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VETLANDS INTERNATIONAL SYKE

SESSION 05

ENHANCEMENT OF **MULTI-USE LANDSCAPE**

RENATURATION IN THE FLOODPLAIN OF THE PO RIVER: RESULTS AFTER 10 YEARS INTERVENTIONS ON THE INITIATIVE OF PRIVATE FARMS

European Centre for River Restoration

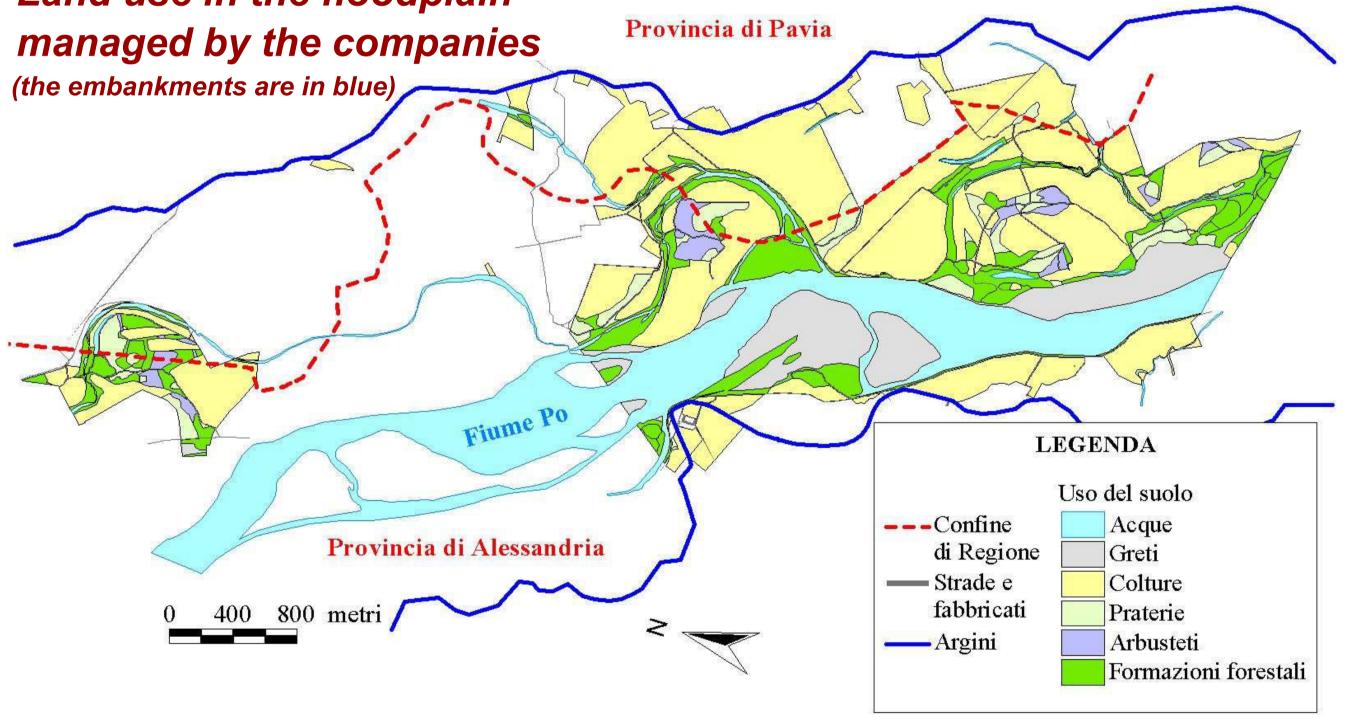
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tory developments and land policy identify river floodplains as areas of pecial natural value and of public interest for the hydraulic steering, imposing limitations on traditional agricultural and forestry practices. The farms that grow poplar in floodplains are realizing the particular value of this environment, and look for new opportunities, expanding their economic horizon to agri-tourism activities and enjoyment of the environment.

