

Sustainability project for the Sacred Convent of Assisi



www.frasole.org



promoters

A PROJECT OF THE



Custodia Generale del Sacro Convento
www.sanfrancescoassisi.org

WITH THE TECHNICAL
SUPPORT OF



www.arpa.umbria.it

COORDINATED BY



www.sisifo.eu

main partner



NOVAMONT
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the project has obtained the patronage of



SACRO CONVENTO DI ASSISI
CUSTODIA GENERALE DEL SACRO CONVENTO DI ASSISI



project

“
**WE NEED A
CONVERSATION
WHICH INCLUDES
EVERYONE,
SINCE THE
ENVIRONMENTAL
CHALLENGE WE ARE
UNDERGOING, AND
ITS HUMAN ROOTS,
CONCERN AND
AFFECT US ALL**
”

Pope Francis,
Laudato si', 14

“Love for the environment brings with it both value and profit on a number of levels: on the one hand, it reduces costs, thanks to the possibility of using capital for energy saving and sustainability measures, while on the other, it makes an effective, practical contribution to caring for Earth, our common home; and lastly, with it comes a sense of coherence and satisfaction with regard to the original ecology manifesto written by Saint Francis: the Canticle of the Sun, which provides us with the inspiration for the essential values of peace and harmony between humankind and creation. A Project of this importance cannot be implemented without skills and the enthusiasm from various quarters able to support and regulate one another”.

Brother Mauro Gambetti
Custodian Father of the Sacred Convent

“Earth is a finite system, with a limited capacity to regenerate resources and absorb waste, and social and ecological systems can remain alive only if we are able to recognise and respect the limits set by the natural environment. Each one of us must share responsibility for the need to pursue a sustainable approach based on equity within and between the generations, with a view to improving the living conditions of the poorest populations on Earth and of future generations”.

Walter Ganapini
General Manager of ARPA Umbria and
an Honorary Member of the Scientific
Committee of the European Environment
Agency

“After almost two years of activity, **Fra' Sole** is starting to take a look at the results achieved, and – more importantly – is beginning to set ambitious new targets that require further, challenging new partnerships. These will regard not only Waste, Water and Energy, but also the relationship with money, with the local area and with visitors to the Monumental Complex of Assisi. The fact that Fra' Sole has become a common action for **Ethical Financing** and for the **Circular Economy** is another positive outcome that we will continue to work on, inspired by the **Integral Ecology** approach foreseen by Pope Francis”.

Giuseppe Lanzi
Managing Director of Sisifo
and coordinator of the Project



LAUDATO SI'

Francis's biographers tell of his love for animals, with which he established a mutual relationship of care and respect. In **Compilatio Assisiensis**, we learn that: **"He told the brother who cut the wood for the fire not to cut down the whole tree, but let one part remain. He used to tell the brother who took care of the garden not to cultivate all the ground in the garden for vegetables, but to leave a piece of ground that would produce wild plants, [...] so that in their time they would invite all who saw the beautiful flowers to praise God"** (FF 1623). This lifestyle the Saint proposed was founded on three imperatives – do not pollute, do not

waste, do not exploit – and on three principles: you own nothing, life on earth depends also on you, and the economy brings benefits only if it is governed by sustainable development and beauty. Such is our faith in the wisdom, efficacy and modernity of Francis's lifestyle that we have chosen to emulate it in

the **Caput et Mater** of the Order. Food, water and energy...; education, relations and finance... have been structured along three founding guidelines: consideration, transformation and communion. **It is this that has generated the project Fra' Sole: Praised be You, my Lord, with all your creatures!**



EARTH: THE HOME OF JOY AND LOVE

Economy and ecology share the same root, **oikos**, and form the crossroads that leads to either the construction or the destruction of our planet, today and tomorrow. While on the one hand

the etymology of the term economy – meaning “household management” – refers to purchase and sale, to the rules governing business, on the other, ecology requires us to know and love our sister, **Mother Earth**. Ingenuity and organisational skills, relations between people and communities, politics and law, as well as the earth and the climate, the seas and the subsoil, vices and virtues, spirituality and material all meet and collide in our common home, at the crossroads between ecology and economy. What are the essential coordinates for building a **common home** for the good of everyone, where everyone's resources are protected? Francis mentioned two: poverty and giving. Poverty is

the door to freedom and sharing, but it is also the condition for true awareness and an ability to respect and treasure what we have. Giving is the soul of the world and of relations, including those regarding the market and finance; it's the food of life. As Saint Francis teaches us: giving back with gratitude, expecting nothing in return, is the living principle of joy and love.



