



Università  
degli Studi  
di Palermo



The ICCA  
Consortium

## Discovering the Power of Nature". Participatory Environmental Education for Sustainability: Opportunities, Challenges and Practices

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# Educating through networking: Building Communities of Practice in the Environmental Field

Marco Bassi

University of Palermo

Representative for Europe at the ICCA Consortium Council



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The Italian Network of Territories of Life (Rete Italiana dei Territori di Vita) was created to share in Italy the vision, mission, and objectives of the ICCA Consortium

# the ICCA Consortium ([www.iccaconsortium.org](http://www.iccaconsortium.org))

- rooted in the movements that promoted the international policy recognition of ICCAs...
- formally created in 2008...
- legally established in 2010 in Switzerland as a global, member-based organization...



# “ICCA” stands for: Indigenous Peoples’ and Community Conserved Areas and Territories



“...natural and modified ecosystems including significant biodiversity, ecological services and cultural values  
voluntarily conserved  
by indigenous  
peoples and local  
communities  
through customary  
laws or other  
effective means...”

# Shifting of terminology within the ICCA Consortium from 'ICCA' to 'Territories of Life'

## ICCA/Territory of life

- A custodian people or a community
- A territory or natural resources deeply connected to the custodian community/people
- The governance enacted by the community or people contributing to the **conservation of nature** (ecosystems, habitats, species, natural resources), as well as to the community's **wellbeing**

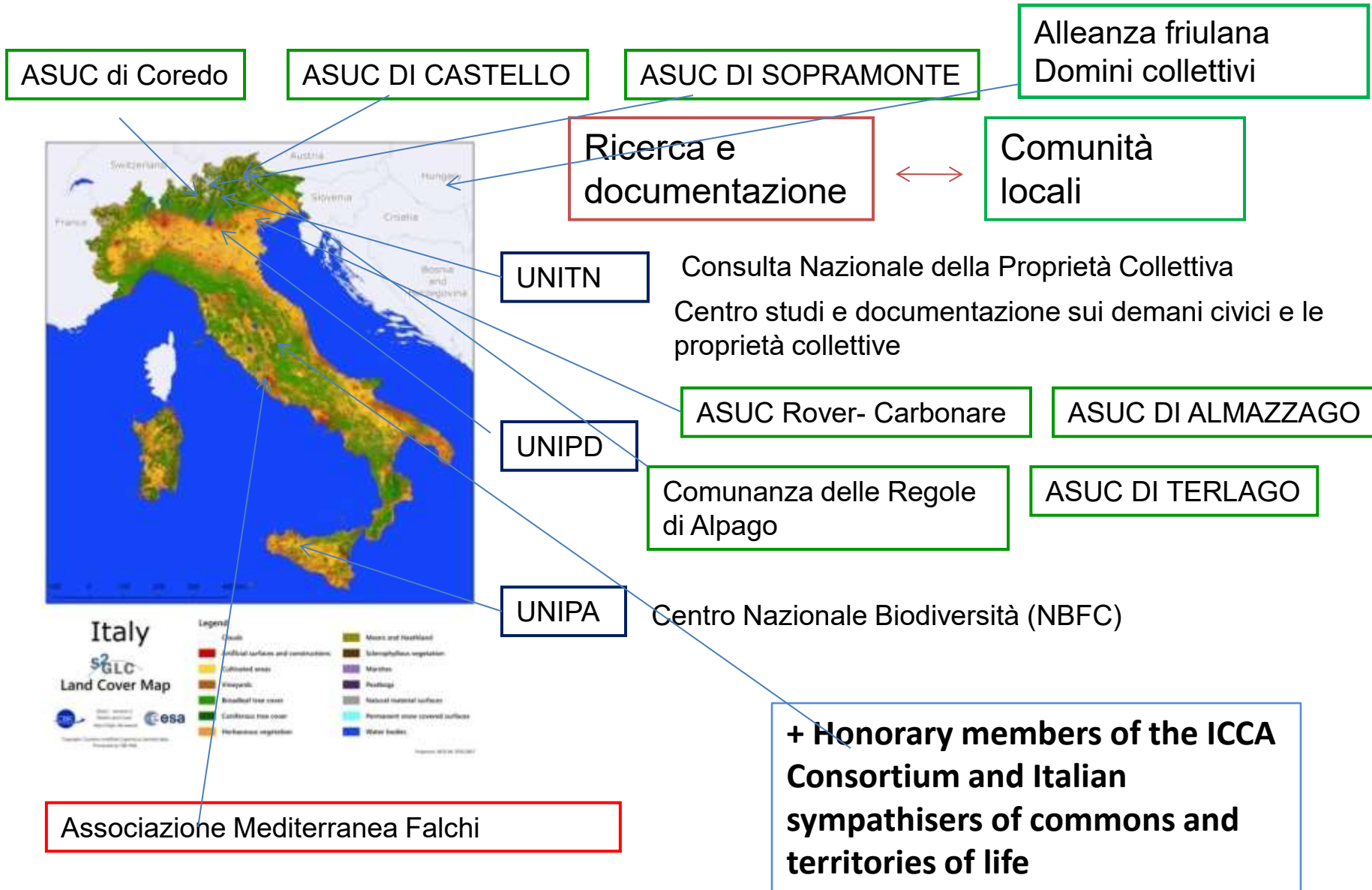
In the Italian context, this terminology and the idea of community-based conservation of biological diversity were relatively unknown.

There are, however, deeply rooted civil society experiences in environmental conservation and a strong movement of rural commons

**WE NEEDED AN INSTRUMENT TO BRING  
TOGETHER THE VARIOUS EXPERIENCES**

The Italian Network of Territories of Life originated as a simple, open (non-moderated) mailing list on Google Groups.

# RETE ITALIANA DEI TERRITORI DI VITA



# SOME KEY PRINCIPLES

- The bulk of the participants are members (organisations or communities) and Honorary members (sympathising and supporting individuals) of the ICCA Consortium, but the network was open to any interested person
- Use of the Italian language
- Some of the persons and organisations involved in the network have decided to become members and honorary members of the ICCA Consortium

**The participants to the network have organised, coorganised and participated in several in-presence events, including**

- Second European Assembly of the ICCA Consortium
- Thematic workshops, such as on mapping commons
- Policy-oriented events: workshop for policy brief on commons and territories of life in Trento and follow-up; events in Geraci Siculo, with the establishment of the Associazione Italiana dei Territori di Vita, a formal organisation **parallel** to the Network.

# Self-reflection

- Our work has centred on communication grounded in a shared interest
- We have developed a platform enabling cross-fertilisation among civil-society sectors and across subnational, national, European, and global levels
- **Ongoing reciprocal learning**

# Situated learning (Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, 1991)

- learning happens through **participation in social contexts**, especially in real practices
- newcomers learn by engaging with “old-timers” in a community
- competence grows through **legitimate peripheral participation**

# Communities of practice (Wenger 1998)

“Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis.”

(Etienne Wenger, Richard McDermott & William Snyder, 2002)

- share a **domain** of interest
- engage in **joint practice**
- build shared **repertoires** (tools, stories, norms)