

Sečovlje Salina Nature Park

Business company supports protection of Natura 2000 Site in Slovenia

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The Sečovlje Salina, part of the Piran Salinas which comprises adjacent still active Strunjan Salina and already abandoned Lucija Salina, is situated on the NE Adriatic coast, at the mouth of the Dragonja River, in the southernmost stretch of the coastline of the Piran Bay.

The Sečovlje Salina, extended over 6,5 km², is among the most important natural and cultural heritage sites in Slovenia, and therefore designated as a nature park, Ramsar site, Natura 2000 site and a cultural monument of national importance.

The Sečovlje Salina Nature Park is the first state-designated protected area in Slovenia where the concession for its management has been given to a business company (SOLINE Salt Production), which is owned by the national biggest mobile phone company (Mobitel d.d.).

The company SOLINE has a specific status in terms of management of the state-protected area – Sečovlje Salina Nature Park. The company has been given a concession, issued by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia, by which the company is responsible for the management of the state-designated nature park and use of its natural resources. The company also has a specific duty in provision of public services in terms of protection of nature in the state-owned property of the Sečovlje Salina Nature Park.

In return, the Republic of Slovenia provides funding for the management of the protected area which is reflected in a yearly program and financial plan of the Sečovlje Salina Nature Park; however the rate of this contribution comprises only approximately 8% of the overall budget of the Park.

The rest of the budget is generated by the Park itself, with the contribution of Mobitel. In addition, the concession contract says that all the assets and investments in the Nature Park's infra-

structure remain the property of the Republic of Slovenia, even after the time when the concession contract will expire (in the year 2023).

The main objectives of the protected area are conservation of the wetland ecological character, thus biodiversity and its economic and cultural values (cultural heritage).

To achieve these objectives by:

- Maintaining the saline ecosystem and its diverse habitats that are sustaining the characteristic flora and fauna;
- Safeguarding the traditional production process and technology of salt-making;
- Salt-making, which as an economic activity created the salina and was the main development objective in the history.



Foto Archivio Sečovelje Nature Park

The Sečovlje Salina is an actual example of close interaction between natural environment, cultural heritage and economic production. Cultural heritage has been especially taken care of in the open air museum, but it is also present all over the area in the remains of the salters' houses, canals and dykes, water basins and salt-pans. Being one of the two still active salinas in the Gulf of Trieste, its significant value is in a cultural landscape with ethnological, technical, historical and settlement heritage hand in hand with its importance for biodiversity.

The management of the area is carried out in accordance with the specifications included in the decree on the establishment of the Nature Park and other legal background and is put into practice through the management plan, approved by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia. In return for the efforts and investments into protection and management of the heritage of the area, the private sector management body has been granted with the possibility to exploit part of the income generated from salt-making, tourism and other activities carried out in the area. In the abandoned Fontanigge salt-pans, the museum of salt-making was created, where a wide collection of salt-making tools is kept and two salt repositories can be found. The museum serves educational purposes, in the frame of eco-tourism. By paying regard to various local natural processes, the management company of the Park provides for the sustainable development of the area. In addition, through the implementation of measures concerning the protection of both natural values and of cultural heritage, the company is contributing to increased public awareness of the significance of protecting Sečovlje Salina Nature Park.

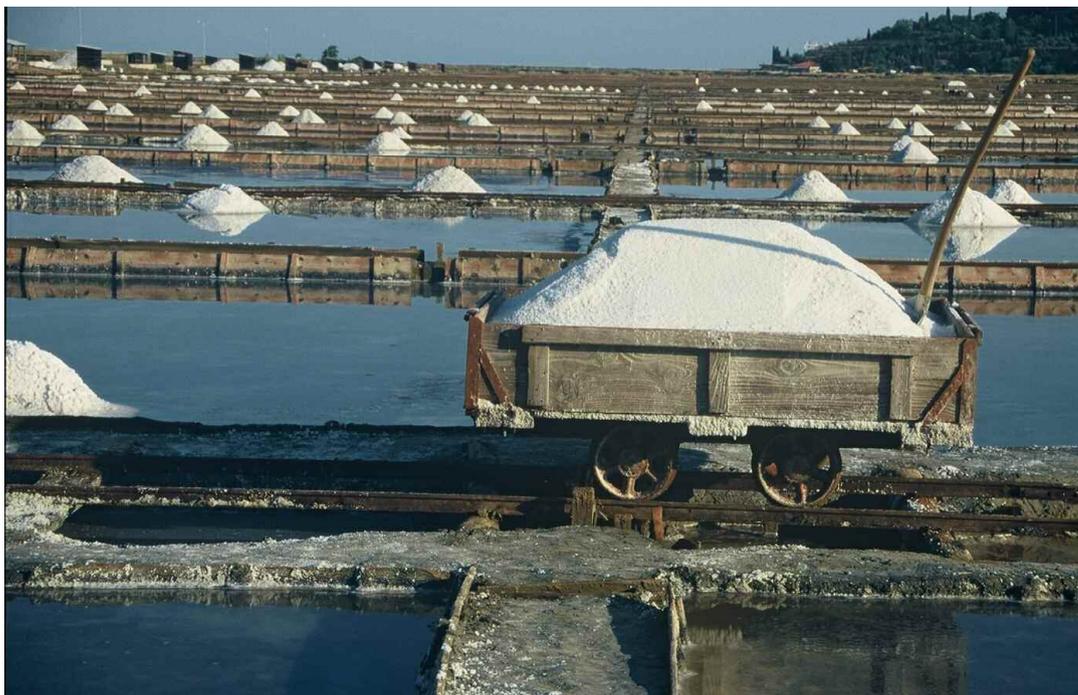


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