

SmartGreen

News from the environment

Post

A YEAR-LONG JOURNEY to discover the environment

CORONAVIRUS

The interview: "No connection with climate change"

Hand sanitizer: all you have to know about it

How to recycle single-use gloves and facial masks?

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Bamboo toothbrushes and grass straws: plastic-free alternatives

TRAVELING

From Lisboa to Matera, our sustainable destinations

 EDITORIAL

SmartGreen Post is one year old: thanks to our readers



Piera Vincenti

Editor of SmartGreen Post, she has many years of experience as a journalist and copywriter, alongside which she has added new skills in the digital and social media management sectors. With SmartGreen Post she expresses its true ecological nature.

A year has passed since that April 4, 2019 in which SmartGreen Post went online for the first time. We are set off on a new and exciting journey with a small luggage made of only 15 items and a lot of good will. The path has not always been simple, long the path we encountered obstacles that we have bravely faced, but also many friends who they shared a piece of road with us.

I think of those who contacted us with his green idea and those who followed us with passion every day. It is for you that we have created this magazine, a special that tells our story through the most interesting articles we have published, the insights, the photos. A small gift that we want to give to our readers on our birthday.

Even the editorial staff has been enriched with time to come meet your interests and offer you information increasingly complete and engaging. Today I can count on a well-assorted team that includes several collaborators. Someone you already know, someone else will join us in the coming weeks. Mine goes to them first thanks because, despite having other commitments professional, they manage with sagacity to research and propose news that can arouse readers' curiosity.

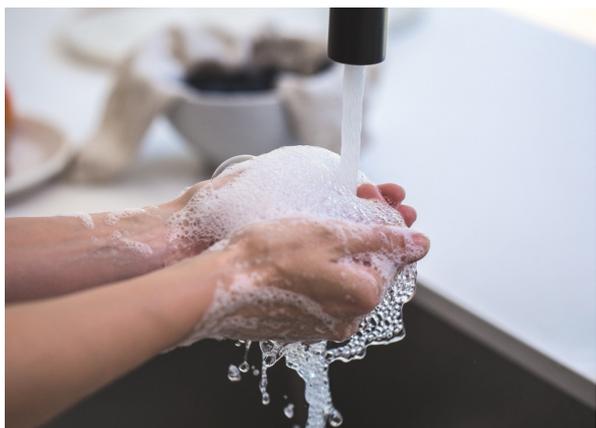
In every article, in every post on social networks we put passion and commitment and results go far beyond expectations. This growth is primarily due to the founder by SmartGreen Post, Mario Telesca, who have made available his skills and his strength to publish the blog regularly. I want to thank them for believing in me and have entrusted me with the project, which today has become for me great reason for pride.

Finally a sincere and grateful thanks to all those readers who continue to follow us every day with love. Your trust has allowed us to grow day after day and get great satisfaction. By now you are many to follow us, to support us, to read us and this pushes us to continue with renewed enthusiasm.

Finally, I would like to remind you that today's is not a milestone, but only a small step towards more milestones ambitious. Our goal, in fact, is to offer a service more and more complete and punctual to our readers, who daily they repay us with their affection.

Only together can we continue to grow and do something important for the environment.





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Founder



Mario Telesca

Computer scientist, sensitive to environmental issues, he has carried out various green projects including SmartRicola, the app for separate collection. He is fascinated for the perfect union between science and art, that he applies in each of his projects.

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Coronavirus, Antonio Giordano: “There is no connection with climate change”

The director of the Sbarro Institute in Philadelphia explains what COVID-19 is and how to contain the infection but underlines: “Pollution is a worse threat to our health”

By **Piera Vincenti**



In the last few days we have witnessed panic scenes due to the spread of the coronavirus: escapes from the red zone, supermarkets taken by storm to stock up on masks, disinfectants, food and other consumer goods. Not to mention the damage that COVID-19 is causing to Italy's economy and productivity. The news coming from the media are conflicting, on the one hand there are those who cause alarmism, on the other those who trivialize by assimilating the coronavirus to a common seasonal influence.

