

# Report on examples of accessibility and promotion of Adriatic natural and cultural sites

## PP8/SVEM

Deliverable Number D5.3.1  
Final Version of 06/2023  
WP5 ACCESSIBLE NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE  
SITES

Project Acronym: TAKE IT SLOW  
Project ID Number: 10255547  
Project Title: Smart and Slow Tourism Supporting Adriatic Heritage for Tomorrow  
Priority Axis: 3 Environment and cultural heritage  
Specific objective: 3.1 Make natural and cultural heritage a leverage for sustainable and more balanced territorial development  
Work Package Number: 5  
Work Package Title: Accessible natural and cultural heritage sites  
Activity Title: Improvement of accessibility and promotion of Adriatic natural and cultural heritage sites  
Partner in Charge: LP/DNC & PP7/ER  
Partners involved: PP8 - SVEM  
Status: Final  
Distribution: Public  
Date: 30/ 06/2023

## Summary

INTRODUCTION .....	2
AREA DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT .....	3
THE CAMALDOLESE FOREST CODEX, AN INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE .....	4
FONTE AVELLANA CULTURAL HERITAGE INTERPRETATION CENTRE .....	5
1. Mission .....	5
2. Objectives .....	5
3. Concept design .....	6
CROSS BORDER EFFECT .....	6
RESULTS .....	7
Results obtained: Improved accessibility .....	7
Results obtained: Improved promotion .....	8
Achieving the expected results .....	8
Problems and difficulties .....	8
Completion of the activities .....	8
Follow-up actions .....	9
Pictures .....	9

## INTRODUCTION

TAKE IT SLOW project is designed to establish, manage and promote Adriatic Region as smart, integrated, sustainable, accessible, year-round, green and slow tourist destination of the Mediterranean based on accessible, protected, valorised, promoted tangible and intangible joint natural and cultural heritage of its islands, coastal, inland and rural Adriatic. With realisation of project activities within 42 months, Dubrovnik-Neretva County (lead partner), 11 project partners and 1 associated partner will trigger high-quality level of services and products of tourism value chain through smart specialisation concepts stimulating innovation, knowledge, competitiveness, networking and cross-border partnership processes.

Within the project, PP8/SVEM increased the accessibility of the Forest Codex of Camaldoli, which contains 850 years of rules and regulations on forest and land management. The Codex is a historical paradigm of a balanced relationship between man and nature and represents a concrete model of sustainable development in the Apennines.

PP8/SVEM developed a package of activities with the aim of fulfilling a cultural-educational function and ensuring maximum accessibility and transparency of the contents and ethics of the Codex.

In collaboration with the Monastery of Fonte Avellana, located in an inland area of the Marche region, PP8/SVEM has set up an information, education and visitor centre that combines information, promotion and cognitive insights on the Camaldoli Forest Code and other topics that constitute the attractive resources of the surrounding area.

## AREA DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT

The strategic area of the SVEM pilot action is called "Appennino Basso Pesarese and Anconetano", which includes two provinces, Pesaro-Urbino and Ancona, and nine municipalities for a total of 34.000 inhabitants, of whom six are associated to the Unione Montana Catria Nerone, member of the Local Community of Practice. The area was identified on the basis of criteria of spatial proximity and density of socio-economic and institutional relationships. The relations between the pilot area and the strategic area are modelled on the basis of the transport and communication systems and the location of the main settlements and services.

The upper altitude range of the strategic area is characterised by the highest level of naturalness with a forest predominance. The main reliefs are the Catria (1700 mt) and Nerone (over 1500 mt) mountains. The area has a strong tourist vocation, in particular linked to outdoor activities both in the winter and in the summer season. Most of the inhabited centres are located in the intermediate altitude range, rich in historical and architectural heritage. Here the territory is scattered with hamlets, castles, and villages. The natural and historical resources are the basis of the area's tourism economy that, even if it is growing, is not evenly distributed among the municipalities. Finally, the agriculture sector prevails in the lower altitude range. The landscape features small plots, annual and permanent crops and farmhouses. In recent years, a multifunctional interweaving of relationships has developed between farms, agritourism, hospitality and culture.

The location of PP8/SVEM pilot action is the Monastery of the Holy Cross of Fonte Avellana, located on the wooded slopes of Monte Catria (1701 m.), in Serra Sant'Abbondio (Marche Region), in the highest part of the Central Apennines between the Marche, Tuscany and Umbria. It dates back from the late Xth century and it belongs to the Camaldolese Congregation of Monks of Fonte Avellana.

