

PRESS RELEASE

STONEWALLSFORLIFE, AT SCHOOL LEARNING ABOUT DRY-STONE WALLS IN THE CINQUE TERRE NATIONAL PARK

Beginning of the first training course for learning dry-stone wall building techniques, identified as a tool for resilience to climate change

*Two different courses are planned: an **advanced training course** for maintenance workers already enrolled in the Park's Register, and a **basic training course** for those approaching the world of traditional building techniques.*

Cinque Terre National Park, Feb. 23, 2023

The **first training cycle planned as part of Stonewallsforlife**, the project led by the Cinque Terre National Park, started on February 23. The project's aim is the deepening of knowledge related to traditional **dry-stone wall building techniques** with a **special program addressing experts already enrolled in the Park trail maintainers' Register who possess specific skills**.

Some of the maintainers have been employed for quite some time in the maintenance interventions of the hiking network prepared by the Park Authority. The course will offer them the opportunity to study in-depth aspects related to the stability of terraced slopes, the surface water management, the forms and causes of wall collapse, the different techniques of stone laying, vegetation cutting, as well as elements of geology and lithology.

The courses are organized with the support of **Isforcoop La Spezia** and will be held for a total of **32 hours of both theoretical and practical lessons**, involving professors from the Universities of Padua and Genoa, experts in forestry and remote sensing fields, and contact persons from ITLA Italia, the national branch of the International Alliance for Terraced Landscapes.

As a result of the knowledge acquired through this module, together with the total number of hours already worked, some of the maintenance workers will be able to obtain, through a skills certification process, **the title of "operator in the defense and maintenance of the territory and environmental resources" recognized by Regione Liguria and valid throughout Italy**.

The **Cinque Terre National Park Director Patrizio Scarpellini** states: "The Stonewallsforlife project's approach is to integrate a series of different actions in terms of research, monitoring activities and transfer of traditional knowledge in order to develop specific, replicable and direct solutions for the protection of the terraced landscape. The Park's landscape represents one of the most important expressions of the use of this peculiar technique. **It is a proof of how the environment is a driver of professional growth in favor of a circular economy**, as in this case since the trail maintainer is a green job that we created specifically for the needs of our territory with a shared path together with Regione Liguria."

The second training cycle envisaged by the project will be focused on the transfer of basic knowledge of this art, which is also recognized by UNESCO as intangible World Heritage, and will be aimed at anyone who wants to be introduced to the world of traditional dry-stone building techniques.

The classroom in which the practical lessons of the courses will be held is the amphitheater in Manarola: the terraced slopes where the Manarola Foundation, a project partner, operates to restore abandoned land for agricultural purposes.

STONEWALLSFORLIFE - the European project, started in the fall of 2019 and ending in 2024, aims to demonstrate how ancient dry-stone wall technology can be used to increase land resilience to climate change. Innovative building techniques and monitoring systems will be used to restore an abandoned terraced area of more than 5 hectares (4,000 m2 of dry-stone wall area) at a demonstration site in the Cinque Terre: the amphitheater of Manarola (Riomaggiore). Experienced builders will hold training courses for migrants and unemployed people to teach them the fabrication and maintenance of dry-stone walls. Through the efforts of the Manarola Foundation, the recovered areas will be leased under long-term contracts to local farms that will be committed to their maintenance. Preparatory scientific, technical, and socioeconomic studies will be conducted to ensure the transferability of the model proposed by Stonewallsforlife to other sites with different conditions, both within the Cinque Terre National Park and in the Garraf Park in Catalonia.

The PARTNERSHIP of Stonewallsforlife is composed of: the **Cinque Terre National Park** which is the main leader; the **University of Genoa-DISTAV**, responsible for the analysis of the effect of climate change on the territory, monitoring of the actions and results of the project; **Manarola Foundation**, which has already carried out a preliminary part of the project and is directly involved in mobilization activities in the area; **ITRB Group** for its background in drafting proposals to EU programs; **Legambiente** is in charge of communication and will be useful thanks to its experience in environmental sustainability projects; **Diputació de Barcelona**, an international partner who will have a key role in the replicability of the project in other areas within the European Union with similar conditions.