

# BDC

Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II

## 15

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**Cultural landscapes:  
evaluating for  
managing the change**



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## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR CULTURAL LANDSCAPES: A CASE STUDY OF HERITAGE PRESERVATION AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

*Gabriella Esposito De Vita, Stefania Ragozino, Maurizio Simeone*

### Abstract

In order to discuss partnership models and action protocols to be implemented in regeneration processes for enhancing the relationships slow tourism-cultural landscapes-urban regeneration, a case study approach has been chosen. The paper focuses on a purposely-selected experience in Naples (Italy): the Marine Protected Area of La Gaiola. In this distinguished example of waterfront area, a group of activists is developing an integrated system of initiatives for protecting cultural and environmental resources by promoting compatible uses for education and tourism purposes. The case study has been developed by interacting with the local stakeholders involved in social, environmental and economic activities in order to address the topic of developing effective partnerships for sustaining successful regeneration processes according to the needs of promoting cultural tourism and intelligence in tourism.

Keywords: cultural landscapes, urban regeneration, civic activation

## ATTIVAZIONE CIVICA E PAESAGGIO CULTURALE: UN CASO DI TUTELA DEI BENI CULTURALI E SVILUPPO TURISTICO

### Sommario

Per affrontare il complesso tema dei modelli partenariali e dei protocolli d'azione per favorire le relazioni tra turismo, rigenerazione urbana e paesaggio culturale si è scelto di sviluppare un caso studio che consentisse di discutere i diversi aspetti della questione: l'Area Marina Protetta de La Gaiola ed il suo contesto di elevato pregio archeologico, paesistico e naturalistico. In questo notevole contesto litoraneo, un gruppo di attivisti sta sviluppando un sistema integrato di iniziative per proteggere le risorse culturali ed ambientali, promuovendo usi compatibili di natura turistica ed educativa.

Il caso studio è stato sviluppato interagendo con gli stakeholder locali impegnati in attività di respiro sociale, ambientale ed economico allo scopo di interpretare le dinamiche relazionali che hanno sostenuto il processo di rigenerazione e di fruizione compatibile, finalizzata ad un turismo consapevole.

Parole chiave: paesaggio culturale, rigenerazione urbana, attivazione civica

## 1. Introduction

Attractiveness in tourism destination can be considered the result of integrated approaches of urban regeneration, dedicated facilities as well as smart tourism management.

In vulnerable contexts, characterised by relevant environmental resources and cultural heritage, sensitive tourism approaches need both to preserve the context and to increase compatible uses and hospitality capacity. Catalyst areas of the contemporary city are, frequently, those of a recognized value in terms of density of monumental districts as well as those with astonishing landscape and the coexistence of cultural heritage and environmental values.

Far from being an elite activity such as the Grand Tour experiences at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, cultural tourism can be considered a leading economic sector growing over 4% per year (UNWTO, 2015). This mass-movement for tourism purposes may threaten places sensitive from the environmental and historical perspective, challenging the needs for preservation of the cultural stratification (Trillo, 2003). Nowadays, the awareness about the necessity of exploiting cultural and environmental assets for supporting and enhancing local development needs to be integrated with the protection of genuine cultures and environmental resources. To combine local development, tourism attractiveness and cultural preservation, integrated approaches to tourism management are needed.

