the Basilica,   |  |
| especially when at the same time sea storm      |  |
| surges impede pluvial water discharge.          |  |
| Sea level rise will exacerbate these problems,  |  |
| as ground water level will rise too and it will |  |
| become even more difficult to protect the       |  |
| excavations, the mosaics, the Basilica's bell,  |  |
| and tower's foundations from water related      |  |
| damages.  |  |
| There are also other climate-related impacts    |  |
| such heat waves affecting the archaeologists    |  |
| at the site, tourists or school groups visiting |  |
| the site.                                       |  |
| But did you know that cultural heritages        |  |
| under UNESCO protection are not the only        |  |
| thing under severe threat from the climate      |  |
| change?   |  |
| Complexes of shallow wetlands such as the       |  |
| Marano and Grado lagoon are facing              |  |
| significant threats.                            |  |
| The Marano and Grado are placed between         |  |
| the Isonzo and Tagliamento river mouths in      |  |
| upper Adriatic Sea.                             |  |
| They are extending for about 32 km and          |  |
| reaching up to 5 km width.                      |  |
|   |  |



| More than 16,000 are the hectares of ca<br>tidal flats, saltmarshes, islands, and estu<br>areas.  |   |
|---|---|
| The Marano and Grado lagoon is one of<br>largest and the most characterising Nat<br>2000 sites of the Friuli Venezia Giulia re  | ura Komisije i drugih tijela kako bi se pratila |
| The protected habitats (Directive 92/43<br>as Coastal lagoons, Grey and white dun<br>Mudflats and sandflats cover about the<br>of the lagoon.   | es,   |
| Moreover, other typical transitional had<br>as Mediterranean salt meadows and Se<br>beds are well represented. Estuarine an<br>largely present at the mouth of the rive<br>Stella, are close to the typically lagoon<br>habitats. | agrass<br>eas,                                  |
| Also, did you know that the diversity of<br>habitats is linked with great bird species<br>richness and a diversification in bird<br>communities?  | ;   |
| Over 300 bird species have been observ<br>many of which particularly protected.   | ed,   |
| The Marano and Grado lagoon is the mo<br>important migrating and wintering area<br>Italy for the Eurasian curlew, the Grey p<br>the Greater scaup, and the Bar-tailed go  | in<br>lover,                                    |
| The lagoon is also frequented by other<br>marine animals such as the Loggerhead   |   |
| Today, the lagoon hosts economic, tour<br>industrial services which continue to pro<br>a high degree of anthropisation in the<br>surrounding territories.   |   |



| This is amazing, but I am afraid that these  | Tu jedan od naratora (likova) treba reći ovo |
|--|--|
| lagoons will face huge problems due to   | kao uvod u završnu fazu teksta, a to su      |
| climate crisis?  | posljedice klimatskih promjena.              |
| Sea level rise is affecting Grado and Marano<br>lagoon in many ways. The physical<br>environment is being transformed and some<br>habitats and species are being reduced and                   |  |
| <br>are at risk of disappearing.<br>Sea level rise increases water depth, which in   |  |
| turn accentuates bottom erosion in the lagoon.   |  |
| Consequently, water does not need to flow<br>through tidal channels, preventing them from<br>being filled in by sediments.   |  |
| Silted channels need to be continuously<br>dredged to maintain access for fishermen's<br>boats and in general for navigation in the<br>lagoon, which has always been an important<br>waterway. |  |
| Increasing salinity is affecting some vegetal<br>and animal species that thrive in less salted<br>waters and that are therefore forced to move<br>or disappear.                                |  |
| Apart from sea level rise, also water<br>temperature is rising and this is a problem for<br>organisms adapted to cooler waters;  |  |
| Changes in the lagoon ecosystem and in the<br>trophic chain can also affect productive<br>activities as fishing and extensive aquaculture<br>vallicoltura.                                     |  |
| Some habitats and species could adapt by moving inland as sea level rises, but that's not  |  |



| possible because the lagoon boundaries have been hardened by embankments.  |   |
|--|---|
| This is a serious problem, and great example<br>of what climate change does to our<br>environment and different habitats.  | Ovo govori osoba 1 u videu (student ili<br>novinar) |
| We need to tackle the challenges we are<br>facing as soon as possible, and make sure that<br>people are aware of their responsibility to<br>protect our nature, and ecosystem.     | Ovo govori osoba 1 u videu (student ili<br>novinar) |
| Yes, indeed. You are right. That's why we are<br>here to educate our fellow neighbors, friends,<br>and policymakers to address the biggest<br>threat of our time – climate change. | Ovo govori osoba 2 u videu.                         |