In the past ten years two companies located along the Po river (totalling about 1.250 hectares between Piedmont and Lombardy, in A and B bands of the sub-Plan of Fasce fluviali, in protected area sites and the Natura 2000 network) have drawn Management Programs of the river area inside the farms' boundaries, requiring state-owned land in concession free of charge for recovery and environmental restoration according to Decree 11/5/99 n. 152.

The Programs were submitted to the park body of "Parco fluviale del Po e dell'Orba", the Interregional Agency for the Po river- AIPO and the Basin Authority, receiving positive advices.

Land use in the floodplain



plantations are also used locally rare or extinct species (in this case Quercus robur)

In medium

to long cycle

articulated in sub-plans, aim for a zoning The **Programs**, bands according to decreasing degree of naturalness from the Po main course towards the embankments, with the succession of natural or semi-natural forest to medium - long cycle wood tree plantations to get to the short term poplar plantations grown under environmentally friendly techniques.

The Programs are being implemented. Table on the right shows the highlights of the main actions carried to date.

The Programs proved to be suitable instruments for the recovery and enhancement of floodplains, permitting the continuation of agricultural activities. They gained interest among the authorities involved, as being coordinated interventions from a pilot and

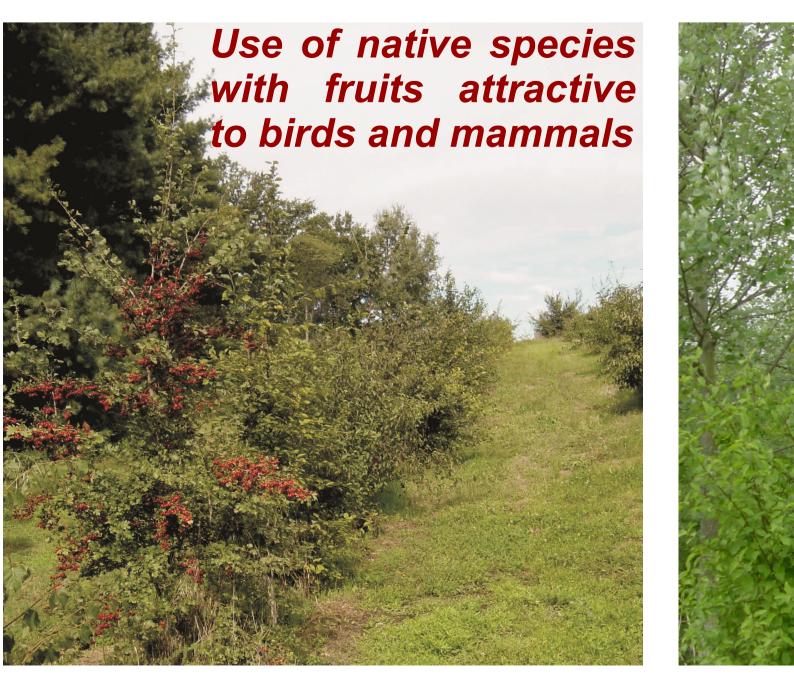
The Programs include the creation of buffer zones between natural and semi-natural areas and those areas with high productive vocation, relocating the latters inland as less susceptible to flooding, together with the conservation and improvement of natural areas, increasing the physical stability and ecological characteristics of habitat for wildlife.

	Cultural practices in forest stands (including experimental	
	interventions for the renewal of riverine forest in critical	30 hectares
	condition for the strong development of exotic shrub species)	
	Wood plantations with indigenous tree (and shrubs) species on	90 hectares
,	land already planted with poplar and cereals	30 nectares
	Preservation and creation of hedges and rows	3500 meters
	Conservation of wetlands	18 hectares
	Set-aside of fields once cultivated with cereals, to permanent	8 hectares
	grassland	o neclares

private initiative.

The companies ruling the farms took advantage of public grants - in particular from the European **Union - and their own resources.** The regular financing of interventions could be resolved by agreements with the public bodies which are variously entrusted to environment maintenance but lack departments for execution.





Medium-long cycle arboriculture, with mixed tree and shrub native species, a few years after plantation