

Accord Pelagos
relatif à la création en Méditerranée
d'un Sanctuaire pour les mammifères marins

15^{ème} Comité scientifique et technique
11 et 12 septembre 2023



Accordo Pelagos
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Report on the evolution of the communication tools of the Pelagos Agreement

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The communication activities of the Pelagos Agreement were conducted by the Permanent Secretariat with the support of Mrs. Francesca Caneri, consultant for the development of communication activities of the Pelagos Agreement (Call for Consultancy n° Pelagos/AC/2023-03).

The following report covers the activities performed during the period from March 21st 2023, to July 31th 2023 in the framework of the Programme of Work 2022-2023.

INTRODUCTION

The communication actions taken in exam up to now, recall the relevant action foreseen in the Programme of Work 2022-2023 of the Pelagos Agreement and concern both direct methodologies (where we produce the content that users receive, like social, newsletter, site) and indirect methodologies (mediated by third parties: press agencies, representatives, ambassadors, etc.). They have been focusing on the following objectives:

- promote correct information on the role and objectives of Pelagos Agreement.
- promote the adoption of correct behaviour and good practices in line with the objectives of the Agreement.
- promoting the brand, image and perception of the importance of the Pelagos agreement in protecting marine environment.
- conferring value to our communications.
- creating a bridge between "insiders" and the public.

PELAGOS COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Depending on the activities and the type of action to be emphasized, different tools have been taken into account: website, social media, press releases, press conferences, press reviews, newsletters, posters, videos, creation of dedicated mailing lists, events, design and management of communication campaigns.

SOCIAL NETWORKS

The social networks currently active for the Pelagos Agreement are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Linkedin and Youtube. The actions taken so far aim to establish a solid basis for the primary purpose of strengthening the image of the Pelagos Agreement, making information accessible to target audience and increasing the reach of the news (*Action B-13c of the PoW*) are the following:

- ✓ revision of the bios, and useful information in the various profiles to comprehensively present what the Pelagos Agreement is and how it operates internationally.
- ✓ revision of profile images and cover graphics to improve the legibility and attractiveness of our pages.
- ✓ switching all social platforms to English language.
- ✓ study of both generic and specific hashtags related to the Pelagos Sanctuary with the objective of providing further reach to our content.

- ✓ link profiles with similar interests (follow, group membership, direct messages, comments, shares) to keep up to date with news and start strengthening our authority on social media.
- ✓ drafting of an editorial plan that takes into account the events involving the Pelagos Agreement, the 'world days' of our interest and generic 'soft' content to increase engagement (38 own posts on Facebook, on Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn and many relevant shared ones).
- ✓ design and creation of Posts, Reels and Stories to exploit the full potential of the different platforms.
- ✓ monitoring the progress and making a first brief report (Annex I) highlighting the obtained results and proposals for next steps.

NEWSLETTER

Newsletter is an essential tool for creating high engagement, for motivating subscribers and encouraging their loyalty. It allows sharing all kind of content, including multimedia and links to the website and social networks. It also helps in adding value to communication, taking care of the 'face-to-face' with the target audience and involving them so that they become supporters. It can also be used for sending of press releases.

Actions taken:

- ✓ creation of a basic graphic structure with colours, fonts and images recalling the style of the Pelagos Agreement.
- ✓ implementation of a general contacts database (Italian and French municipalities, Marine Protected Areas, Pelagos Ambassadors, partners, etc).
- ✓ implementation of a contacts database for Italian and foreign journalists (1.005 Italian, 50 French, 21 international).
- ✓ creation of a form for voluntary subscription to the Newsletter, periodically publicised on social media.
- ✓ update of newsletter on all the activities promoted by or involving the Pelagos Sanctuary.
- ✓ analysis of Mailchimp platform performance results and decision to migrate to Mailup.
- ✓ migration of content to Mailup (all contacts divided by category, language and interest; makeover of graphic structure, import of headers).

