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AS Di alice smacchia
03 Ottobre 2024




Presenta

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DEFORESTATION OF MOUNT CATRIA

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TERRITORY

Mount Catria, with its 1701 m a.s.l., is the main mountain of the Marche region.



It is located along the border between Umbria and Marche, within the territory of the municipalities of **Cagli**, **Cantiano**, **Frontone** and **Serra Sant'Abbondio** and the municipality of **Scheggia** and **Pascalupo**.

"GEOLOGICAL ATLAS"

CURIOSITY

"GEOLOGICAL ATLAS"

The Catria has been defined by some scholars and researchers a "geological atlas" for the numerous outcrops of different types of rocks and different geological periods, which testify to the entire time span of formation of the central Apennines.

the rivers arise from the catria:

- Cesano
- Artino
- Cinisco
- Bevano

The fauna of Mount Catria is numerous, you can admire birds of prey such as the **peregrine falcon** or maybe the **golden eagle**. Mount Catria is populated by many mammals such as **wolf**, **fox**, **badger**, **roe deer** and many more.


The vegetations are countless, such as **oak**, **beech**, **maple**, **holly** and many other species.

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CURIOSITY

The famous author **Dante Alighieri** in the Divine Comedy to the Canto **XXI** of **Paradiso**, made the mountain famous by recalling the hermitage of **Fonte Avellana**, founded on its slopes in the tenth century, where 76 saints and blessed lived and from which 54 bishops came out.

“ *Between the two shores of Italy rise rocks, and not very distant from thy native land, so high that the thunders far sound lower down, and they form a ridge which is called Catria, beneath which is consecrated a hermitage which was wont to be devoted only to worship.* ”



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PROJECT

In the period between the year 2018 and 2020, a project was carried out to build ski resorts in the Catria area with the consequent deforestation of a large wooded area — 3000 sqm



LAND MANAGEMENT

BEFORE VS AFTER

It has been ascertained that the development of the track had undergone a transfer not previously authorized.

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LAND MANAGEMENT

The territory has been subjected to an intervention consisting of significant excavations of land and rocks around the supporting pylons of the cableway.

Subsequently, an anomalous intervention was detected along the service road of the cableway that leads from the valley bottom resort called "Grotticciole" to the ski facilities, and whose development is almost entirely within a wooded area.



Further differences emerged from the extension, not foreseen in the project, of existing roads to reach some pylons by mechanical means, with movements of land and uprooting of trees.

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BEFORE: AFTER:



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CONSEQUENCES

With regard to the possible territorial consequences of the project, we asked the geologist **Mauro De Donatis** for an opinion, who kindly provided us with information from an expert on this issue.



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In the following text we find the information that has brought us:

- The ski slopes created on Mount Catria have eliminated the soil that had formed over several thousand years. Both the soil and the vegetative cover allowed to maintain a dynamic balance of the slopes.
- Once removed, the actions of water, wind, ice are much more direct on carbonate rocks. The result is an acceleration of slope erosion, which leads to the creation of ever deeper ditches and accumulation in the counterslopes of materials such as stones, sand and mud..
- These, in the extreme weather conditions caused by climate change, can be moved in a catastrophic way with landslides very dangerous as those precisely that occurred in the last floods of September 2022 and May 2023.

In conclusion, from the point of view of the geologist knowing and aware of the impact on the territory and the climatic prospects, the ski slopes created on Mount Catria, are absolutely harmful if not dangerous to the environment and man in many respects.

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INVOLVED COMPANY

There are six **suspects** for logging on Mount Catria in 2018. They are public technicians, construction company and works manager.



The Urbino Public Prosecutor's Office speculates against them violations of urban and environmental regulations in addition to the typical crime for such cases, that is the destruction or compromise of a habitat within a protected site.

The process is criminal but are contraventions, **"minor crimes"**, although in the eyes of all appear as crimes greater than many others.

COSTS

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COSTS

The total expenditure of the intervention in order to realize the renewal of the slopes and the adaptation of those existing has been of **3 million and 700 thousand euros**, public money paid from the Region.

