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Cohesion policies and landfills

Cohesion policies are participating in the Italian government's efforts aimed at remediation of the waste landfills - subject or potentially subject - to EU infringement procedures. In particular, national financings of the Development and Cohesion Fund (FSC) invest in interventions for the reclamation and adaptation of sites affected by the presence of waste that causes environmental damage, contamination of soil and aquifers and that puts in health danger citizens living nearby.

OpenCoesione dedicates a DataCard to the theme related to the landfills following closely the first public appointment in the process of creating a "[National network for civic monitoring of European funds for the environment and sustainable development](#)" that took place on 16th April 2021 in the online event format.

It is a project coordinated by [Lunaria](#) and [Monithon](#) with the financial support of the Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy of the European Commission and the support of the Sbilanciamoci! Campaign, of the [Department of Culture, Politics and Society of the University of Turin](#), of the Metropolitan city of Turin, of [Europe Direct Turin](#) and also of [OpenCoesione](#). On Friday, April 16, 2021, from 14.00 to 17.00, an online initiative was held, free of charge and open to all, during which Monithon provided a specific training on civic monitoring of cohesion policy funds in relation to the environment and sustainability. This event gathered around 170 online participants - students, journalists, researchers, public administration representatives - and the team of At the School of OpenCoesione that highlighted the examples and best practices of civic monitoring activities carried out in Italian schools since 2013.

"Infringement" landfills on OpenCoesione

On the OpenCoesione portal, are monitored 38 interventions relating to the reclamation of 36 landfills and subject to EU infringement procedures: since 2017, the resolution of environmental problems related to these sites has been entrusted to an [Extraordinary Commissioner for the Reclamation of Abusive Landfills](#), the General of the Carabinieri Giuseppe Vadalà. The total public cost for the 38 projects is approximately € 50.25 million of euro and the progress of the activities is measured also in payments amounts for about 17.92 million of euro at 31 December 2020 (data taken from the OpenCoesione focus dedicated to "Remediation", [published for the first time in April 2021](#)). The commissioner became necessary due to the non-compliance of the entities to which a deadline was assigned by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers to carry out or complete the interventions necessary to adapt the landfills which in December 2014 had led to a sentence of conviction for the Italy of the Court of Justice of the European Union. Failure to adapt - or delay in making it - entails the payment of a large pecuniary sanction to be borne by the Italian Republic, a penalty initially calculated at 42.8 million euros for each semester of delay.

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The activity implemented by the Commissioner aims at a progressive reduction of the penalty, by intervening on the individual landfills assigned, which initially were 81.

After 4 years from the appointment of the Commissioner (March 2017), the work carried out led to the exit from the procedure of 48 illegal landfills. The last seven are those reclaimed and accepted by the European Union in the request for "expulsion" that Italy presented in June 2020, [accepted in March 2021](#). For each situation resolved, Italy has a saving on the penalty: 400,000 less for each semester for each landfill containing hazardous waste; 200,000 (always per semester) for any other landfill containing non-hazardous waste, made up to standard.

Cohesion policies, civic monitoring and the environment

Before describing 5 stories, related to projects financed by cohesion policies and related to landfills subject to infringement proceedings, we present the assumptions and objectives of the national civic monitoring Network of European funds for the environment and sustainable development promoted by Monithon and Lunaria.



RETE di **MONITORAGGIO CIVICO** dei **FONDI UE** per l'**AMBIENTE**

"The major public interventions on the environment are a fundamental lever for solving problems and criticalities that are at the heart of the action of many associations, problems that in many cases are addressed thanks to projects financed by cohesion policies' EU funds, especially in the South of Italy" says Luigi Reggi, coordinator of Monithon (www.monithon.eu/it), an independent civil society initiative that allows anyone to check how public funds are spent, partner of OpenCoesione.

Civic monitoring means verification, control, collection of ideas and proposals by civic communities towards public decisions, starting from the data and information made available by the responsible administrations. It is a form of active participation in public life, of conscious citizenship. As Luigi Reggi underlines: "These actions can trigger a useful and informed debate in the media. The added value of civic monitoring is the possibility of having many sentinels in the territories, who are able to go into detail on the thousands of projects that are financed. We believe it is essential to analyze the major interventions but also the projects that have a local and hyper-local character, activating individual communities or local association offices. Through an application we will give the possibility to discover 'where the projects are'. Monithon, with Lunaria and Sbilanciamoci! has undertaken the commitment to provide a clustered transversal reading of what is happening in the territories".

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"Civic monitoring - concludes Reggi - is part of a virtuous circle of exchange and debate, which already involves students and local and national administrations. The ultimate goal is to improve the effectiveness of the financed public actions and reply to the needs of local territories, of those who live there and think that the quality of the environment and of life can improve".

Local and punctual interventions, such as those on illegal landfills in police stations, which often fall within the territory of small or medium-sized municipalities.

