

ARPAV. THE RIGHT VALUE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT



Agenzia Regionale per la Prevenzione
e Protezione Ambientale del Veneto

Environmental Prevention and Protection Agency of the Veneto Region | www.arpa.veneto.it

More than fifteen years have gone by since the referendum that introduced a dedicated management system for environmental prevention and protection in the Veneto region: ARPAV - the Regional Agency for Environmental Prevention and Protection. Prevention is fostered through ongoing research, training, information, and environmental education, while Protection is guaranteed through environmental control and monitoring activities aimed at ensuring both the safety of the territory and the health of those who live in it. Over the last decade, the development of environmental legislation has led to profound changes in both the scope and substance of ARPAV's functions and responsibilities: important new tasks have been assigned to the Agency, which has consolidated its distinctive role as an Entity fundamental to governing sustainable economic and territorial development in the Veneto. This is the new context in which ARPAV is called upon to operate, becoming an increasingly important technical and scientific partner equipped to engage in dialogue with the various tiers of government - first and foremost the Veneto Region, but also the Provinces and Municipalities - in order to represent and manage policies aimed at safeguarding the environment. This brochure, which is part of a broader communication project aimed at the various sectors of our public, is designed to illustrate ARPAV's mission, the services it offers and the activities it carries out. It is important to realise that, in a constantly evolving scenario, what is fundamental is to effectively transmit our distinctive skills, which are invariably aimed at ensuring sustainable development in the Veneto and safeguarding the health of those who live here. We feel sure that the "culture of communication" we hope to convey in this way - and indeed others - will be welcomed as a concrete sign of our commitment to protecting and promoting the environment. This is our mission, one that is acutely aware of the value of the historical roots of our region and the sense of regional identification that is such a vital part of our heritage. In the Veneto, enterprising spirit, skill, hard work and a constant drive for innovation have always gone hand in hand with respect for the environment.

"Nature is an infinite sphere of which the centre is everywhere and the circumference nowhere." Blaise Pascal

ARPAV

How ARPAV operates
Organisation
Central structure
Offices

Regional and Provincial Divisions

Functions
Organisation
Observatories
Tools and facilities

Task

Monitoring the environment

- Air
- Water
- Waste
- Soil
- Physical Agents
- Industrial Risk
- Major Works
- IPPC
- Nature and Biodiversity
- Energy

Prevention and research for sustainable development

- Environment and Health
- Sustainability Education
- School of Specialization for Environment
- Information and Communication
- Environmental Management Systems
- Environmental Assessment
- Cooperation