Faced with the cutting of 30 thousand square meters of beech, a series of environmental associations (there are 12, including the Cai, Lupus in fabula, Wwf, Italia Nostra etc.) signed and presented on 16 June 2020 a complaint to the Public Prosecutor's Office asking to stop the work and to investigate who had authorized the alleged massacre and who had not bothered to control the execution of the works.



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PROTESTS

The environmental associations of the Marche say they are **against** the construction of new ski slopes on Mount Catria in the face of a deforestation of 2.6 hectares of forest.



The upgrading of the plants:
-destruction of the forest
-increased anthropic and atmospheric impact in the small historic hamlets of Foce and Caprile in the municipality of Frontone
-spending public money for an unlikely prospect constitutes a damage to the treasury

The municipality of Frontone insists on creating a reservoir and an underground tank at the foot of Mount Acuto in order to feed the cannons for artificial snow, destroying a large area of secondary grassland protected by the U.E. as a priority habitat.

CRITICS

CAI PROTEST


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CRITICS

Environmentalists say that this is not the first and only episode of disfigurement of the Catria, it is in fact since the 70s that these territories have been targeted.



Stefano Ardito, author of one of the many valuable and detailed guides for hikers twenty years ago, writes:
 "five large dirt roads go up, while cuts and excavations of various kinds have transformed the mountain into a sad monument to the bulldozer".

Yet even he could not imagine at what point of devastation the choices of politicians and administrators of the Marche Region with their plans to transform the mountain environment in the permanent winter sports playground of Mount Catria.


In the face of the havoc accomplished the environmental associations, national ones like the FAI, Italia Nostra, the WWF or Legambiente, and the local ones, have protested while failing to scratch the granite block of politicians and entrepreneurs supporters of the work.

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The project has therefore sparked many protests from neighbouring countries. In particular, the **Italian Alpine Club (CAI)** of Frontone decided to take a position in **defense** of the mountain of Mount Catria.



The CAI protested against the work carried out behind the shelter of Cotaline and the construction of concrete plinths that alter the natural landscape because he noticed that, despite the permissions in order. This work was yet another attack on the integrity of the mountain, involving systematic stripping and deforestation.

In response, a rally was organized for Sunday, October 27, 2019, with the aim of giving voice to the mountain and opposing these transformations. The CAI protest quickly gained the **support** of other groups, including the CAI of **Montefeltro** and **Pesaro**, as well as numerous CAI groups of the Marche and the Apennines. Many walkers, environmental guides and associations also joined the **Prezi** protest, declaring their intention to suspend their activities to participate in this day



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INTERVIEWS

We also interviewed some citizens of the country of Frontone and surroundings, who for privacy reasons prefer to remain anonymous.



The opinions of the citizens find a **point of union** in the fact that this is still a project that could improve the economy of the country, **the environmental damage is too great to go unnoticed.**

These views reflect a heated debate in the local community, divided between the **desire for economic development** and the **need to preserve the environment**. The ideal solution would require a balance between progress and sustainability, listening to the concerns of all the citizens involved.