We tried to understand each other a little more and to do so we interviewed Antonio Giordano, director of the Sbarro Institute in Philadelphia and full professor at the Department of Medical Biotechnology of Pathological Anatomy at the University of Siena, who explains to us what COVID-19 is.

“Coronaviruses are capsule RNA viruses that cause respiratory diseases of varying severity from the common cold to fatal pneumonia – says Giordano – Seven are the known coronaviruses that cause disease in humans. Of these, four mostly manifest with common cold symptoms while three cause much more severe respiratory infections: MERS-CoV was identified in 2012 as the cause of Middle Eastern respiratory syndrome, SARS-CoV of acute respiratory syndrome severe (SARS) and, finally, SARS-CoV2 is a new coronavirus identified as the cause of coronavirus disease in 2019 (COVID-19) that started spreading in Wuhan, China and is rapidly spreading throughout the world”.

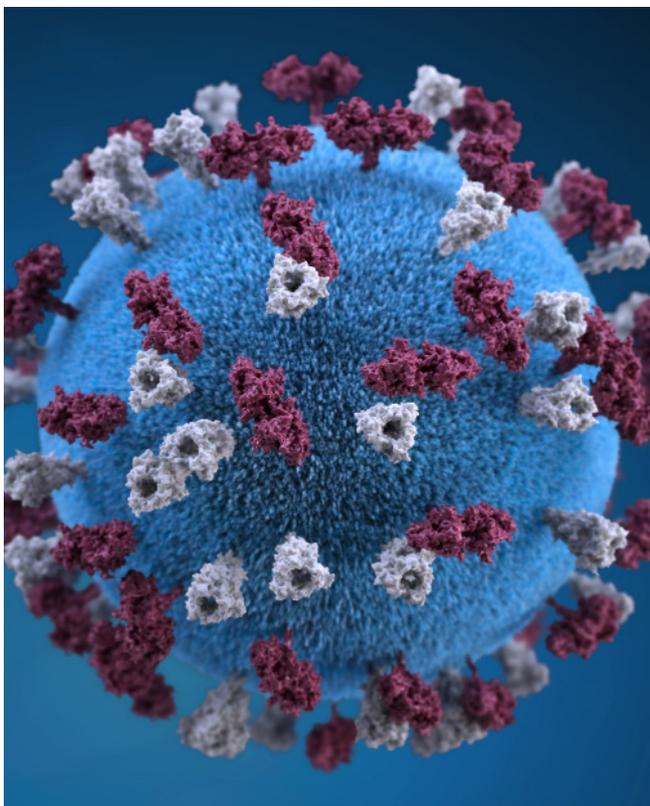
The latter three coronaviruses cause serious respiratory infections; and as pathogens from infected animals, through the jump of species, they are transmitted to people. Diffusion from person to person occurs through contact with infected secretions: mainly through contact with respiratory droplets.

“A characteristic of this virus is that it is very contagious – he continues – This type of virus can expand without finding resistance, because a vaccine is missing and because being new the population has no antibodies to face it. It is important to underline that, in most cases, mortality is not attributable directly to the coronavirus, but to the presence of previous chronic pathologies aggravated by the coronavirus”.



At the moment there is no vaccine or antiviral drugs or other specific treatments although the whole scientific world is studying COVID-19 to find a cure. “The only way to slow down this epidemic is to reduce the flow of people and avoid any interpersonal contact – suggests the director of the Sbarro Institute – We must strive to respect containment policies, in order to help our doctors and our hospitals to “dilute” the daily growth curve of cases over time. Otherwise, we will risk collapse especially with regard to intensive and subintensive therapy. Each of us can make a difference and must make it. The best thing is to stay where you are, not to flee to areas that seem apparently intact. ”

The incubation period represents the period of time that passes between the infection and the development of clinical symptoms. It is currently estimated that it varies between 2 and 11 days, up to a maximum of 14. “We must try to curb alarmism, but be aware of what is going on, and understand that the number of subjects found positive in Italy and in Europe will increase. This is inevitable for two reasons; the first is that we now know that SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, is very infectious and the mode of contagion occurs when those who already have the infection do not show obvious symptoms. Second, identifying the subjects who have come into contact with those who are already positive will have the inevitable consequence of finding others”.



