

BIODIVERSITÀ E PRESENZA UMANA NELLE "ALTE TERRE" ITALIANE

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MOUNTAIN BIODIVERSITY

ITALIAN MOUNTAINS

WILDLIFE AND PLANTS
ADAPTATIONS

ITALIAN MOUNTAIN BIODIVERSITY THREATS



WILDLIFE AND PLANTS
ADAPTATIONS

ITALIAN MOUNTAIN
BIODIVERSITY THREATS

INTRODUCTION



Himmelbjerget (Danemark) transl. «The Sky Mountain» 147 m a.s.l.



Garth Hill (S Wales, UK) 307 m / 1,007 ft a.s.l.

WHAT IS A MOUNTAIN?

MOUNTAIN BIODIVERSITY

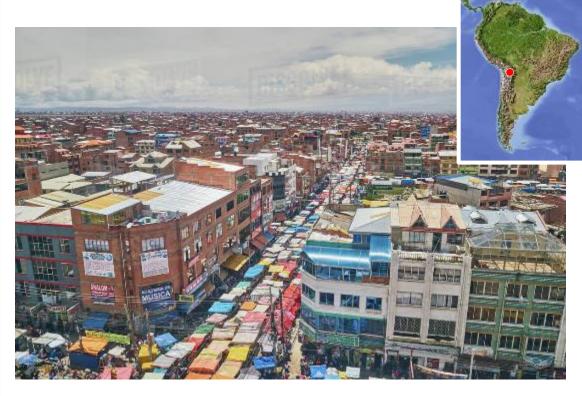
ITALIAN MOUNTAINS

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El Alto (Bolivia) 4,150 m a.s.l. / 1,100,000 inhab.

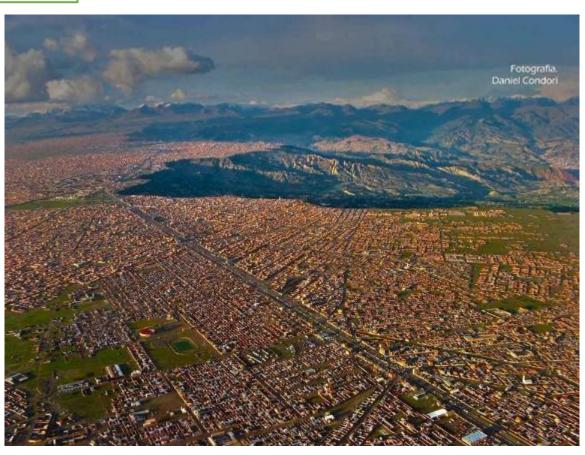
WHAT IS A MOUNTAIN?

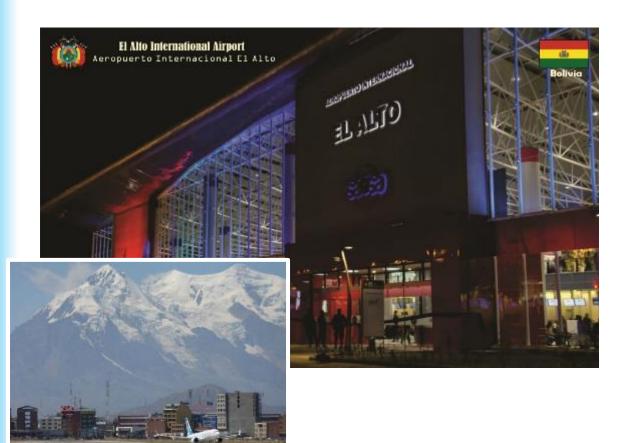
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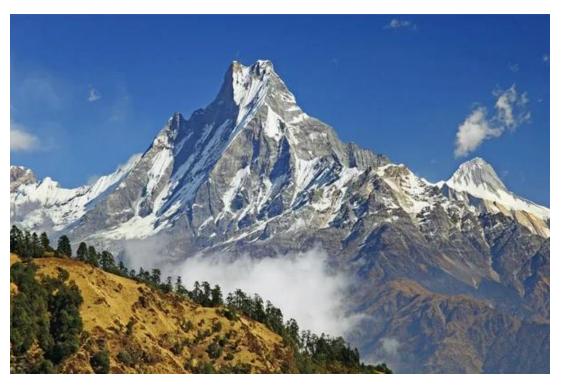
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POINTS OF VIEW

We do also have a distorted image of mountains...



Does it look high?

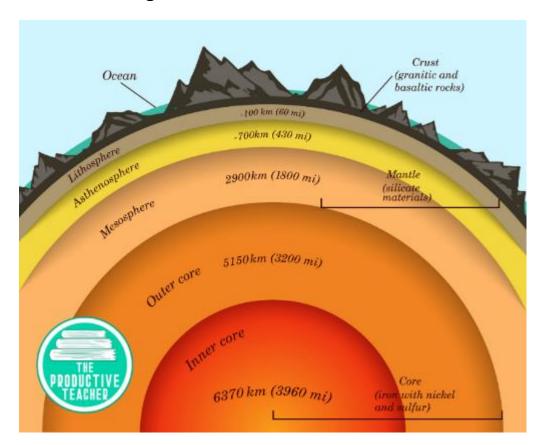
POINTS OF VIEW

We do also have a distorted image of mountains...



Does they look low?

This is our image of mountains...



WILDLIFE AND PLANTS ITALIAN MOUNTAIN ADAPTATIONS BIODIVERSITY THREATS

... their prominence is nothing more than wrinkles on an orange!

9/12756 =

0.07%

9 km

non smetterei mai di vederla per quanto è bella

POINTS OF VIEW



WHAT IS A MOUNTAIN?

MOUNTAIN BIODIVERSITY

ITALIAN MOUNTAINS

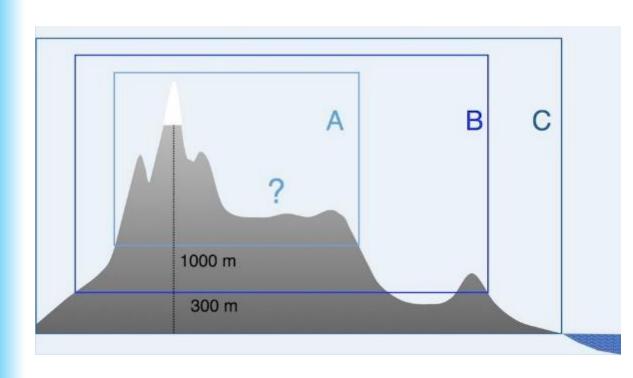
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POINTS OF VIEW



WHAT IS A MOUNTAIN?



Mountain

"Landform that rises prominently above its surroundings, generally exhibiting steep slopes [...]. Mountains generally are understood to be larger than hills, but the term has no standardized geological meaning. Very rarely do mountains occur individually [...]. When an array of such ranges is linked together, it constitutes a mountain belt"

A bit too vague...!



WHAT IS A MOUNTAIN?



«A mountain **cannot be defined by elevation**, simply because there are elevated plateaus such as the North-American short-grass Prairies at around 2,000 m elevation or the vast plateaus in central Asia [...].



Similarly, mountains **cannot be defined by climate**, given that any cold category would include arctic and antarctic lowland [....].



The only common feature of mountains is their steepness [...] which causes the forces of gravity to shape them and create habitat types and disturbances typical for mountains and which make exposure a driving factor of life»

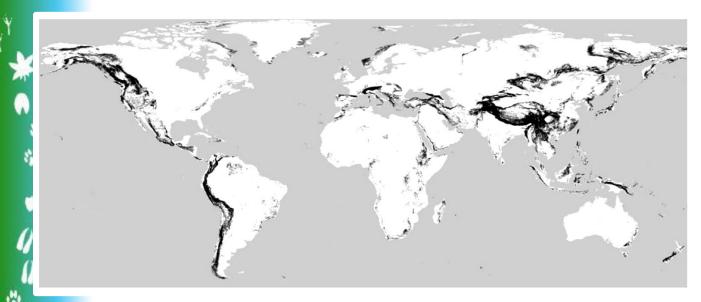






A MOUNTAIN IS... any land meeting one condition

>200 m elevational difference in an approx. 3x2 km area (7% slope or 77 m / km)



- → 12.3% of landmasses are mountain
- → 511 million people



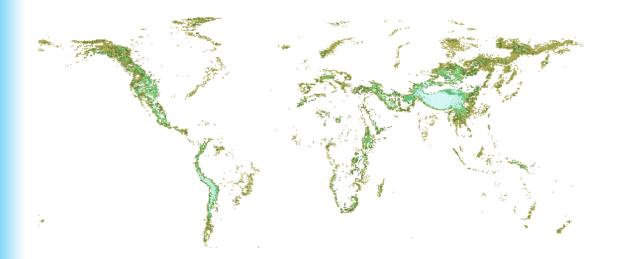


A MOUNTAIN IS... any land meeting one of several conditions

>2,500 m

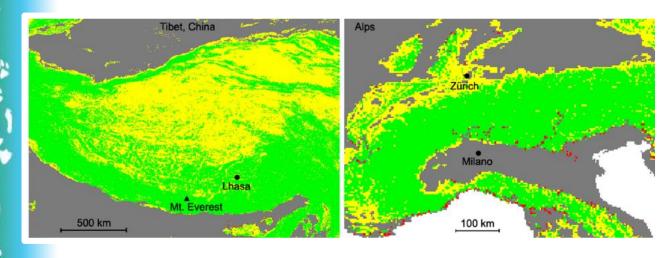
1,500-2,499 m if the slope is >2°

1,000–1,499 m if the slope is 5° and local elevat. range (radius 7 km) >300 m 300–999 m if local elevat. range (radius 7 km) >300 m



- → 22.3% of landmasses are mountain
- → 1.27 <u>billion</u> people

According to the definition, areas can be either classified as mountains or not



- WCMC yes, GMBA yes
- WCMC yes, GMBA no
- WCMC no, GMBA yes
- WCMC no, GMBA no



100 m a.s.l.

