Making Farmland Work for the Public Good

Access to land and sustainable local development: the Land Bank

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Criticality and context

It's a matter of fact that abandoned/unused lands

(and related assets)

-belonging to public or private owners -

- are an obstacle to the access to land by young people and to triggering local development processes

- are the source of multiple risk: hydrogeological risk, fire risk, spread of plant diseases, soil pauperisation, enviromental degradation….they are also a "wound" to the landscape

- most of abandoned public assets belong to small municipalities -rural and mountain- that have a weak administrative strucuture and a wide territory to manage

- many public e private unused lands are fragmented

The role of public administration

Local Authorities (in Italy, Regions and Municipalities) are responsible for "government and management" of their territories. Talking about lands (with an agricultural vocation or not) and rural buildings

IT MEANS

➢ Identifying and Mapping unused/abandoned lands (public and private) and related assets

➢ Mapping resoucers, opportunities, local stakeholders and partners, human and social capital, entrepreneurial energies

➢ Outlining a recovery plan for productive re-use and sustainable valorisation of public assets, also for social and environmental purposes

➢ Envolving private owners of unused assets in local development plans

➢ Supporting the matching between land's demand (especially by young people) and land's supply by local administrations and private owners

➢ Involving Economic and Social Partners, in order to create a supportive environment for project proposals by local actors

The Land Bank (Banca della terra)

The toolbox is the so called «Land Bank»

A "Land Bank" is a Competence Center that manage
➢ The geo-referenced mapping (WEBGIS *Geographical Information System*) of abandoned public assets (and also private)

➢ The processes to implement recovery plans for productive re-use and sustainable valorisation of assets included in the lists of the Bank
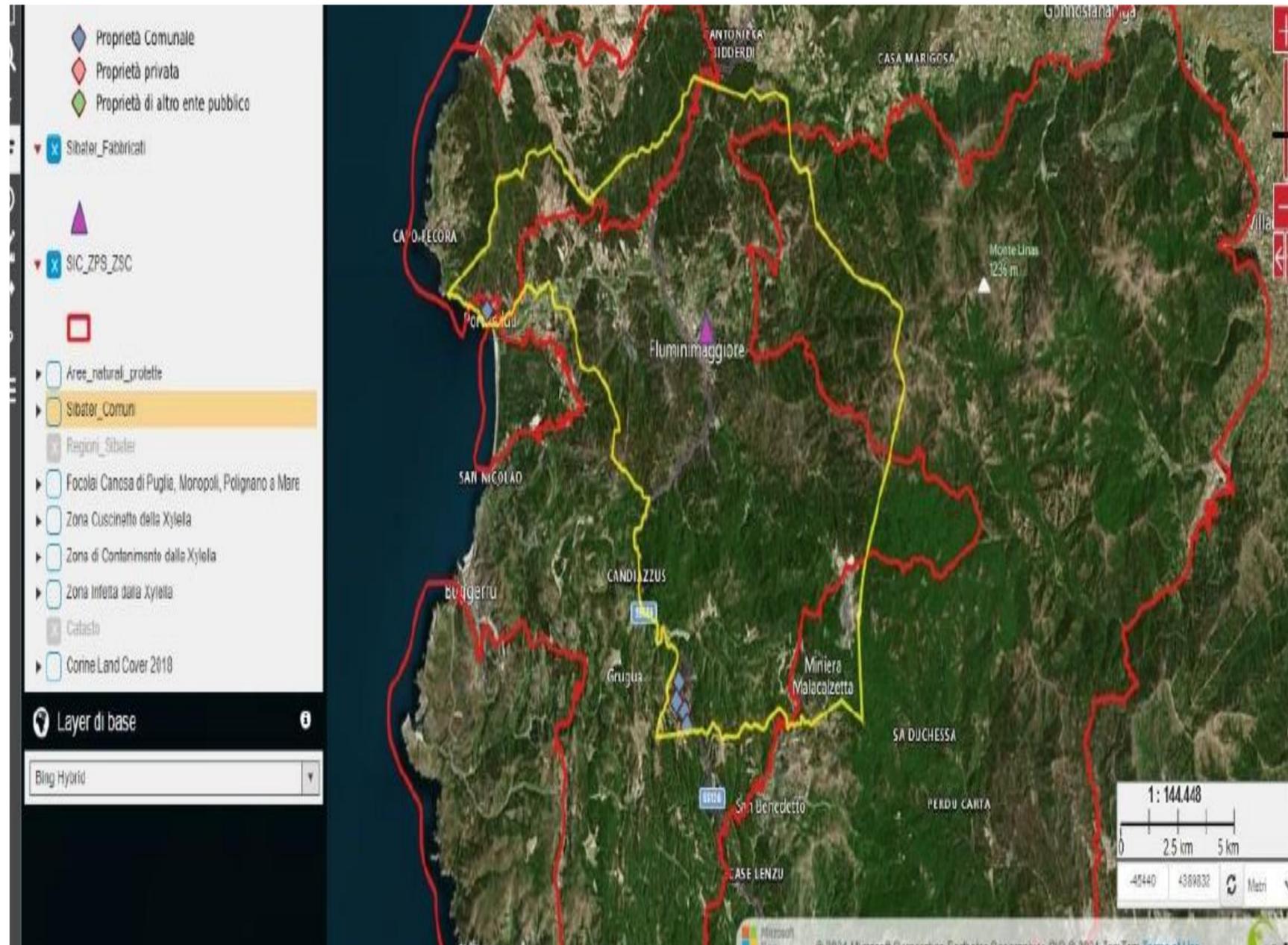
The Land's Bank consists of **panels/lists of assets**, which are updated as soon as these assets become available
➢ Lands with agricultural vocation