The first newsletter of the Pelagos Agreement will be sent in August, and it will be three-monthly.

PRESS REVIEW

Press review deals with collecting Editorials, articles and reports published in newspapers. This activity is essential to understand the communicative reach of specific news and the mass medias' response. Specific indicators have to be identified to estimate effectiveness of communication actions: the number of publications could be an initial index, as well as citations by journalists and qualified newspapers.

PRESS RELEASES

Special attention has been paid to drafting press releases for the media. It is worth stressing that final communications spread out by Media outlets often appear as a mere interpretations or misunderstandings of the original reported facts. It is, therefore, essential to address the media with appropriate, clear, and structured language.

Press releases covered topics related to the main activities of the Pelagos Agreement, as in particular: the “Training on cetacean disentanglement” held in Genoa in May 2023 and the “2nd International Meeting of the signatory Municipalities of the Pelagos Partnership Charter” held in Sassari in June 2023.

For both events, a particular attention was given to developing a professional and trusting relationship with journalists and editorial offices with the objective to minimise input/output communication distortion.

WEBSITE

In accordance with the Web Master chosen for the new Pelagos website, a macro-sector structure of [the actual Pelagos website](#) was carried out (Annex II).

Thanks to the collaboration and revision work of the relevant Pelagos Working Groups, all texts were revised and/or reworded with the aim of being more user-friendly for the general audience and to meet the objectives of the Pelagos Agreement in a more effectively way (Action B-13a and B13b of the 2022-2023 PoW).

Sections were published and revised from SEO perspective, with link building and implementation of meta descriptions.

The current goal is to work on various Search Engine Optimisation strategies to increase the ranking, that was penalised by the domain change.

Once the new contents will be online on the website, together with meta descriptions and link building, its promotion can be started at first among insiders, social and Newsletter, and then through Google Ads campaigns.

ESCAPE GAME

Thanks to the financial support of the Rotary Club of Monaco, an interactive game for children, specifically an [escape game](#), was created and it will be included on the website (on the page dedicated to kids).

The game, addressed to 6 to 12 years old children, is set in a research boat. Players have to help the researcher Sebastian in various missions, solving puzzles and learning about:

- ✓ the main characteristics of marine mammals
- ✓ the differences between fishes and marine animals
- ✓ the risks marine mammals are exposed to
- ✓ what the Pelagos Sanctuary is and where it is
- ✓ the code of good conduct to observe marine mammals
- ✓ what to do to help an entangled marine mammals

Once players go through all the levels in the game, a 'Junior Ambassador' certificate is obtained. This is a special reward recalling the 'Pelagos Ambassador'.

POSTERS FOR SCHOOLS

Thanks again to the contribution of the Rotary Club of Monaco, a [poster](#) was designed for schools (Action B-11 of 2022-2023 PoW). Suitable graphics were created to represent marine mammals in an empathic way and some explanatory text is displayed about:

- ✓ the marine mammals of the Pelagos Sanctuary
- ✓ fun facts about them
- ✓ differences between fish and cetaceans
- ✓ evolution from land animal to aquatic animal
- ✓ an highlight on the Monk Seal.

The poster represents a complement to the escape game, a QR code is included to get to it.

2023 PELAGOS EVENTS

Two main events were held in 2023, and specific communication actions were taken to spread knowledge about them. Specifically:

- *Disentanglement Training (Genoa, 16th and 17th May 2023)*
In addition to press release, visibility was given to the training on social media through pre-event posts (providing general information on the activity and the trainers), live information (with videos and descriptive photos) and post-event posts.
The practical training at sea was also documented through video footage and photographs, an effective way to involve audience through an immersive view. Concrete actions display stimulate interest and contribute to knowledge spreading.
- *2nd International Meeting of the signatory Municipalities of the Pelagos Partnership Charter (Sassari, 22nd June 2023)*
Event graphics: a modern and elegant graphic design was created, matching with the style of the L. Canepa Conservatory of Sassari, the structure hosting the event and applied to invitations, Save The Date, badges, posters, presentation slides and social posts.
Additional material was produced: the event programme, a folder, a portable rollup banner for interviews, MPA posters, a renewal Certificate for municipalities, etc. A [video](#) on the Pelagos Partnership Charter was recorded during the meeting.