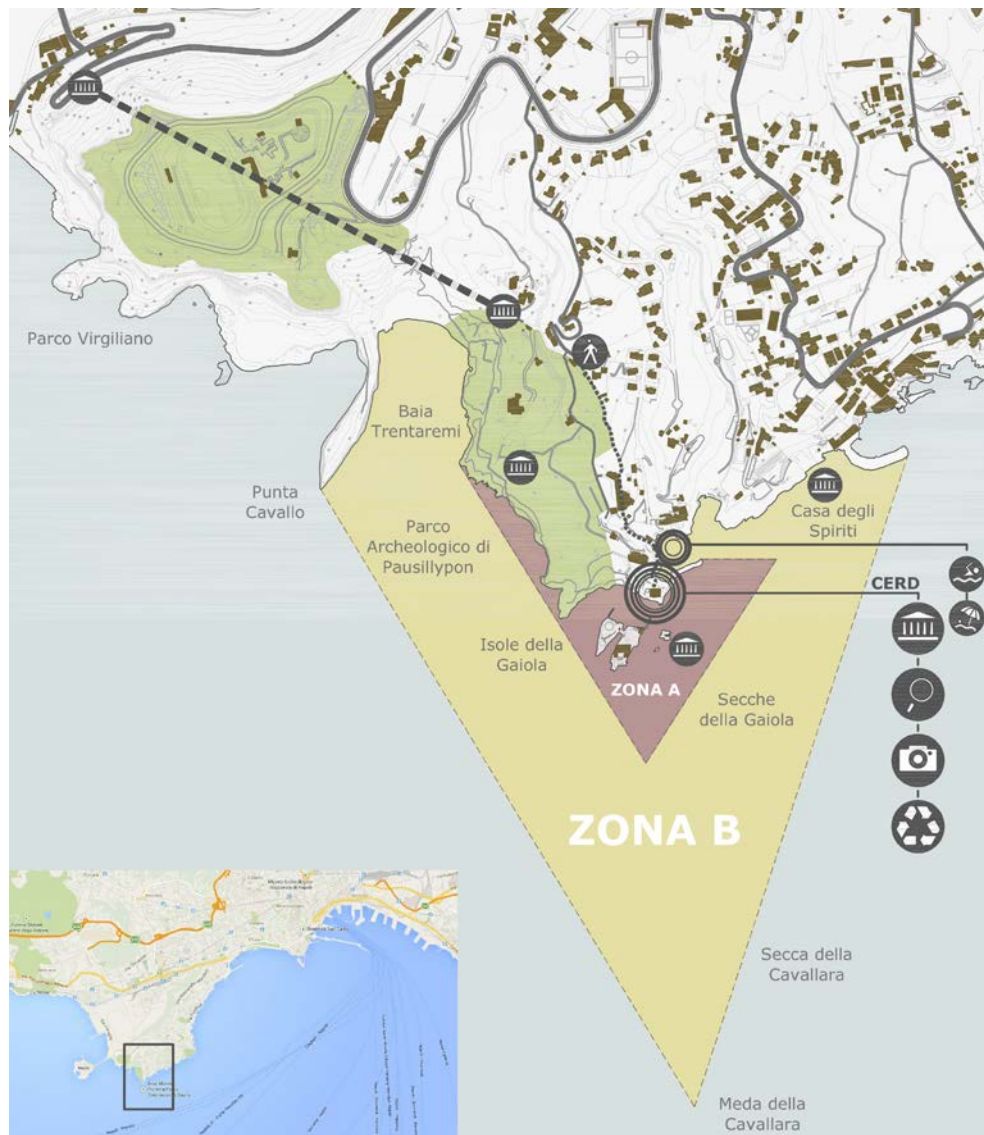
Regarding the urban planning perspective, competitiveness in tourism can be supported by the activation of proper synergies among cultural heritage valorisation, place-based entrepreneurship, civic engagement and novel marketing strategies (Edwards *et al.*, 2008). If the urban environment represents the material and cultural milieu and the humus for nourishing the tourism industry, appropriate strategies for both regenerating, protecting and valorising potential tourism catalyst need to be enhanced (Wood, 2001). By combining cultural heritage preservation, urban regeneration initiatives, accessibility and services enhancement, sustainable hospitality, positive impacts on both everyday life quality and tourism attractiveness have been observed in urban contexts from different geographical areas (Dickinson *et al.*, 2011). The common framework of each element of this circular process should be the community engagement and the promotion of civic actions in terms of bottom-up regeneration initiatives, based on local resources and vocations (Rubin, 2000). In specific contexts in which cultural heritage, environmental assets and anthropic pressure coexist, such as the urban coastal areas, opportunities and risks of tourism-oriented initiatives are both maximized (Bassett *et al.*, 2002; Fusco Girard, 2013). The coastal environment, even in presence of dedicated protection rules, have been considered a vulnerable context due to the complex relationships between underwater life, human settlements (Zoppi, 1993; Carrada *et al.*, 2003) as well as tourism and leisure activities and places (Craig-Smith and Fagence, 1995).

The tourism industry is one of the main agents in managing the coastal zones with environmental and cultural values, producing high impact on the status quo. This impact has been quantified in terms of economic indexes within the framework of studies on local development and has been assessed in terms of environmental vulnerability of a complex eco-system (Bassett *et al.*, 2002; Cerreta and De Toro, 2012; Rigillo and Cervelli, 2014). Two different perspectives of the same challenge: to combine the need of attracting and retaining qualified economic activities such as tourism and the need of protecting cultural heritage and environmental resources. In literature, the need of identifying tourism experiences compatible to the environmental protection issues to be promoted in vulnerable

contexts is well recognized (Dickinson *et al.*, 2011; Knox, 2005). The high density of uses in urban coastal areas and its impacts on biosphere, water cycle and environmental metabolism ask for dedicated policies of both development and protection (Rigillo and Cervelli, 2014; Rigillo, 2013; Whiteman and Cooper, 2011). Nevertheless, the lack of resources for protecting environment and cultural heritage, due to the economic crisis, suggests developing specific management practices oriented at promoting culture-led activities: cultural tourism supplies, educational initiatives, and place-based regeneration strategies. The pivot of these long-term strategies has been recognised in the community engagement, in order to enhance the activation of small-medium social, economic and cultural initiatives rooted in the sense of local identity related primarily to place (Ballet *et al.*, 2007; Ostrom *et al.*, 1999). If «we consider envisioning to be a collective process that concerns futures for which citizens are themselves responsible» (Albrechts, 2010, p. 12), it provides the mobilization of ideas and commitments. In strong identitarian contexts, communities could activate bottom-up initiatives for both protecting and improving their own cultural heritage, sharing a «sense of being engaged in something important» (*ibidem*). The recent strategic planning orientation of collecting visions from the territory for better address needs and priorities of the citizens involved meets the community planning approaches, in order to deal with the issues of a complex, dynamic and multicultural society (Rubin, 2000; Silverman, 2005). The layer of the tourists flows rests on this complex scenario by introducing new fuzzy elements in the planning process.