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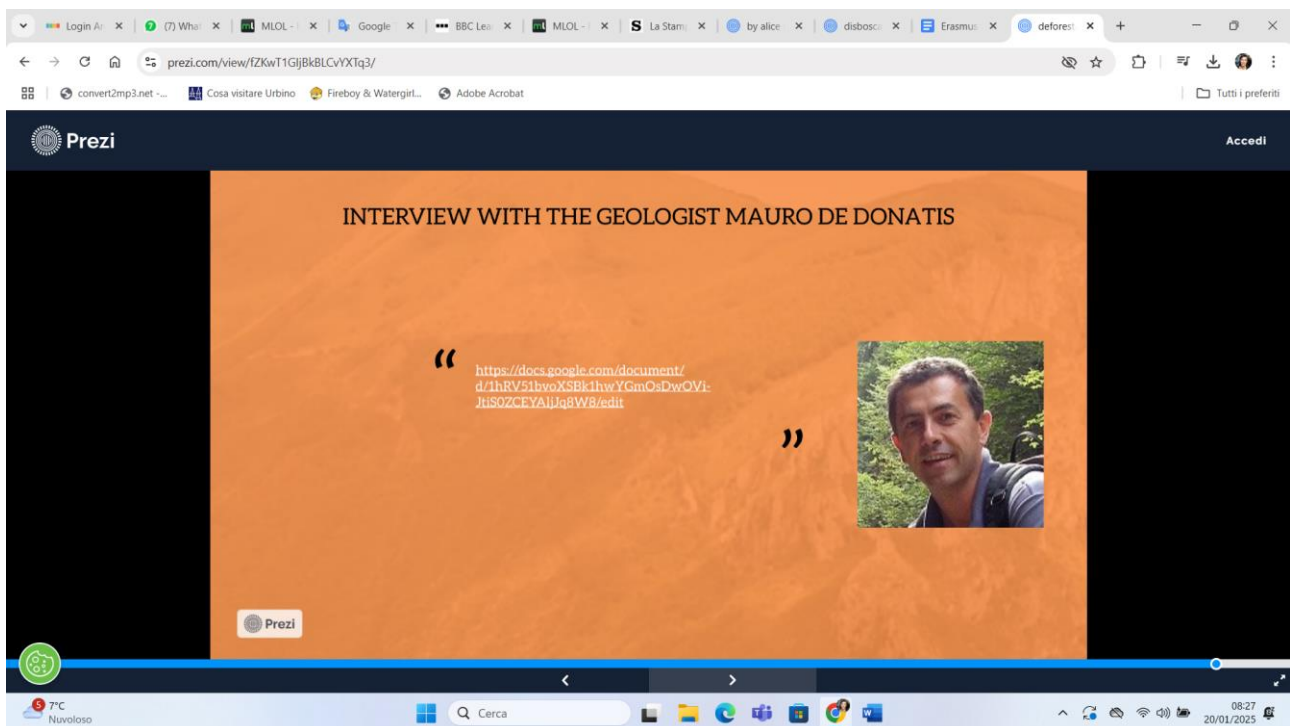
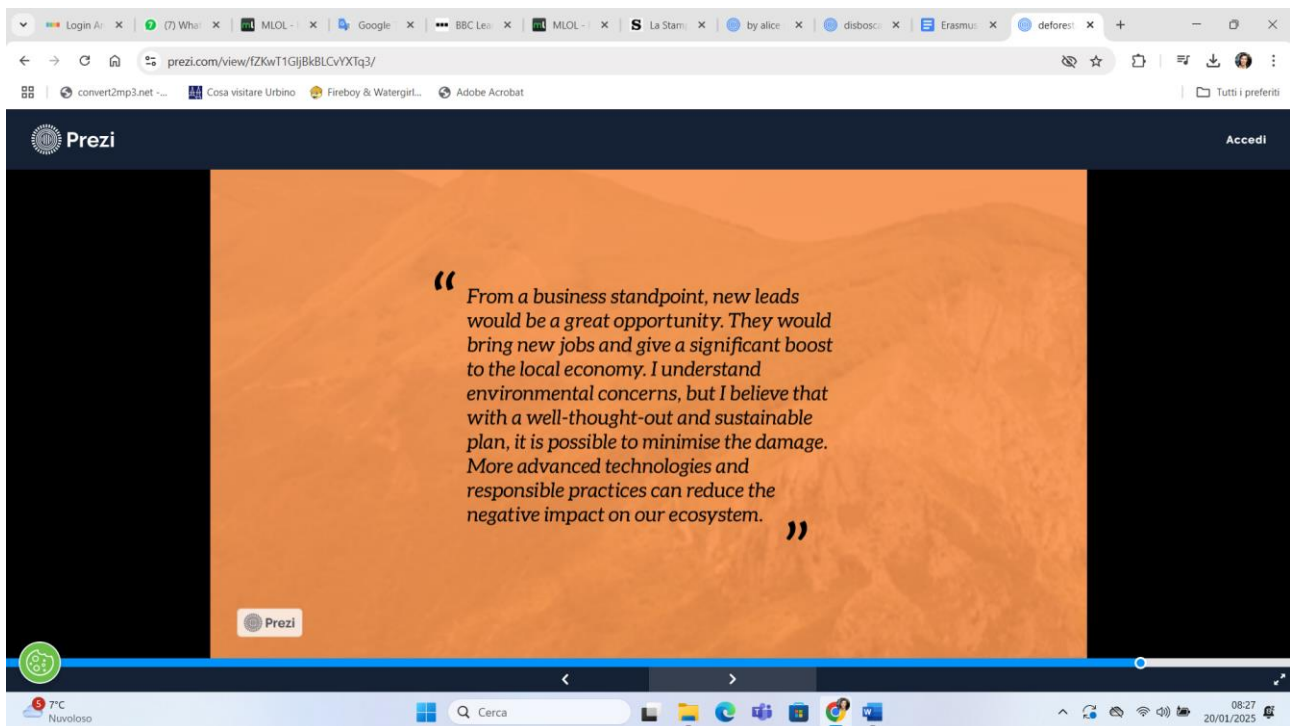
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“ I understand the importance of tourism to our economy, especially during the winter season. The new ski slopes could attract many visitors and bring economic benefits to local activities. However, I am concerned about the environmental impact of deforestation. We have already seen how deforestation can lead to landslides and loss of biodiversity. Deforestation of the mountain is an irresponsible and short-sighted choice. The loss of trees will have devastating consequences on the local ecosystem, threatening the species living there and increasing the risk of soil erosion. We must find alternatives that do not compromise the environment. Investing in leisure activities that do not require the destruction of nature is the way to go. ”

