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Press Release

The Capoprati Park restores the beauty of the Tiber

Hundreds of volunteers have been working to revive and rescue one of the most important green areas of the city from neglect

Legambiente and the Unipol Group present the new project carried out within the scope of *Bellezza Italia*, the partnership created to return compromised areas to the common good

See photos of the works at <https://flic.kr/s/aHskkGNWoQ>

FutureLab, the crowdfunding initiative for environmental regeneration, starts up again: new projects in Venice, Cantù (Co), Sarno (Sa), Pisticci (Mt) and Cuneo

In recent months, hundreds of volunteers have rolled up their sleeves to save the Capoprati Park in Rome from degradation and neglect. One of the last natural areas of the Italian capital has finally been returned to the people: safety measures, maintenance and gardening, new décor, information signs as well as new access to the Tiber allow citizens to regain contact with their river.

In short, the innovative new environmental education centre is taking shape as imagined by **Legambiente** and the **Unipol Group** in the scope of ***Bellezza Italia*** (Italian beauty), the campaign involving the two organizations in the proposal and implementation of actions for the restoration and renewal of degraded areas in Italy, returning them to be enjoyed by citizens.

The initiatives carried out and the work scheduled for the coming months were presented this morning at the Capoprati Park by **Rossella Muro**ni, General Manager of Legambiente, **Maria Luisa Parmigiani**, Head of Sustainability at the Unipol Group, **Roberto Scacchi**, Chairman of Legambiente Lazio and **Massimo Di Stefano**, Chairman of the Legambiente Capoprati association, in the presence of **Cristiana Avenali**, Lazio Region Councillor, **Marcello Ribera**, Councillor of XV Sub-municipality of Rome and the Legambiente volunteers involved in the work carried out over these past months.

“With *Bellezza Italia* we wanted to renew our commitment to the Capoprati Park, one of the great resources of this city, in order to finally rediscover the Tiber and its precious ecosystem,” stated **Rossella Muro**ni, General Manager of Legambiente. “What was once a riverside treasure, in fact, risked disappearing despite the tenacity and dedication of the volunteers. Today we are launching a new challenge focusing on the direct participation of all citizens, in order to allow the revitalisation of the Park. The commitment and dedication that young volunteers are contributing to this initiative prove that returning beauty to our country is not only a sacred work of restoration, but above all the best way to give hope and vision to the future, towards achievable development.”

“The Capoprati initiative has a significant meaning for us: it is not only a project for environmental restoration and protection in line with the *Bellezza Italia* campaign, but it is also an initiative for the maintenance of waterways, thanks to the help of volunteers, to reduce the hydrogeological risk as we would like to promote in different areas of the country,” stated **Maria Luisa Parmigiani**, Head of Sustainability at the Unipol Group. “A choice of continuity and experimentation, able to guide other initiatives such as the one we will promote with Eppela on the Sarno river.”

The Park – covering approximately 7 thousand m² in the heart of Rome, located on the eponymous Via Capoprati – came to life in 2001 thanks to the reclamation operations carried out by Legambiente

volunteers. After two floods in 2008 and 2012, Capoprati suffered extensive damage and was likely to close. The *Bellezza Italia* project made it possible to clean up and implement safety measures throughout the area, renovate furnishings and park facilities, while contributing to recreate a sense of belonging to this beautiful area among the community. The path allowing safe access to the banks of the Tiber has been restored, where rafting activities have resumed, reconnecting the green space to its natural riverside front. In the coming months work will continue to complete the maintenance of facilities to make the Park more and more accessible, also with special attention to pets, and for the realisation of educational, natural, historical and cultural tourism. This location in the heart of the city will host educational projects for elementary and middle schools, gardening and maintenance activities, recreation and a generational exchange between the young and not so young on a journey of scientific, historical and cultural discovery. The project also provides for the planting of additional tree and flower species.

Cooperation between the Unipol Group and Legambiente will also continue in the coming months. In fact, from 30 November the *Bellezza Italia* campaign will return to [UnipolSai Future Lab](#), a space on the [Eppela](#) portal, the leading reward-based crowdfunding platform in Italy, which hosts the top projects related to services and solutions that innovate and make the lives of citizens more sustainable, thus improving the quality of the same.

The Legambiente associations will give life to five new projects that, thanks to UnipolSai and Eppela, shall launch fundraising campaigns in order to look after a part of the natural and artistic heritage of Italy.

The projects selected to participate in the crowdfunding campaign will involve the cities of **Venice, Cantù (Co), Sarno (Sa), Pisticci (Mt) and Cuneo**. In **Venice**, Legambiente, with the project **Don't Waste Venice**, shall continue its commitment to the reduction of waste in the canals of the Lagoon, developing a scientifically solid method for monitoring floating waste and, in doing so, bringing the issue of waste abandoned in the city to the attention of the population, tourists and the media and contributing to the reduction of the same through some simple good practices. In Cantù, the **Green station – Binario 1** (Green Station – Platform 1) project will be launched for the reutilisation of the Brenna-Alzate station on the Como-Lecco railway line, which shall be transformed into a centre for environmental sustainability, tourism and innovative transport. In **Sarno**, in the province of Salerno, the Legambiente association will continue measures to protect the river of the same name with the **Torniamo alla fonte** (Back to the source) project, which aims to revitalise the path along the banks of the Rio Foce, one of the three river sources, where an educational site for the maintenance of the area and the creation of seating and fences will be activated, simultaneously proposing innovative solutions for the protection of the precious river ecosystem. In the small town of Pisticci, in the province of Matera, funds will be collected to finance **Imbianchini di bellezza** (Painters of beauty), pioneers in bottom-up urban regeneration: volunteers taking responsibility for the maintenance of the historical centre with the clear objective of basing the conditions for the new development of the area on the revival of the same, in a sustainable manner strongly focused on restoring the identity of the community. Finally, in **Cuneo**, efforts will be focused on the **I nidi della biodiversità** (Biodiversity nests) project, for the protection of animal wellbeing. The objective is to contribute to making the city a more natural, pleasant and liveable environment, while maintaining a biodiversity in danger of being lost. Part of the activities, in particular the building of nesting boxes and information boards, will be carried out in the carpentry workshops of the Saluzzo prison, to promote social as well as territorial cohesion.

Videos available at: <http://www.youtube.com/bellezzaitalia> and <https://www.flickr.com/photos/bellezzaitalia>

Information on the cooperation between Legambiente and Unipol Gruppo Finanziario are published on the national portal of Legambiente, www.legambiente.it under the section Companies and Sustainability, on the website <http://sostenibilita.unipol.it/bilanciosostenibilita> and on the corporate website www.unipol.it under the section Sustainability/Partnerships/Legambiente.

To follow current and future initiatives in real time, visit:

<http://www.legambiente.it/bellezza-italia>, <http://www.facebook.com/progetto.Bellezzaitalia>,
<http://twitter.com/Bellezzaitalia>