Territorial Protection

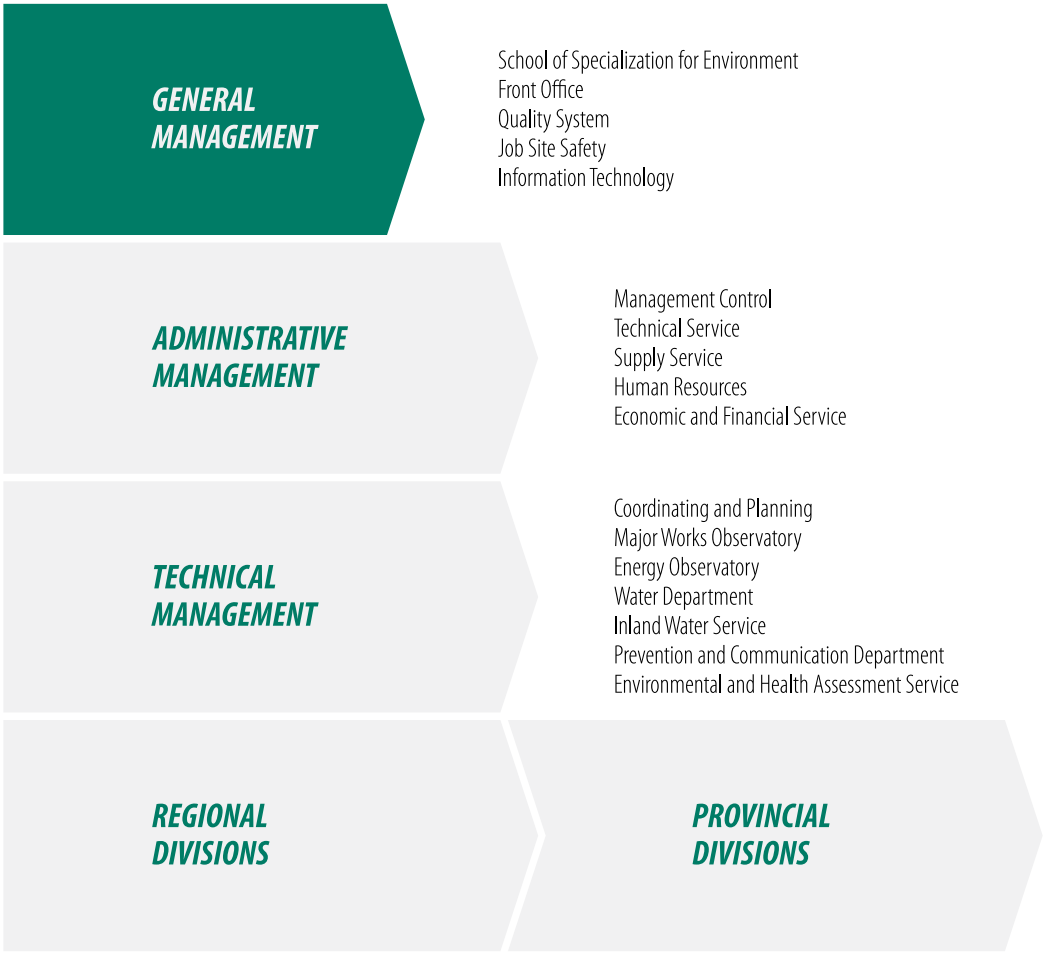
Services

- Weather
- Regional Centre of Civil Protection and Territorial Safety

Our reputation

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■ **HOW ARPAV OPERATES** Set up by the Veneto Region with Law no. 32 in 1996, ARPAV's mission is to ensure environmental protection and prevention in the Veneto. To do so, the Agency operates on two complementary fronts, divided into mandatory and non-mandatory institutional areas. On the mandatory institutional front, ARPAV supports and coordinates environmental policy provided for by specific relevant legislation promoted by the Veneto Region and the Provinces and, on their behalf, carries out the required control and monitoring services, also in collaboration with other entities and institutions. On the non-mandatory institutional front, the Agency acts as a scientific and technical partner of Local Bodies in the Veneto and the players that form part of the region's economic fabric. In this area, ARPAV organises and takes part in programme agreements and draws up conventions and contracts, thus helping to monitor specific environmental activities promoted and implemented throughout the region. It also carries out research and study activities, produces publications and organises information and training encounters, all aimed at encouraging and supporting sustainable growth in the area.

■ **ORGANISATION** The Agency is an instrumental body of the Veneto Region, which operates independently from an administrative, organisational, technical and accounting point of view, in compliance with three-year plans and yearly