THE FRA' SOLE PROJECT HAS THREE MAIN OBJECTIVES:

A

To implement good sustainability practices in the Sacred Convent, starting from a detailed analysis of the current situation and the corrective actions necessary.

B

To draft replicable regulations for monument complexes and for three types of “closed” communities.

C

To raise awareness of sustainability issues among all pilgrims and visitors to Assisi, estimated at up to more than seven million a year.

objectives

Water, Energy and Waste

are the three areas the Fra' Sole project focuses on. The project did not start from scratch, since the community of friars had been seeking ways of reducing their environmental impact for some time. The project is thus a

continuation of earlier actions, which it aims to structure into a system, with efforts designed to analyse not only the question of the building, but also the daily lives of the friars, and paying close attention to the millions of pilgrims who each year visit the Tomb of Saint Francis.

An **initial study** by the Regional Environmental Protection Agency (**ARPA Umbria**) analysed the energy flows and the existing systems, identifying potential improvements regarding both electricity consumption and the heating and cooling systems for the building,

as well as hot water production for domestic use.

A second analysis offered a picture of the amount of different types of waste produced, as well as specific indications on how first to reduce waste and then to recycle it, with a new, dedicated rigorously separate waste collection system in all areas inside the Convent. The waste collection point system was consequently completely reorganised, and strategies are being adopted to reduce packaging even before it becomes waste.

In order for all this to work, it was – and is – necessary for all the friars in Assisi to be aware of the issues and help resolve them, acting as both operators and ambassadors for the actions.

The **Sustainability Project for the Monumental Complex of Saint Francis of Assisi** is not only a specifically environmental effort; the promoters of the project were keen from its inception that it should serve a common purpose and set an example, creating a **model** that can be copied in Italy and worldwide.

The Project has been granted the patronage of the **City of Assisi**, the **Umbria Region**, the **Italian Ministry of the Environment** and the **Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development**.

“WE HAVE NOT YET MANAGED TO ADOPT A CIRCULAR MODEL OF PRODUCTION CAPABLE OF PRESERVING RESOURCES FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS, WHILE LIMITING AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE THE USE OF NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCES, MODERATING THEIR CONSUMPTION, MAXIMIZING THEIR EFFICIENT USE, REUSING AND RECYCLING THEM”

Pope Francis, *Laudato sì*, 22

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION, DISSEMINATION AND COMMUNICATION

An equally important objective of the project is to spread an environmental culture at a point in history where it is no longer possible to deny climate change. One of the first significant results obtained by **Fra' Sole** are the partners who have lent their support to the project, and who are making a real, practical contribution to the efforts of the Community of the Sacred Convent. These reflections are also evident in the logo, developed along with the agency **EcoComunicazione**. Inspired by the rose window of the Upper

Basilica, the aim of the logo is to identify all the project activities and products. It will be used on the various communication materials, such as the stand present at the various events the project will be featured in, starting from **Ecomondo** in Rimini, the benchmark exhibition of the circular economy in Italy, which – unsurprisingly – is a partner of Fra' Sole.

Every project requires promotion, however, and we aim to reach and have a positive impact on as wide an audience as possible thanks to the **Sacred Convent Press Room**, the magazine **San Francesco Patrono d'Italia** and the information hub **Valori.it**.



REDUCTION OF WASTE

Every journey requires travelling companions that help us on our toils, and **Fra' Sole** has found them in some of the finest expressions of the **Italian circular economy**: firstly, **Novamont**, who believed in the project even before it took shape, and was followed by Consorzio Italiano Compostatori (**Italian Composting Consortium**), which created a **circular self-composting point** in the olive grove of the Sacred Convent, used to produce compost that acts as an organic fertilizer for the Community's farming and forestry activities. More actions are under study with the Consorzio Imballaggi Alluminio

(**Aluminium Packaging Consortium**) to further reduce the production of waste.

Measures to reduce the production of plastic waste will take the form of drinking fountains spread around the complex and the distribution of water bottles, following a model in which the service is to be extended to visitors and pilgrims.

Good prevention practices are based on the use of entirely reusable and/or recyclable consumables, and on an efficient waste collection system featuring containers designed by **Gruppo Sartori Ambiente** to respond to the needs of the convent Community, to the preparation of which a number of specific training and information sessions have been dedicated.