A TRIP...



500 m a.s.l.

A TRIP...



1000 m a.s.l.

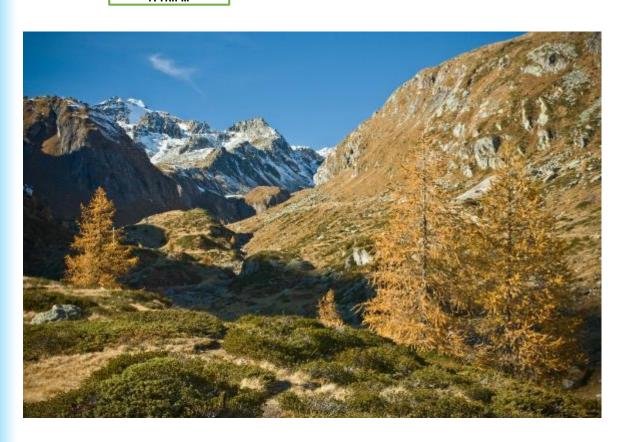
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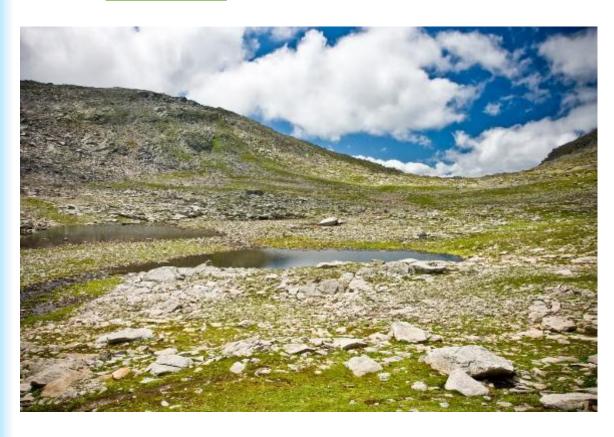
WHAT IS A MOUNTAIN? A TRIP...



1500 m a.s.l.

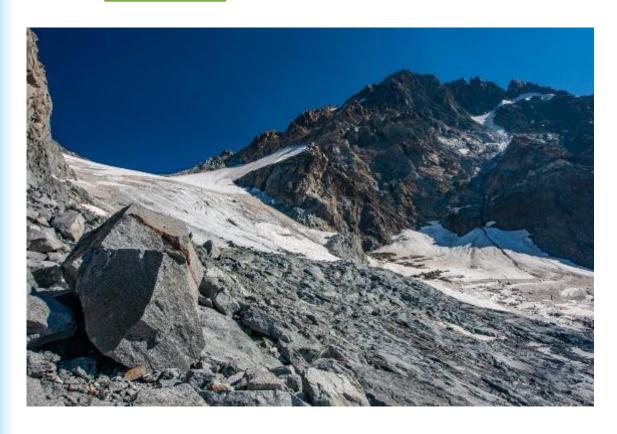


2000 m a.s.l.



2500 m a.s.l.

A TRIP...



3000 m a.s.l.

A TRIP...



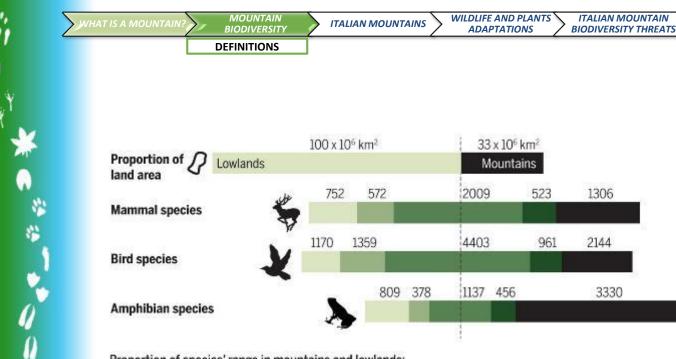
ITALIAN MOUNTAIN BIODIVERSITY THREATS

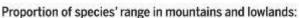
4000 m a.s.l.

Whatever is the classification considered, mountain biodiversity (i.e. the species richness) is **HUGE**



"With about 25% of all land area, mountain regions are home to more than **85% of the world's species of amphibians,** birds, and mammals, many entirely restricted to mountains"

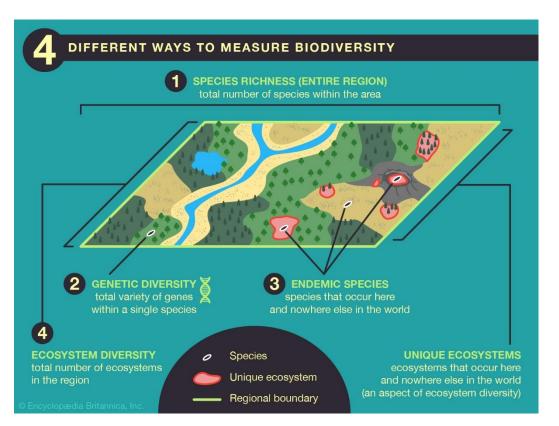




- > 90% lowlands
- > 75% lowlands
- Both
- > 75% mountains
- > 90% mountains

Biodiversity (Wilson 1988)

→ the diversity (= heterogeneity) of living organisms





Ecosystems



Biodiversity

→ Biodiversity makes the ecosystems work!

I Trophic relationships *

- 1.1 heterotrophic consumer (an organism that is unable to manufacture its own food and must feed on other organisms)* 1.1.1 primary consumer (herbivore; an organism that feeds primarily on plant material) (also see below under Herbivory) *
 - I.I.I.I foliovore (leaf eater) *
 - 1.1.1.2 spermiyore (seed eater) *
 - 1.1.1.3 browser (leaf, stem eater)
 - 1.1.1.4 grazer (grass, forb eater)
 - 1.1.1.5 frugivore (fruit eater) * 1.1.1.6 sap feeder
 - 1.1.1.7 root feeders *
 - 1.1.1.8 nectivore (nectar feeder)
 - 1.1.1.9 fungivore (fungus feeder) *
 - 1.1.1.10 flower/bud/catkin feeder
 - I.I.I.II aquatic herbivore
 - 1.1.1.12 feeds in water on decomposing benthic substrate (benthic is the lowermost zone of a water body)
 - 1.1.1.13 bark/cambium/bole feeder
 - 1.1.2 secondary consumer (primary predator or primary carnivore; a carnivore that preys on other vertebrate or invertebrate animals, primarily herbivores) *
 - 1.1.2.1 invertebrate eater
 - 1.1.2.1.1 terrestrial invertebrates
 - 1.1.2.1.2 aquatic macroinvertebrates (e.g., not plankton)
 - 1.1.2.1.3 freshwater or marine zooplankton
 - 1.1.2.2 vertebrate eater (consumer or predator of herbivorous or carnivorous vertebrates) *
 - 1.1.2.2.1 piscivorous (fish eater) *
 - 1.1.2.3 ovivorous (egg eater)
 - 1.1.3 tertiary consumer (secondary predator or secondary carnivore; a carnivore that preys on other carnivores)
 - I.I.4 carrion feeder (feeds on dead animals)
 - 1.1.5 cannibalistic (eats members of its own species)
 - 1.1.6 coprophagous (feeds on fecal material)
 - 1.1.7 feeds on human garbage/refuse

 - 1.1.7.1 aquatic (e.g., offal and bycatch of fishing boats)
 - 1.1.7.2 terrestrial (e.g., garbage cans, landfills)
- 1.2 prey relationships
- 1.2.1 prey for secondary or tertiary consumer (primary or secondary predator)
- 2 Aids in physical transfer of substances for nutrient cycling (C,N,P, etc.) *