The cases of contagion and deaths in Italy are in greater numbers than in other areas in Europe. The reasons are different; certainly because Italy, to date, has carried out over 30 thousand control tests on Covid-19, unlike most European countries, then because our country is characterized by an elderly population.

“The professor. Enrico, Bucci of the Sbarro Institute, in Philadelphia, the center I direct – explains Giordano – tried to explain the high mortality. His observation suggests that different sampling strategies on populations at different stages of development of the epidemic (at an advanced stage or if it is discovered at the beginning), therefore, together with the delay with which it aggravates and dies compared to when you become infected , cause extreme variability between different nations in what is apparent lethality on a certain date. At the end of the epidemic, however, in both scenarios considered lethality will converge to its true value (1%)”.

There has been talk of a possible link between coronavirus and climate change but Giordano categorically denies it. “To date, there is no scientific evidence that correlates the spread of COVID-19 and climate change, although it is important to underline the impact that pollution has on human health. In a short time the coronavirus emergency will have passed and we will remember it as one of the many seasonal influences while pollution is a persistent danger, just think that the amount of waste grows year by year. All kinds of substances, new molecules have been introduced into the environment, we are bombarded with radiation and radio frequencies”.

This causes a constant increase in the incidence of tumors. “We focus our attention on a virus that will soon be eradicated by forgetting this scourge that is reaping and will reap many victims in the years to come. For these reasons, I believe that every biomonitoring activity is necessary in order to bring out the close relationship between pollution and cancer and to force society to put man and his home, the environment first”.



Hand sanitizer or hand washing: which is better against coronavirus

When you can't wash your hands often you can use sanitizer: all you have to know about it

By **Ste Vi**



Among the many tips issued by the World Health Organization to prevent contagion from coronavirus, there is to wash your hands frequently, for at least 40-60 seconds and, in the absence of water and soap, use a disinfectant gel, a product that has become now unavailable in supermarkets and pharmacies.

Why is it so important to protect your hands? First of all because the hands, after eyes and face, are the most socially communicative part of our body and also the most exposed. Just think of the classic handshake that we exchange in greeting or all the actions we carry out with our hands every day, which come into contact with atmospheric agents and with the most diverse surfaces.

This means that bacteria of all kinds nest on the hands. Washing them often helps to reduce the bacterial load and the dirt, so as to avoid contaminating also other surfaces of our body. In addition to washing, hands need to be protected from the cold, hydrated and kept soft.

If you can't use soap and water, you can use hand sanitizer. Except for some types that are disinfectants, or rather medical devices, the rest of the products we find in the shops are all sanitizing, and therefore belong to the large family of cosmetics. When buying a hand gel it is good to keep this valuable distinction in mind.

In sanitizers we will often find in the ingredients the wording Alcohol Denat or, as the words suggest, denatured alcohol. It is a powerful sanitizer only if it is present in the finished product at a concentration of over 60%, but remember that it is not a disinfectant, although it was used for this purpose until a few years ago.

So, better soap and water or a sanitizing gel? Surely water and soap are more effective for cleaning and eliminating dirt and bacteria, provided you wash your hands well, that is, using at least the famous 40-60 seconds suggested by the WHO. A minute that can change our life. However, when this is not possible, an alcohol-based sanitizer is still a good substitute to carry in your handbag.

Another factor to keep in mind are the contraindications deriving from alcohol abuse. The feeling of freshness that we experience by applying a sanitizing gel is due precisely to the effect of alcohol which, however, does not completely evaporate leaving traces on the skin. Frequent applications can sensitize and redden the epidermis.