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Geological and geomorphological impact of the ski slopes along the northern slope of Monte Catria

Mauro De Donatis

Mount Catria is a massif consisting geographically of several heights (Mount Catria, Acute, Tenetra) that correspond geologically to the culminations of a wider anticlinal fold that continues northwest with Petrano and Nero and south-east with the Witch and so on up to the Sibillini Mountains.

This structure is the result of a tectonics still active today that has bent and faulted a series of geological units called "formations" (from the Limestone Massif to the Group of Scales) that are mainly limestone and marl stratified.

The current morphology is the result of this deformation linked to the so-called endogenous and to the subsequent erosion and modelling caused by perhaps exogenous. Cryo-clastism (ice that breaks rocks), water etching, landslides, debris accumulation and soil formation are the main agents that have worked to create the natural landscape.

To this, here as elsewhere, is now associated for some tens of thousands of years the work of man who actively intervening has become an agent also of landscape modeling, so much so that the landscape is now defined by all scholars as the result of human action together and over the natural. So all landscapes are no longer virgin territory, natural. But this is not always negative. Our hills and mountains of Montefeltro are generally very pleasant in the eyes of tourists because of the harmony they express.

That said, sometimes man exaggerates in the name of profit, which he also calls by other names (economy, development, entrepreneurship) and inserts absolutely dissonant elements with natural dynamics, each time by paying the consequences directly or making them pay to future generations.

The ski slopes created on Mount Catria, in addition to eliminating part of a beech forest, have also eliminated the soil that had formed in several thousand years (at least a decade after the last ice age). Both the soil and the vegetative cover allowed to maintain a dynamic balance of the slopes. Once eliminated, the actions of water, wind, ice are much more direct on carbonate rocks. The result is an acceleration of slope erosion, which leads to the creation of ever deeper ditches and accumulation in the counterslopes of materials such as stones, sand and mud. These, in the weather conditions that are extreme due to climate change, can be moved in a catastrophic way with very dangerous landslides (called debris flow, debris flows) such as those that occurred in the last floods of September 2022 and May 2023.

In addition, the aim of achieving economic exploitation of the mountains through ski tourism, is shattered in the climatic prospects of the near future that will limit snowfall to periods many restricted and often useless, since the intense cold immediately freezes the snow that soon after melts quickly for the next heat wave.

In conclusion, from the point of view of the geologist knowing and aware of the impact on the territory and the climatic prospects, the ski slopes created on Mount Catria, are absolutely harmful if not dangerous to the environment and man in many respects.