3 Organismal relationships *

- 3.1 controls or depresses insect population peaks *
- 3.2 controls terrestrial vertebrate populations (through predation or displacement) *
- 3.3 pollination vector
- 3.4 transportation of viable seeds, spores, plants, or animals (through ingestion, caching, caught in hair or mud on feet, etc.) *
 - 3.4.1 disperses fungi
- 3.4.2 disperses lichens
- 3.4.3 disperses bryophytes, including mosses
- 3.4.4 disperses insects and other invertebrates (phoresis)
- 3.4.5 disperses seeds/fruits (through ingestion or caching)
- 3.4.6 disperses vascular plants *
- 3.5 creates feeding, roosting, denning, or nesting opportunities for other organisms *
 - 3.5.1 creates feeding opportunities (other than direct prey relations) *
 - 3.5.1.1 creates sapwells in trees
- 3.5.2 creates roosting, denning, or nesting opportunities *
- 3.6 primary creation of structures (possibly used by other organisms) *
- 3.6.1 aerial structures (typically large raptor or squirrel stick or leaf nests in trees or on platforms, or barn swallow/cliff swallow nests)*
- 3.6.2 ground structures (above-ground, non-aquatic nests and ends and other substrates, such as woodrat middens, nesting mounds of swans, for example)*
- 3.6.3 aquatic structures (muskrat lodges, beaver dams)*
- 3.7 user of structures created by other species
 - 3.7.1 aerial structures (typically large raptor or squirrel stick or leaf nests in trees or on platforms, or barn swallow/cliff swallow nests)

- 3.7.2 ground structures (above-ground, non-aquatic nests and ends and other substrates, such as woodrat middens, nesting mounds of swans, for example)
- 3.7.3 aquatic structures (muskrat lodges, beaver dams)
- 3.8 nest parasite
- 3.8.1 interspecies parasite (commonly lays eggs in nests of other species)
- 3.8.2 common interspecific host (parasitized by other species)
- 3.9 primary cavity excavator in snags or live trees (organisms able to excavate their own cavities)
- 3.10 secondary cavity user (organisms that do not excavate their own cavities and depend on primary cavity excavators or natural
- 3.11 primary burrow excavator (fossorial or underground burrows)
- 3.11.1 creates large burrows (rabbit-sized or larger)
- 3.11.2 creates small burrows (less than rabbit-sized)
- 3.12 uses burrows dug by other species (secondary burrow user)
- 3.13 creates runways (possibly used by other species; runways typically are worn paths in dense vegetation)
- 3.14 uses runways created by other species
- 3.15 pirates food from other species
- 3.16 interspecific hybridization (species known to regularly interbreed)
- 4 Carrier, transmitter, or reservoir of vertebrate diseases
- 4.1 diseases that affect humans *
- 4.2 diseases that affect domestic animals
- 4.3 diseases that affect other wildlife species
- 5 Soil relationships *
 - 5.1 physically affects (improves) soil structure, aeration (typically by digging) *
 - 5.2 physically affects (degrades) soil structure, aeration (typically by trampling) *
- 6 Wood structure relationships (either living or dead wood) *
- 6.1 physically fragments down wood *
- 6.2 physically fragments standing wood *
- 7 Water relationships *
 - 7.1 impounds water by creating diversions or dams *
 - 7.2 creates ponds or wetlands through wallowing
- 8 Vegetation structure and composition relationships *
- 8.1 creates standing dead trees (snags) *
 - 8.2 herbivory on trees or shrubs that may alter vegetation structure and composition (browsers)
 - 8.3 herbivory on grasses or forbs that may alter vegetation structure and composition (grazers)

85 functions in boreal temperate ecosystems!

What causes such diversity?

Ecosystems are shaped by peculiar **environmental constraints** that change along steep **gradients** (= at small spatial scale)