Since Covid-19 has spread, many have suggested DIY formulas for the realization of sanitizing gels containing salt or sodium hypochlorite, or the active ingredient of bleach. The latter is a disinfectant which, depending on the concentration, is used for cleaning surfaces (used in hospital) or for washing vegetables but certainly not for cleaning hands. The confusion was generated by the fact that a famous commercial brand produces a sodium hypochlorite-based disinfectant for washing vegetables and an alcohol-based hand sanitizing gel and, therefore, it was believed by assonance that they were the same thing.

In fact, the effectiveness of sodium hypochlorite against pathogenic microorganisms depends on both the concentration and the time of contact, as reported by the WHO which, in response to the epidemics of viruses such as Ebola, has studied the issue in an attempt to provide do-it-yourself disinfection media even in poor countries. Yes to bleach to disinfect surfaces, therefore, but it is good to remember that it must always be diluted in water and that its effectiveness is not immediate but it must be left to act for at least ten minutes before rinsing. As for the hands, since we wash them for a few tens of seconds, sodium hypochlorite does not have enough time to be effective.

The coronavirus emergency has brought attention to hygiene but it should be remembered, when this period has passed, that hands must be washed often and not only when we are faced with an epidemic.

HOW TO WASH HANDS

Hand washing is intended to remove pathogenic germs present on the skin, through mechanical action. But it is not enough to open the tap and pass your hands under the jet of water to eliminate the problem. Here are some simple rules for effective and hygienic hand washing, suggested directly by the WHO and the Ministry of Health.

- Use soap (preferably liquid soap) and running water, preferably warm. Liquid soap is not exposed to air and therefore does not allow germs to proliferate, as can happen on the soap surface
- Apply soap on both palms and rub on the back, between the fingers and in the space underneath the nails (where germs nest more easily), for at least 40-60 seconds
- Rinse thoroughly with running water
- Dry your hands if possible with disposable paper or with a clean personal towel or hot air device
- Do not touch taps or handles with freshly washed hands. To close the tap use a clean towel, preferably disposable.
- If necessary, apply a moisturizing cream or lotion to prevent irritation, in case of too aggressive detergents or after prolonged washing.



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How to recycle single-use gloves and masks?

The coronavirus emergency has increased the use of latex gloves and masks

By **Piera Vincenti**

The coronavirus emergency has placed all of us in front of a new challenge for recycling. The need to contain the infection and, therefore, to avoid as much as possible coming into contact with potentially infected surfaces has significantly expanded the spread of single-use gloves, used above all in the medical and professional field.

Hence the need to dispose of them correctly but, before understanding where to throw them, it is important to know the different types of disposable gloves on the market. Find them out together in this article in collaboration with SmartRicicla.

Latex gloves are a biodegradable product that ensures a high level of sensitivity, elasticity and impermeability. These characteristics make them similar to plastic, but in reality latex is a natural product, obtained from the incision of the bark of rubber trees. At the end of its use, therefore, this type of glove must be disposed of in the unsorted bin to be disposed of in a landfill or through waste-to-energy plants or reabsorbed from the environment, being completely biodegradable and therefore capable of decomposing within a few months.

Even single-use nitrile gloves must be sent to the unsorted product, as it is not possible to dispose of them with a specific recycling process. Nitrile is a very elastic synthetic rubber, with mechanical and chemical resistance, sensitivity and ergonomics, all features that make this material ideal for those who handle food or need maximum protection by working in contact with chemicals and / or body fluids. Nitrile is produced from an organic compound and, given its nature, cannot be destined for recycling and therefore for partial or total reuse. It should therefore be placed in the undifferentiated dry product.

Different fate for single-use vinyl gloves, another name of polyvinyl chloride, known to most with the abbreviation PVC, which instead must be given in the separate collection of plastic. These professional gloves have a lower sensitivity and resistance than those in nitrile but the addition of plasticizers makes them malleable, moldable, soft and elastic. Vinyl is a chemically produced material which, thanks to the addition of plasticizers, undergoes a different disposal process than latex and nitrile gloves.