This paper aims at showing how an integrated approach between environmental and cultural heritage protection, grassroots initiatives for cultural purposes and smart tourism promotion can act as catalyst for local development by fostering “intelligence” in tourism (Hunter, 1997; Wood, 2001) and contributing to the environmental preservation. In so doing, the research aims at filling the gap in the current literature on tourism that tend to underestimate the added value of cultured and environment-sensitive planning experiences in contributing to the attractiveness of coastal areas. Experiences of informal public-private-partnerships (PPPs) and environment-friendly management models based on local communities’ initiatives could contribute to the definition of a common framework for the enhancement of compatible tourism activities. Purposely selected bottom-up practices of compatible uses could act as catalyst for a sustainable and respectful tourism: pro-active initiatives for protecting by exploring, learning, sharing and promoting knowledge and awareness. In order to explore this issue, a case study approach has been chosen. Within the coastal area of Naples (Southern Italy), a place where environmental, cultural and social resources coexist has been selected. The Neapolitan coast is characterized by high population density, complex social structure, urban decay and abandonment of public places, coupled by astonishing environmental resources, archaeological sites and listed cultural heritage (UNESCO, 2015). Applying specific criteria, by combining the presence of relevant environmental and cultural resources and the activation of bottom-up regeneration initiatives, the ongoing experience of the Protected Marine Site of *Gaiola* has been selected for discussing on both the proactive protection and the compatible valorisation for smart tourism (Fig. 1).

In this distinguished example of waterfront area, in which archaeological sites coexist with attractive landscape sites, sandy beaches and a valuable biological diversity, a group of activists is developing an integrated system of initiatives for protecting cultural and environmental resources by promoting compatible uses for education and tourism purposes.

**Fig. 1 – The AMP of Gaiola: protection area, accessibility, archaeological heritage and uses**

Source: Ragozino (2015)

The Marine Protected Area has been managed since 2002 by the non-profit organization, the *CSI Gaiola Onlus* (CSI Gaiola onlus, 2009), for the purpose of enhancing the knowledge about the underwater biology and the archaeological site as well as the active protection of the area. This fifteen-years process started by a condition of abandonment and decay of the area due to inappropriate behaviours of users for fishing, swimming and

leisure in general, without any control and preservation of the area. The new course developed by the CSI offers a good opportunity for understanding how the different perspectives of protection and valorisation could be merged and for promoting the next step: the cultural tourism attractiveness. A first laboratory for developing and exploiting these opportunities has been established within the workshop *Identità Marittima per l'Interculturalità Urbana. Il Mare e la Città come Habitat di Pace* (Maritime Identity for Urban Interculturality. Sea and City as Habitat of Peace) in the framework of the *Forum Universale delle Culture Napoli e Campania* (Cultures Forum) 2014 of the City of Naples. In this context a group of young architects and social psychologists, coordinated by an interdisciplinary group of professors, mentors and local stakeholders has developed a pre-proposal for valorising the *Gaiola* by networking it with other catalyst areas along the coast for tourist purposes. In details, the paper discusses the possible architecture of partnerships for place branding and tourism promotion in coastal areas, linking it to the community engagement potentiality and the ICT support tools, in order to address the need of promoting both tourism-led local development and environmental awareness and valorisation. The case study has been developed by interacting with the local stakeholders on social, environmental and economics side in order to address the topic of developing effective partnerships for sustaining successful regeneration processes according to the needs of promoting cultural sustainable tourism. The aim is enhancing the discussion about what kind of outcomes could be achieved by pursuing an integrated and mixed approach based on cultural and environmental heritage protection and valorisation, community initiatives and civic action, leading to an increase in smart tourism competitiveness. Evidences from this case show how tourism could be smart if contributes to:

- reacting to abandonment and decay of cultural and environmental heritage;
- protecting the endogenous resources by developing proactive valorization initiatives;
- starting a place branding process;
- enhancing the communities, stakeholders and professional participation to the process;
- reducing the impact of tourism uses by promoting novel approaches to tourism.

In the next pages, after defining the cultural background and methodological approach, the case study will be introduced by a qualitative analysis and the interpretation of quantitative data of uses and accesses to the area. The fieldwork and the discussion with the key stakeholders in the area will be included in the following section. In the conclusions, a discussion will be introduced in order to draw insights for the planning perspectives in comparable contexts.

