

PRESS RELEASE

MASSIF opportunities for a bright future in Verdon

The MASSIF Project has just released its results for the Agriculture sector in the Verdon Catchment region. The authors of this study, with the support of local stakeholders, produced a series of recommendations to safeguard a future for biodiversity and human well being for the region.

Integrated within the “Mapping Regional Vulnerability in the Southern Alps –Evaluating Trends and Developing Sustainable Adaptation Strategies for the Verdon Catchment” (MASSIF) project, the Agriculture report identifies the main current and future drivers for change in the landscape and agricultural practices in the Verdon region.

The Southern Alps are currently under the influence of several factors of change. Instability in agricultural land uses and the challenges associated with changes in demography, characterize the current situation and are likely to be enhanced by climate change in the upcoming decades. New opportunities to improve human well being and safeguard biodiversity are emerging, but need to be supported by sustainable, proactive and integrative policy.

In order to contribute with viable and scientifically-based policy recommendations, the authors identified drivers and pressures that affect the region. The so called “ecosystem services” of the region were carefully assessed, and ways of preserving them were considered. Stakeholders from the agriculture, tourism, nature conservation, water management and the political sectors, were essential in this process.

Two scenarios that illustrate possible futures were then taken into account, and policy recommendations were proposed. The future of the Verdon Catchment region can rely on the promotion of new biodiversity-friendly management techniques (e.g. organic farming and water retention technology), creation of local opportunities and markets, and diversification of economic activities.

Ultimately, the future of the Verdon Catchment region is in the hands of those who care for its environment, history and culture.