➢ Areas with a naturalistic value, including woods and forests

➢ Small plot of land in urban areas; urban gardens to be used for social and educational purposes; urban green areas (parks and gardens)

➢ Former industrial and craft areas (districts) now abandoned

➢ Rural buildings useful for multifunctional agriculture, social agriculture, educational and cultural activities……

The ownership of lands and other assets is public and private
➢ **About public ownership**: municipalities, regions, public consortia and other public bodies' aggregations….

➢ **About private ownership**: absent owners (who don't maintain or use their lands) or so called "silent" owners (who cannot be contacted because, for example, they have been living abroad for decades)

How the Land Bank works

The "Competence Center" provides for several activities

➢ Mapping and listing public (and private) assets which are unused, as soon as they become available in order to be to be assigned in management

➢ Supporting new sustainable entrepreneurial projects, which are also able to provide services and welfare for the local community

➢ For pubblic assets, management of public procedures for assignment (call for proposals, public tender)

➢ For private assets, supporting the matching between supply and demand of lands, by private law agreements
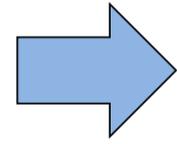
Expected results

By subtraction of lands and other "common assets" from the state of abandonment, public administrations achieve results in several fields:

➢ generating income/employment opportunities for the local community;

➢ protection of soil and territory; containment and prevention of landscape-geological-environmental degradation; generation of ecosystem services

➢ re-generation of territories and communities; enhancement of territorial resources, human and social capital;

➢ providing new services and welfare for the local community by new entrepreneurial projects = valorisation projects become drivers for local development

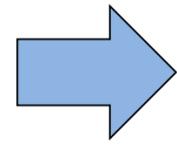This way, public administrations contribute to several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda

Italian Land Banks

The Land Bank can be settled at national, regional and municipal level

At regional level

*17 Italian Regions upon 20 have settled the Land Bank: **the best performing is the Tuscany Region's Land Bank** (the oldest Land Bank all over Europe)

At local level

*914 Municipalities participating in The **SIBaTer Project [Institutional Support for the Implementation of the Banca delle Terre** (Lands Bank)], managed by ANCI-IFEL on behalf of Cohesion Ministry