## 2. Protecting and valorising urban coastal areas: possible bottom-up strategies

Starting from the rich tradition of studies and practices of participation in urban transformation and regeneration initiatives (Healey, 1997), a reflection on the re-appropriation by the local communities and city-users (Atkinson, 2003) of public space and public realm has been introduced. The consolidated participatory processes (Balducci, 1996; Esposito De Vita and Ragozino, 2013; Sclavi, 2002) have been recently renewed according to the economic crises scenario and the needs of enhancing social capital and promoting civic action in the regeneration processes. In this context, the pro-active role of communities and local stakeholders is paramount in guaranteeing renewed energies, creative resources, respect of local traditions and priorities, by activating alternative financial assets for promoting public interests. Formal and informal public-private

partnerships, built on the basis of the local communities demand, could support integrated projects of urban regeneration and redevelopment and the recovery of places with high and recognized identitarian value (Dyer, 2014; Esposito De Vita and Ragozino, 2014; Stone and Nyaupane, 2013). One of the most consolidated initiatives in the field are the Community Development Corporation (CDC), developed by networks of profit and non-profit organizations with the aims of promoting ideas and initiatives to improve quality of life in low income neighbourhoods (Silverman, 2001, 2005; Warner, 2001). CDCs have long been the main place-based strategy aimed at revitalizing low-income communities by controlling urban transformations through active resident participation (Stoutland, 1999). The main goal is to rectifying inequalities created by economic forces and market-led redevelopment initiatives. Coming through the three generations of community-based development initiatives, a critical perspective suggests to highlight that, because most CDCs are severely undercapitalized, they cannot keep up with accelerating decay (Stoecker, 1997). Nevertheless, recent experiences have showed effective methods for securing resources by combining grassroots mission, philanthropic initiatives, and assistance of governmental bodies. The late CDCs (such as the Jamaica Plain Brewery in Boston) are primarily based on the direct investment of human and financial resources by the local communities in order to activate place-branding and regeneration processes (Gittell and Wilder, 1999; Skinner, 2011). These well known and wide spread initiatives have been largely investigated by the urban planning perspective (Bevilacqua *et al.*, 2013; Walker, 2002) also as alternative redevelopment strategies.

Business attraction/incentives remain the most common form of local economic development but they seldom benefit distressed areas or marginalized communities (Warner, 2001). In sensitive context, due to cultural and environmental exposed goods, these market-led initiatives also produce the side effect of emphasizing neo-liberal processes, far from revitalizing local traditions and resources.

Community-based regeneration initiatives could play the relevant role of enhancing the quality of everyday life, sustainable tourism supplies and accessibility as well as a conscious use of cultural and environmental resources. The trans-disciplinary focus on themes such as community-based conservation (Brooks *et al.*, 2012), commons (Ostrom *et al.*, 1999), ecological shared sense-making (Whiteman and Cooper, 2011), social capital (Ballet *et al.*, 2007; Ledyard, 1995) promote the idea that successful conservation of natural resources requires engaging with, and providing benefits for, local communities (Donolo, 2005; Esposito De Vita and Ragozino, 2013; Rodotà, 2011).

Nevertheless, both potentiality and criticism have been identified when the place-based regeneration processes meet the multiple issues and emergencies of the coastal areas. In these territorial contexts the needs of resident communities, the aims of economic stakeholders and the strategies of decision-makers frequently collide. Tools for dealing with the coexistence of anthropic pressure, environmental vulnerability, economic values and cultural heritage, institutional rules and informal uses, traditional tourist activities as well as commercial and industrial ports, are needed (Zoppi, 1993; Fusco Girard and Nijkamp, 2004; Forte, 2010; Cerreta and De Toro, 2012; Clemente, 2013).

The accessibility and the environmental-friendly fruition of coastal areas and the complex relationships between maritime traditions and regeneration processes of abandoned port areas have been frequently explored in literature and in planning experiences (Bruttomesso,

2001; Carta, 2012; Clemente, 2011, 2013; Esposito De Vita, 2011; Feyen *et al.*, 2008; Fusco Girard, 2013; Marshall, 2004; Savino and Arena, 2010).

Waterfront regeneration projects are frequently examples of large-scale, signature projects over the past few decades (Hoyle *et al.*, 1988; Jauhiainen, 1995). «Such projects have often acted as a focus for the development of public–private partnerships as part of a broader growth-oriented strategy agreed by local elites to re-image their cities in an increasingly competitive urban system» (Bassett *et al.*, 2002, p. 1758).

Large-scale regeneration projects such as the waterfront of Barcelona, the London Docklands, the Genoa port area (projects related to international events and celebrations) are symbols of wider community mobilisation and urban re-imaging. The Baltimore inner port redevelopment is the mainstream of the following generation of waterfront projects for tourism and leisure purposes (Craig-Smith and Fagence, 1995).

They are not only intrinsically interesting, but also serve to illuminate many aspects of local systems of governance. A paradigmatic experience from this side can be considered the masterplan of Hafencity in Hamburg (Germany): a new town on the waterfront has been built on the former docks area. It can be considered one of the prominent (in terms of extension and investments) urban projects in Europe (Breckner, 2009). On the other side of the Ocean, New York (USA) (Clemente and Esposito De Vita, 2011) starts from the Sandy Hurricane destructions for re-thinking the waterfront organization and the relationships between the urban boroughs and the bay area (AIANY's Design for Risk and Reconstruction Committee DfRR, 2013).

