



CASE STUDY

RE Lambro SE



"We want to strengthen the riparian ecosystem and the Natural Capital of Metropolitan Milan"

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PROFILE SNAPSHOT

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Country	Italy
Main sector	Public
Uforest thematic discipline	Forest Ecology
Stage of development	Implementation



By reducing water pollution, fostering riparian wildlife, and improving natural irrigation systems.



By combining social needs with environmental goals to create multifunctional urban extensions.



By building ecological connections to increase biodiversity, and protecting natural heritage areas.





START-UP

Starting in 2019, RE Lambro SE (Rete Ecologica Lambro metropolitano. Servizi Ecosistemici a Sud Est) is an environmental redevelopment project along the urban area of the Lambro river in Metropolitan Milan. The project is implemented by the Regional Agency for Agricultural and Forestry Services of the Lombardy Region (ERSAF). Targeting the South-Eastern axe of the Metropolitan city of Milan, RE Lambro SE aims at restoring the riparian ecological systems of heavily urbanized areas.



RE LAMBRO SE'S GOALS:

- **Reconnect** fragmented territories along the South-Eastern Milanese section of the Lambro: urban parks, private estates, cultivated and fallow fields, derelict areas, infrastructures, etc.
- **Restore** the ecological system of the river.



INITIATIVE MODEL

MAIN ACTIVITIES:

What does RE Lambro SE do?

- Collect data and analyses on land use, soil, and wildlife.
- Develop a tree census to feed the municipal registry.
- Protect the forest 'Oasi del Carengione' by redeveloping the surrounding lands.
- Renaturation of targeted areas (more than 270.000m²), through afforestation and planting of flowering herbaceous species and shrubs.
- Plant a low canopy woodland to comply with the nearby airport regulations.
- Design and plan walking trails.
- Clean up the river banks, remove weeds and foreign plant species.
- Install a riparian protective fence.
- Improvement and restoration of an historic water source.
- Relocate leisure areas that are under flood risk.
- Create an educational area.

BENEFICIARIES:

Who benefits from RE Lambro SE's activities?

1. **The citizens of Milan**, who enjoy a continuous, healthier green-and-blue extension of the city.
2. **South-Eastern Milanese farmers**, who benefit from increased insect biodiversity.

PROMOTION:

What is RE Lambro SE's promotion strategy?

- Public events, workshops, webinars, and outdoor activities.
- Brochures and reports.
- Press conferences.
- Social media.
- Contratti di Fiume promotion website.
- Strategic scientific dissemination.
- Networking.

GOVERNANCE:

How does RE Lambro SE implement its activities?

ERSAF promotes and leads the project, with the support of **Fondazione Cariplo** who finances the project.

The steering committee implements the project through three groups:

- **The Communications and engagement group** oversees citizen participation and the dissemination of information, and organises educational activities.

- **The Ecosystem services group** provides technical support.
- **The Planning and execution group** manages the implementation process.

Re Lambro SE also works with many **partners**:

- The Municipalities of Milan, Peschiera Borromeo, Segrate, San Donato Milanese, and Melegnano.
- Two universities: Politecnico di Milano and Università degli Studi di Milano Statale.
- IRSA-CNR (Water Research Institute).
- INU (National Urban Planning Institute).
- Environmental NGOs Legambiente Lombardia and Grande Parco Forlanini .
- Parco Nord Milano.

FINANCES:

What are RE Lambro SE's main resources?

The project budget is € 1.195.163, which is covered with **mixed funding**:

- **70%** from Fondazione Cariplò, a private philanthropic foundation.
- **30%** from project partners.

POLICY AND STANDARDS LEADING THE INITIATIVE:

ReLambro SE operates according to the **Code on the Environment n.152/2006**, the main Italian regulatory framework in this sector. In addition, municipalities use the framework agreement '**Northern Lambro River Contract**' as a methodological and technical reference.



UNIQUENESS

What makes RE Lambro SE a one-of-a-kind project?

- As a river contract ('Contratti di Fiume'), it is a **co-creative, bottom-up process** that engages private and public stakeholders - NGOs, public bodies, private institutions and research centres - to integrate environmental and hydraulic issues with economic and social local needs.
- It is a **replicable model** for other heavily populated areas.



EXPECTATION

By **2025**, RE Lambro SE aims at engaging more municipalities to pursue new sustainable development priorities. It also seeks to foster citizen and political awareness about the importance of the Natural Capital.

What does RE Lambro SE need to be successful?

- Implement the 'Ecosystem services evaluation tool' to assess the large-scale effects of local actions on the entire territory.
- Funds to support long-term actions.
- The availability of a single regional database of flora, fauna and ecosystem monitoring.

What are today's main challenges?

- Coordinating local stakeholders, especially municipalities, who often operate independently.
- Executing specific sector policies with local planning tools.
- An extreme fragmentation of lands, most of which are privately owned, prevents the project from operating organically.

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