If destined for landfills and therefore for incinerators, this type of glove would release substances dangerous for the environment and human health into the air. In fact, PVC is formed in part by organic chlorine molecules, which during the combustion phase generates a series of chemical compounds of the dioxin family: it is a series of highly toxic molecular groups, often carriers of carcinogenic elements. For these reasons, vinyl gloves must be destined for the collection of plastic and consequently for special recycling plants: through the recovery of the various plastic materials, it is possible not only to obtain new products, but also heat and electricity.

Not only single-use gloves but also masks. There are many who wear protective masks to protect themselves from the risk of infection when they leave the house to go to work or go shopping at the supermarket. It is important to reiterate that, except in the case of washable masks, these products must be thrown away every time after use. In fact, it is not possible to reuse them or even recycle them. This means that disposable protective masks must be thrown into the collection of the unsorted waste.

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An ocean of surgical masks

Researchers have begun to see a spike in the number of discarded surgical masks washing up on Hong Kong beaches since the COVID-19 pandemic began at the end of 2019. Saanich researcher Teale Phelps Bondaroff works as the director of OceansAsia – a non-profit organization focused on marine issues including organized crime involving sea creatures. Over the past few weeks, researchers have been noticing large numbers of surgical masks washing up on the Soko Islands – a group of islands off the coast of Hong Kong.

Gary Stokes, OceanAsia's Founder, told Energy Live News: "We have found 70 discarded masks within 100 metres of the beach and an additional 30 masks when we returned a week later. Over time the team has seen the odd mask here and now, however this time they were all along the high tide line and foreshore with new arrivals coming in on the current. When you suddenly have a population of seven million people wearing one to two masks per day the amount of trash generated is going to be substantial. The masks were not that old, some almost looked brand new meaning they were not in the water long".

Teale Phelps Bondaroff, Director of Research at OceansAsia, told Energy Live News: "A mask that is ingested by a local turtle, pink dolphin or finless porpoise, for example, could easily become stuck in the digestive system of this animal, thereby killing it.

"Most of these masks contain or are made of polypropylene, which does not break down quickly. Marine plastic pollution is a serious problem. It is estimated that every year, over eight million tonnes of plastic enter our oceans. This plastic does not disappear but rather slowly breaks down into micro-plastic, which enters food chains, with devastating effect. Estimates suggest that more than 100,000 marine mammals and turtles and over a million sea birds are killed by marine plastic annually. Marine plastic adsorbs toxins, which results in it poisoning animals that accidentally ingest it".



Plastic, EU says stop to the disposable item

By **Piera Vincenti**



Europe says stop to the use of disposable plastic. The European Parliament approved a package of measures that will ban disposable items by 2021. The new directive become definitive in 2021 and prohibit Member States to use a series of disposable plastic items such as disposable plastic cutlery (forks, knives, spoons and chopsticks) and disposable plastic plates, plastic straws, cotton sticks made of plastic, plastic sticks for balloons, oxy-degradable plastics and food containers and polystyrene cups.

The legislative text, approved in Strasbourg with 560 yes, 35 no and 28 abstentions, also sets some goals. In fact, by 2029, Member States will have to collect 90% of plastic bottles separately through separate waste collection. The legislation also provides that by 2025 plastic bottles must contain at least 25% of recycled content, to go to 30% by 2030. In the adopted text it is proposed that the prohibition of the use, starting from 2021, of products for which alternatives – in addition to cutlery, plates, cotton buds, straws, drink mixers and balloon rods – are also extended to oxodegradable plastic products and containers for take-away food in expanded polystyrene.

For disposable products for which, instead, there are no alternatives, Member States will have to develop national plans, with detailed measures, to significantly reduce their use, to be transmitted to the Commission within two years of the directive coming into force. The reform, which the association of plastic producers wants to apply uniformly in all member countries, is expected to reduce the costs of marine pollution by 22 billion euros between now and 2030.

The legislative text requires national governments to impose a reduction in the use of plastic objects. According to the European Commission, around 80% of the waste that pollutes the seas is made up of plastic and the products covered by the directive account for about 70% of all marine litter. The plastic decomposes very slowly, therefore it accumulates on the beaches, in the seas and in the whole world. Residues are ingested by sea animals, often causing death, but much more often by entering the human food chain through the food we eat. The aim of the directive is therefore to reduce pollution by plastic or otherwise find alternatives for the reuse of materials.



