

AQUAMADRE starts in Rome, the Eternal City, crossed by the Tiber, river of History. Its own story, just as that of most of the rivers worldwide, is made of millennia. Flowing under the bridges of Rome, the water of the Tiber goes by and raises the continuity of ages dominated by agriculture and animal breeding, amazing monuments, channels, roads, bridges, transports, and wars and cultures of different peoples.

It is the History of each river, witness and actor of the birth and becoming of life. River is indeed synonymous of civilisation over all continents: from Tigris to Euphrates, Nile, Indus and to the Yellow River in China.

Starting from the Tiber **AQUAMADRE** advocate the real sense of the river as a resource for the economy, society and culture, renewing and providing new perspectives all over the world.

NAME AQUAMADRE

LOCATION Rome, Italy

TASK Network for sustainable socioeconomic development

FIELD Rivers and basins

The river expresses and represents the unfolding and renewal of Life. Originating from a source, the river flows from the mountains to the lowlands, quenches thirst, cleans, irrigates, provides energy sustaining the production of vital goods and services. Cities, cultures, and civilisations in every corner of the Earth flourished from water availability along rivers and canals made by human capacities.

Nevertheless, as the time goes by and in most cases, the inappropriate use of waters, wrong choices, pollution and urbanisation, have been modifying and sometimes upsetting the very nature of the river, spoiling its essential characteristics and original roles. Misuse of soils, deforestation, modifications of river' banks are among the causes, more and more recurrent, of catastrophes and tragic events. **In the way that water has been the vital element in the raise of large civilisations, it is still one of the causes of division of people, generating conflicts and wars. More than 300 rivers of the world cross the borders of some 170 countries.**

A renewed and widespread awareness on the need to reconsider the river in its vital role is taking place, implementing tools, in particular normative ones, to re-establish the quality of waters and to guarantee their most coherent, appropriate, and productive use. Steps forward are certainly under way, but are they sufficient to give back to this extraordinary resource its social, economic, and cultural role to the full benefit of local communities?

Within this framework further efforts should be made. They will definitely contribute to **raise awareness on the river as an element of high value, in contrast to the general trend considering it as a marginal element of the land.** A new and broader vision and approach are urgently required: not only the targets of quality and rational use of water are necessary, but the whole of the socioeconomic aims and interests of a territory should be brought together and linked to all factors sustaining life, development, the balance between man and nature, aiming at the sustainable management of each on of our rivers. A daily, local, and shared commitment from the ground (farmers, herders, fishermen, entrepreneurs, administrators and citizens) is the real driver for a renewed management with a view to give back to the river its original value.

The mission of **AQUAMADRE** goes this way.