Besides these important top-down initiatives of urban regeneration and transformation in coastal areas there are interesting experiences of bottom-up approaches dedicated at place-based community engagement processes, in order to enhancing local endogenous resources and promoting compatible uses of the cultural heritage and the environmental resources. These community-led initiatives could influence both the cultural and the economic redevelopment in contexts challenged by anthropic pressure for tourism and leisure purposes. They also act as support for mitigating the side effects of lack of control and inefficient management processes of tourism flows (Dickinson *et al.*, 2011).

In Antwerp, the harbour on the River Scheldt was the nexus of European commerce and it remains one of the busiest in the world; recently, starting by the grassroots initiative of the local communities it has rebranded itself as a centre of culture and design also. The riverfront and the municipal museum, the Museum aan de Stroom (MAS) on the site that was once home to that Hanseatic warehouse (Fig. 2), are the engines for the re-branding and re-development programmes of the region (Secchi *et al.*, 2009).

The development of quality tourism in Bruges is also interesting in terms sustainability: protecting cultural heritage, improving water quality and accessibility of riverfront pathways, developing consensual urban planning and enhancing the quality of life for local communities (Pécsek, 2015).

In order to address these phenomena and to explore the bottom-up partnership process and the opportunities for enhancing an environmental friendly tourism development in waterfront areas, evidences from in-the-field experiences are needed. The research process needs to understand opportunities, gaps and strategies for promoting sustainable tourism-leisure initiatives in vulnerable contexts (due to the needs of protecting environmental resources and cultural heritage) by activating community-led regeneration initiatives. In order to achieve these goals, a case study approach has been chosen.

**Fig. 2 – The MAS on the riverfront in Antwerp**

Source: Esposito De Vita (2012)

In order to select the study area, a set of key-criteria has been defined:

- a coastal urban area challenged by a high population density;
- an accessible waterfront considered as public place;
- the coexistence of relevant environmental and cultural resources;
- spatial decay due to incompatible uses or abandonment;
- ongoing bottom-up initiatives for both protecting and enhancing the natural and cultural environment by promoting compatible uses and re-development initiatives.

In the Italian scenario, the focus has been dedicated to Naples (Southern Italy) where the recognized cultural and environmental values and the significant trend of civic economics initiatives share the floor with a complex social and economics context, the abandonment and decay of public assets and problems of accessibility of the seaside. The well known Gulf of Naples, with its astonishing views, castles and other historical buildings captured in paintings, literature and poetry, is a consolidated tourists' catalyst but its potentiality are significantly underestimate.

Within this complex, privatized and/or abandoned waterfront, the marine protected area of *Gaiola*, which lies under the *Posillipo* hill, shows an ongoing initiative developed by the Interdisciplinary Studies Centre *CSI Gaiola Onlus*: a pro-active and integrated protection

and valorisation project. This non-profit organization, since 2004, has developed an agreement with the institutional actors of the area such as the *Soprintendenza Archeologica* of Naples and Pompei in order to favour the refurbishment, redevelopment, protection and innovative management of the waterfront in cooperation with local authorities, universities, research centres, schools and local activists. The project covers a segment of the coast with an astonishing environmental and cultural value, established by law as the Marine Protected Area (AMP) *Parco Sommerso di Gaiola*.

The case study approach protocol has been adopted (Yin, 2009) as follows:

- survey of the territorial context of the study area, by interpreting the morphological scheme, the accessibility system and the prominent local cultural and environmental heritage;
- identification and timeline of the law system of protection rules and access discipline of the area;
- qualitative and quantitative data collection related to forms, functions and uses in the area through visual analysis, interaction with local stakeholders, semi-structured interviews with users, social network access and active observation in selected daytimes, weekdays and seasons;
- overlapping the partnership schemes and the developed and ongoing regeneration strategies.

The interpretation and generalization of the evidence-based results has been oriented at the definition of possible trajectories for the enhancement and exploitation of the initiatives.

### 3. The experience of civic action for protecting and promoting the coastal area

The case study area, known as *Gaiola* for the Latin etymology of small cave, is part of the 10<sup>th</sup> Municipality of the city of Naples including the Southern coastal area of *Posillipo*, the ancient *Seiano* cave and the two small islands in the surroundings. The underwater park of *Gaiola* covers 41.6 hectares and includes a small accessible public beach (Fig. 1).

The accessibility is guaranteed by a pedestrian pathway, which runs across Mediterranean spontaneous vegetation, cultivated areas, a small former anglers' village and a turf stairway. During the summertime, the beach is crowded and suffers problems of antisocial behaviors and incivility. The archeological settlements of the area combined with the seaside and the stunning views are potential tourism attractors: among the others the so-called *Pausilypon*, the Roman villa of *Publio Vedio Pollione* (I Century b.C.) and the ancient ports of *Baia* and *Miseno*. The transformation of the coastline, due to a seismic phenomenon *bradisismo*, give us the opportunity of visiting other underwater villas of the I century b.C. (Simeone and Masucci, 2009). This peculiar context has given rise to different marine species forming a rich biological community (Simeone and Russo, 2005).