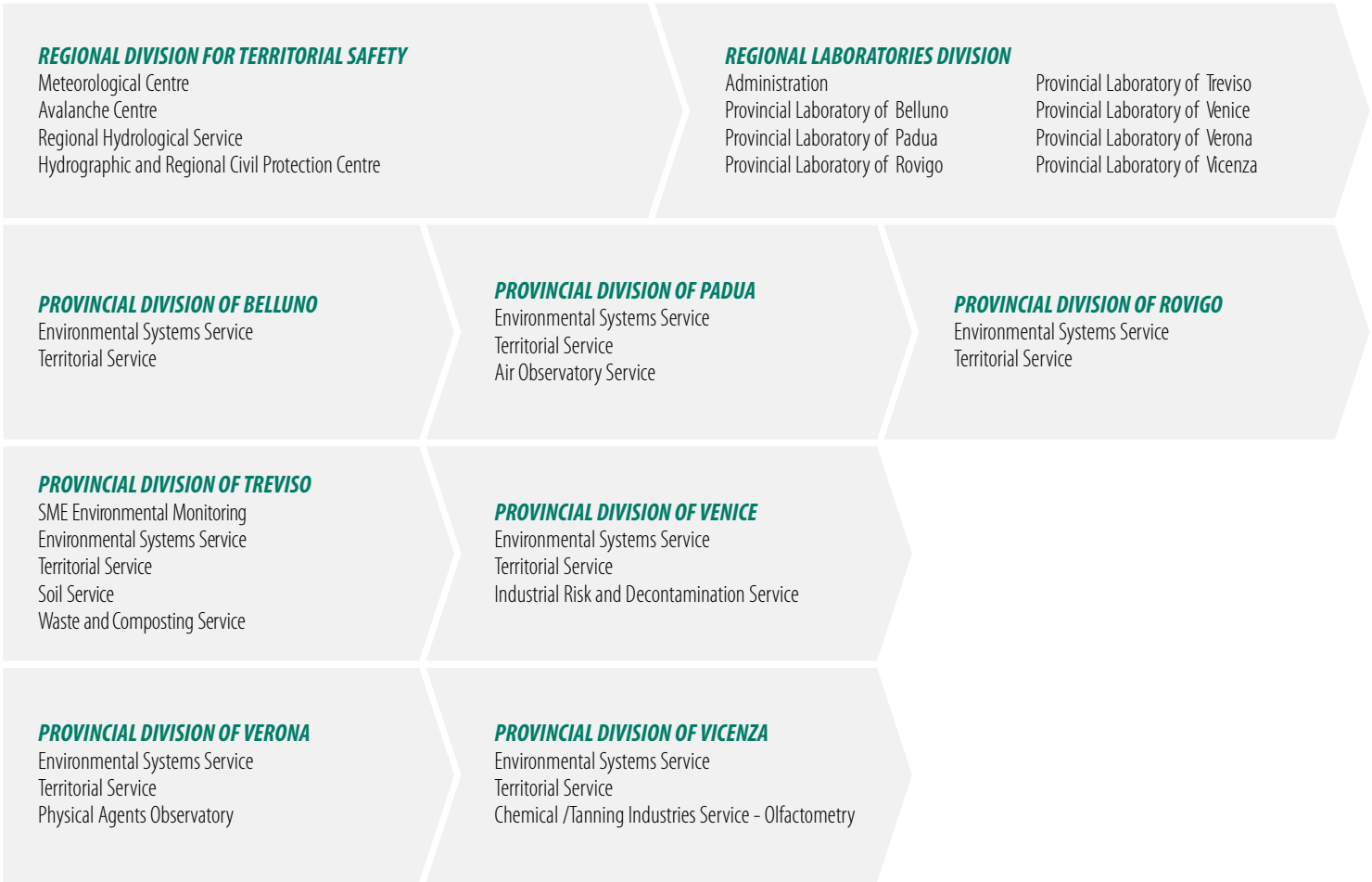
programmes approved by the relevant Regional Committee set up as part of Regional Law no. 32 of 1996. The specific technical and scientific skills of the large number of professional figures who work for the Agency guarantee a multi-disciplinary approach to environmental issues and problems and therefore to the fulfilment of the tasks it is entrusted with. ARPAV has both a central and a devolved structure. The central control structure is embodied by the General Management, assisted by the Administrative Management and the Technical and Scientific Management. The organisation of the Agency is also devolved both to the seven Provincial Divisions, one located in each province of the Veneto, and to the two supra-territorial Regional Divisions.

■ **CENTRAL STRUCTURE** The General Management's main task is to guide and coordinate the Technical and Administrative Areas and the Provincial and Regional Divisions. It oversees and keeps tabs on the progress made in achieving targets, and weighs up resources acquired, costs and services offered in order to ensure the organisation of the Agency functions effectively and efficiently in the pursuit of its aims. The General Management is responsible for the organisation of the quality system, the activities pertaining to the development and management of information systems, press relations, front office activities, risk prevention and protection and the coordination of the School of

Specialization for Environment. The Administrative Management takes care of all the administrative activities related to human resources, accounting, financial statements and management control, as well as purchases and asset management. The Technical Management is in charge of the promotion, planning and implementation of services regarding the technical and scientific activities the Agency is entrusted with, as well as coordinating research, information, education and environmental communication activities. It is directly responsible for coordinating activities related to the waters, environmental impact assessment and studies and actions regarding the effects on human health when pressure is placed on the environment.

