

D4.2.4

SMART ACTION PLAN

For enhancement and promotion of the Green
Way of the Trabocchi Coast

June 2023

1. Introduction

1.1. An Overview of the project TAKE IT SLOW

1.1.1. Introducing TAKE IT SLOW

TAKE IT SLOW, funded under Priority Axis “Environment and cultural heritage” – Specific Objective 3.1 - Make natural and cultural heritage a leverage for sustainable and more balanced territorial development, has the overall objective to increase the prosperity and the green growth potential of the Mediterranean islands, coastline and inland across the project area as highly specialized TAKE IT SLOW destinations by boosting the cross-border partnership to achieve tangible changes in destination management.

The action aims at defining, managing and promoting the Adriatic Region as a smart, integrated, sustainable, accessible - throughout the year -, green and slow tourist destination in the Mediterranean region based on a common natural and cultural heritage that is preserved and valorized. It will maximize the impact of the Programme overall objective towards tangible results; meet the priorities of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth; strengthen the collaboration between institutions, entrepreneurs, educational institutions, the civil and private sector of the Adriatic region.

TAKE IT SLOW focussed on the potential that heritage carries of developing maritime and coastal tourism, in order to achieve economic, social and territorial cohesion of joint cross-border Adriatic tourism destinations, thus enabling regional and local stakeholders to exchange knowledge, develop and implement pilot actions and test new policies, products and services.

TAKE IT SLOW is committed to raising awareness of operators and final users on the importance of smart & slow tourism, as efforts for generating innovation in tourism

- in the field of accessibility (more accessible and user-friendly information)
- sustainability models (raising awareness on certification and understanding their aims, social

1.1.2. The Smart Action Plan of the Green Way of the Trabocchi Coast

According to Activity 4.2., the Smart Action Plan designed by the Abruzzo Region aims to outline the pilot area identified by the Region, namely the Green Way of the Trabocchi Coast, which is the best slow tourism solution to foster.

The paper aims to identify the activities needed to achieve the objectives and measures of a policy instrument. The Action Plans adopted within this project are linked to the five policy instruments defined within the previous steps, which include all value chains that create smart sustainable tourism products based on the recognized natural and cultural heritage through the concept of smart specialization.

The territory which is object of this analysis is the Green Way of the Trabocchi Coast. In the scope of the project, the Abruzzo Region carried out a pilot action focusing on improving the road signs of the approximately 50Km long cycle path along the abandoned railroad across the Costa dei trabocchi - which is about to be completed - being this the best slow tourism solution to apply across the territory. The road signs were placed in 6 municipalities along the cycle path, in order to achieve better accessibility to the most interesting tourism places of interest.

Moreover, the goal of the Region is to identify and obtain an ad-hoc “green” certification for the services provided by the pilot area of the Costa dei Trabocchi, which respond to extremely high-quality standards.

1.2. Background context - the Green Way of the Trabocchi Coast

Starting, from the analysis of the geographical conformation, landscape, environmental and archaeological resources, it is noted that the territory of the GAL COSTA DEI TRABOCCHI is characterized by a stretch of coastline over 50 km long whose appearance is varied, alternating stretches of cliffs and pebbly beaches with sandy shores that end towards the south in the gulf of golden beach that includes the coasts of Vasto and San Salvo. A common element is the presence of the trabocchi (particularly in the municipalities of San Vito, Rocca San Giovanni, Fossacesia, Torino di Sangro and Vasto): ancient constructions used for fishing and representing man's attempt to connect the sea with the land. It can be defined as a mosaic territory, beginning with its geographical aspect: in just a few kilometers one goes from the sea coast to the peaks of the central-eastern Apennines, in a continuous up and down between parallel valleys and rarely flat countryside. It is in this varied landscape, in which the extraordinary proximity of mountainous and hilly environments with those of the sea gives the prerogative of being the ideal place to embrace realities that are apparently not homogeneous among themselves, that dozens and dozens of small towns are located, places that enclose well-marked histories and traditions.

This condition implies the elongation of a virtual cross-section of the coastal landscape, to also affect the hill system, with the involvement of all the foothill areas that abut the sea. These areas are embellished with the rural landscape that centuries of care and maintenance, by man, has made "artificially natural." This landscape accompanies the predominantly cultivated territories of vineyards and olive groves preponderant in the coastal area.