The coexistence of geological, biological, archaeological and landscape values has been recognized with the establishment by law of the Marine Protected Area (AMP) *Parco Sommerso di Gaiola* within the complex planning system of the city of Naples.

In particular, the AMP *Parco Sommerso di Gaiola* has been recognized by the Inter-ministerial Decree (7/8/2002) oriented at guaranteeing protection, knowledge and valorisation (also for social purposes, education and job creation) of underwater archaeological and biodiversity sites. The institutional subject responsible for these topics is the *Soprintendenza Speciale per i Beni Archeologici di Napoli e Pompei* as follows:

- environmental protection and protection of the archaeological resources;

- enhancement and valorization of this resources in order to promote social development and job creation;
- educational and research initiatives related to ecology, marine biology and underwater archaeological patrimony;
- enhancement of economics development compatible with the protection of cultural and environmental heritage and the valorization of local traditional activities.

The accesses to the protected area are forbidden, with different level of protection in the different areas, for incompatible uses such as tampering and damage to the archaeological and geological formations and minerals; any activity that may constitute a danger or disturbance of plant and animal species; the landfill and the discharge of solid or liquid waste. The protection areas are as follows: *A* zone of integral reserve, *B* zone of general reserve (Figg. 1 and 3).

**Fig. 3 – Gaiola Beach Protected Area B**



Source: Ragozino (2014)

According with the protection profiles, the accessibility nodes and the needs of public spaces, various initiatives have been launched in the area. Research agreements with universities for enhancing the quality of underwater life and refurbishment of boardwalks and coves, within the programme of *Riqualificazione del sistema degli approdi per la fruibilità turistica ed ambientale del tratto di costa tra Castel dell'Ovo e Nisida*, funded in the framework of the POR Campania 2006 *Integrated Project of Touristic Port System* (Comune di Napoli, 2008), have been developed. The projects have been oriented at mitigating the vulnerability of the area and at guaranteeing services, such as the waste management and the coast guard controls (Regione Campania, 2008). The described actions are the pre-condition of the activation of synergies between public and private subjects for the enhancement of the area. The CSI Gaiola onlus initiative has been developed as both

typical and original expression of civic action, promoted by a group of young activists/researchers in marine biology and archaeology under the umbrella of the non-profit organization CSI Gaiola onlus. As anticipated, the case study has been selected because of the complex set of factors that coexists in the area:

- issues related to the environmental vulnerability of the coastline (weather-marine condition, geo-morphological conditions, evolving trends of the seafront, anthropic pressure, environmental hazard defense, land consumption);
- issues related to the protection and the valorization of a relevant archaeological patrimony and relevant bio-diversity conditions;
- active civic initiatives for re-developing and promoting compatible uses of the environmental and cultural resources.

The CSI initiative starts in 2002 with the research project titled “Analisi territoriale per una gestione integrata della fascia costiera di Posillipo”, developed within the ecology group of the Department of Science and Environment of the University Parthenope of Naples. A group of young researchers (archaeologists, biologists, experts in education and divulgation of environmental issues, experts in cultural heritage) was involved in the project, developing a scope association. Inspired by the scientific societies in the field, such as the *Stazione Zoologica Anton Dohrn*, founded in Naples in 1872, the cultural association CSI *Gaiola* have been established in 2004 with the aim of developing research and dealing with the abandonment and decay of the area. In 2005, the CSI *Gaiola* and the institutional subject responsible for the management of the area signed an agreement: the CSI was committed to promote multidisciplinary research in the area and, simultaneously, to launch initiatives to improve the quality of the surrounding areas, to control the protected area and to carry out educational activities. The Region of Campania gave to the association the possibility of accessing a small building located within the protected area, to be adapted for hosting the educational activities, in order to stimulate correct behaviours in accessing the seaside, to control and to promote environmental-friendly initiatives.

The City of Naples invested 320.000,00 euro (P.O.R. Campania 2000-2006 P.I. Tourists Ports System) for the refurbishment of the accesses from the land and the sea, guaranteeing the safety of the access points. The efforts of the Association culminated in the opening in 2010 of the CeRD, Center for the Research and Scientific Exploitation of the Gaiola underwater park, in building located on the waterfront in a strategic position for both the protection of the Zone A of integral reserve and the exploitation purposes.

Nowadays, the Centre can be considered a presidium for protecting and valorising the AMP: research activities, educational and informative initiatives, visitors centre, conference room, a small museum and a small laboratory for monitoring the water. The Centre is also the base for controlling illegal fishing and other prohibited activities in the area. The main aim of the CSI is the creation of a pole for disseminating the principle of sustainable development by contributing to the widening of environmental awareness in the next generation; in so doing, the CSI involves local communities in educational initiatives, promotes laboratories and campuses with local schools and guarantees a constant control of the area (Fig. 4). The fieldwork has been developed firstly with accesses to the area in different weekdays (in the Monday morning and in the weekend) and seasons (February, May, June, July, September and October). The active observation has been accompanied by the participation to several educational or promotional initiatives developed by the CSI and other stakeholders such as the Italian CNR, the University Federico II and NGOs in the

field. The second step has been the analysis of the official document of the institutional process and the collection of quantitative data from the CSI, regarding the developed activities, the recorded flows of visitors and the end-users of the educational and leisure proposal (Tab. 1).