Bamboo toothbrushes, many benefits not only for the environment

By **Piera Vincenti**

Biodegradable toothbrushes are a valid eco-sustainable alternative to plastic toothbrushes. Dentists advise us to change the toothbrush often, which means that we use, and then throw in the garbage, around 300, over the course of our lives. This causes a great damage to the environment, as a toothbrush takes about a thousand years to deteriorate. Toothbrushes are composed by a material called polypropylene, that is a particular plastic impossible to recycle. The head, instead, is formed by nylon bristles with high environmental impact, without counting the high emissions of gases during production.

In recent years we began to think of an ecofriendly alternative that allows us to have a healthy and dazzling smile without damaging the environment. At first the solution was an interchangeable heads, which allow you to use the handles longer. Then we began to think of an eco-sustainable solution also for the handles and the choice fell on an extremely versatile material, biodegradable and 100% recyclable, the bamboo. The right compromise was found also for the bristles and today we have bristles made of a mixture of bamboo and nylon or vegetable charcoal.

Bamboo, in addition to being an eco-sustainable and biodegradable material, has many other benefits that make it low environmental impact. The cultivation of this plant, in fact, occupies vast areas that become “wooded” – therefore far from other types of cultivation. Furthermore, the bamboo grows in a particularly humid microclimate and its cultivation does not require pesticides or chemical fertilizers, resulting in a sustainable production for the environment as it is the type of wood that has a higher yield / hectare than any other plant. Finally, bamboo spreads and grows very rapidly, leading to a positive relationship with CO2 abatement.

By now there are many companies that understand the importance of creating eco-friendly toothbrushes that represent a valid alternative to traditional toothbrushes, given the growing demand for this product. It is still difficult to find them in the common supermarkets but also this time the net comes to meet us and gives us the possibility to choose the most suitable product for us among the dozens of bamboo brushes that we find on the market. As with normal toothbrushes, we can choose between soft, hard or medium bristles and often even the packaging is compostable, greatly reducing the environmental impact.



Grass straws come from Vietnam and are 100% biodegradable

By **Piera Vincenti**



Grass straws come directly from Vietnam and are 100% biodegradable. The producer is Tran Minh Tien that make them with the stems of the “*Lepironia articulata*”, very common in the Mekong Delta region where the businessman lives. This type of grass is perfect for straws because it has a very long hollow stem. Grass straws represent an ecological and very valid alternative to the classic disposable plastic straws that are difficult to dispose of and harmful to the environment.

The idea was born almost by chance but it immediately gained great success all over Vietnam so that the straws are now marketed throughout the country by the “Ong Hut Co”, the company founded by Tran Minh Tien. The whole process of collecting, producing and selling straws was shown by the Vietnamese businessman in a video that appeared online a few days

ago and immediately became viral. To produce the vegetable straws, Tien collects the empty grass stalks, washes them and cuts them up to 20 cm. Then he cleans the inside with a rod before final cleaning and packing in banana leaves. Each pack contains 20 fresh straws, which last about two weeks in the refrigerator or a week at room temperature. The company also produces dried straws, which are spread in the sun for a couple of days and then baked in the oven. This second type can be used and stored at room temperature for up to six months.

Grass straws were born as disposable products but they can be washed, dried and reused until they deteriorate. At that point, they can be disposed of in the organic like any other food waste. Among the advantages of this product, in addition to being completely compostable and not treated with chemicals, there is the ability not to alter the taste of beverages and the possibility of chewing them after use in order to ingest the fibers and nutrients of which they are rich. Moreover, thanks to their properties, they contribute to the cleaning of the teeth and the oral cavity.



The grass straws can be ordered directly on the company’s website, where Tran Minh Tien also provides advice on how to best use and preserve his environmentally sustainable creations. For now they are for sale only in Vietnam but the goal is to expand soon all over the world.





