



AN ENTERPRISE FOR SIX PARKS, A MUSEUM AND 5 MUNICIPALITIES

The Parchi Val di Cornia Company combines economic and business activities with the conservation of the historic and environmental heritage

The Parchi Val di Cornia company operates as a network integrating cultural and tourist services: archaeological and nature parks, museums, documentation centres, hostels, holiday homes, beach facilities, commercial services, restaurants, and car and caravan parking facilities.

This innovative project that directly or indirectly employs 250 people, is based on business related to tourism and the cultural heritage and has succeeded in transforming the traditionally steel-based industrial economy of the Val di Cornia. The 5 municipalities (Campiglia Marittima, Piombino, San Vincenzo, Sassetta and Suvereto) of the area have responded to the decline of the steel-based economy, which had become structural in nature by the second half of the eighties, with a project for economic diversification involving tourism and the cultural heritage. To this end the Parchi Val di Cornia was created in 1993 as a mixed private/largely publicly financed company, managing areas of archaeological and environmental interest belonging to the municipalities of the Val di Cornia or to the state.

The promotion of the environmental resources has been supported by insertion of the area into "Objective 2" of the European Union Structural Funds. With the benefit of an investment of about 16.4 million euros, made up from EU funds with contributions from the municipalities, and an average of 290 thousand visitors, the park economy generates a business volume which for 2004 was estimated at around 5 million euros, 1.8 of which is directly attributable to the activity of the Parks company. The remainder comes from business linked to the project, 20 companies in all handling: reception and restaurant facilities, park guides and educational activities, cleaning and maintenance.

With a cost/benefit ratio that is much higher than the average for cultural heritage management - 78% against 30%, based on the data of the "Ministero per i beni e la attività culturali" - the Parchi Val di Cornia company is about to beat the challenge of financial independence. In 2004 self-financing should reach 81% and complete economic independence is expected for 2007.

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