***Metropolitan City of Rome** (*under construction*)

The SIBaTer Project

Project Management =

ANCI – IFEL, on behalf of the Italian Government, within a Programme co-financed by ESI Funds

SIBaTer supports Municipalities on=

✓Implementing **Land Bank** of abandoned/unused municipal lands (and related assets)

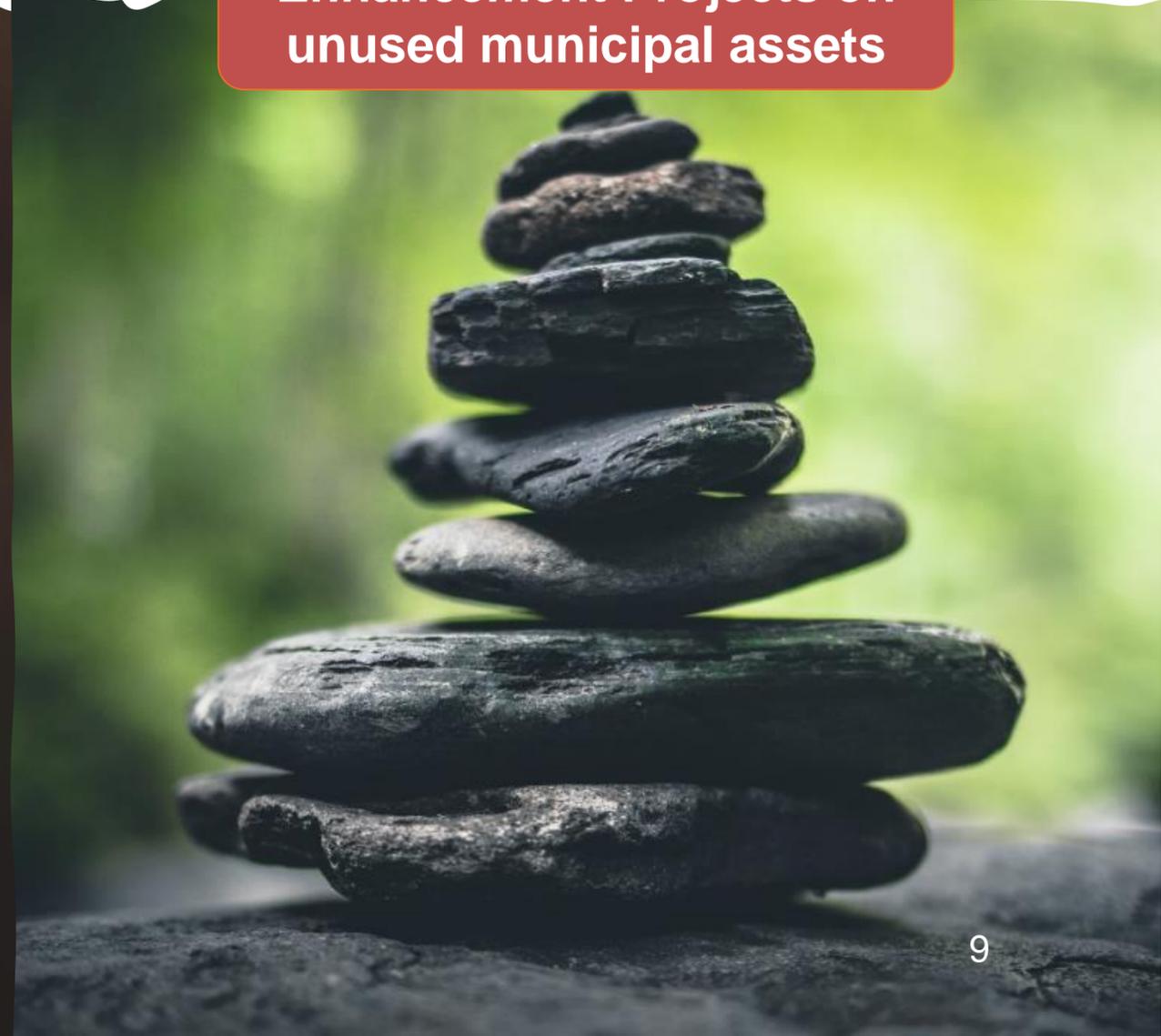✓Allocation of unused **public assets under management of young people by** regeneration projects