Thermal / air pressure gradient



Slope



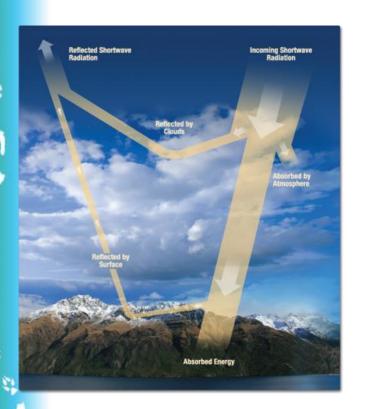
WILDLIFE AND PLANTS
ADAPTATIONS

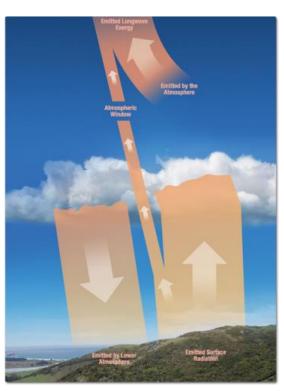
ITALIAN MOUNTAIN BIODIVERSITY THREATS

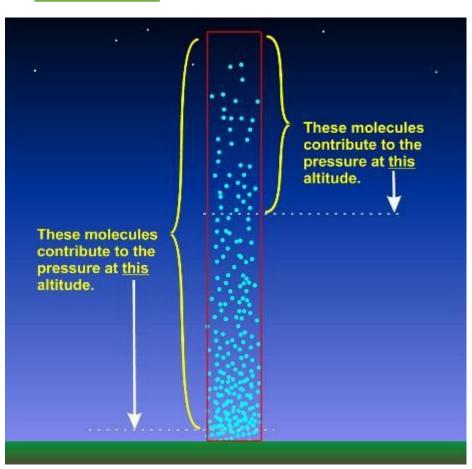


WILDLIFE AND PLANTS
ADAPTATIONS

ITALIAN MOUNTAIN BIODIVERSITY THREATS

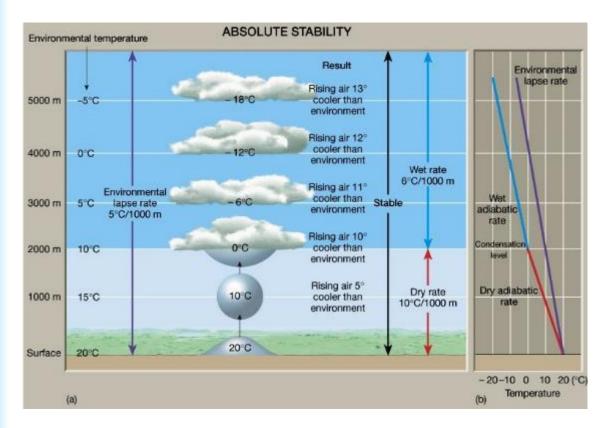






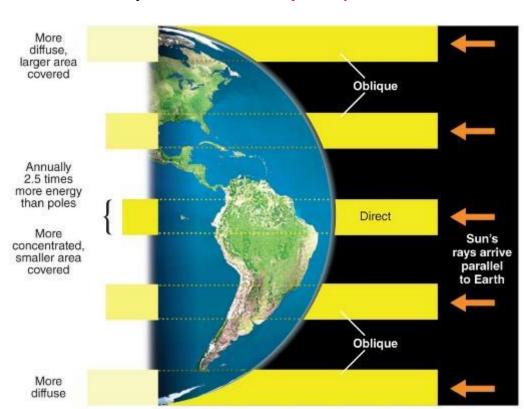
TEMPERATURE GRADIENT

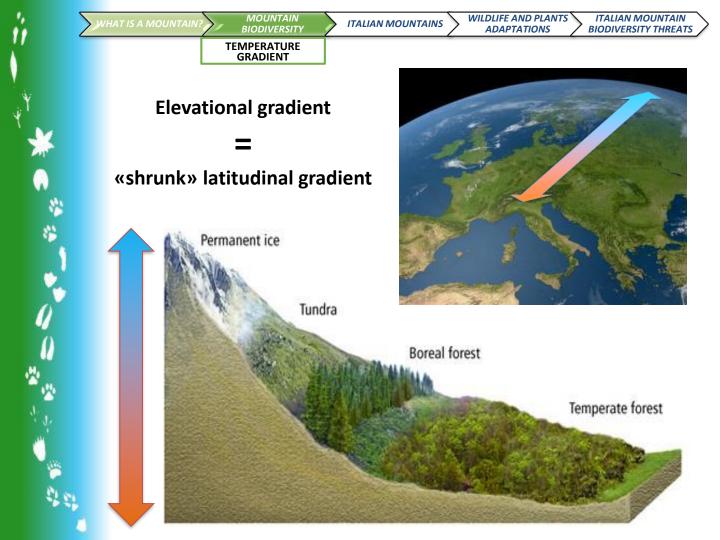
-6.5°C / 1000 m → -1°C / 153 m



TEMPERATURE GRADIENT

-0.7°C / 1° lat → -1°C / 150,000 m



















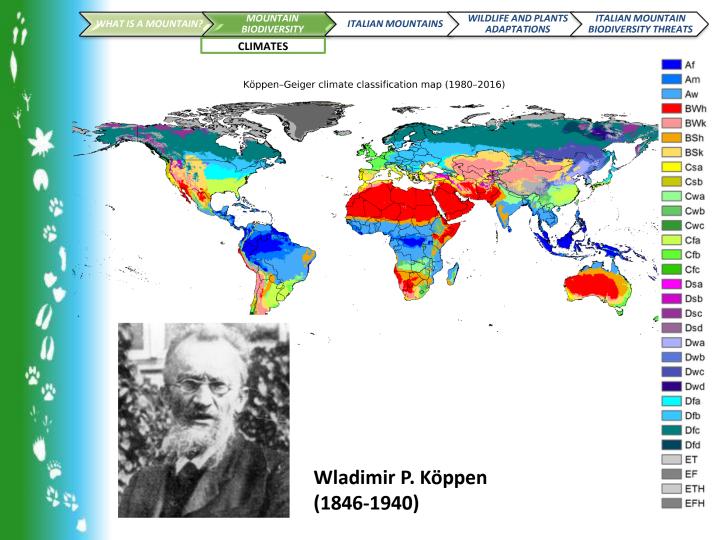


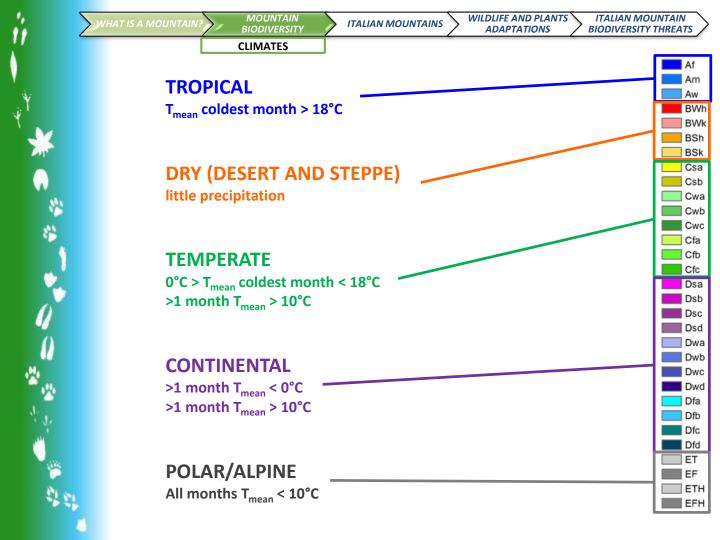


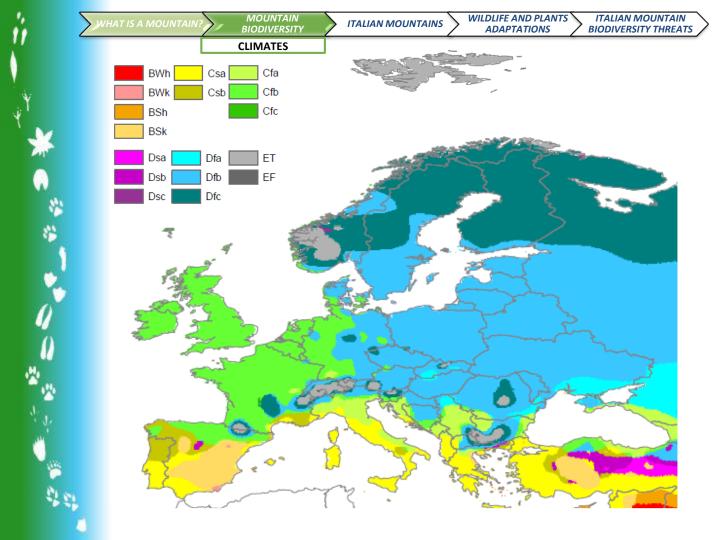


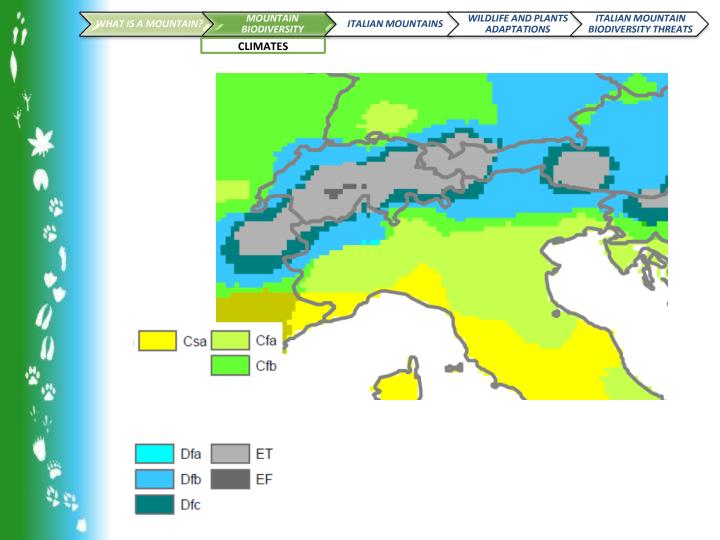










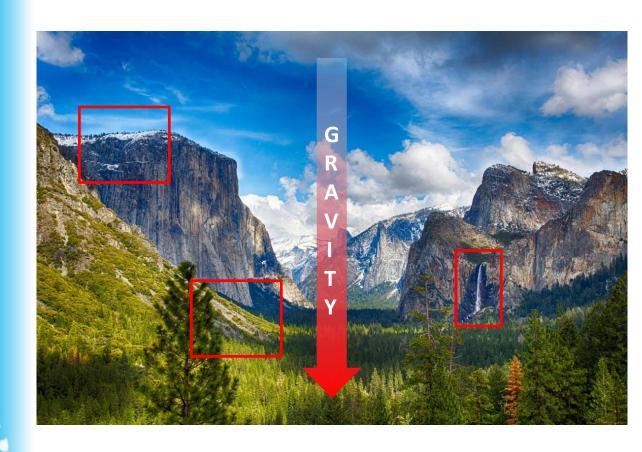


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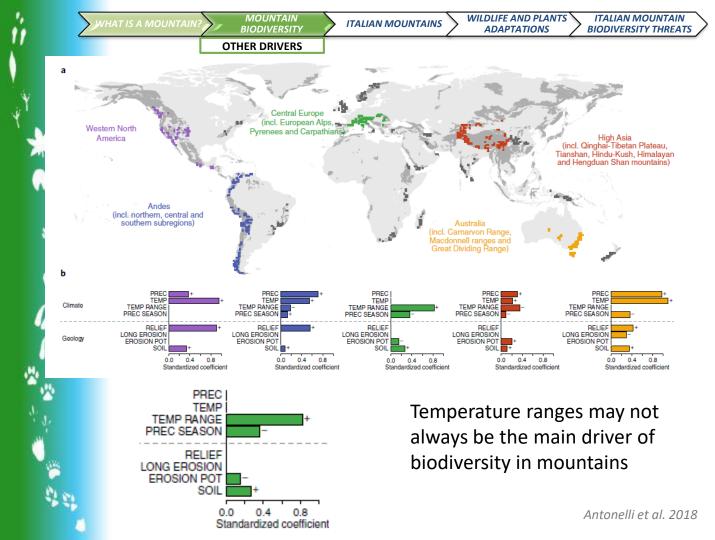
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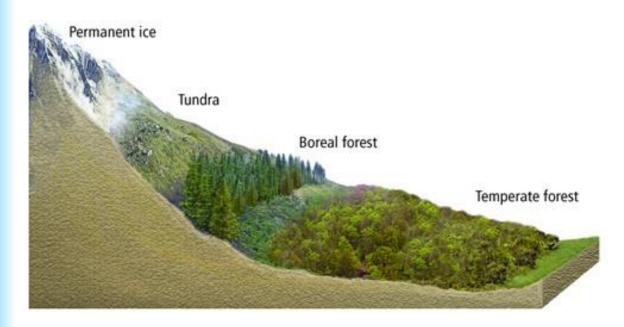


Alps are hotspots of biodiversity

100 out of 198 European habitats 40% of the European flora in 2% of the area 10% endemic plant species 30,000 animal species