■ **OFFICES** A pivotal role in ARPAV's activities is played by the network of offices the Agency has throughout the Veneto. The city of Padua plays host to the organisational structure of the General Management, which occupies the various offices of the Administrative and Technical Managements. Each provincial capital has offices representing the respective Provincial Divisions, which also house the Laboratories of the specific Regional Division. Also in the province of Padua, in the splendid setting of the Euganean Hills, are the offices of the Regional Meteorological Centre.

THE REGIONAL AND PROVINCIAL DIVISIONS. THE RIGHT VALUE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT



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REGIONAL LABORATORIES DIVISION

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THE PROVINCIAL AND REGIONAL DIVISIONS. THE RIGHT VALUE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

■ **FUNCTIONS** ARPAV operates the length and breadth of the region through its seven Provincial Divisions and two Regional Divisions. Their function is to plan and carry out activities aimed at verifying and controlling environmental matrices and monitoring the stress to which the environment is subjected by human activity, as well as to provide technical and scientific support to the Veneto Region and to various Local Entities in the areas they are responsible for. Each Provincial Division is divided up into two main Services:

- The Territorial Service, which controls equipment, plants and processes, carries out measuring activities regarding electromagnetic fields, radioactivity in the environment, noise, etc., as well as monitoring the state of conditions of the environment in general.
- The Environmental Systems Service, which is in charge of monitoring networks and deals with analysing and assessing environmental data.

The Regional Laboratories Division boasts a network of seven laboratories, equipped with the most modern technologies that allow them to conduct all the various kinds of analysis required by standards regarding environmental matrices. These laboratories have recently undergone reorganisation in order to enable them to provide an increasingly efficient, quali-

fied response to the demands deriving from environmental monitoring activities. The laboratories work together with the other Agency bodies entrusted with environmental monitoring activities, as well as with the Local Health Authorities to carry out checks on foodstuffs and drinking water, and with the forces of order for those analyses required during legal investigations.

The laboratories are also happy to respond to requests from private individuals to analyse both food and environmental matrices. The Regional Division for Territorial Safety, through the two specialised Centres in Teolo (Padua) and Arabba (Belluno), and the new Regional Hydrological Service, carries out monitoring activities and provides services regarding meteorology, agrometeorology, snow and avalanches, climatology and hydrology. The Division also manages the regional hydrographical network and assists the Veneto Region in running the Regional Centre of Civil Protection.

■ **ORGANISATION** Each Provincial and Regional Divisions is headed by a Director, appointed by resolution by the Director General. They employ both administrative staff, with managers and ordinary employees running all the internal organisational and financial activities, and highly specialised in-house technical staff, responsible for controlling, monitoring and analysis of environmental matrices.

■ **OBSERVATORIES** Operating within the Provincial Divisions, these are provided with the specific tools and staff required to carry out and coordinate activities at regional level regarding the following areas: Air, Soil, Waste and Composting, Industrial Risk and Decontamination, Physical Agents, Chemical/Tanning Industries - Olfactometry. Also included here are a number of other outstanding services operative at regional level: the Meteorological Centre and the Avalanche Centre of the Regional Division for Territorial Safety, the Water Department and the Prevention and Communication Department of the Technical Management.

■ **TOOLS AND FACILITIES** In order to carry out its complex environmental control, monitoring and analysis activities, ARPAV is equipped with a range of highly sophisticated tools and facilities: the air quality monitoring stations, the weather radar, the manual and automatic networks for the registration of environmental data, the cutting-edge portable laboratories for carrying out on-the-spot analysis of polluting substances, the SIMAGE - Integrated System for Environmental Monitoring and Emergency Management - the nautical vehicle equipped with the tools for monitoring coastal and sea waters - just to quote a few representative examples.

THE OFFICES IN THE REGION. THE RIGHT VALUE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