In place of the original monks' cells scattered around a chapel, many stone buildings were erected there from the XI century onwards. They included the cloister, the church with crypt, the Chapter house, an extraordinary example of Scriptorium, the monks' cells, the guest quarters, and the library - all precious monastic buildings clustered around the massive bell tower and home to the monks of Camaldoli to this day.

Mentioned by Dante Alighieri in Canto XXI of the "Paradiso", the Monastery today comprises a large square that leads to the church, upgraded to the status of Minor Basilica by Pope John Paul II in 1982 when he visited Fonte Avellana at the end of the celebrations for the Millennium of its foundation. The church, with a Latin cross footprint in Romanesque style with occasionally pointed arches, features a raised presbytery standing above the crypt dating back to the X century. This is the oldest section of the architectural complex, with the cloister and the Saint Peter Damian

Scriptorium dating back to the XII century. Here, the amanuensis monks followed the Rule of Saint Benedict regarding their daily work, transcribing ancient Greek and Latin texts onto parchment and creating precious illuminated manuscripts, using the sunlight shining through the wide single lancet windows in the high barrel vault of the building.

The Monastery of Fonte Avellana is visited every year by thousands of tourists, as a symbol of history, spirituality and culture.

## THE CAMALDOLESE FOREST CODEX, AN INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

By the XIV century, Fonte Avellana had turned into a socio-economic power in central Italy and a unique example in the history of Italian agriculture. At the same time, the Monastery of Camaldoli, in Tuscany, has always stood out for its sustainable relationship with and use of the Apennine Forests.

Examining the almost millennial management of the forests and agricultural resources operated by the Camaldolese Monks of Fonte Avellana and Camaldoli has revealed an intangible asset that holds an ethical value as basic identity.

The relationship between man and the environment has produced the complexity of the heritage summarised in the so-called Camaldolese Forest Codex, for which the forest is not only a good to be kept, but to be shared.

The Codex - comprising over 850 years of regulations on forest and land management - represents a tangible example of multifunctional, flexible and sustainable management of environmental resources. This extraordinary ability to listen and respond to the territory created a profound environmental ethical system. As an ethical value it becomes the foundation of an Immaterial Cultural Heritage. The intangible value is not an abstract notion; however, it relates to social and cultural survival. The set of rules contained in the Codex are declined in an existential relationship, involving the local population into a vital reciprocity that developed social welfare and natural sustainability. This management was, and continues to be, an integral part of the life of local populations, monks and the territory.

## SVEM PILOT ACTION:

### FONTE AVELLANA CULTURAL HERITAGE INTERPRETATION CENTRE

In the facilities provided by the Congregation of Monks, located at the Monastery of Fonte Avellana, SVEM – in synergy with local stakeholders, museum professionals and the monastic community – has designed and established a CULTURAL HERITAGE INTERPRETATION SITE as venue to showcase the Codex and increase its accessibility, aimed at visitors and local communities.

#### 1. Mission

SVEM's pilot action aims to narrate the Codex, as a local cultural identity, and the invisible parts of natural resource management, trying to reconstruct the relationship between mountains and humans. The mission is to cultivate and safeguard the ethical dimension of the Forest Codex through a broader process of conservation and accessibility including the following dimensions: dissemination, popularisation, presentation and interpretation of the Codex.

The starting point was to define, in synergy with LCP'S members and other key stakeholders, museum professionals, external experts, and the Congregation of monks of Fonte Avellana:

- What to preserve?
- How to preserve it?
- How should it be presented to the public?

#### 2. Objectives

The Strategy Plan of the pilot action was designed on the basis of the following main goals and lines of interventions:

1. INTERPRETATION: to raise public awareness and enhance understanding of the Forest Codex in the need for its protection and conservation.
2. PRESENTATION: arrangement of interpretative information, physical access and interpretative infrastructure at the cultural heritage site in order to communicate the meaning of the Codex to a range of audience through documented contents.
3. INTERPRETATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE: to design a physical facility and related installations utilised for the purposes of interpretation and presentation of the Codex, including those supporting interpretation via new technologies.

### 3. Concept design

The main mode of display and presentation of the Codex is through audio-visual content (including recorded interviews/videos and digital and interactive displays), with fewer material objects.

This design not only fulfils the centre's purpose of "musealising" and safeguarding the Codex, but also allows ICH practitioners (i.e. tourists) to actively interact within the content museum.

Based on this concept, in the long term, training activities for schools/universities on the topic of sustainable land and forest management will be offered in order to promote intergenerational memory sharing and dialogue.

## CROSS BORDER EFFECT

The choice of SVEM's pilot action was linked to the fundamental spiritual, cultural, economic and social role that the Camaldolese Congregation of the Order of St. Benedict has played for centuries, not only in Tuscany and Marche, where the most important hermitages and monasteries still exist today, but also in other areas of the Italy-Croatia cooperation area.