The Press Conference on the event implied drafting the press release and contacts with international, national and local editorial offices. During the conference the President of the Pelagos Agreement, Mr Oliviero Montanaro, the Permanent Secretariat of the Pelagos Agreement, Ms Costanza Favilli and the Mayor of the Municipality of Sassari (co-organiser of the event), Mr Nanni Campus were interviewed.

With the objective to make up for staff shortages in the newsrooms and in press conferences, Pelagos self-produced material such as pictures and videos was addressed to journalists and editorial offices the same day.

CONCLUSIONS

All the work done so far has mainly focused on building a good communication basis for the Pelagos Agreement, through the existing tools and with the objective to effectively communicate with the target audience.

The website still needs some improvements, just as contents increase and revision by field experts. At the same time, a specific work on continuous search engine optimisation must be done, through efficient strategies aimed at making the website suitable and worthy and thus increasing its ranking on the major search engines.

In other areas, following steps concern integrating, as much as possible, all available tools to support specific objectives, e.g. donations, ambassador membership, dissemination and educational activities. The objective is creating a multipurpose communication network (social, newsletter, site, press release etc.) where every user can find his preferred dimension and language.

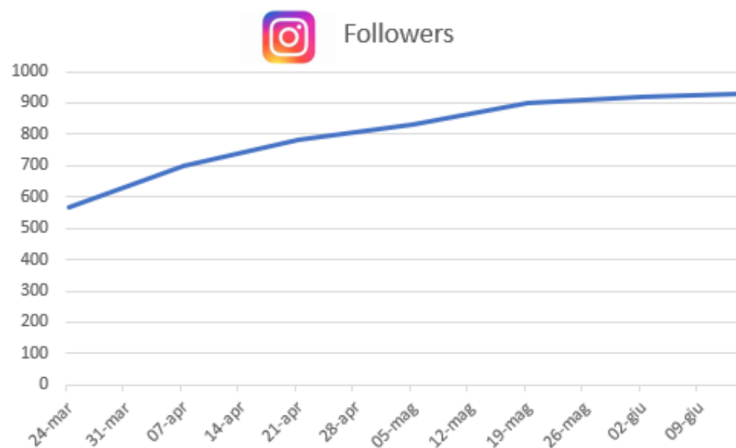
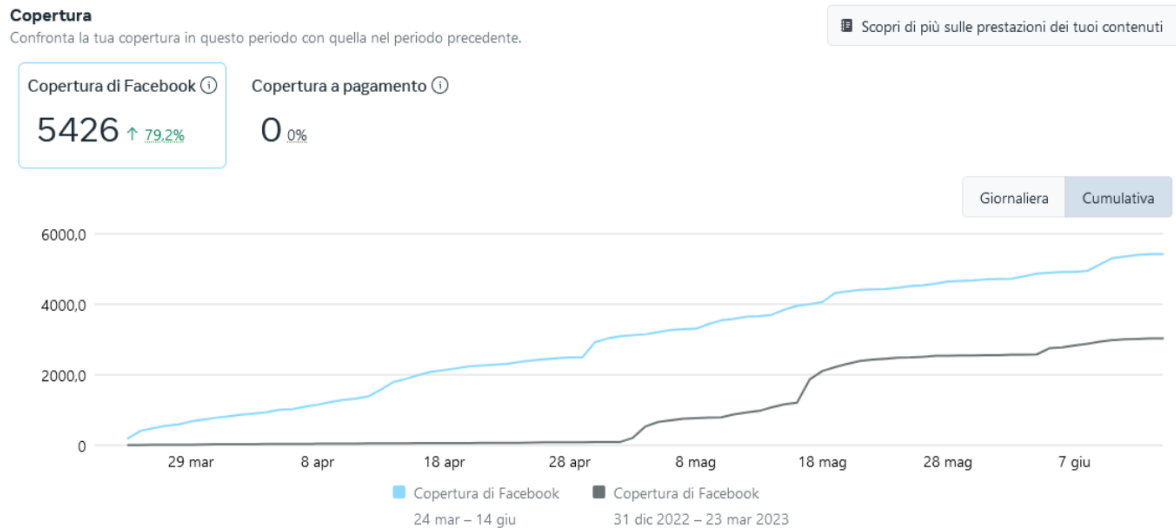
ANNEX I

SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT 15 June 2023

Facebook and Instagram

From 24th March the coverage of the FB page in relation to the previous period has grown by 79%. The growth on Instagram of new followers was 38%.

gr.1



Interazioni

Reazioni, commenti e condivisioni del post ⓘ

662 ↑ 353,4%

Totale degli ultimi 90 giorni rispetto ai 90 giorni precedenti

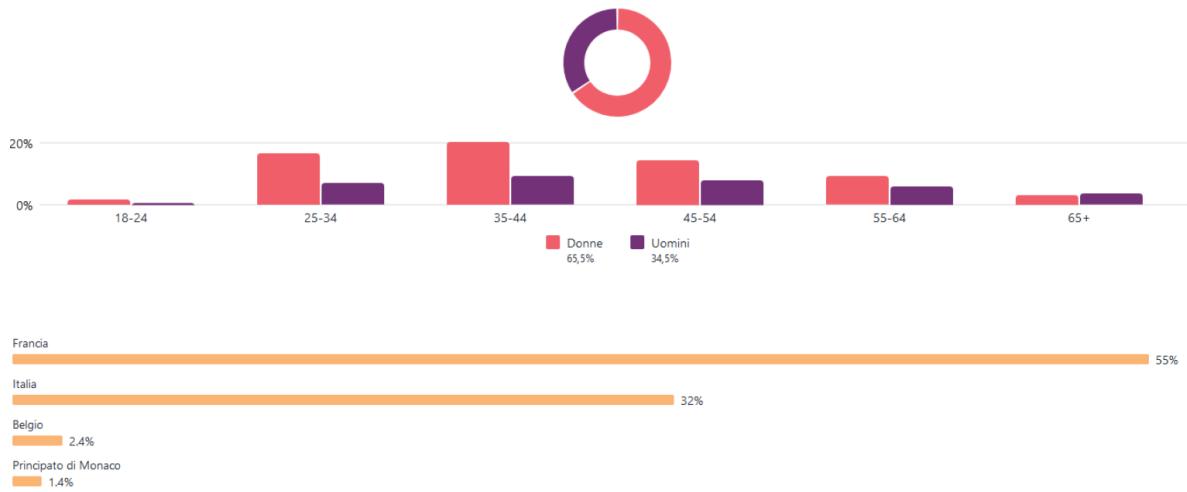


This was because of the continuity of publication, the use of different types of content (video, reel, graphics, photos), contents sharing in groups and other strategies. An over 350% growth on both social media was detected.

IG reels on the “Inhabitants of the Sanctuary” received over 500 views each.

As for gr.1 the growth curve is settling, an indication that the maximum organic (non-paid) content has been reached.

About followers: majority female and living in France.



Twitter

From 24th March, average daily views increased from 16 to 57. It is not the most common social network in Italy and France, but it is worth being there in order to gain visibility in trending topic. The advised strategy is frequently posting only within 'hot' topics (e.g. a beaching, whales sightseeing in the Sanctuary or Mediterranean...) and provide relevant contents.

Linkedin

In LinkedIn, posts display depends on tags used. Parallel to the increased number of posts, views have grown (there are no cumulative statistics available). It is remarkable that more organisations/collaborators involved and mentioned are, more successful the post is and the network widened.

ANNEX II