By the «SIBaTer Land Bank», Municipalities are able to create
- ✓ a favorable environment for the generation of community/youth enhancement projects on public lands
- ✓ employment opportunities for local youth and new services for the local community

Youth Entrepreneurship

Enhancement Projects on unused municipal assets

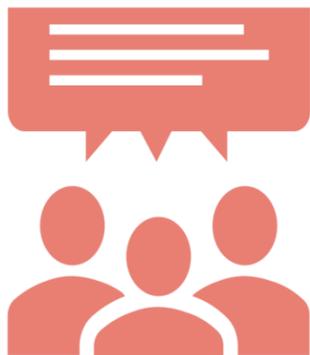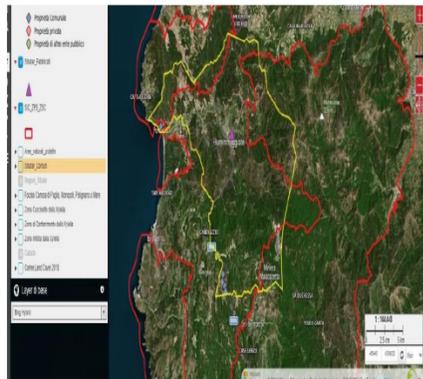# SIBaTer Project's path for «valorisation»

SIBaTer Task force supports Municipalities on:

➢ Mapping of unused/abandoned lands and other rural assests [*private and public*]

➢ Mapping of territorial information layers [*resouces and opportunities*]

➢ Mapping of local stakeholders and partnership [*human and social capital*]

➢ Implementig recovery plans for productive re-use and valorisation of unused assets, by *economically, socially, environmentally* sustainable projects
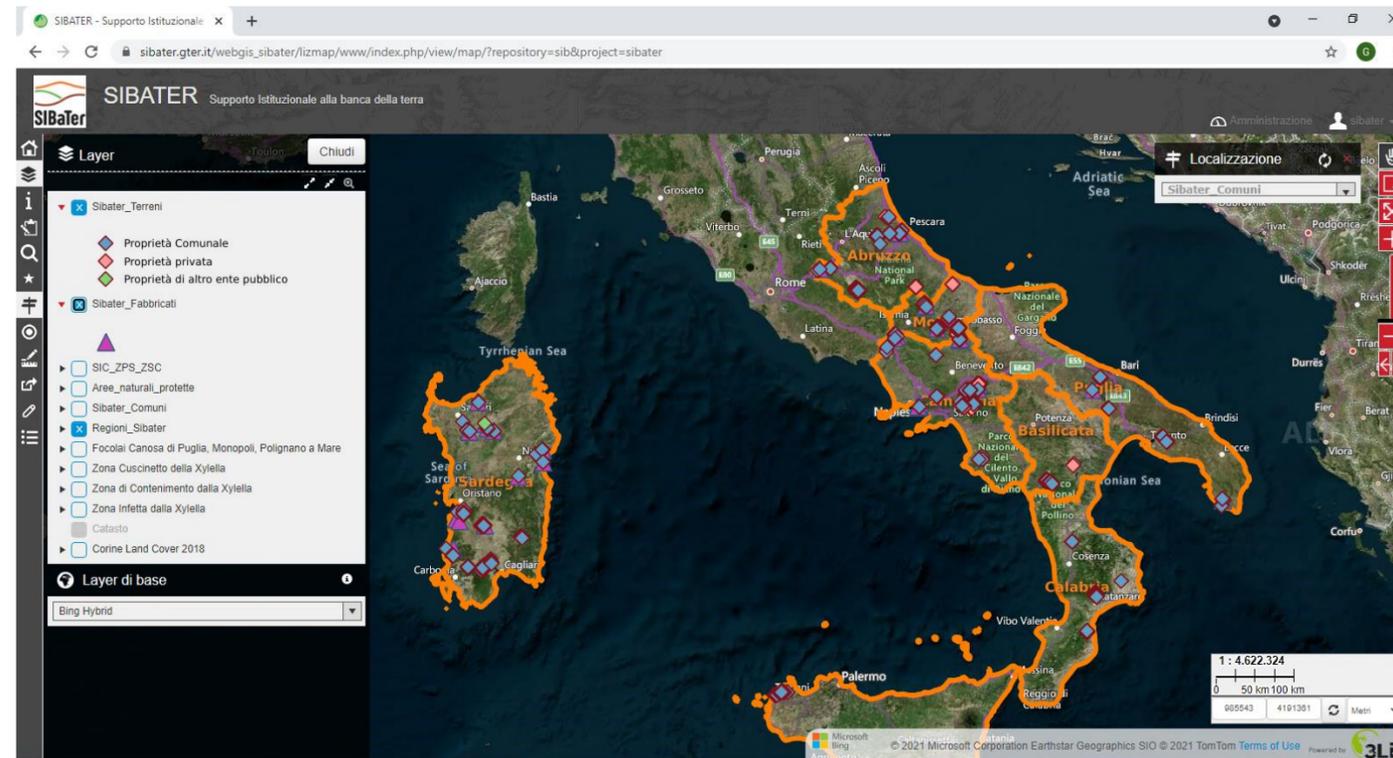
 *for public assets: call for proposals in order to promote   community/youth projects on public lands

