

Participation in the enlarged Biosphere Reserve

Participation means that the citizens can play an active role in the cooperation between the community living in the Biosphere Reserve and the institutions. The citizens will take part in the planning of the management and enhancement of the area and, thus, they will be directly involved in the enlargement of the MAB Reserve and the implementation of a sustainable land management model.

Both residents and non-residents can send their warnings (descriptions, photographic material and indication of the places) via e-mail, specifying whether it concerns biodiversity conservation, land management practices and traditional knowledge.



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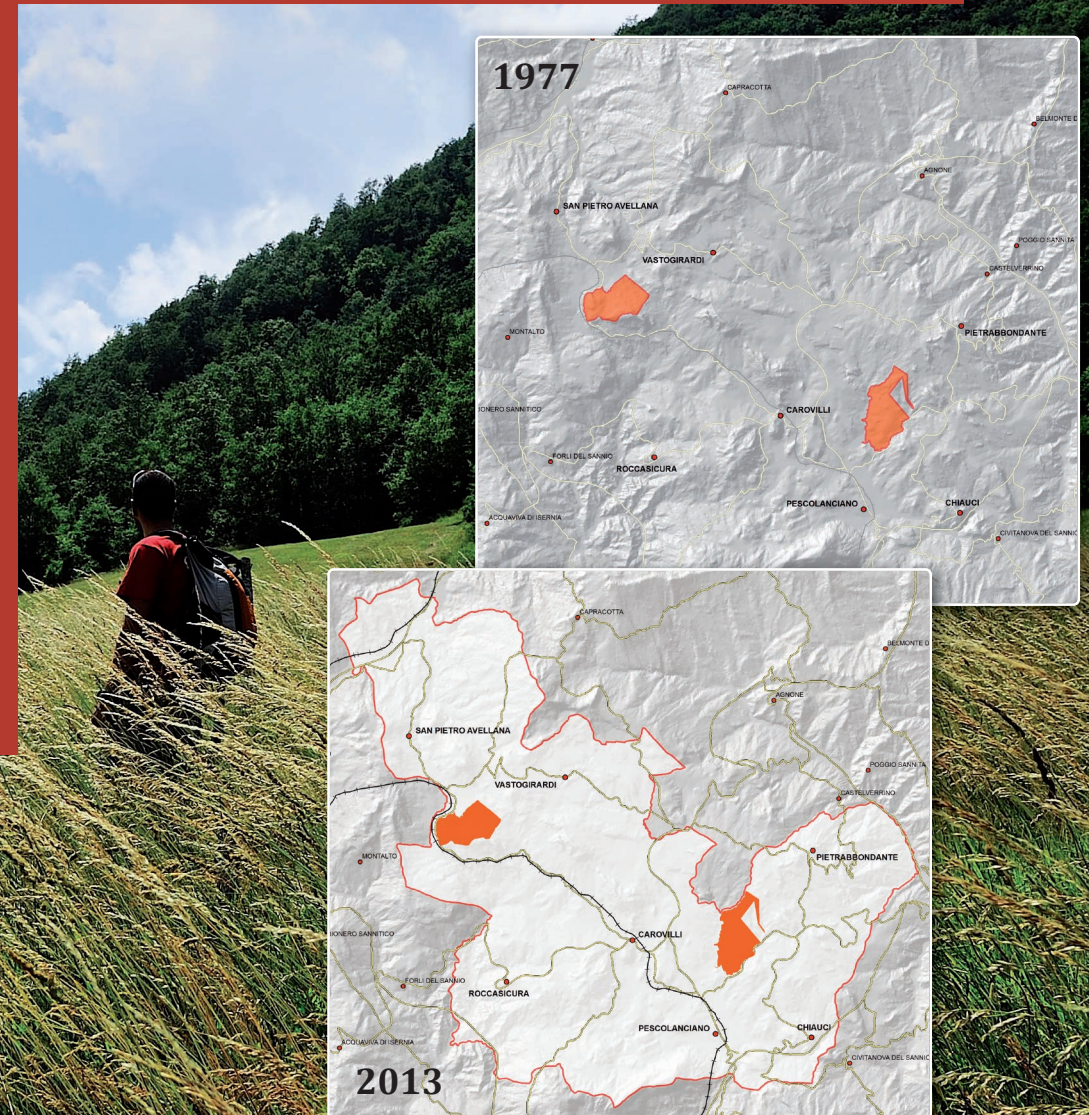
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DEL MOLISE Photo and graphics: M. Minotti, Consortium ASSOMAB Alto Molise archive, C. Giancola, P. Di Marzio.