01. GENERAL MANAGEMENT

02. REGIONAL DIVISION
FOR TERRITORIAL SAFETY

03. REGIONAL LABORATORIES DIVISION

04. PROVINCIAL DIVISION OF BELLUNO

05. PROVINCIAL DIVISION OF PADUA

06. PROVINCIAL DIVISION OF ROVIGO

07. PROVINCIAL DIVISION OF TREVISO

08. PROVINCIAL DIVISION OF VENICE

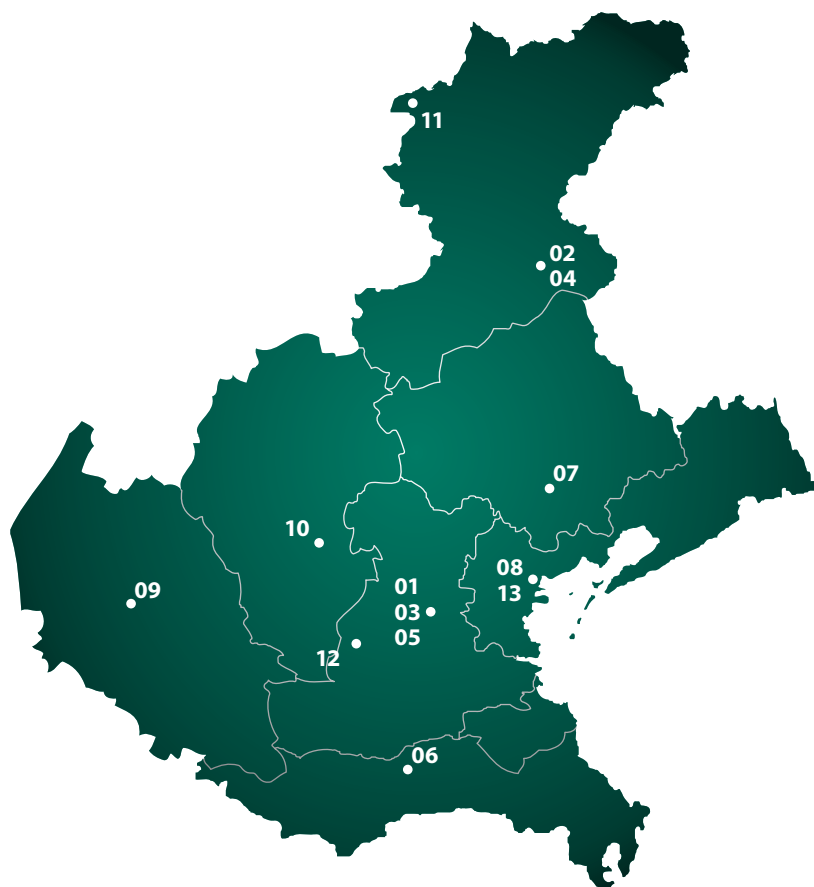
09. PROVINCIAL DIVISION OF VERONA

10. PROVINCIAL DIVISION OF VICENZA

11. AVALANCHE CENTRE

12. METEOROLOGICAL CENTRE

13. REGIONAL CENTRE OF CIVIL PROTECTION



ARPAV. MONITORING THE ENVIRONMENT

AIR - WATER - WASTE - SOIL

PHYSICAL AGENTS - INDUSTRIAL RISK - MAJOR WORKS

IPPC - NATURE AND BIODIVERSITY - ENERGY



MONITORING THE ENVIRONMENT. THE RIGHT VALUE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

■ **AIR** In compliance with a specific law of the Veneto Region, ARPAV is entrusted with monitoring air quality and emissions liable to cause pollution. Checks on air quality and to ensure the minimum legal values are complied with are conducted by analysing the air outside and determining the concentration present of the main pollutants, using both the fixed stations in the monitoring network and the new mobile laboratories. The results obtained are then collated and studied, and mathematical models representing the spread of pollutants are then used to attribute them to a particular area. For the monitoring and controlling of emissions, analysis is conducted on the pollutants dispersed into the air at their origin, such as those deriving from chimneys and industrial stacks. The results are then added to the emissions inventory. Where analysis has not yet been carried out, or where it is impossible to do so, for instance in the case of vehicular traffic, internationally established emission factors are applied to obtain an estimate. The air quality monitoring network of the Veneto Region, managed by ARPAV, is made up of over 50 fixed measuring stations of various kinds (traffic, industrial, urban and rural areas) and it is constantly updated in order to comply with evolving legislation. The stations are located

all over the region, and each of ARPAV's Provincial Divisions is in charge of running those within its area. In addition to the stations, atmospheric pollutants are detected by using mobile laboratories for air quality monitoring campaigns in those areas that are not covered by a fixed network.