Characteristic of the 9 municipalities bordering the coast is that of having a marina that is separate from the main residential core, so there is a double connotation, that of the seaside resort that is also, at the same time, a hillside village. It is significant to point out that this territory is unified and infrastructured by a highly innovative cycling tourism and soft mobility project such as the Via Verde della Costa dei Trabocchi, a cycle route that insists on the former railway track and connects with the larger "Bike to Coast" project. In this context, the integration between the coastal area and the foothill area, albeit in the differences that will be detailed more precisely in the following analysis, are a strategic development factor for both the area and the entire province of Chieti. In fact, if the coastal area is characterized by a growing anthropic pressure and a centrality of the tourist economy, with respect to which the processes of environmental protection are a fundamental factor, the foothill area is characterized by a progressive reduction of human presence and an economy in which the process of qualification of the food and wine product (in particular wine and oil, as well as productions of excellence such as tomatoes and fruit) has been reported as a strong factor of the local economy, with important results on the national and international level. This is an element that also physically marks the area: hills that slope gently toward the sea with large expanses of vineyards and olive groves.

2. Description of the challenge

2.1. The policy instruments

The Ciclovía Via Verde of the Costa dei Trabocchi, in the broader planning put in place by the Abruzzo Region with "BIKE TO COAST," can be a factor capable, if governed in a participatory way, to affect, in a multi-sectoral way, a wide range of sectors and supply chains, projecting the territory "Costa dei Trabocchi" in an important international dimension both from the point of view of tourism and related supply chains.

The strategy is based on certain assumptions, supported by both the characteristics of the territory and international market trends:

- The competitiveness of an area and of the sectors linked to territorial identity, primarily tourism and quality agrifood production, depend strongly on an adequate territorial narrative, a factor that if present can produce significant added value.
- Tourism, if the result of a unified local development strategy, can be an important cross-sectoral catalyst, capable of enabling a presence of the territory's products (distinctly agrifood and artisanal products that enjoy a typicality factor) on the global market.

It is believed that some peculiar characteristics of the territory allow the development of an SSL capable of strengthening the long-term development of the territory, in a dynamic of strong connection with other initiatives such as the FLAG "Costa dei Trabocchi," the 3 DMCs in the territory and the LAG "Maiella Verde," to have a significant impact not only in the territory of implementation, but on the entire vast area of the Province of Chieti, also providing for a strong coherence between the actions of the LAG Costa dei Trabocchi Strategy and cooperation actions.

Therefore, the participatory path defined to focus the areas of intervention in the following themes:

- Sustainable tourism;
- Development and innovation of local supply chains and production systems;

These themes, however, although they mark the boundaries of the proposed measures and actions, are understood by the partnership and the territory that participated in the definition of the Strategy as enabling factors for this and other initiatives underway at the provincial level, in a dynamic that aims to reduce fragmentation and maximize investments, both referred to the different articulations of the Structural and Investment Funds of the 2014-2020 programming and to directly managed funds, Territorial Cooperation and other opportunities for local development. It is intended to combine two processes that have already been underway for some time, which today, if supported by a strong local initiative, can impact the local economy for a long time:

- The area covered by the initiative will be infrastructured with a strong tourist attraction aimed at bicycle tourism, such as the Green Way of the Trabocchi Coast.
- We begin to see the first effects of territorial identification around the brand "Costa dei Trabocchi," which can be a strong factor of territorial identity on the international scene.

These two endogenous factors will help, through participatory and coherent action and a CLLD strategy, to build a narrative and positioning strong enough to affect the construction of imaginaries. In fact, territorial marketing is only incisive if it is: a) shared and acted upon by all stakeholders present in a given territory b) supported by a strategy and appropriate operations aimed at enabling the territorial network of the stakeholders themselves. This strategy will make it possible to maximize the impact that the launch of the "Green Way of the Trabocchi Coast" cycle route can have in the tourism and agri-food production sectors in the first instance and other sectors such as crafts and services in the second.

2.2. Understanding the project area cultural and natural heritage

Among the most valuable areas is the Lecceta di Torino di Sangro Nature Reserve, which covers 175 hectares, in the municipality of Torino di Sangro, south of the mouth of the Sangro River. The symbol of this reserve is the Hermann's Tortoise and the presence of mixed Mediterranean scrub in which holm oak is the most representative species. Punta Aderci Nature Reserve is a protected natural area included entirely in the municipality of Vasto and occupies an area of 285 hectares.

A stone's throw from the mouth of the Sinello River, Don Venanzio Forest is one of the last patches of lowland forest on the Adriatic coast, protected since 1999 with the establishment of a Nature Reserve.

The forest covers 78 hectares and consists of a series of gradually decreasing river terraces where it is possible to observe: Brasche, Ranucoli, Water Celery, Cress, and trees of rare hygrophilous species. By placing the architectural and cultural heritage in a market perspective, the area offers an important endowment; having to highlight the "resources".