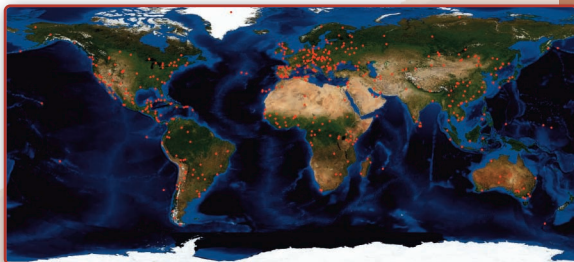


The enlargement of the Collemeluccio-Montedimezzo UNESCO-MAB Biosphere Reserve



UNESCO "Man And The Biosphere" (MAB) Programme

The Intergovernmental Programme "Man and the Biosphere" (MAB) was launched in 1971 with the aim of contributing to the maintenance of a long-lasting balance between people and their environment through the implementation of models of sustainable development for the local communities. The agenda of the MAB Programme is defined by its main governing body, the International Co-ordinating Council in concertation with the broader MAB Community. The World Network of Biosphere Reserves currently counts 621 (9 of them are located in Italy) biosphere reserves in 117 countries all over the world.



The enlargement Project



The two forests (Natural Reserves of Collemeluccio and Montedimezzo) designated in 1977 by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry as Biosphere Reserve do not follow the criteria of division into homogeneous areas (zoning) that are today requested by the MAB Programme. As a result, it is necessary to enlarge the area of the Reserve, which will include the territories of the seven neighboring municipalities, and define its zoning.

The enlargement of the Reserve will bring to the implementation, according to a voluntary process, of the **first homogeneous area of sustainable development in Molise**, enhancing both the environmental characteristics and the socio-economic activities.

In order to implement the enlargement and the zoning of the Collemeluccio-Montedimezzo UNESCO-MAB Biosphere Reserve, the **Consortium Asso (Area di Sviluppo Sostenibile - Area of Sustainable Development) MAB Alto Molise** was established in autumn 2006. So far, members of the Consortium are the municipalities of **Carovilli, Chiauci, Pescolanciano, Pietrabbondante, Roccasicura, San Pietro Avellana, and Vastogirardi**, the **University of Molise**, the **Territorial Office for Biodiversity of Isernia of the National Forest Service** and the **Molise Region**. All members of the Consortium share the priority objectives of submitting a new nomination for the MAB Reserve and of putting into practice a **new model of sustainable management**.



How will the enlarged Reserve meet the criteria for the MAB designation?

Thanks to the presence of a variety of ecosystems representative of the biogeographic region to which they belong and the various human activities, through the conservation of biodiversity, by fostering opportunities for the implementation of effective models of sustainable development at local level and easily replicable, by having an appropriate surface to ensure the three functions of a Biosphere Reserve.

What can be the development models of a sustainable tourism?

Eco-tourism will be enhanced through the development of activities aimed at the valorization and implementation of nature trails whose topics will be:

- the cultural landscape of transhumance and drove roads;
- historical, cultural and anthropological ruins;
- the characteristics of vegetation, flora or fauna;
- the products of animal husbandry (meat and cheese).

What will be the future of agroforestry and pastoral activities?

The strengthening of the traditional practices of forestry, agriculture and animal husbandry will be achieved through:

- the creation of a short supply chain of forest systems that is also used for the production of biomass heating;
- the recovery and characterization of local varieties of agricultural species and their conservation *in situ* by custodian farmers;
- the preservation of plant germplasm *ex situ* (at the Germplasm Bank of the University of Molise located in Pesche);
- the origin and quality certifications of local products through appropriate legal recognition (PGI, PDO, etc.).