Cammino Materano, 5 routes for a holiday between nature and history

For those looking for different and unusual destinations for their holidays, in the name of slow and sustainable tourism, a tempting opportunity is around the corner

By **Maria Giuseppina Ferrulli**

Designed for tourism through slow traffic and towards internal areas, normally not considered by traditional circuits, the Materano Way is a way to get in touch with all the resources of the territory: natural, historical-archaeological, cultural, food and wine resources and also human, considering that it is fully in tune with the people and local communities.

The path, to be done strictly on foot, leads the tourist to experience the places and live an unforgettable activity. According to what David Le Breton observed in his *The world on foot*. March praise:

“Walking, in the context of contemporary reality, would seem to express a form of nostalgia, or of resistance. Walkers are singular people, who accept for a few hours or a few days to get out of the car to physically venture into the nakedness of the world. The act of walking represents the triumph of the body, with different shades according to the degree of freedom of the person. It favors the elaboration of an elementary philosophy of existence based on a series of small things, induces for a moment the wayfarer to question himself, his relationship with nature, with others, to meditate on an unexpected range of issues. ”

The Way is therefore a spiritual itinerary in one’s interiority and in search of one’s identity as a living in the world and in the surrounding nature; it is a journey where the only real goal is the journey and the slow rhythm of the steps and thoughts.

The Materan Way, recognized in the Atlas of Paths of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, consists of five different itineraries, all dedicated to the pre-Roman populations of Southern Italy: Via Peuceta, Via Ellenica, Via Jonica, via Dauna and via Lucana. The last itinerary is the Via Sveva, dedicated to the extraordinary figure of Federico II, which starts from the castle of Trani and then from Andria, in whose Cathedral the remains of two of Federico’s wives are preserved, leads to Castel del Monte and, through the Alta Murgia National Park, in the city of stones.



The Via Peuceta is a path that starts from the Basilica of San Nicola di Bari, a symbol of the pilgrimage in Puglia, and crosses the ancient territory of Peucezia: from the olive forest of the coastal plain to the steppe expanses of the Murgian plateau and the woods of conifers and oaks, up to the blades and ravines of the rock scenery where Gravina in Puglia and Matera rise. Along the 170 km you can discover the rich Apulian and Lucanian cultural heritage, consisting not only of cathedrals, medieval villages, rock churches, Greek and Roman remains, but also of farms, trulli, dry stone walls and the magical gastronomy of the peasant tradition.



Through the Via Appia-Traiana, starting from Brindisi, the fascinating itinerary of the Via Hellenica takes shape; on the way you can meet the two Unesco sites of the Sassi of Matera and the Trulli of Alberobello, the wonderful villages of the Itria Valley and the extraordinary open-air museum of the Gravine Park.

The Via Jonica is a 215 km path along the Ionian coast from Taranto, the city of the two seas, to Leuca, the finis terrae of Italy. The walk takes place in a continuous circle of environments made up of Mediterranean scrub, long beaches with their sixteenth-century watchtowers and numerous unspoiled natural oases.

The Via Dauna is a journey between Molise and Puglia, along the ancient paths of transhumance and pilgrimages. The path passes through ancient villages perched on the rocky spurs of the Dauni Mountains, interspersed with luxuriant oak and beech forests, valleys and breathtaking landscapes. After Melfi, the Norman capital, and Venosa, statio of the Via Appia and seat of the majestic Church of the Incompiuta, the path rejoins the Via Sveva to get to Matera.

Starting from Matera, the path of via Lucana moves through the enchanting landscapes of the Apennines and the Lucanian Dolomites, of the Cilento National Park up to the Tyrrhenian Sea where the temple of Hera stands in Paestum, passing through villages and wonderful natural places.

A tourism to be enjoyed step by step, to rebuild the unchanged and eternal bond created over the centuries between man and nature and to feel truly at home.



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Environment: what can we do to save it from disaster

By **Piera Vincenti**

Environment, ecology, climate change: all topics on which the world is becoming increasingly sensitive. The recent demonstrations led by Greta Thunberg have had the power to bring to the fore an increasingly alarming phenomenon, but they have also aroused the response of millions of young and old throughout the world, worried about the future of the Earth.