How?

➢ Consulting the economic-social partnership, economic operators and other local stakeholders, in order to identify local needs and resources

➢ Involving main actors of local economic-social Partnership in co-designing projects, activating special partnerships between public and private, activating other collaborative tools.

Mapping lands and buildings suitable for valorisation

SIBaTer has created the first big database of lands and buildings belonging to municipalities on a Webgis platform *[GIS - Geographical Information System]*
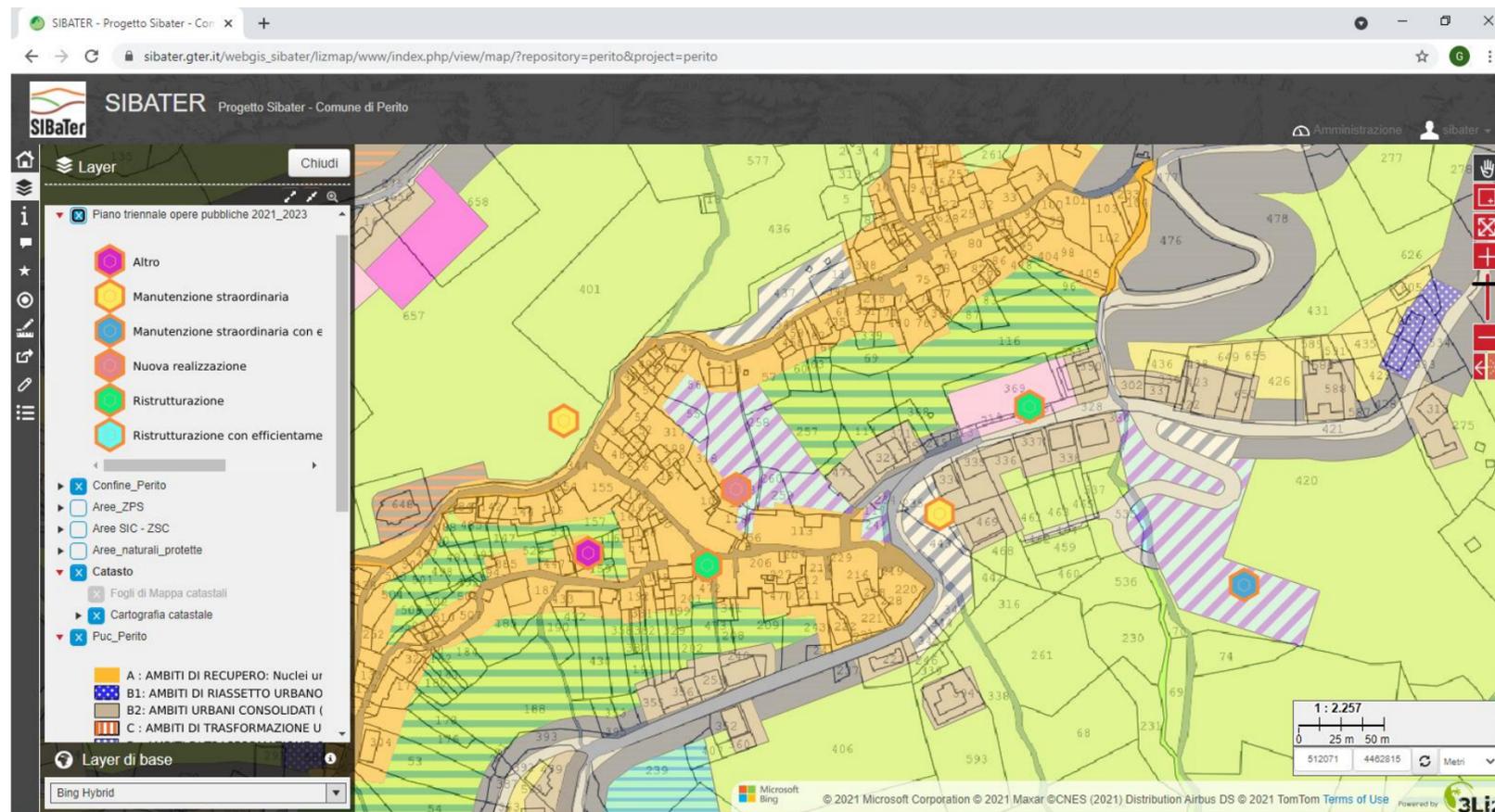
All these assets are suitable for sustainable community projects