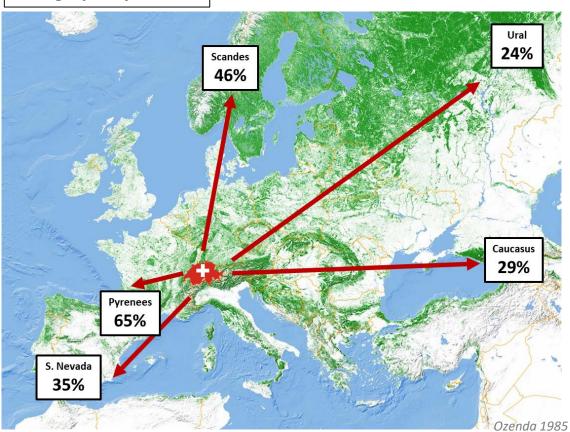


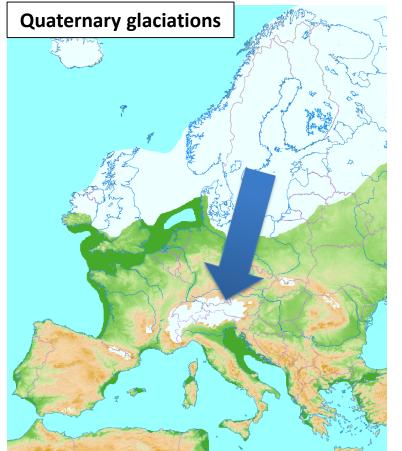
Elevational gradient





Geographic position











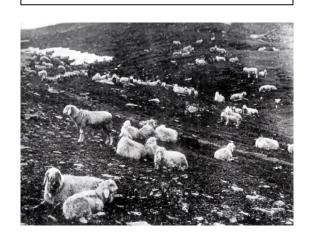
WILDLIFE AND PLANTS
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ITALIAN MOUNTAIN BIODIVERSITY THREATS

DETERMINANTS OF BIODIVERSITY



Traditional human activities









How do species cope with low temperatures and slope in European mountains?

Anatomical / physiological adaptations



Behavioural adaptations



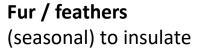




Fur / feathers (permanent) to insulate









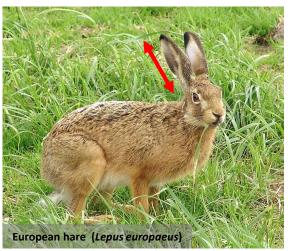






Fur / feathers seasonal colour change

(to match the environment and enhance mimicry)





Smaller / more rounded body shape and reduced appendages (e.g. ears) (minimises body exposure to cold)

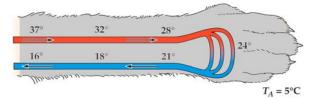




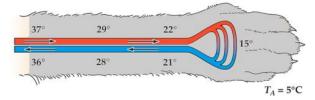
Hooves specially designed (hard and sharp outer edge and soft inner pad)



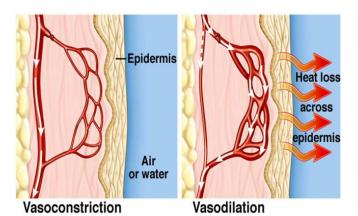
(a) Blood flow without countercurrent heat exchange



(b) Blood flow with countercurrent heat exchange



Countercurrent heat exchange (warm arterial blood flows close to colder vein blood)

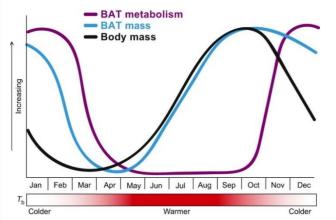


Vasoconstriction



Shivering thermogenesis

(muscule contractions which produce heat)

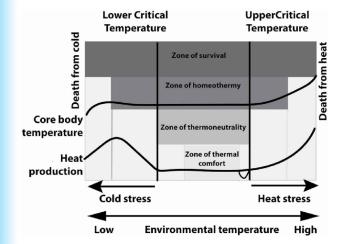


Non shivering thermogenesis in hibernating mammals (metabolism of brown fat)





Piloerection («goosebumps»)



Low thermoneutral zone

(environmental T°C where the body do not need to shiver or to sweat to keep homeothermy. In humans, around 20°C, in alpine galliforms can be as low as 3-4°C)



Ovoviviparity of reptiles

(eggs are retained and hatch inside the mother)



Melanism

(to increase heat absorbance)



PLANTS ANATOMICAL



Pubescence

(reduces convective heat loss by trapping a warm air layer and water loss from transpiration)



Dark colours

(to increase heat absorbance)

PLANTS ANATOMICAL



Creeping growth form

(protection against wind and maximises heat gain from sun)



Cushion growth form (up to 15°C warmer!)





PLANTS ANATOMICAL



Deep roots (e.g. taproots)

(to cope with thin soils and to act as water and nutrients storage when it comes to grow fast)

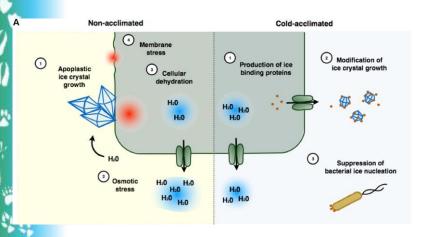


Flexible branches (bend but are hardly crashed by snow)

PLANTS PHYSIOL.



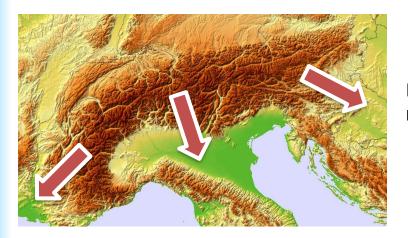
Freezing point depression by increasing sugar concentration in cells (protection against wind and maximises heat gain from sun)



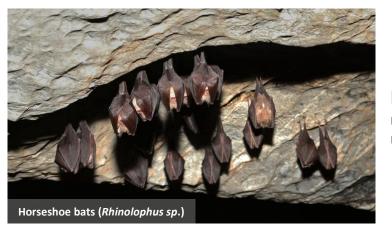
Deep supercooling / freeze tolerance

(prevention of ice formation within tissues to-40°C by inhibiting ice nucleation / water segregation outside cells)

BEHAVIOURAL



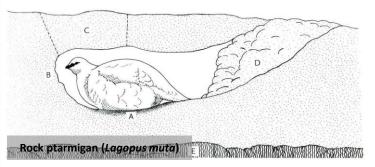
Migration (birds and, partially, large mammals)



Hibernation (only <u>few</u> mammals, amphibians, reptiles and <u>very few</u> insects)



Reduced activity (to warmest hours only)



Snow roosting

(snow insulates, T°C inside the roost can be up to 40°C warmer than outside)

BEHAVIOURAL



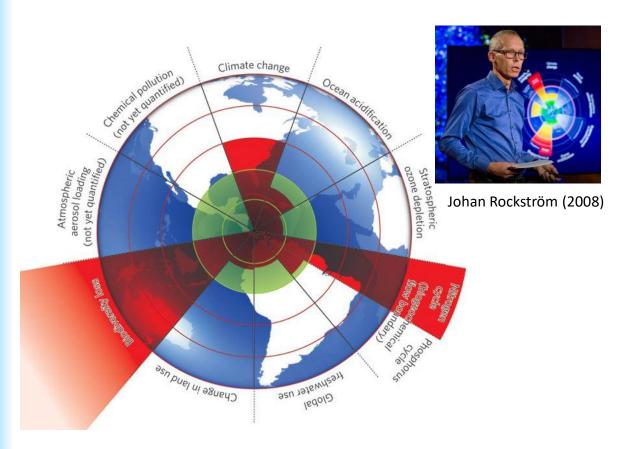


Thriving on low energy food (available all year round)

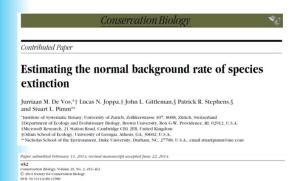
Hoarding food (which may retrieved in case of food scarcity)

BIODIVERSITY CRISIS

Nice picture, but we have a problem...



