



AGENZIA INTERREGIONALE PER IL FIUME PO

The Interregional Agency for the Po River (AIPO, the Italian acronym), is a non-profit public body that provides engineering and environmental services across the full spectrum of operations in support of interests of the Italian regions crossed by the Po river: Piemonte, Lombardia, Emilia – Romagna and Veneto. Its mission is to provide flood protection and flood damage reduction. AIPO flood damage reduction efforts range from small, local protection projects (levees or non-structural flood damage reduction measures) to major civil engineering works (dams, flood control storage areas, etc)

AIPO programs and projects most frequently are the result of close cooperation with national and local governments, academic institutions and other concerned groups.

AIPO was established in 2003 and took over the role of the previous organization called “Magistrato per il Po”, which had been part of the Ministry of Public Works.

In addition to carrying out water safety practices and emergency procedures in the case of flooding for the Po River Basin, AIPO now has several new responsibilities regarding inland waterway navigation, based on an agreement with the Region of Lombardy in force since January 1, 2007. In the same year, 2007, AIPO and ARNI (Regional Agency for Inland Navigation for Emilia – Romagna) have drawn up an agreement for project coordination and planning.

AIPO performs its mission throughout the River Po Basin - the largest one in Italy. Its catchments covers an area of more than 74.000 square kilometers - a quarter of the national territory. It includes about 3.200 council areas and six regions: Piemonte, Valle d’Aosta, Lombardia, Veneto, Liguria, Emilia-Romagna and the Autonomous Province of Trento. The basin has a population of about 16 million and the territory is unevenly populated. The Basin is home to Italy’s major industries, providing 46% of jobs, about 55% of livestock in only 5 provinces and 35% of the country’s agricultural production. Electricity consumption accounts for 48% of the national total, thus making the Po River Basin a crucial area in the national economy.

The Agency operates through its main Headquarter in Parma, 12 divisions throughout the River Po Basin and a Research and Development District. Divisions are defined by watershed areas and are located in four Po districts (Piedmont Po district, Lombardy Po district, Veneto Po district and Emilia- Romagna Po district).

AIPO mission includes four broad areas:

- planning, designing and building civil hydraulic projects along the Po river and its tributaries (dealing with navigation, flood control, environmental protection, disaster response, etc.)
- river and flood forecasting, drought forecasting, planning and management of natural resources and water resource system

- analysis of terrain morphology and hydrodynamic and rheological characteristics of terrain for both analytical, physical and geotechnical modeling
- supporting navigation

AIPo has recently carried out an important program of development of its research branch. In particular:

- The Research and Development District consists of three laboratories (two hydraulic laboratories and a geotechnical engineering laboratory/materials testing center) located in Boretto near Reggio Emilia. Most of the investigations carried out by the three laboratories are undertaken at the request of AIPo local divisions in cooperation with universities and academic institutions.

The engineering laboratory work includes planning and executing testing programs, investigations, and studies that involve civil applications of geotechnical and materials, soil and rock mechanics and geology.

The two hydraulic research laboratories are staffed with technicians from the Agency and equipped to study - by analytical methods, scale physical models and field investigations - problems arising in connection with the hydraulic performance of hydraulics structures. The purpose of the laboratories is to solve hydraulic and stream stability problems and to support engineers with design guidance and tools.

- The implementation of a flood early warning system able to provide river and flood real-time forecast water information and drought forecast across the Po River. The system is the result of close cooperation with other national and local governments, academic institutions and other concerned groups.

The Flood Forecasting and River Monitoring System in the Po River provides timely and accurate river forecast to local governments in order to reduce the vulnerability of floods and droughts in the Po Basin. It is also an essential element in regional and national alert strategies. The system is efficiently connected to external hydrological and meteorological data sources. Imported data include, for example, weather predictions and telemetry systems such as observed water levels and precipitations.

- AIPo is carrying out studies, commissioned by the Region of Lombardy, to specify projects for establishing the free water flow of the Po River for the navigation unit of the V class CEMT in order to increase the number of navigable days. In addition, AIPo, together with the Region Lombardy and the Infrastructure Department of Lombardy, is developing a project to control the distribution of the water flow through the creation of a series of reservoirs between the river section from Cremona to mouth of the Mincio River.

For some examples of AIPo works and projects, see attached documents

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