Data and informations referring to public assets are an essential tool to support public decisions. They can be used to run multi-criteria analysis.

By several layers , the platform gives informations about:

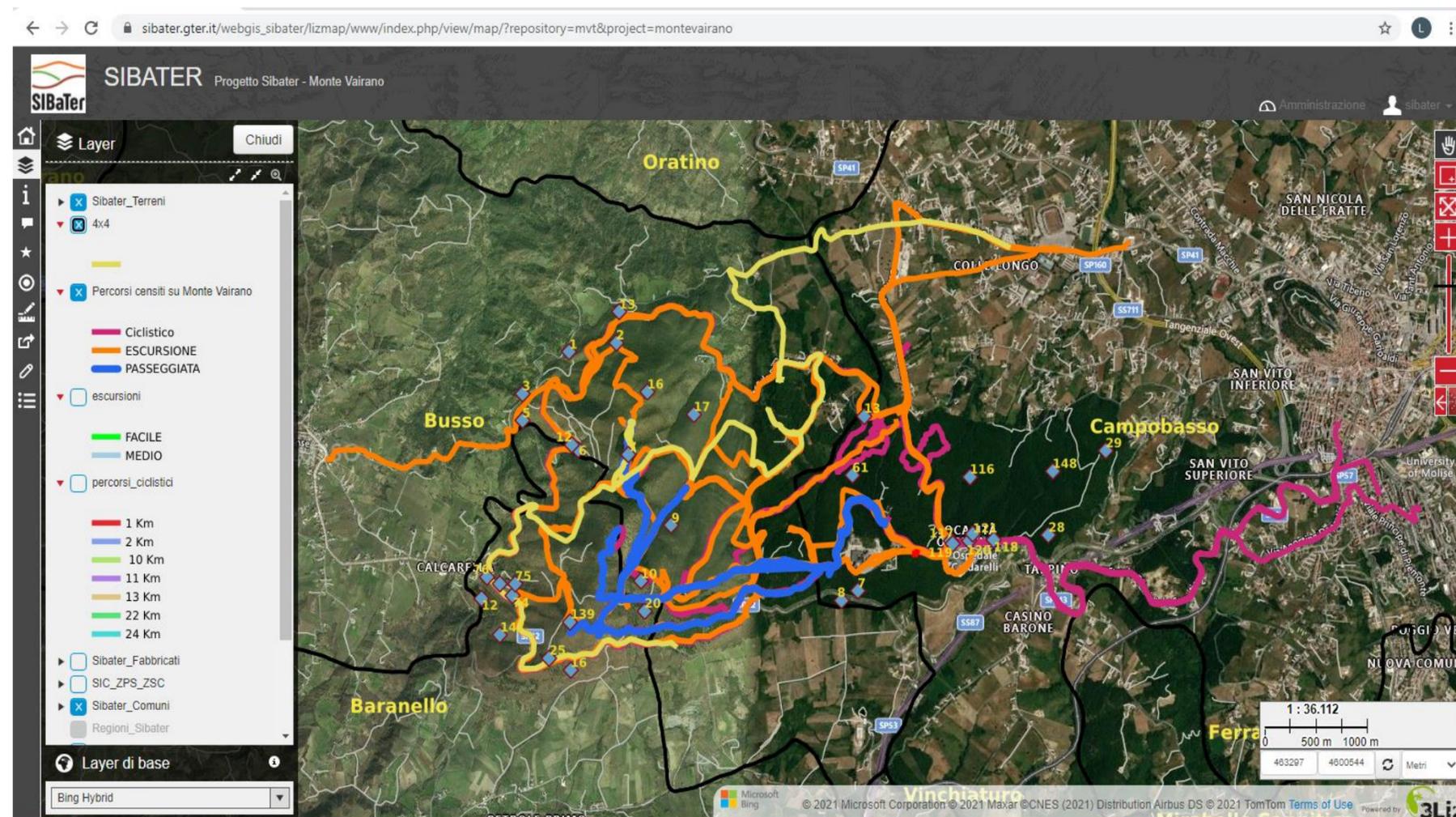land use and vocation, urban destination, constraints and real rights…..

Territory government and planning

Using webgis to manage Municipal Urban Plans and Public Works Plans

Every Municipality supported by SIBaTer can access for free to the WebGIS platform [including training on the job to manage the database and the platform.

Mapping routes and trails within naturalistic areas, in order to enhance cultural and recreational itineraries and to promote tourism
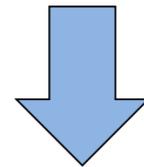

By loading on the webgis the "routes data" obtained from other web platforms (such as "Wikiloc") dedicated to sport and hiking, it is possible to identify paths within naturalistic areas, or cultural sites or recreational areas

The role of Municipalities in the Land Bank

Municipalities that have settled the «SIBaTer Land Bank» **manage the valorisation's path by the technical support of IFEL, using the «SIBaTer toolbox»**

Local Administration has to create a supporting enviroment for community and sustainable projects, in order to create opportunities for young people, but also to satisfy community needs and to generate social services

That's why the call for proposals and the public tenders always come after

➢ consulting relevant local actors, economic and social partners

➢ involving relevant players in management and valorisation decisions

The role of
Partnership Network

world of agriculture, main representatives of cooperatives' confederations, university and research centers

The success of SIBaTer is strictly linked to the wide Network of Partners, representatives of national and local Socio-Economic Partnership
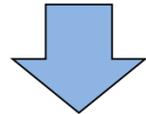
The joint action is essential to reach the final goal: matching between lands' supply by local administrations and lands' demand by young people

Partnership Network (2)

SIBaTer is an exemplary model of capacity building of municipalities -especially small ones- by transferring competences and knowhow inside municipalities' organization.
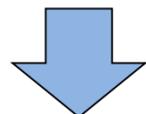
*The diffusion of good practices and experience-sharing is one of the key mechanisms ensuring that good ideas can inspire many relevant actors and can create a multiplicative global effect on local communities

*Partnership Network is the other KEY = Partners are leading actors with local administrations