BIODIVERSITY CRISIS



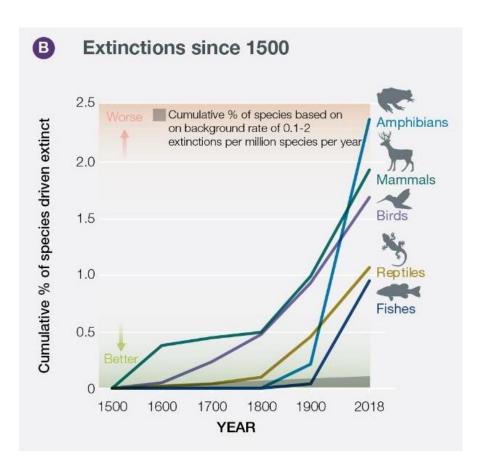
Abstract: A key measure of bumanity's global impact is by bow much it has increased species extinction rates. Familiar statements are that these are 100-1000 times pre-buman or background extinction levels. Estimating recent rates is straightforward, but establishing a background rate for comparison is not. Previous researchers cbose an approximate benchmark of 1 extinction per million species per year (E/MSY). We explored disparate lines of evidence that suggest a substantially lower estimate. Fossil data yield direct estimates of extinction rates, but they are temporally coarse, mostly limited to marine bard-bodied taxa, and generally involve genera not species. Based on these data, typical background loss is 0.01 genera per million genera per year, Molecular phylogenies are available for more taxa and ecosystems, but it is debated whether they can be used to estimate separately speciation and extinction rates. We selected data to address known concerns and used them to determine median extinction estimates from statistical distributions of probable values for terrestrial plants and animals. We then created simulations to explore effects of violating model assumptions. Finally, we compiled estimates of diversification—the difference between speciation and extinction rates for different taxa. Median estimates of extinction rates ranged from 0.023 to 0.135 E/MSY. Simulation results suggested over- and under-estimation of extinction from individual phylogenies partially canceled each other out when large sets of phylogenies were analyzed. There was no evidence for recent and widespread pre-buman overall declines in diversity. This implies that average extinction rates are less than average diversification rates.

Median diversification rates were 0.05-0.2 new species per million species per year. On the basis of these results, we concluded that typical rates of background extinction may be closer to 0.1 E/MSY. Thus, current extinction rates are 1,000 times bigber than natural background rates of extinction and future rates are likely to be 10,000 times bigber.

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[...] current extinction rates are 1.000 times higher than natural [...] and future rates are lileky to be 10.000 times higher

BIODIVERSITY CRISIS



OVERVIEW

What are the main threats to Italian mountain biodiversity?



Global warming



Recreational activities

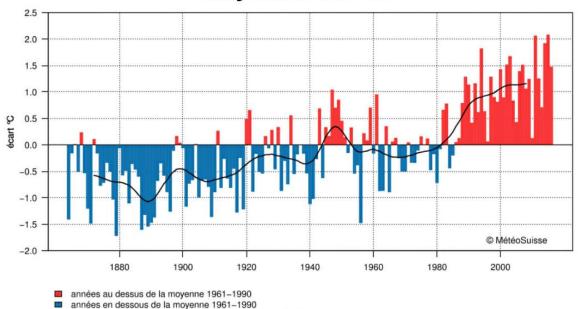


Land use change

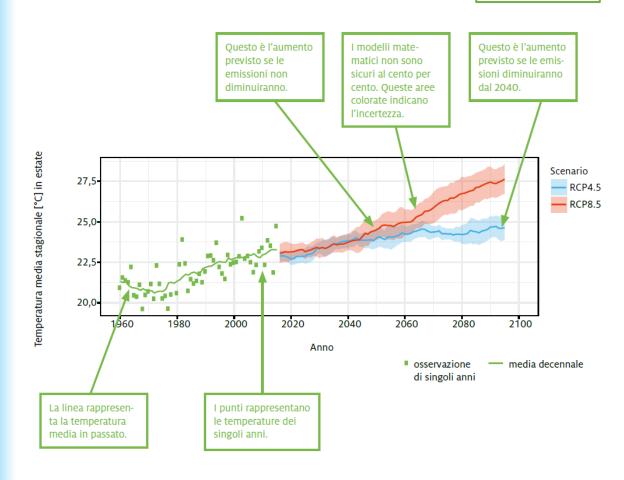


Social issues with large mammals

Annual temperature in Switzerland 1864 – 2016 Average deviation 1961 - 1990

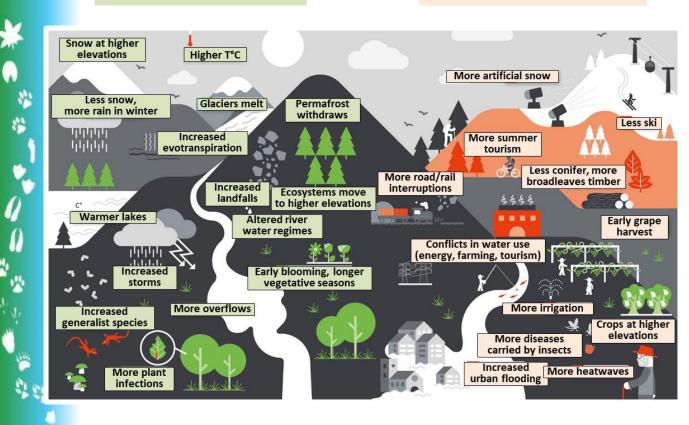


- moyenne pondérée sur 20 ans (filtre gaussien passe-bas)



Consequences on nature

Consequences on society

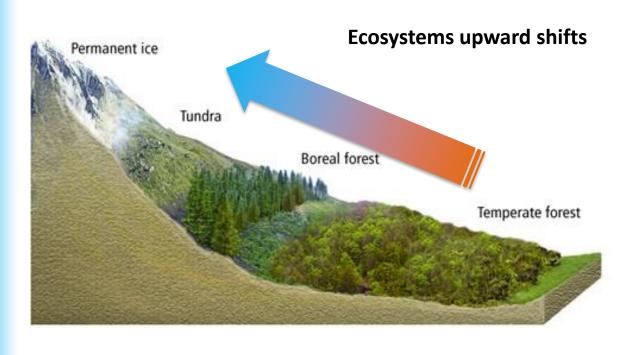


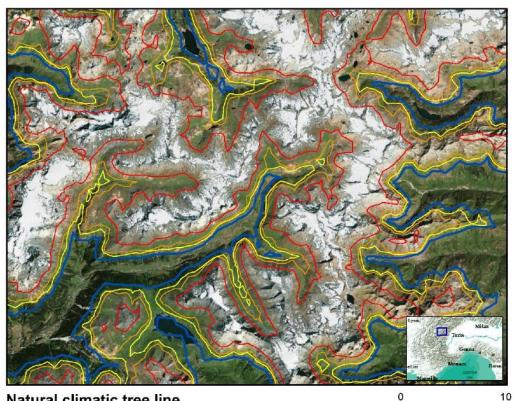
The new law under global warming...



It applies to biodiversity... and to humankind







Natural climatic tree line

Reference period (1981-2010)

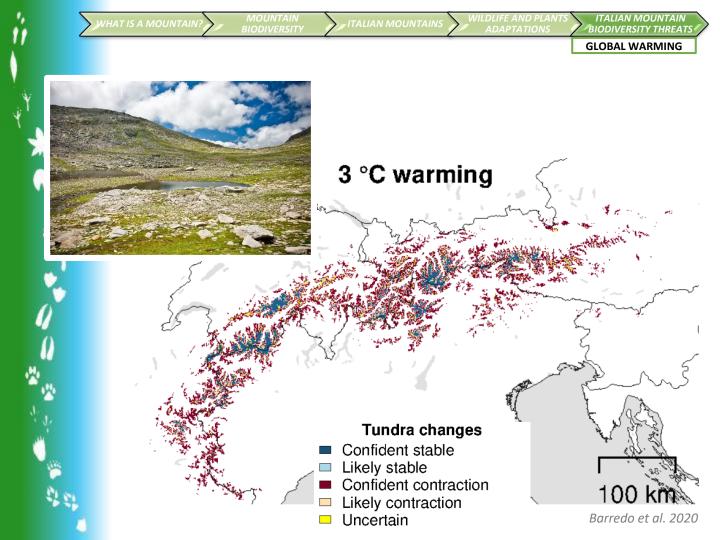
CCLM4-8-17-ICHEC-EC-EARTH - RCP8.5 1.5 °C warming (2012-2041)

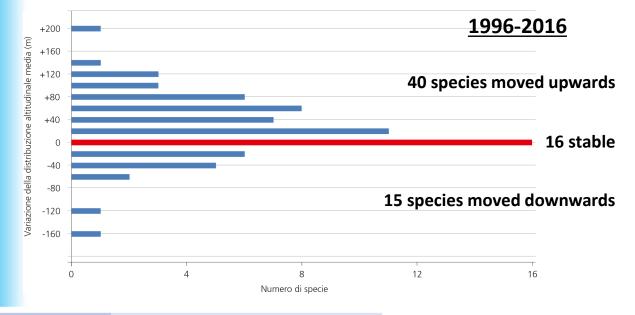
CCLM4-8-17-ICHEC-EC-EARTH - RCP8.5 2.0 °C warming (2027-2056)

CCLM4-8-17-ICHEC-EC-EARTH - RCP8.5 3.0 °C warming (2052-2081)

Barredo et al. 2020

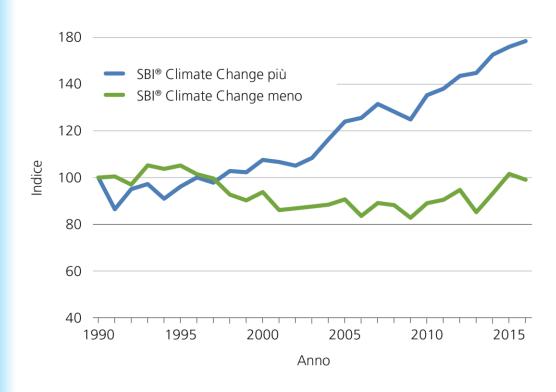
Kilometers





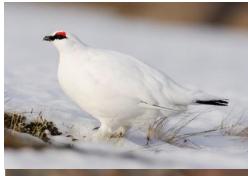
Evoluzione	Schemi
Verso l'alto (40 specie)	20 specie diminuiscono a bassa quota e aumentano ad alta quota
	9 specie diminuiscono soprattutto a bassa quota
	9 specie aumentano soprattutto ad alta quota
	2 specie con schema complesso
	Verso l'alto

- → Distribution shift
- → Distribution shrink
- → Distribution enlargement



Snowfall delays in autumn are highly appreciated by eagles...





