

Meeting in Cavareno, Val di Non, 13 October 2024

This meeting was incited by the visit of the APE director, Pedro Morais, to north of Italy that having the opportunity to visit again the Val di Non, made available to meet with AAACS and the association "Amici della Natura" de Ledro.

The objective of this meeting in Cavareno was to reflect about the ongoing of the SMA ERASMUS project, how the results from the visits to Portugal and Spain are influencing the current activity of AAACS and also to discuss some ideas for possible future projects that can integrate all associations involved.

The initial part was the presentation of Amici della Natura of Ledro, a neighbour association that have a great experience with environmental action, volunteering and involvement of children and young people, and an activity on two UNESCO sites (the Lake Ledro Pile-dwelling and the Ledro Alps and Judicaria Biosphere Reserve).

About the questions related to ecotourism practice in Val di Non, the meeting was centred in pairing of problems/needs and solutions.

Some needs of work to develop in future:

- More involvement of locals in AAACS, in special students and young people.
- Need for a stronger relationship between local population (and farmers) and visitors.
- Finding strategies to value the local heritage, the local culture and give a better understanding about their importance and the importance of Val di Non for the world.

How to approach with some solutions from ecotourism:

- The health issues, as a concern that is relevant for almost people, can be linked to the cultural and natural potential existing in Val di Non. The old traditions and stories, cultural objects and manifestations, the diversity and quality of a range wild plants and their use for wellbeing, are relevant elements that can support new tourism products and also an effective commitment of local population.
- The existing natural and cultural heritage, can be explored on a deeper way with heritage interpretation, identifying curious relations between the natural and the cultural world and increasing the interest of visitors for this singular context.
- New products (traditional, innovative, handmade, biologic, ...) can be promoted to link visitors to the farmers and local artisans.
- Creating new activities to promote in local population (a) a new involvement in tourism activities (Val di Non can give a significant contribution to reduce the overtourism and seasonality problems in the broad tourism in the region); (b) more health, happiness and friendship, as central values that can be shared with visitors.
- The geology, the natural environment, the culture

One idea left during the meeting was the creation of a project to study the connections of the Santiago way of Val de Non with all the heritage (natural and cultural) around and project new

services (personal or non-personal) that provides a better understanding and connexion of visitors with Val di Non. This project can have the link with “Interpret Europe”, as the main association in Europe in this field.

Beyond the “apple region” there are huge world of culture and nature to discover. This is Val di Non!