

English abstract

Technical Intervention Sheets in favour of wetland birds

Action A.11 of LIFE Gestire 2020, coordinated by LIPU and primarily conducted by the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences of the University of Pavia, focused on identifying critical issues for waterfowl populations in Lombardy. The action was focused to three ecological groups: 1. Sternids and birds of river pebbly shores; 2. Birds of internal wetlands; 3. Colonial herons. For each of these three groups a field survey, aimed to assess the population status and the main conservation threats, was carried out in 2017. In the case of sternids and ardeids, the results of these field investigations were added to those of the long-term monitoring that University of Pavia leads on these species since 1972.

The field survey step was followed by those of data analysis, which focused on the species of the highest conservation interest (included in Annex 1 of the EU Directive 2009/147, 'Birds Directive') and aimed at examining the relationships between the probability of occurrence and environmental conditions at different spatial scale. Successively, the information obtained in the two previous steps was integrated with those available in the bibliography to contextualize the results in the framework of the most current scientific knowledge.

The main purpose of action A.11 is to propose concrete actions in favour of the bird's community of Lombardy wetlands. Interventions that will be mainly realized in 2018-2020, within the C15 action of LIFE Gestire 2020 but potentially also beyond the LIFE, in case that local management authorities (i.e. Parks) will use these guidelines for future interventions.

With the aim of focusing the future environmental interventions in the areas of greatest conservation importance or in those exposed to the greater environmental risk, an on-line survey was opened to facilitate the collection of a list of critical situations from management entities, local associations or citizens. In the same questionnaire, it was also possible to bring the example of practical environmental interventions of proven success which would be suggested as 'best practices' for future interventions. The step of the questionnaire culminated in a meeting day on May 26, 2017 realized at the University of Pavia.

The last step of action A.11 was eventually dedicated to ordering the vast amount of information collected in a series of free access technical sheets, reporting the practical details of the suggested interventions and a non-exhaustive list of the sites of priority intervention. The sheets are oriented to a

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practical use and designed to be accessible to the widest possible audience, thus avoiding excessive technicalities or explaining them exhaustively when necessary.

The sheets were organized and subdivided into homogeneous ecological categories with respect to the need for intervention. Therefore, in some cases a technical sheet was dedicated to a group of species (Sheets 1 and 4); while in others to a single species (i.e. Sheets 2 and 5). Other technical sheets were focused on the long-term conservation of crucial environmental typologies (Sheet 6). Finally, four sheets propose a series of interventions for the environmental improvement in some specific Natura 2000 sites (Sheets 3, 7,8,9).

The series of interventions proposed in the sheets does not claim to be exhaustive, as its would be impossible for an instable environmental context as wetlands, naturally exposed to irregular environmental dynamics and highly sensitive to human and climate change impacts, so that critical situations may evolve or emerge in a short time. However, we are confident that managing entities, associations or individual citizens will find in these cards a number of ideas eventually enhancing the conservation of wetlands birds in Lombardy and beyond its borders.

List of the technical sheets:

- Sheet 1: Sternids and birds of river pebbly shores
- Sheet 2: Common tern in restored natural areas
- Sheet 3: SCIs 'Lago di Alserio' and 'Lago di Pusiano' (CO)
- Sheet 4: Heronries
 - Sheet 4a: Heronries on isolated trees
 - Sheet 4b: Heronries of typical wetlands
 - Sheet 4c: Heronries of the riverbeds
 - Sheet 4d: Heronries of hill woodlands
 - Sheet 4e: Heronries of planitial woodlands
 - Sheet 4f: Reedbeds heronries
 - Sheet 4g: Heronries of restored quarries
 - Sheet 4h: Heronries of urban parks
 - Sheet 4i: Heronries on tree cultivations
- Sheet 5: Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

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- Sheet 6: Conservation of wetland macrophytes habitat
- Sheet 7: SCI/SPA 'Palude Brabbia' (VA)
- Sheet 8: SCI/SPA 'Pian di Spagna e Lago di Mezzola' (CO-SO-LC)
- Sheet 9: SPA 'Il Toffo' (LC)

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Regione
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