The projects

[PLAN FOR PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIONS AIMED AT THE MISE OF THE FONTANA SPORTS FIELD IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF AUGUSTA, WHICH IS IN THE SIN DI PRIOLO](#)

Campo Fontana, located at the entrance to Augusta (SR), is the city's sports field, built in the 1960s. The facility - which hosted the football matches of the Megara 1908, the local team that also played in Serie D in the 1970s - was closed in 2006, after the



presence of pyrite ash was found underground - processing residue in the production of sulfur and sulfuric acid which contains toxic substances, in particular arsenic. The pyrite comes from the Syracusan industrial area: Campo Fontana falls within the Site of National Interest (SIN) of Priolo. The ash was used for the construction of the sports field, between the end of the 60s and the beginning of the 70s.

In the summer of 2020, the project aimed at safeguarding the area, was approved and foresees the new modalities for the disposal of pyrite ashes and the arrangement of rainwater in the square in front of the football field, as well as the complete construction of sports facilities. The goal is to restore the area and its natural social features. By the means of the European Fund for Regional Development, as part of the [ROP CONV FESR SICILY](#), the preliminary investigation plan aimed at making the Fontana sports field emergency safety was financed with approximately 128 thousand euros. In the spring of 2021, the Commissioner announced the launch of the procedure for the award of the remediation work.

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ABUSIVE LANDFILLS - MUNICIPALITY OF AMANTEA

The one in Grasullo in Amantea, a municipality in the province of Cosenza, in Calabria, is the former municipal landfill where municipal solid waste (MSW) was disposed for years. It occupies an area of approximately an area of approximately 16,000 square meters. The latest operations launched, during 2020, are those of integration to the characterization of the site: they aim to understand in more detail the composition of the "buried" waste in the area.



The waste selection, analysis and verification procedures began under the coordination of Maj. Aldo Papotto, Head of the Expenditure Planning and Economic Control Division of Commissioner Vadalà's task force. The operations will make it possible to define a definitive executive project for the safety of the former landfill. The excavation operations of trenches are aimed at a more selective understanding of the quality of the waste present on the site: the first analyzes have highlighted the presence of waste in an advanced state of decomposition and crumbling.

Cohesion policies intervene in Amantea with a total funding of 2.97 million euros, drawn from the national resources of the Development and Cohesion Fund within the [REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM \(PRA\) FSC CALABRIA](#).

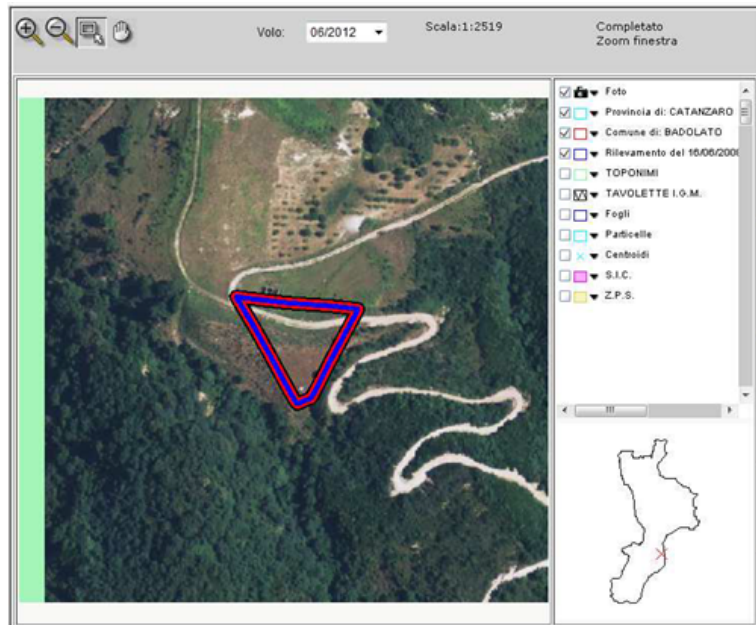
Video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jr09sHzfP_M

ABUSIVE LANDFILLS - MUNICIPALITY OF BADOLATO

Badolato is a town of around 3 thousand inhabitants in the province of Catanzaro. Badolato is a medieval village located on a hill a few kilometers from the Ionian coast and nearby Serre Calabre park. The one in San Martini is the former municipal landfill. During 2020, the design study phase by the University of Sannio - Scientific Department for the implementation of environmental restoration that involves the use of phytoremediation was completed. The project takes advantage of biofitorimmediation

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techniques (i.e. plants and microorganisms) in order to fight and eliminate the pollution of the landfill soils by returning the environment to its natural destination. The treatment with natural elements (microorganisms and native plant species) aims to bring the site back to its original environmental conditions, recreating the original flora and bringing the fauna back to the site in order to safeguard the health of the area by restoring the natural habitat. The project for the San Marini di Badolato landfill involves the inoculation of a microbial consortium (mycoretic fungi and flower growth promoting bacteria) through the spreading on the ground, without removing the vegetation cover present in the intervention area.