NEW MATERIALS AND A NEW PURCHASING PHILOSOPHY

Businesses have also been brought in, and **Polycart** – an Assisi company – has helped us create a shopper in biodegradable, compostable **MATER-BI**, which will be customised with the project logo and given to the millions of pilgrims who visit the shop run by the friars between the Upper Basilica and the Lower Basilica, thus also

becoming an important resource for the promotion of the project. The Sacred Convent often hosts events that involve thousands of people. For the catering at these events, washable material cannot be used, but thanks to **Ecozema**, it has been possible to eliminate all the traditional plastic products and replace them with **biodegradable, compostable** material, compliant with the European **UNI EN 13432** standard and thus suitable for industrial composting. Waste reduction starts

even before materials are purchased: a detailed analysis of all the Community's purchases has led to a number of changes in the Convent's purchasing policies, based on an assessment of the type of packaging used, the consistency and the end-of-life disposal, opting for less packaging and for materials that are easier to recycle, taking account also of the social and environmental costs not evident in the price. All the actions implemented by the various partners are monitored by **Sarvex**.

CLEAN ENERGY

With regard to **ENERGY**, and following on from the actions already undertaken by the Community, the objective is full, complete **decarbonisation** for the Sacred Convent. Numerous technical and architectural difficulties make it impossible to install solar panels or other systems for the Convent to produce its own energy, so further studies are required on the best techniques available. Thanks to the partnership with **ERG** – a company that has turned its operations around by abandoning the oil sector and becoming a leading producer of energy from renewable sources – the Sacred Convent is able to boast the exclusive use of energy that is not only

clean, but is also practically “zero miles”, since this is the operator that produces virtually all the Umbria Region's hydroelectrical energy. An important issue when it comes to decarbonisation is mobility, i.e. a completely new approach to the vehicle fleet, which we are currently studying with a potential partner. **Fra' Sole** is not, therefore, an individual undertaking, but a common effort that seeks to bring others on board along the way.

“WHILE THE EXISTING WORLD ORDER PROVES POWERLESS TO ASSUME ITS RESPONSIBILITIES, LOCAL INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS CAN MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE. THEY ARE ABLE TO INSTIL A GREATER SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY, A STRONG SENSE OF COMMUNITY, A READINESS TO PROTECT OTHERS, A SPIRIT OF CREATIVITY AND A DEEP LOVE FOR THE LAND. THEY ARE ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT WHAT THEY WILL EVENTUALLY LEAVE TO THEIR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN”

Pope Francis,
Laudato sì, 179



THE RESPONSIBLE USE OF MONEY, THE DRIVER OF ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The crises that have struck the economy of many countries so hard in recent years have made the central role of finance abundantly clear. There is an increasing awareness that if the sole aim of the financial industry is to maximise profit, this can have a severe impact on the real economy, society, employment and ecosystems.

This new awareness has grown worldwide, prompting an alternative approach to the traditional financial system. This new

approach is founded on the principle of transparency, as a means that allows people, organisations and institutions to assess and to verify where their money is going. Ethical finance chooses to channel economic resources exclusively towards projects able to improve the environment and the community, mitigate climate change

and guarantee dignity for people. The efforts of ethical finance brokers are aimed at illustrating the future their clients' money is helping to build: this is a simple intuition, but given the environmental, economic and cultural crisis under way, it is imperative that we pose the question of the responsible choices required when it comes to money.



THE BANCA ETICA ETHICAL BANKING NETWORK: SUPPORTING AN INTEGRAL ECOLOGY PLAN

The planet we are privileged to live on has natural limits, and preserving it is the responsibility of each one

of us. Ethical financing is also the result of this awareness, and its medium-long-term goals are compatible with the rhythms of the ecosystems. This is why the network of companies for which Banca Etica is a benchmark has chosen to support the “**Fra’ Sole**” project, because one way to reach the ambitious objective of an integral ecology plan is by channelling economic resources into a financial circuit that has the potential to multiply positive social and environmental impact. **Banca Etica** is a banking institute founded in 1999. Operative in Italy and Spain, it guarantees over € 1.3 billion in loans for some 12,000 actions aimed at personal development and environmental protection, offering clients the opportunity to verify how

their savings are invested. **Etica Sgr** is the savings management company of Gruppo Banca Etica, which offers exclusively sustainable, responsible mutual investment funds. Established in 2000, it adopts a rigorous issuer selection method, based on social and environmental responsibility. **Fondazione Finanza Etica** is the cultural foundation set up by Banca Etica and Etica Sgr with the task of promoting, disseminating and studying the principles, good practices and developments of ethical finance and the new economy.

from our partners

NOVAMONT

We joined the Fra' Sole Project straight away, because we're convinced that the Monumental Complex of the Sacred Convent is a subject of fundamental importance to promote effective good practices and strategies for decarbonisation, taking steps for the structure and the community it hosts to gradually abandon fossil energy resources. The challenge is to turn these limits into opportunities. Novamont's history starts from the use of knowledge placed at the service of all-encompassing sustainability, because the environmental challenge cannot be considered and risen to without its social counterpart. Our corporate mission remains focused on redesigning systems and products while respecting local traditions and cultures.