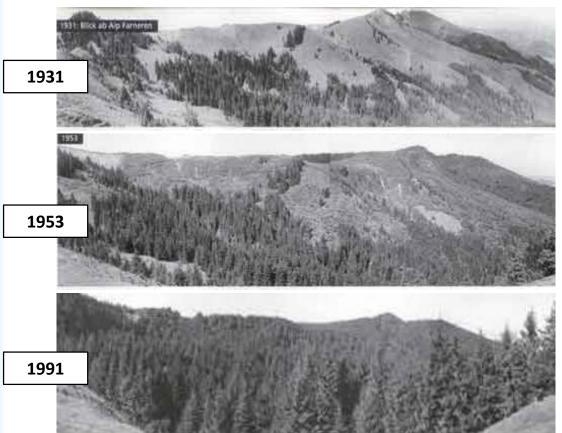




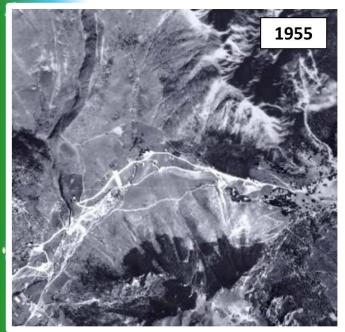


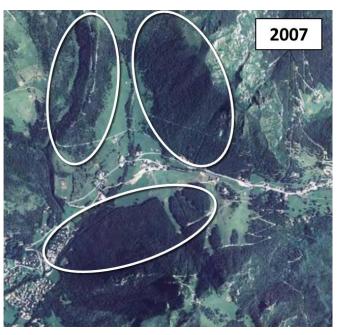
Land abandonment + urbanization





Presolana (BG)











Discontinuation of traditional alpine farming (grazing + haymaking)



Land abandonment

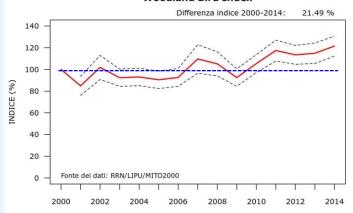


Shrub and forest encroachment into former pastures and hay meadows



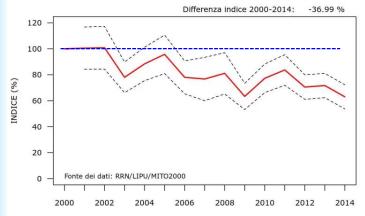
Ultimately....

Woodland Bird Index



... biodiversity loss

Indice delle specie delle praterie montane





WHAT IS A MOUNTAIN?

MOUNTAIN BIODIVERSITY

ITALIAN MOUNTAINS

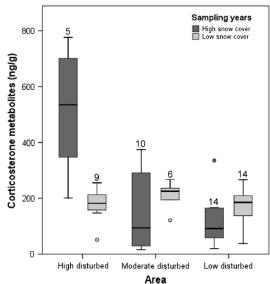
WILDLIFE AND PLANT
ADAPTATIONS

ITALIAN MOUNTAIN
BIODIVERSITY THREATS

RECREATIONAL ACT.









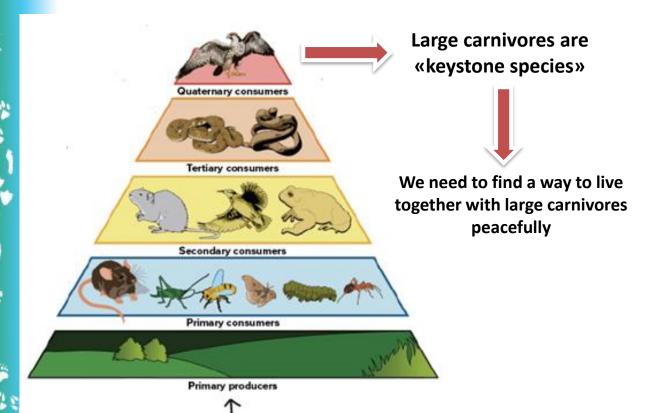








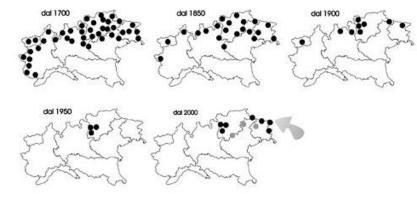


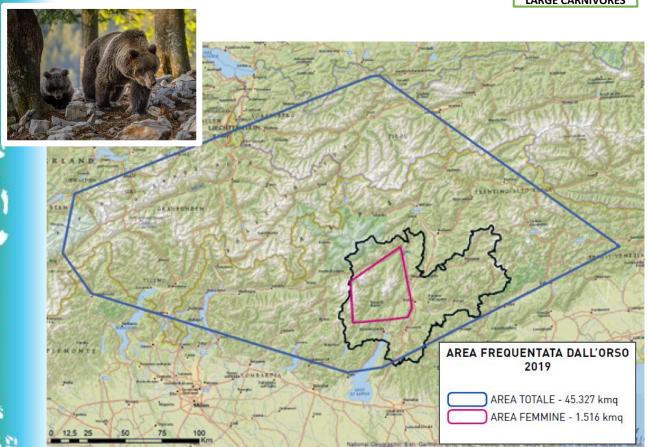




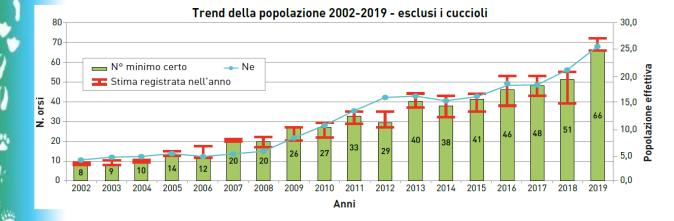
Reintroduced* in W Trentino from 2000



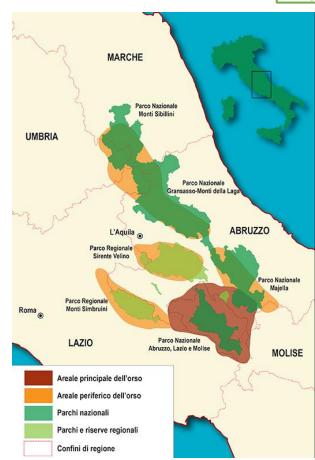






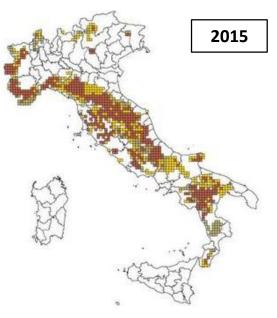


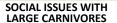






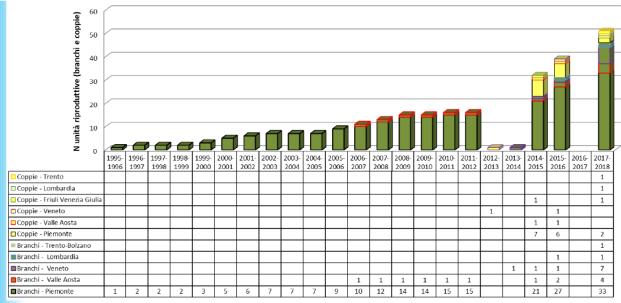






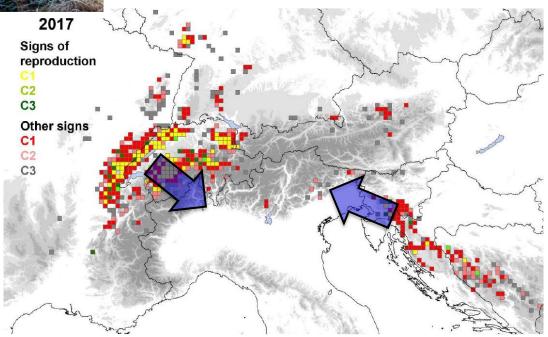


Branchi e coppie di lupo sulle Alpi italiane per Regione/Provincia autonoma dal 1995 al 2018