**Fig. 4 – Activities proposed by the CSI Gaiola**



Source: CSI Gaiola (2013)

In the last ten years, the above-mentioned activities have been developed by the CSI in cooperation with other NGOs and the participation of volunteers, producing an increasing interest and enthusiasm in the local communities. This success has been recorded during the qualitative interview sessions; it has also been testified by the increasing number of visitors and by the improvement of the environmental quality (Tab. 1).

**Tab. 1 – Activities in 2012**

Activities	May	June	July	August	September	Total
Access to the zone A and B	300	828	822	895	386	3.231
Educational projects	1.277	173	155	15	47	1.667
Boat tours	103	185	127	12	155	582
Snorkelling/diving tours	33	51	94	103	21	302

Source: CSI Gaiola (2013)

During the fieldwork, profound gaps have also been identified:

- difficulties in accessing the area with public transport;
- a lack of parking areas in the surroundings;

- a lack of information for tourists (opening time, accesses, activities) within the traditional media: tourists info-points, official homepage of the tourists offices, flyers and advertising;
- the activities are carried out mainly with the support of volunteers and activists;
- it has not been possible to build a network of comparable initiatives in order to achieve the critical mass for guaranteeing the long-term development of the project.

The gaps identified have a common framework: the place-based initiatives promoted by activists and local communities need to be supported by the territorial milieu. Otherwise, a single project suffers the precariousness of the lack of adequate networks, services and resources for achieving a long-life process. The *Gaiola* experience demonstrates the capacity of being a local catalyst due to the natural and cultural attractiveness of the area and the full-time involvement of the activists of the CSI. However, to reach another level of fruition, opening the doors to tourist's flows, an integrated approach is needed.

The slow tourism approach has been developed to cope with mass tourism and to promote awareness of tourists' space usage in order to manage successfully spatial-temporal crowd movement by differencing urban destinations (UNWTO, 2002).

The tourism reports identify, among others, the following issues and opportunities relate to urban tourism: how to use urban tourism to improve the quality of life of local population? How to merge tourism action plans and city planning within the decision making process? How can information and communication technologies support a competitive, sustainable and human tourism? How can cities reducing impact on the environment and promote the benefits of greener tourism? (UNWTO, 2015). The slow tourism approach, embraced by many small towns worldwide (larger cities need to rethink their spatial organization), allows visitors to interact with locals, access local products, enjoy local culture. The related planning process needs to make places equally enjoyable for locals and visitors. According to this complex framework, experiences such as the *Gaiola* initiative could be re-designed in order to improve compatible tourist's fruition within a network of alternative paths for visitors and locals. Embracing this strategy could also led to a twofold result: collecting funds for supporting the educational and protection initiatives as well as promoting knowledge and awareness about a sustainable tourism.

An integrated and proactive environmental protection combined with controlled fruition and development of small economics opportunities has been the engine of the *Gaiola* experience in the start up phase. The next phase is expected to be a wider experience of slow tourism attraction; to do this a networking approach is needed in order to redesign the material and virtual paths between tourism destinations on the coastal area.

Starting by the results achieved by the CSI *Gaiola Onlus*, a first opportunity of discussion of possible initiatives for improving, modelling and implementing compatible slow tourism experiences in the context described was the workshop *Identità Marittima per l'Interculturalità Urbana. Il Mare e la Città come Habitat di Pace* (Maritime Identity for Urban Interculturality. Sea and City as Habitat of Peace, 20-24 October 2014, Mostra d'Oltremare, Naples), coordinated by Massimo Clemente (IRISS CNR) in the framework of the *Forum Universale delle Culture Napoli e Campania* (Cultures Forum) 2014 of the City of Naples (April-December 2014).

During this initiative, to which contributed actively economic operators, scholars of different disciplines, professionals from different sectors and associations, the 33 participants have developed design experiences that have merged objectives of urban

regeneration, enhancement of the cultural and archaeological heritage, place branding and ICT tools to be applied in seaside contexts.

Under the umbrella concept of sustainable development, the slow tourism stems on a system of integrated actions, including community-building, environmental protection and cultural exchange. In this perspective, the Workshop was oriented at contributing to the development of ideas to be tested with the support of local stakeholders and shareholders. One of the ideas launched during the workshop has been the concept “Sustainable Use of Marine Protected Area and Archeological Sites - SUM ParchS” (developed by Viviana Del Naja, Fabiana De Vincenzi, Giorgio Nugnes, Riccardo Scotti Galletta, Francesca Sodano, Ippolita D’Ayala Valva and Antonio Vitale). The authors, as mentors and contributors of the Workshop, shared the research results with the participants and, according to the opportunities and gaps emerged by the fieldwork, a concept of slow-tourism has been developed (Fig. 5).



