

Information belowground: soil as an archive of information

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An environmental education project on soils has been set up in the Cilento Geopark, based on the focal geosite "Grotte di Pertosa e Auletta", through the development of museum exhibits and the involvement of local schools. The geosite consists of a system of caves with a portion of about 3 km and the surroundings open to the public. . The MIdA foundation ("Integrated Museums of the Environment") manages the geosite along with a museum and activities for local development and heritage preservation. MIdA works with a Junior Scientific Council (JSC): a group of 40 children from local schools participating in museum and geosite activities.

In 2013, a project was developed with the aim of increasing awareness of geotourists, school children and the local community on the role and importance of soils as links between geology and landscape, but also as an archive of information, e.g., on archeology, paleoclimate, past management, landscape, vegetation and culture. The project was called "Laboratori nella natura", financed by the Campania Region rural development program (psr 2007-2013 mis.313) and involved collaboration between the local municipality of Pertosa, the MIdA foundation, three local schools, the JSC and the Geopark.

Three-dimensional models of the bronze-age archeological site buried in the geosite and now submerged were produced within the project; a museum exhibition on palynology and pedo-anthracology reconstructing vegetation and landscapes of Cilento and Vallo di Diano was also set up. Multimedia materials such as a video on ancient landscapes and vegetation and slide shows on methods were also prepared. These materials and exhibitions constitute a new section of the MIdA museum. Activities with the JSC children involved materials sharing before opening to the public; JCS members of the elementary school also prepare exhibition guidebook for children of their age group.

Presented in Theme 3.