Referring to the "RITCHIE AND CROUNCH MODEL" regarding "CORE RESOURCES & ATTRACTORS," understood as the motivating factors of tourist visitation, the heritage is divided as follows

PHYSIOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE: Seaside of San Salvo, Vasto, Casalbordino, Torino di Sangro, Fossacesia, Rocca San Giovanni, San Vito Chietino and Ortona/ Nature Reserves and forests along the coast and in the villages bordering it.

CULTURE AND HISTORY: Historical centers, museums, ancient buildings, archaeological sites. In particular in Casalbordino the Church of San Salvatore, in Fossacesia the Abbey of San Giovanni in Venere and the Church of San Donato, the Castle of Menteodoriso, in Ortona the Basilica of St. Thomas the Apostle, the Basilica Monastery of St. Mark the Evangelist, the Aragonese Castle; in Pollutri the Sanctuary of the Madonna dei Miracoli and the Towers of Ripa Teatina; in San Vito Chietino the archaeological site of Murata Bassa; in Vasto an articulated heritage such as the Cathedral, the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, the Sanctuary of Santa Maria Mater Domini, the archaeological site of Histonium and the three Castles.

MARKET TIES (understood as links with present markets) - If from the point of view of the presence of foreigners the links and spending capacity are fragile, from the point of view of religion and the community of Abruzzi people in the world, this parameter can be significant if properly enabled.

MIX OF ACTIVITIES: The range of possible activities within the area are related to summer bathing: camps to play various beach sports (these very well organized and with strong potential for growth and attractiveness); presence of a water park, Vasto's Aqualand; hiking; spearfishing. The Via Verde, for the development of cycling activities, is in the process of being built.

SPECIAL EVENTS: Most of the events that affect the area over the course of a season are festivals and events related to religious worship. To these is added the "Vasto FilmFestival" Another sector with strong attractive potential and under development is food and wine, both on the coast and inland. To be mentioned among the most important events that can be leading promoters of this sector are: "The month of brodetto alla Vastese" in June; "The festival of new wine and chestnuts" in the rural village of Treglio; All the festivals related to "ventricina" (typical local salami of our hill-mountainous territory), among the most important we find the one in the municipality of Scerni.

ENTERTAINMENT: although rich, as employment sector data show, entertainment requires a process of integration and reorganization to be usable by the tourist market, especially foreigners.

SUPERSTRUCTURE (understood as the presence of infrastructures capable of satisfying not only the needs of the native population, but also those of visitors) - From this point of view, the Green Way of

the Trabocchi Coast can become that superstructure capable of making the territory competitive in the cycling tourism market at the international level, a market that in Italy is worth 2.05 billion euros and in the top 10 European countries over 36 billion euros. With about 40 km of extension and an already deliberate investment of more than 10 mln euros, it can become an important attractor.

From the perspective of tourism and the activities closely related to it (catering and lodging), there is an expansive trend in the period from 2012 and 2016, for both services. The total number of establishments increased from 1085 to 1153. As might be expected, coastal municipalities, both in terms of location and size, gather more than 95 percent of the establishments, with Vasto, Francavilla and Ortona aggregating more than 57 percent. We are talking about an important market for the regional economy, which gathered more than 181,000 arrivals and 820,000 presences in 2014. A figure with a hard core, that of arrivals, since they were 190,000 in 2011 and 185,000 in 2008. On the other hand, the figure for presences, and therefore duration, changes from 934,000 in 2011 to 820,000 in 2014. Consequently, the average length of stay figure worsens from 4.9 to 4.5.

The foreign presence figure is central to this proposal precisely because of its weakness: only 23,000 foreign arrivals for 89,317 presences, with an average stay figure (3.8) even lower than the overall figure (4.5). From the point of view of tourism indicators, the averages for the total area (receptivity rate 0.11; tourist rate 5.1; receptivity density 33.3; tourist density 1597.9) do not tell of an area strongly divided between foothill and coastal areas, where municipalities such as San Vito Chietino, Vasto, Casalbordino, and Torino di Sangro, which have rates above the national average, correspond to other municipalities with practically zero parameters.

2.3. Defining key issues and challenges

Starting from the monitoring of the results carried out by GAL – Gruppo di Azione Locale Costa dei trabocchi, the developed masterplan is set as an outcome, the achievement of three fundamental goals:

- Initiate processes for economic development;
- enhance the qualities of the landscape and local resources;
- ensure an increase in quality for living environments.