  ➢ Sibater Land Bank system provides technical support to municipalities;

  ➢ SIBaTer Partnership Network supports local actors and relevant partners

The final goal is to co-design and to decide together which kind of valorisation projects and which development path for the local community

This way public lands will be managed, not only to get economic benefits, but to follow public interests by sustainable projects

Partnership Network (3)

The strong focus is on

➢ enhancing the active role of local communities in the demand for lands

➢ strict cooperation with a broad partnership of associations, cooperatives' confederations and third sector organizations, with the aim of increasing the demand for lands/assets by local communities

➢ stimulating local communities to revitalise their territories and to propose projects for socio-economic development

Without involving Socio-Economic Partnership to reach SIBaTer's main goals would be impossible

➢ The SIBaTer Project foresees that community and collaborative initiatives -such as so called "Community Cooperatives" or multifunctional agriculture- can represent highly appropriate tools to regenerate abandoned assets

➢ For example, "Community Cooperatives" are bottom-up cooperatives, established by a network of stakeholders and citizens, in order to

- manage abandoned public assets and produce services and welfare at a local level

- create job opportunities, especially for young people

- create conditions for regeneration of fragile territories and urban peripheries

SIBater by numbers

Technical assistance totally free for Municipalities

✓914 Municipalities have adopted a Council Resolution to join SIBaTer and have been supported directly on the job by SIBaTer Task Force

✓90% of supported Municipalities are small and rural

✓ All Italian Municipalities (8,000) are able to access all outputs, guidelines and technical notes available on the web site www.sibater.it

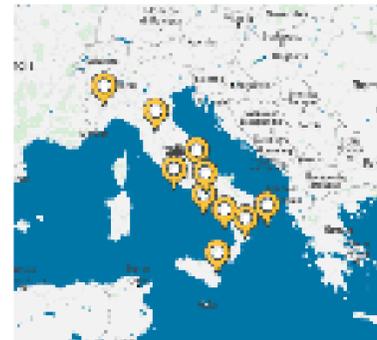✓10,000 hectares of land and 1,400 buildings have been surveyed in 2 years

www.sibater.it
[ARCO Action Research for CO-development, in 2021, has identified
SIBater Project as one the "BEST PRACTICES OF SOCIAL
COHESION AND SOCIAL AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY IN ITALY"
within the UNDP – United Nations Development Programme]

SIBaTer method and toolbox

Supporting Municipalities
 https://www.sibater.it/materiali/

WEBGIS Mapping Experiences
https://www.sibater.it/esperienze/#mappa-esperienze

WEBGIS Mapping of lands and buildings
 https://www.sibater.it/mappe-interattive/mappa-terreni-e-fabbricati/

RECOMMENDATIONS
Key Success Factors for regeneration of territories and communities by the instrument of Land Bank

1. Create «Competence Centers» [operating at different level: regional or intermediate, between regional and local level], which provide technical assistance to Municipalities (especially small ones), in order to produce systematic knowledge about relevant information layers of their territories **HOW?** Providing technical tools and transferring knowhow to manage webgis mapping and survey of unused assets and territorial resources

2. Create a favorable administrative and legislative framework to assign the management of recovery plans directly to collaborative bodies of local stakeholders and partners (*eg. Cooperatives, Associations, Third Sector Organisations,*

ecc.....) **HOW?** Co-designing call for proposals and public tenders in cooperation with local partnership network **+** providing "award criteria" if the valorisation project for productive re-use: 1) is proposed by associations and/or cooperatives that can provide services and *welfare* to the local community; 2) is proposed by young people, creating new job opportunities

THIS WAY

➢ The public administration generates «community» projects -economically but also «socially» and «environmentally» sustainable-, where public assets will be managed to achieve local development goals & to create new services and welfare to the local community

➢ The public administration increases the matching between demand and supply of unused public assets *[as a matter of fact, often, they are unused because they don't have big value or have management criticality]*, by the strict cooperation with a broad partnership of associations, cooperatives' confederations, third sector organizations

Thank you!

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