**Fig. 5 -The Eco Network of SUM ParchS**

Source: SUM ParchS Group (2014)

The SUM ParchS proposal has been studied as vision for improving both the valorisation of identitarian cultural resources and the local development. The main strategic idea was a bottom-up management model for the promotion of the “Eco-network” of archaeological and environmental coastal sites: the Marine Protected Areas of *Baia* (Aree Marine Protette, 2002a) and *Gaiola* (Aree Marine Protette, 2002b). The concept of the pilot proposal, starting by the need of protecting the environment and the cultural heritage, address the potential catalyst of tourist development by combining networking, compatible uses, ICT remote-access, educational play-time producing a virtuous cycle of cultural and economic development, minimizing the protection costs, enhancing knowledge. According to the slow tourism principles, the network of material and virtual tourism catalyst is oriented at

achieving the critical mass for generating value and for enhancing the attractiveness of the cultural supply. The marine connections of the poles (water taxi, kayak, glass bottom boat, hydrofoils) have been integrated with virtual connections (apps for smart devices, info-totems, digital simulations and friendly maps) for enhancing the accessibility of places and promoting compatible tourists development.

#### 4. Conclusion

A slow tourism approach needs to be developed in order to enhance local development, cultural intermingling, social inclusion and quality of life on the one and to protect and valorise environment and cultural heritage on the other. The literature in the field, the screening of best practices, the development of a case study and the analysis of possible trajectories of re-branding and networking catalyst sites, gave us directions about the potentiality of compatible tourism promotion in starting virtuous processes of both local development and heritage protection. The activation of proper synergies among environmental and cultural heritage, civic action, community engagement, place branding and purposely selected ICT tools could produce attractiveness in tourism destination, to be managed by innovating public-private partnerships.

The purpose of this investigation has been to analyze how the needs of innovating the strategies for protection and valorisation of the cultural heritage could be the engine for designing drivers for a novel slow tourism approach.

In order to discuss partnership models and action protocols to be implemented for enhancing the relationship slow tourism-cultural heritage-urban regeneration, a case study approach has been developed: the purposely-selected experience of the Marine Protected Area of *Gaiola* in Naples (Italy) and the strategies for tourism enhancement developed within the concept-proposal of *SUM ParchS*.

Starting from the consolidated experience developed by the non-profit organization *CSI Gaiola Onlus* in this distinguished example of waterfront area in which archaeological sites coexist with attractive landscape sites, sandy beaches and a valuable biological diversity, the following results have been achieved:

- the initiative developed by a group of activists and citizens has been transformed in a structured organization oriented both at enhancing scientific and cultural knowledge, protecting the heritage, educating young generation by combining leisure, playtime, divulgation as well as promoting compatible uses in the surroundings;
- even if the initiative has a small size in terms of stakeholders involved and of economic investment, it is growing and could be improved with appropriate strategies; the revenues from the activities developed in the area (school campuses, visits by glass bottom boat, kayak excursions, gadget selling and other initiatives) are reinvested for the management of the protected area, producing job creation and opportunities to be improved;
- the use of social networks and the divulgation initiatives, such as the “Oceanic Initiatives” (Oceanic Initiatives, 2012), have incremented the participation of people, communities and scholars starting a re-branding process, useful has base for the next possible initiatives;
- a renewed institutional definition of partnerships is needed, as the big effort of the CSI have to be supported by a more efficient organizational model regarding the competences of the local authorities involved, the funding opportunities, the long term

planning strategies, the combination of environmental-friendly profit and non-profit initiatives.

Inspired by the *CSI Gaiola* experience, the *SUM ParchS* proposal has been studied in order to understand how communities, young designers, cultural operators and economic stakeholders are thinking about strategic trajectories of both protecting and developing this cultural heritage by enhancing compatible touristic uses. The concept of this ongoing proposal, now in the process of being shared within the framework of a “commons” initiative, has been useful to understand perceptions, needs and visions starting by the existing experiences of the *AMP* in Naples. The combination of physical (marine) connections and user-friendly ICT tools for virtual connections represents the starting point of a networking experience useful for achieving the needed critical mass for supporting a sustainable tourism process. Within the framework of the slow tourism, identified as priority in the next programming period of the EU investment in research and local empowerment, the ongoing initiative of *Gaiola* and the first concept of the next steps give us the opportunity of reflecting on both the research demands:

- could the community engagement designed with appropriate partnership protocols (even if lacking public financial resources) guaranteeing the integrated and proactive protection of environment and cultural heritage?
- could a bottom-up regeneration process oriented at enhancing a slow tourism promotion contribute at supporting local development, cultural awareness and compatible uses in vulnerable contexts?

The case-study, developed by interacting with the local stakeholders, the group of young professional involved in the *maritime identity* workshop and the communities, gave us the opportunity of discussing about a possible model of partnership-regeneration-management of cultural heritage based on environmental-friendly slow tourism.

The first results of the research process need to be enhanced by modelling the process and defining the strategic guidelines. It will be tested in an appropriate context in order to address the topic of developing effective partnerships for sustaining successful regeneration processes according to the needs of promoting slow tourism destinations.

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