

# Community Participation in the Cinque Terre



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# Why community participation?

- Considered an essential component of sustainability
- One of the guiding principles of Agenda 21
- Emphasised by the Park as a key management strategy
- Formation of National Park - initiated from a community level

## Aim:

- To investigate the nature of community participation in the management of the Parco Nazionale delle Cinque Terre.

# Overview

- Methodology
- Concept of community participation
- Outline of current management structure in the National Park
- Research findings - level of participation from different perspectives
- Conclusions & Recommendations

# Methodology

- Workshops
- Park website
- Interviews with park staff, local people not directly employed by the park
- Constraints
  - Language
  - Limited sample groups
  - Access to information

# Community Participation

- Not just representation, but opportunities for direct involvement
- Not just direct stakeholders, but also "lay citizens"
- Deliberative process improves chances for equitable outcomes
- Ensures ownership, accountability and commitment to outcomes

## Pro

- Increases social justice
- Improves citizenship
- Includes other forms of knowledge
- Facilitates learning and positive change

## Con

- Still involves people
- Costly
- Economic interests may dominate decisions
- Difficult to implement



# Official Line

- Community Forums
- Public Meetings
- Council members represent community & are very approachable

# Another Perspective...

- Decisions made by Council President
- Forums - to educate community members about decisions already made
- Suggestions/concerns dealt with if also a concern of the President
- Easier to have your voice heard if you know someone high up



# Conclusions

- People generally had trouble grasping concept
- Majority unenthusiastic about increased participation
- Generally happy with management outcomes to date - so long as things are going well
- Contrast of opinions indicates lack of understanding of levels of community satisfaction

# Conclusions

- Community not ready - cannot force high-level participation on community
- However, several severe risks to long term sustainability of the park arise from lack of engagement
  - Dependence on President's vision for the park
  - Unknown future impacts on park ie. Tourism decline, climate change
  - Community becomes unhappy

# Recommendations

- Begin with small steps...
- Put in place measures to gauge community satisfaction with park decisions & activities at all levels of the community
- Invest in building social capital within community & park staff
- Establish basic institutional infrastructure of inclusion which can be maintained and extended over time

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