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Environmental education and correct scientific information on climate change and natural issues: the case of Lombardy Foundation for the Environment

Simone Picco and silvia macalli

Lombardy Foundation for the Environment, Italy (s.picco.qts@gmail.com)

Fondazione Lombardia per l'Ambiente (FLA) - Lombardy Foundation for the Environment is an Italian private, non profit, foundation established in 1986 by the Lombardy Regional Administration and five major universities of Lombardy.

The foundation's work is functional to promote regional Environmental Education initiatives, to enhance and give them visibility. It is also precious to facilitate communication between Lombardy Region and the local entities dealing with these issues, as well as between educational supply and demand, from a networking and subsidiarity perspective.

It is a real mission, carried out through training activities, events, publications, collaborations aimed especially at schools, students and the younger generation.

In this context, correct information is promoted to this public and, more generally, to the citizenship, enhancing the foundation's vast scientific heritage. The goal is to support the growth of the culture of sustainability with trustable information.

This is a real antidote to the spread of fake news and misleading information, which is increasingly widespread in Italy in relation to climate change issues. The development of initiatives aimed at educators and students is also crucial to combat this problem at its root.

FLA organizes several initiatives annually, often in cooperation with organizations and associations in the sector, e.g. Regional Environmental Education Fair (Fiera di Educazione alla Sostenibilità Ambientale) that support the creation of the regional Environmental Education network and program and engaged one thousand students last October. Other activities are The Astronomy

week with conferences and exhibition dedicated to the study of space.

FLA also promotes a tender on Environmental Education proposals to select high quality education projects for the development of environmental education and sustainability education on the territory. Around 200 projects were submitted at the three annual editions.

At the institutional level, FLA manages the regional environmental education portal on behalf of the Lombardy Region. It is a communication channel intended for a plurality of actors also and precisely to strengthen communication between the protagonists of this system of education and dissemination of a correct environmental culture, through the dissemination of documents, publications, and informative materials.

FLA also launched a journalism project called Redact-Us and developed in collaboration with Association Together and the newspaper Il Sussidiario.net, which trains students in the profession of journalist and communicator by providing the appropriate tools to communicate sustainability. As part of this activity, a survey was conducted on the interest and commitment of the younger generations in the environmental field.

In the last ten years, environmental education activities promoted by Lombardy Foundation for the Environment engaged more than 23.000 students in Lombardy and other Italian Regions.

This work is useful not only to promote correct information, but also to develop a special, evidence-based sensitivity towards nature.