Homeopathic, punctual, repeated interventions, defined by the deep meaning of places, become the figure of the transformation and emergence of the typicality and intrinsic value of the Via Verde landscape, for a product capable of initiating processes that lead to the development of a tourist and local economy based on landscape quality and sustainability. The master plan has as its content the set of public and private, tangible and intangible actions necessary to direct the area toward a scenario of evolution that tends toward the construction of an attractive territory for visitors, of high quality for inhabitants and consistent with the historical cultural value of the Trabocchi. The following chapter translates the instances gathered from the reading and interpretation of places into operational actions for the initiation of evolutionary processes capable of emphasizing the qualities present and building new landscapes under the banner of territorial typicality. Two modes are proposed for the development of the master plan objectives:

- The implementation of projects that act directly on places with physical and material interventions;
- the deployment of concertation or governance actions that manage processes.

The master plan defines types, directions, modalities, characteristics, timeframes, outline costs and actors to be involved in the development of the identified actions. The degree of definition provided by the master plan remains general and such as to identify guidelines for the development of project actions. Necessarily, the master plan will have to be followed by a generation of point projects to ensure the enforceability and implementation of what is envisaged.

From the reading of the Via Verde landscape, criticalities, qualities and excellences and typicalities emerge. The actions


identified are divided into actions for:

- the resolution of critical issues;
- the enhancement of qualities and excellences;
- the strengthening of typicality.

Resolution of critical issues

The chapter is devoted to describing projects and actions that can positively evolve the contrast to date represented by the nature-built conflict. In particular, attention is paid to the coast, defining ways to resolve the criticality represented by the alternation between parks, beaches, natural areas of great value and unhistoric and poorly structured built conglomerates. It was chosen to use the

element of vegetation as the main operational tool to give continuity to what is a distinctive character of this area and of the entire Abruzzo region. Widespread greenery becomes, in the strategies proposed by the master plan, a connotative element of the Via Verde and the Theatine coast. Hedges, borders, row or scrub trees used according to criteria of framing focal places or as a visual barrier on incongruities and dissonances, are the elements indicated as a common thread for the development of redevelopment projects for the coast. A second area addressed is that of areas where the Adriatic Highway transits along inhabited hamlets. In this case, the theme is to lessen the impacts of vehicular traffic flow, indicating solutions to ensure safety for cyclists and pedestrians.



3. General goals and measures for the future

Enhancement of quality and excellence

The Theatine coast is rich in valuable natural areas and elements of historical-witness value. The master plan proposes for these areas, actions aimed at active protection with the intention of making the protected assets become pivots for the management of transformations. It assumes the principle of accommodating and integrating areas under protection into careful and sustainable development dynamics. That is, measures are proposed that, rather than removing assets from the possibility of intervention, provide for the possibility of intervention using mild and suitable types of interventions. Thus, types of materials, colors and construction methods are defined that are suitable for preserving the asset and its context of insertion and integrating it into the actions planned for coastal development. The desire is to make the protected assets become a pivotal element and example for the management of transformations.

Construction and strengthening of typicality

The purpose underlying the actions envisaged by the master plan is to strongly counteract in the Via Verde area the tendency toward uniformity and homogenization to global logics, investing instead in strengthening what is representative and characteristic of the area. The area affected by the Via Verde, in the objectives of the master plan, will have to become an identity place and deeply descriptive of what are the historical and testimonial characters of the place. The planned new portions of the area, the provision of services and the network of connections will be built to speak a language representative of the region and this portion of the area.

4. Action Plan Table

Table 1 – Costa dei Trabocchi Action Plan Tables

N°	Actions	Holders of implementation	Indicators	Target value	Implementation cost	Execution timeframe
1. increase the knowledge of professional linked with the green mobility						
1.1	Technicians of green mobility though ITFS modules	TECSEO	Number of professional trained	20	30.000€	2024-2026
2. Maintenance of the territory and management of the flow of the different kind of users and visitors (residents, bike tourists, families, etc)						
2.1	Improvement of the parking areas close to dismissed train station	DMC Costa dei Trabocchi	Number of parking managed	1000	500.000€	2023-2026
3. Improvement of data analysis to obtain direct evaluation from visitors of the area						
3.1	Collection of digital tracks related to Costa dei Trabocchi Coast	ITIS Tito Acerbo	- N° comments, tag and other web informations gained into social media	50.000	10.000€	2023_2024

5. Conclusion

The Smart Action Plan presented in the previous chapter is very ambitious and rich in activities. It is mainly based on the Strategy developed by the LAG Costa dei Trabocchi.

The results want to open the area of Costa dei Trabocchi to new potential visitors increasing the involvement of local operator of both, inner and sea areas.

Important will be the cooperation among different stakeholders, entities, and civilians, together with representatives of civil society, also trying to guarantee occasion of match and discussion among them