Monasticism in general was an important phenomenon in the development of Western rural civilisation in the first centuries of the second millennium and in the definition of the landscape as we know it today. The Camaldolese presence, through a network of hermitages, monasteries, abbeys and places of worship, was the main point of reference for a large number of local communities linked to the territory and the use of its agricultural and forestry resources. This phenomenon gave rise to self-sufficient models and economies whose presence can still be felt today in the landscape, culture and local history.

In order to make accessible an intangible heritage of exceptional historical and cultural value, such as the cognitive and experiential heritage of the Camaldolese Monks of Fonte Avellana, Sviluppo Europa Marche, in collaboration with the Camaldolese Congregation and the other public and private members of the Local Community of Pratiche, has created the "FONTE AVELLANA CULTURAL HERITAGE INTERPRETATION CENTRE", which is open to local communities, schools and visitors in general.



The Centre enriches the tourist attraction of Fonte Avellana and the surrounding area, already a spiritual, cultural and natural destination in the Marche Region, and a stopover on various itineraries, including inter-regional ones, which are being rediscovered and promoted by the Region itself, whose tourist revival is also taking place through this form of religious and cultural tourism, which has been attracting an ever-increasing number of travellers in recent years.

The strategic plan of the pilot action designed by SVEM for the realisation of the Centre is considered a replicable good practice in cross-border contexts where there are intangible cultural assets to be enhanced and promoted to a wide range of tourists.

## RESULTS

### Results obtained: Improved accessibility

A Centre for the Interpretation of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Camaldolese Monks in Fonte Avellana was created to facilitate the presentation and valorisation of the heritage and to offer different interpretations for an active enjoyment of the heritage itself, using presentation and animation tools. The work has focused on the “in situ” restoration and the greatest possible contextualisation of the heritage itself.

The Strategy Plan of the pilot action was designed on the basis of the following main goals and lines of intervention: raise public awareness and enhance understanding of the Forest Codex and the need for its protection and conservation; provide interpretative information, physical access and interpretative infrastructure at the cultural heritage site in order to communicate the meaning of the Codex to a wide audience through documented contents; design a physical facility and related installations used for the purposes of interpretation and presentation of the Codex, including those supporting interpretation through new technologies.

Before the opening of the Centre, SVEM improved the pilot action with the collaboration of the Centro Studi Avellaniti, which carried out a study to define a series of actions to enhance and implement the accessibility of the "Fonte Avellana Heritage Interpretation Centre".

## Results obtained: Improved promotion

Creation of an information, education and visitor centre that combines content, promotion and cognitive knowledge about the Forest Codex of Camaldoli and the attractive resources of the surrounding area. The Centre was set up in an existing building next to the Monastery of Fonte Avellana, and was transformed into an experience space that can be accessed and enjoyed by all, in order to allow visitors to develop a deeper understanding of the Codex and the practices of sustainable land management. It was built as a permanent digital exhibition that explains in a simple and accessible way the Codex and the history and mission of the Monastery and the Congregation. The centre is supplied with media technology that uses an attractive mix of different communication methods necessary to arouse visitors' curiosity and keep them as motivated as possible.

A dedicated brochure was produced to promote the site, and SVEM is involved in many public events to present its pilot action as good practice in the interpretation and promotion of intangible cultural heritage.

## Achieving the expected results

The activity achieved the expected results defined in the planning phase. Due to the floods that struck the Marche region in September 2022 and May 2023, the official inauguration had to be postponed to June 2023.

## Problems and difficulties

SVEM didn't encounter any particular problems during the realisation of the activity. The only difficulty was to make such a high cultural intangible heritage accessible to a public with different cultural backgrounds.

Due to the flood that struck the Marche region in September 2022, the Fonte Avellana site was not reachable from September to December 2022. The "Fonte Avellana Heritage Interpretation Centre" was therefore reopened to the general public in April 2023, in agreement with the Camaldolese monks of Fonte Avellana.

## Completion of the activities

All the activities were completed by the end of June 2023.

## Follow-up actions

In order to complete the work that led to the creation of the Interpretation Centre, and as already foreseen in the planning phase of the Pilot Action, SVEM initiated a collaboration with the Centro Studi Avellaniti, based at the Monastery of Fonte Avellana, in order to define accompanying actions for the promotion and extension of the accessibility of the intangible cultural heritage of the Camaldolese monks.

The Centro Studi Avellaniti constantly monitors the use of the Centre for the Interpretation of the Intangible Heritage of the Camaldolese Monks by visitors, assessing their appreciation as well as any problems/limitations in the use of the interactive tools that may be highlighted by the public.

## Pictures