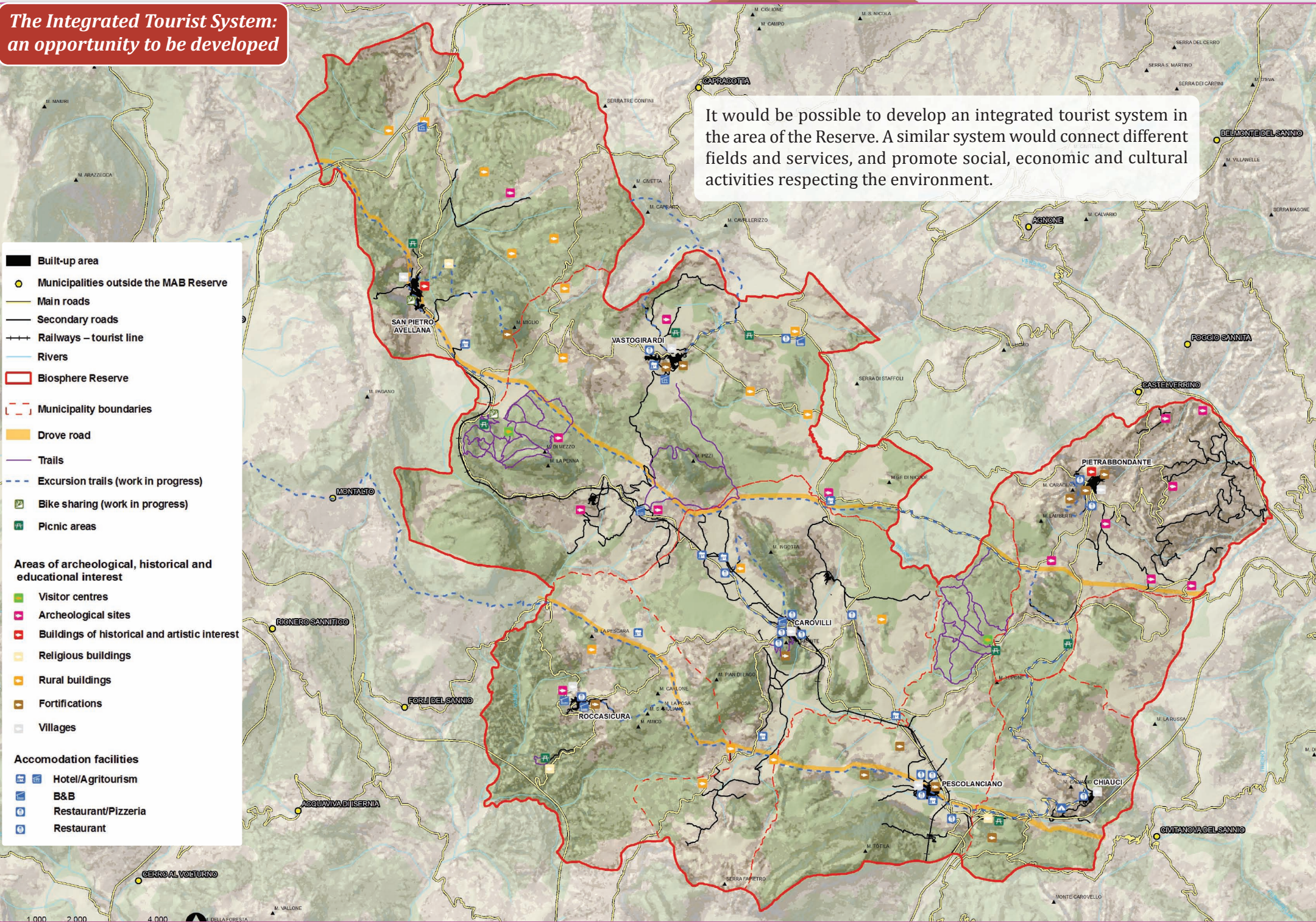
What might be the sources of funding?

There are no sources of funding available for the MAB Programme from UNESCO, and this is the reason why the Reserve must necessarily and independently look for other possibilities. However, it may be possible to access European funding (e.g. Life +, ERDF, EAFRD, Smart Cities), national funding and the Regional Planning 2014 -2020 of the Molise Region.

**The Integrated Tourist System:
an opportunity to be developed**

It would be possible to develop an integrated tourist system in the area of the Reserve. A similar system would connect different fields and services, and promote social, economic and cultural activities respecting the environment.

- Built-up area
 - Municipalities outside the MAB Reserve
 - Main roads
 - Secondary roads
 - Railways – tourist line
 - Rivers
 - Biosphere Reserve
 - Municipality boundaries
 - Drove road
 - Trails
 - Excursion trails (work in progress)
 - Bike sharing (work in progress)
 - Picnic areas
- Areas of archeological, historical and educational interest**
- Visitor centres
 - Archeological sites
 - Buildings of historical and artistic interest
 - Religious buildings
 - Rural buildings
 - Fortifications
 - Villages
- Accommodation facilities**
- Hotel/Agritourism
 - B&B
 - Restaurant/Pizzeria
 - Restaurant



Well-established tourist attractions are: the **Astronomical Observatory “Leopoldo Del Re”** (San Pietro Avellana, about 2 400 visitors per year), the archaeological site of the **Italic Sanctuary** (Pietrabbondante, 12 300 visitors per year), the **Natural Reserves of Collemeluccio and Montedimezzo** (23 000 visitors per year).

Tourist attractions to be improved are: the **Italic Temple** (S. Angelo – Vastogirardi), the **Samnitic Fortifications of Monte Ferrante** (Carovilli), **Monte Caraceno** (Pietrabbondante), **Monte S. Onofrio** (Chiauci), **D’Alessandro Castle** (Pescolanciano), **S. Onofrio’s Church** and **S. Onofrio Forest** (Chiauci), the **Sanctuary of Madonna of Vallisbona** (Roccasicura), the **Hermitage of S. Amico** (San Pietro Avellana), the **Drove roads Castel di Sangro-Lucera** and **Celano-Foggia** and their artifacts (Taverna della Valle, Chiesa di S. Domenico), etc.



What is the adopted zoning?



Core area (5.4% of the total area, in red on the map): it is strictly related to the conservation, it mainly includes the forests of Collemeluccio and Montedimezzo plus the state forests of “Pennataro”, “Monte Capraro”, “San Martino and Cantalupo”.

Buffer zone (48.5%, in yellow): according to the *Madrid Action Plan* (2008), in addition to the function of protection of the core areas, the buffer zones can have a particular intrinsic value related to the maintenance of an anthropogenic, biological and cultural diversity and they may have important functions in order to connect larger areas.

Transition/cooperation area (46.1%, in white): it includes other areas intended to traditional agricultural and forestry practices, these areas are specifically related to activities of socio-economic development and population centres.