The intervention is funded by the cohesion policy with 1.02 million euros, out of the national resources of the Fund for Development and Cohesion within the [REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM \(PRA\) FSC CALABRIA](#).

[MUNICIPALITY OF BENEVENTO - PERMANENT SECURITY WORKS AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION OF THE RRSSUU LANDFILL DISPOSAL LOCATED IN PONTE VALENTINO - LOT II](#)

For almost two decades, the Ponte Valentino landfill has collected the unsorted municipal solid waste of Benevento, before being closed because it is saturated. The plant was managed by the Municipal Urban Hygiene Company - in abbreviated form A.M.I.U - founded in 1978 to deal with waste collection and manual street sweeping. Before the reclamation interventions the situation of this landfill was considered particularly critical, having received large quantities of waste without being equipped with any environmental protection (there was, for example, no bottom waterproofing system or leachate drainage systems and of biogas).

The leachate leaked from the landfill had a de-fertilizing action on the surrounding land (in the industrial area), while special hazardous and non-hazardous waste has also been deposited in the landfill over the years. The Commissioner's action documented leachate infiltrations into the water table, with the presence of very high values of

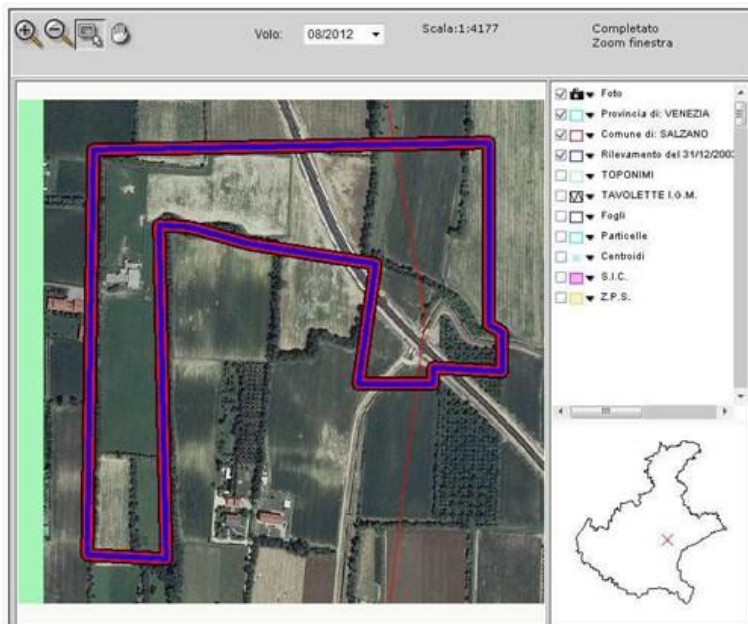
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heavy metals (arsenic, nickel, lead and chromium). Following the characterization plan carried out on the site, permanent safety measures and environmental restoration of this landfill were arranged. These interventions involved the waterproofing of the landfill body, a waterproof capping, a biogas monitoring system, a leachate capture system and environmental monitoring. The special waste containing asbestos found during the permanent safety works has been properly disposed of.

Cohesion policy guaranteed € 3.10 million from the resources of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) under the [POR FESR CAMPANIA](#) programme. Following the interventions, starting from June 2018 the interventions carried out achieved the environmental objectives and therefore the landfill was removed from the list of landfills in infringement proceedings.

[RECLAMATION WORKS FORMER LANDFILL S.ELENA, VIA S.ELENA SALZANO \(VE\)](#)

The area of the former Sant'Elena landfill, which occupies an area of 50,000 square meters, was exploited until the end of the seventies, for the extraction of clay, resulting in the formation of depressions, later filled with solid urban waste and industrial. The landfill remained in operation from 1979 to 1985. In 2002, the State Forestry Corps conducted a census of illegal landfills in the national territory, which also includes the former Sant'Elena di Robegano landfill.



In 2009, a first limited permanent safety intervention was carried out at the north-east corner of the landfill, on the occasion of the construction of a motorway junction connected to the "Passante" works.

The Veneto Region, in 2015, intended to entrust "in house" to its company, Veneto Acque S.p.a., the management of the remediation of the former landfill. Veneto Acque, after having previously investigated the environmental characteristics of the site, in 2016 developed the final and executive project of the safety intervention, which involves the contermination of industrial waste through the construction of a

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perimeter plastic diaphragm immersed in clay up to at a depth of about 7 meters, the laying of a clay roof covering on the entire affected surface and the execution of remediation in situ by injecting oxidizing substances that allow the removal of contaminants. The reclamation project provides for a loan of € 5.73 million from the Development and Cohesion Fund as part of the [EXTRAORDINARY PLAN FOR THE REMEDIATION OF ABUSIVE LANDFILLS IN THE VENETO REGION](#). On June 18, 2020, the acceptance by the European Commission of the deportation request dossier was communicated.