Andrea Di Stefano,
Special Projects Manager, Novamont SpA

CIC

The importance of reintegrating organic substances into the soil is of fundamental importance for the Consortium. By supporting the Fra' Sole Project, Consorzio Italiano Compostatori is able to make a practical contribution to reorganising the management of the organic waste produced by the Monumental Complex of the Sacred Convent of Assisi.

With a view to self-sustainability, an isolated system can become self-sufficient if waste is used as a resource: in this case, the food waste from the canteen, together with the residue from the pruning of the Convent's olive trees, is composted right there in the olive groves, which will in turn be fertilized with the compost obtained.

Massimo Centemero,
General Manager of Consorzio Italiano Compostatori

CIAL

A unique, special project, in line with the principles of the circular economy – of which the aluminium industry has always been a benchmark model – that is able to effectively team sustainability issues and practices with a process designed to create and promote an increasingly broad environmental culture, also thanks to the millions of pilgrims who visit the Convent and in a sense play an active role and become ambassadors for it. It is also for these reasons that CIAL has chosen to support the major sustainability project Fra' Sole.

Stefano Stellini,
External Relations Manager

BANCA ETICA NETWORK

It's an honour for Banca Etica to assist the Sacred Convent of Assisi in such a courageous ecological conversion project, set to have a truly meaningful social and environmental impact: the charisma, authority and renown of Assisi will amplify the results, showing a possible, practical way to turn back the tide of environmental instability, inspiring other religious and non-religious institutions.

Ugo Biggeri, Banca Etica Network

SARTORI AMBIENTE

We joined the Fra' Sole Project not only because we operate in the environmental sector, but also because as a company, we strongly believe in the message of Francis, which we have taken on board in the history and development of our business.

Michele Sartori, Sole Director, Sartori Ambiente Srl

ERG

We believe in a business model geared towards sustainable development and to decarbonisation objectives. This is why we're proud to be a partner in the Sacred Convent of Assisi's Fra' Sole Project.

Edoardo Garrone, President, ERG SpA

ECOZEMA

The project we have been brought into is consistent with our mission of creating quality, environmentally friendly, ethically sustainable products. When the Custody of the Sacred Convent embarked on its research effort aimed at total sustainability, we felt it was only natural for us to contribute to the success of the project.

Armido Marana, Managing Director, Ecozema FPS Srl

ECOCOMUNICAZIONE SRL

Fra' Sole allows us to offer the project and the partners the benefit of our specific experience regarding the waste cycle, energy efficiency and sustainable building. The objectives of the project, and the implementation of best practices that can be replicated in the many similar situations throughout Italy, are entirely consistent with our corporate mission, so we felt it was quite natural to work together with the prestigious partners of Fra' Sole.

Daniele Caldon,
CEO and Sales Manager, EcoComunicazione Srl

ECOMONDO – IEG

ECOMONDO has always supported the development of the circular economy, so being among the partner companies of Fra' Sole is something of value! Fra' Sole is a concrete example of a circular concept adopted and

rooted in an area and able to set an example to other sacred, monumental and other structures to follow, adopting the pragmatic approach that has always been the modus operandi of Ecomondo.

Alessandra Astolfi,
Group Brand Manager, Italian Exhibition Group SpA

SARVEX

The Fra' Sole project is perfectly in keeping with our business values. We decided to join it because in addition to significantly reducing the environmental impact of a historical complex such as the Sacred Convent of Assisi, it is a vehicle for the demonstration, transmission and promotion of good practices and of a new ecological conscience that shows us how respect for the environment is above all a matter of respect for humankind and for our possibilities of survival.

Massimiliano Muggianu, Director, Sarvex Srl

POLYCART

We are stakeholders in the Italian circular economy with our flexible, biodegradable, compostable packaging, and above all, we are based in Assisi; so we felt compelled to take part in the project as representatives of an area for which the Sacred Convent is so important.

This is an area that shoulders the responsibility for taking care of precious assets like the Tomb of Saint Francis, the Basilicas and the Sacred Convent, part of a heritage that belongs to the whole of humankind. This is why I am especially pleased that the city of Assisi – the Seraphica Civitas – has given its patronage to the Fra' Sole Project, which I hope will also become a shared asset.

Luca Bianconi, Managing Director, Polycart SpA



promoters

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#ethicalfinance
#energy #waste
#integralecology
#environmentaleducation
#water
#circulareconomy



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Regione Umbria



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