



Serra San Bruno, Vibo Valentia (Italy) - June 6-11, 2022

XIV INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION

“Biodiversity and Sustainability: two important keywords for the future”

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS
and FIELD TRIPS GUIDE



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Book of abstracts and Field trips guide

Serra San Bruno, Vibo Valentia (Italy) June 6-11, 2022
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ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

INVASIVE ALIEN PLANTS AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES: A CASE STUDY IN SICILY

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Sicily is an island localized in the center of the Mediterranean basin and represents a hotspot of biodiversity. Nowadays, its plant biodiversity is threatened by invasive alien species (IAS). In the last century, several IAS were recorded for the island, which are linked to human activities and commercial exchanges [1]. When invasion is at an initial stage, eradication measures may contribute to prevent alien plant naturalization. According to the last report on plant biodiversity in Italy [2], 473 taxa are present in Sicily including archeophytes and neophytes. Therefore, field investigations play an important role in the fight against the alien species, especially during the beginning of their spread. Thanks to our investigations focused on the IAS of Sicily, we discovered new alien species for Italy and Mediterranean area, such as *Sida rhombifolia* and *Sphaeralcea bonariensis* [3,4].

Currently, our team is working on a project aiming at fighting introduction, naturalization and spread of IAS potentially harmful for local biodiversity. This project named FAST (Fight Alien Species Transborder), funded by INTERREG V-A Italia-Malta 2014-2020 call 2/2019, is focused on four protected areas of Sicily, i.e., “Fiumefreddo”, “Oasi del Simeto” (Catania), “Pino d’Aleppo” and “Fiume Irminio” (Ragusa). For each protected area, a management measures and concrete action against some invasive species, especially *Carpobrotus edulis* and *Opuntia ficus-indica*, are planned.

Main aim of this contribution is to highlight the state of the art in Sicily as regards the invasive alien species and their threats to the natural habitat, as well as the management measures implemented for achieving the FAST project goals.

1. Van Kleunen, M. *et al.* 2015. Global exchange and accumulation of non-native plants. *Nature* 525, 100-103.
2. Bartolucci, F. *et al.* 2021. Report 2020 on plant biodiversity in Italy: native and alien vascular flora. *Nat. Hist. Sci.* 8(1):41-54.
3. Cambria, S. *et al.* 2022. First record of *Sida rhombifolia* L. (Malvaceae) for Italian flora: taxonomical and ecological investigation. *Acta Bot Croat*, DOI: 10.37427/botcro-2022-013.
4. Aleo, M. *et al.* 2022. First record of *Sphaeralcea bonariensis* (Cav.) Griseb. (Malvaceae) as a casual alien species in the Mediterranean area. *Bioinvasions Rec.* (in press).

PIANTE ALIENE INVASIVE E MISURE DI GESTIONE: UN CASO STUDIO IN SICILIA

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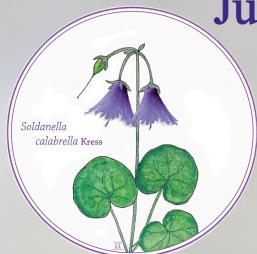
La Sicilia è un’isola localizzata nel centro del bacino del Mediterraneo e rappresenta un hotspot di biodiversità. Attualmente, la sua biodiversità vegetale è continuamente minacciata dalle specie aliene invasive (IAS). Nell’ultimo secolo, diverse IAS sono state riportate, le quali sono collegate alle attività umane e scambi commerciali [1]. Quando l’invasione è ad uno stadio iniziale, l’eradicazione potrebbe contribuire a prevenire la naturalizzazione delle piante esotiche. Secondo l’ultimo report sulla biodiversità in Italia [2], 473 taxa sono presenti in Sicilia, includendo specie archeofite e neofite. Pertanto, le indagini in campo giocano un ruolo importante nella lotta contro le specie aliene, soprattutto durante l’inizio della loro diffusione [2]. Grazie alle nostre indagini incentrate sulle IAS in Sicilia, noi abbiamo scoperto nuove specie aliene per l’Italia e l’area Mediterranea, come *Sida rhombifolia* e *Sphaeralcea bonariensis* [3,4]. Attualmente, il nostro gruppo lavora su un progetto volto a combattere l’introduzione, naturalizzazione e diffusione delle IAS potenzialmente dannose per la biodiversità locale. Questo progetto denominato FAST (Fight Alien Species Transborder), finanziato nell’ambito dell’Interreg V-A Italia-Malta 2014-2020 call 2/2019, è focalizzato su 4 aree protette della Sicilia, cioè, “Fiumefreddo”, “Oasi del Simeto” (Catania), “Pino d’Aleppo” e “Fiume Irminio” (Ragusa). Per ogni area protetta sono state pianificate concrete attività e misure di gestione contro alcune specie invasive, soprattutto *Carpobrotus edulis* e *Opuntia ficus-indica*. L’obiettivo principale di questo contributo è quello di evidenziare lo stato dell’arte in Sicilia per quanto riguarda le specie esotiche invasive e le loro minacce per gli habitat naturali, nonché le misure di gestione attuate per il raggiungimento degli obiettivi del progetto FAST.

1. Van Kleunen, M. et al. 2015. Global exchange and accumulation of non-native plants. *Nature* 525, 100-103.
2. Bartolucci, F. et al. 2021. Report 2020 on plant biodiversity in Italy: native and alien vascular flora. *Nat. Hist. Sci.* 8(1):41-54.
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