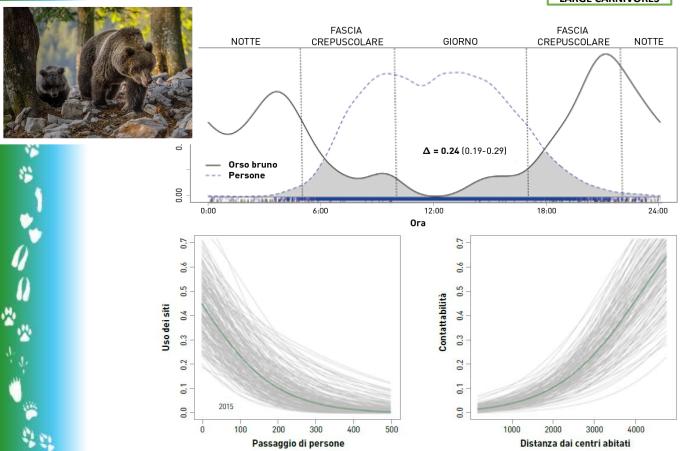




Range expansion from reintroduced populations in Switzerland and Slovenia

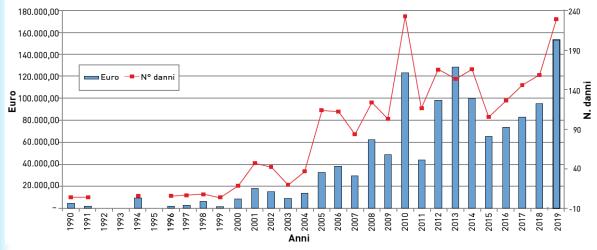




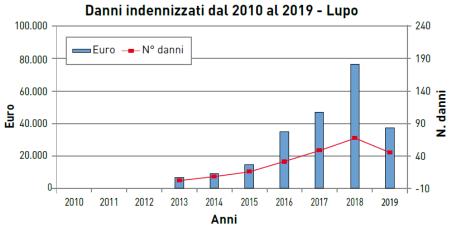


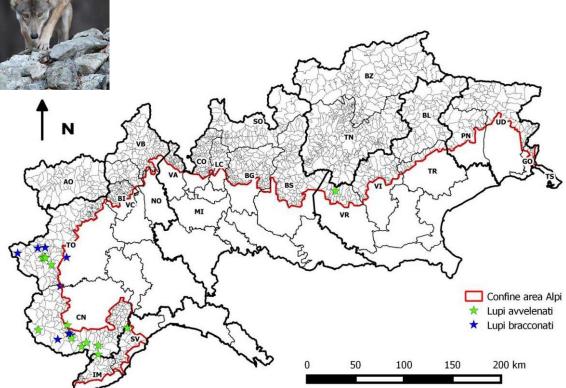












TRENTINO

L'orso è stato ucciso da un colpo di fucile: caccia ai bracconieri

La Procura apre un'inchiesta: perizia balistica sul proiettile. È il primo abbattimento da 40 anni: vittima M2, di 5 anni

01 ottobre 2013 A- A+ 🖷 <









L'orso di Pettorano è stato ucciso con un un colpo di fucile / Video

Le analisi condotte all'istituto zooprofilattico di Grosseto hanno rilevano la presenza di cinque pallettoni, tutti parte della stessa cartuccia. Uno di guesti, penetrato nell'intestino, avrebbe provocato una peritonite fatale

18 settembre 2014

MENU Q CERCA

Il Messaggero

ANIMALI

Lupo ucciso a fucilate nel Veronese, incubo bracconaggio

SOCIETÀ > ANIMAL

Martedi 25 Settembre 2018 di Remo Sabatini



Il cadavere di un lupo è stato rinvenuto stamattina,da un agricoltore nei pressi di Roverè Veronese, in provincia di IN TOSCANA

Suvereto, i bracconieri uccidono un lupo e lo appendono scuoiato a un cartello stradale

La foto postata dal Comune: «Gesto infame speriamo che gli autori siano individuati». L'allarme del Wwf: «Ogni anno uccisi illegalmente 300 animali»

di Beatrice Montini

Lupo decapitato nel torinese: taglia da 7mila euro sui bracconieri



Una ricompensa di settemila euro per chiunque fornirà informazioni sull'uccisione di un lupo nel torinese. Questo l'annuncio diffuso dall'associazione animalista Lav a seguito del macabro ritrovamento, lo scorso 13 novembre, della testa dell'animale appesa a un cartello stradale tra i comuni di Lanzo e Germannano, nel Canavese.

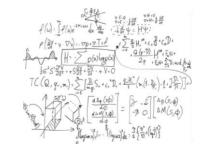








There are no easy solutions to living together with large carnivores peacefully (complex problems require complex solutions)



Long term solutions need to be applied at large scale, local solutions are ineffective



There are national (e.g. PACOBACE for the bear) and international protocols and projects (mostly funded by the EU, e.g. LIFE WolfAlps EU)





ZOØNIVERSE

REAL SCIENCE ONLINE

Projects

Active Paused Finished

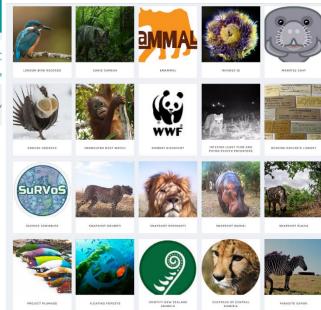
ALL
DISCIPLINES

ARIS

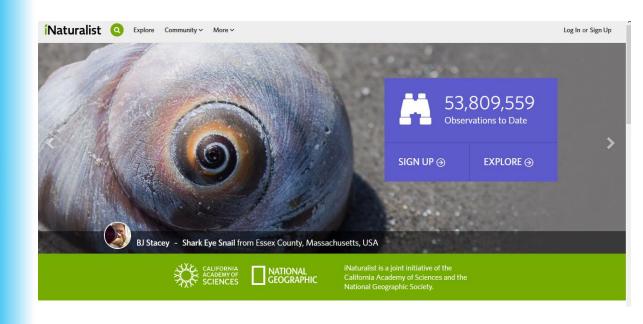
BIOLOGY

CLIMATI

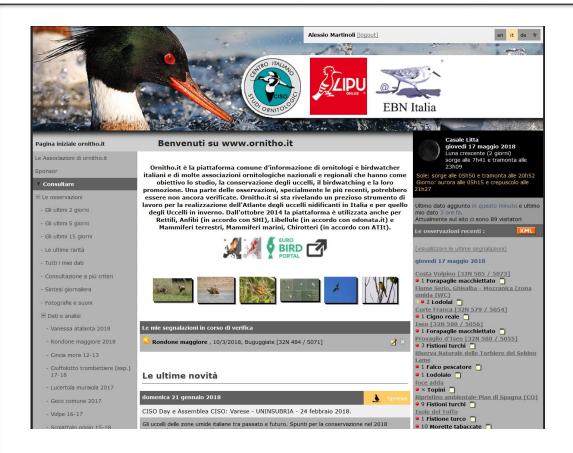
Show







www.inaturalist.org



www.ornitho.it



















eBird







ORNITODATA





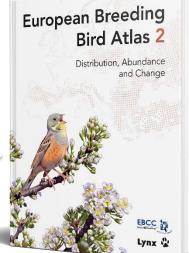
















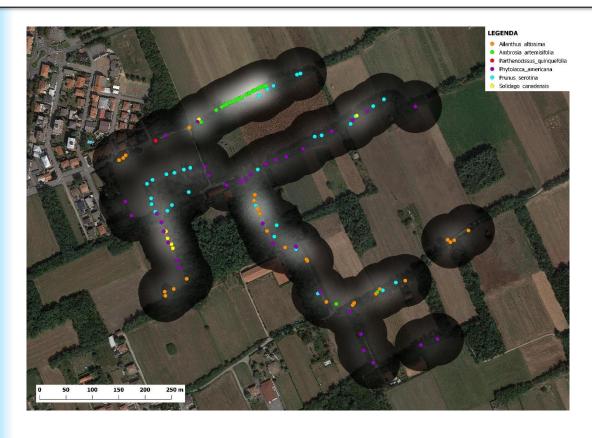












Progetto PON Liceo «Crespi» Busto Arsizio (VA) — 2019 Mappatura flora alloctona in parco di cintura metropolitana



GRAZIE PER L'ATTENZIONE!

alessio.martinoli@uninsubria.it alessio.martinoli@gmail.com