We ask for eco-sustainable policies, designed to safeguard the well-being of our planet, but the real change starts with us who, with a few simple actions we can do so much to make our contribution. Here are some tips:

- Reduce the consumption of meat and dairy products – The production of red meat introduces in the atmosphere quantities of CO₂ up to 40 times higher than those produced by cereals and vegetables. Large quantities of water and feed are needed to keep a dairy cow alive. Cows also contribute 28% to methane emissions related to human activity. Avoid wasting water – By 2050, 5 billion people around the world could experience water shortages.
- Take shorter showers, turn off the tap when brushing your teeth, install efficient aerator aerators.
- Reduce paper consumption – 40% of the wood harvested from tree cutting is used to produce paper. The paper industry damages the environment and consumes a lot of water. Switch to digital bills, withdraw from magazine subscriptions that you no longer read and choose reusable envelopes to make your gifts.
- Use reusable bottles and washable lunch boxes – Today we produce around 300 million tons of plastic every year, half of which is disposable. Every year 8 million tons of plastic go to the oceans.
- Pay attention to what you throw in the rubbish – Avoid multi-material packaging that cannot be recycled and as much difference as you can the garbage you produce.
- Use reusable shopping bags – Before you go to the grocery store, make sure you have reusable bags with you. Plastic bags are the main threat to the life of marine animals.
- Change your driving habits – Motor vehicles pollute the air we breathe. Whenever possible, avoid using the car: walk again, use public transport, take advantage of car sharing or ride.
- Instead of buying, borrow or fix – The most powerful weapon to help the environment is to produce less garbage. To do this, you can recycle, borrow or go to the second-hand market.

Definitely, it is about changing the way we think and act. Certainly we do many of these actions already but it is important to do them with constancy and above all to share and to make them understand the importance of adopting an eco-sustainable lifestyle.



In Lisbon buses are powered by used cooking oil

By **Piera Vincenti**



Portuguese public transport goes green. In Lisbon, the main bus company has converted an entire fleet from diesel to biodiesel derived from spent cooking oil. Born from a joint initiative between the companies Carris and Prio, the “Powered by Biodiesel” project started in the capital last July. From the three buses initially converted, the entire fleet was covered in December 2019: at the moment, in fact, all six buses used by Carris operate on 100% biodiesel obtained from used cooking oil.

If thrown into the drain, in waterways or at sea, exhausted cooking oil represents a serious environmental threat: floating on the surface of the water, it prevents the normal exchange of oxygen with the outside and a single liter can make it drinking up to 1 million liters of water. On the contrary, if properly recovered and reused, it can prove to be a precious resource, both in environmental and economic terms.

The initiative carried out in the Portuguese capital is only further confirmation of the circular approach in the field of waste oils.

“One of the main bus lines in the city is now 100% powered by Prio’s B100, an equivalent diesel that was designed, developed and produced by Prio with used cooking oil,” Prio Emanuel executive director told EURACTIV. Proença – This reduces the greenhouse gas emissions of traditional fossil fuels by 83%, while recycling and valorising a residue that has no alternative use”.

The used cooking oil comes from the collection carried out by Prio through the use of 600 recycling containers present throughout the Portuguese territory: “We collect from all over the country, but also from other countries in Europe and abroad, and we intend continue to grow our network of collection points, as we know there is still a huge amount of cooking oil that has not yet been collected,” explained Proença.

Once recovered, this waste is transported to the factory in the port of Aveiro, in central-northern Portugal, where over 80,000,000 liters are processed every year.

“The feedback we have is that it is a better solution (ie cheaper, operationally more effective and faster to implement) than alternatives to natural gas and electric buses (sector, among other things, in which Carris is already active)”.

Having tested the effectiveness and ascertained the advantages, Carris counts for the future on the support of the same government which, in line with European directives, has established a mandatory increase in the use of biofuels from 7% to 10% from this year.



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