The data collected for the purposes of measuring air quality are processed and used to draw up tables, graphs and reports that provide a clear picture of air quality. ARPAV is able to provide real-time data indicating the concentration present in the air of PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5},

ozone, nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, and sulphur dioxide recorded in the last 48 hours and/or the last ten days. The real-time data come from the automatic stations, so the latest figure recorded will not yet have been validated. ARPAV also provides validated data in the form of tables reporting the concentrations of the main pollutants that are recorded daily, checking if they comply with the maximum values permitted by law. Before being published, these data undergo a validation process to verify the accuracy of the data provided by ARPAV's technical operators. The parameters monitored are: sulphur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen oxides (NO and NO₂), ozone (O₃), carbon monoxide (CO), benzene (C₆H₆), and particulate material below 10 µm (PM₁₀) and below 2.5 µm (PM_{2.5}). (*Air Observatory*)



■ **WATER** The Veneto is one of the Italian regions with the most water, with several major rivers: the Po, Adige, Brenta, Piave, Livenza and Tagliamento, as well as other regional and inter-regional hydrographical basins, including the important basin that drains the waters in the Venetian lagoon. In addition to Lake Garda, the region boasts numerous other smaller lakes of considerable natural importance, and the underground waters of the region make

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up one of the most extensive and best-quality water reserves in Europe. ARPAV constantly monitors the quality of watercourses through a network of 269 control stations, 36 of which are exclusively used to control fish life, where ARPAV periodically takes samples for chemical and biological analyses. These are conducted in the Laboratories Division, after which they are processed by ARPAV's Inland Water Service. Depending on the particular type, samples may be taken at monthly, two-monthly, quarterly or half-yearly intervals. Similar importance is given to monitoring sources of environmental pressure: every year ARPAV carries out checks on hundreds of public purification plants and private systems. For those hydrographical systems of most critical importance for the environment - in particular the large basin that drains into the Venetian lagoon - ARPAV manages, on behalf of the Region, one of the finest, most modern integrated quality and quantity monitoring networks in Europe. There are 10 lakes in the Veneto region that are considered important and thus subject to monitoring by ARPAV in compliance with legislation. Six of these are natural and 4 artificial, and they are for the most part situated in the provinces of Belluno, Treviso and Verona (Lake Garda). To monitor ground water and springs,

ARPAV has put in place a quantity and quality network of over 300 control stations, from which a series of essential chemical and physical parameters are registered several times in order to draw up a classification of the bodies of water located underground. The last of the



Agency's activities regarding water resources involves monitoring drinking water. This is carried out on behalf of the Local Health Boards, with samples taken from over 8000 points. As regards bathing in the Adriatic and the major lakes in the region, ARPAV controls the quality of the waters from the point of view of health and hygiene by carrying out monitoring campaigns through a network of 167 stations, in which environmental, chemical and physical parameters are recorded and samples of waters are taken for microbiological analysis. The information thus obtained on the quality of the water for bathing in is then swiftly published on the ARPAV website in the form of specific reports. (*Water Department*)

■ **WASTE** The Veneto region is particularly efficient in terms of waste - especially urban waste - management, a clear sign that in this area a new mentality is taking root, one that is increasingly attentive to environmental issues and to saving resources. In this field, ARPAV keeps tabs not only on sources of environmental pressure, but also monitors and provides information on the production and management of waste. The Agency gives local administrations and other bodies a helping hand with urban waste management, as well

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as checking that the targets set by the pertinent regional and national legislation have been met. ARPAV acquires data and information regarding the production and management, at regional level, of urban and special waste. These are then organised into a single information system.

The Agency processes these data, which, together with the specific technical and scientific skills it acquires, allow it to provide support to public bodies and private firms regarding waste-related issues, by publishing reports on the subject. In the case of urban waste, ARPAV manages a regional data bank concerning the collection and management of the waste pro-

duced by the residents of each municipality. Specifically, the data bank certifies the percentages of separate waste collection achieved in each municipality and checks how much of the separately collected waste has effectively been recovered. Also important are the collaboration and study activities ARPAV carries out regarding waste-related issues, undertaken together with the National Packaging Consortium (CONAI) and the Supply Chain Consortia for paper (COMIECO), glass (COREVE), plastic (COREPLA) and metals (CIAL), in order to monitor the flow of waste created by packaging. For special waste, ARPAV organises all the information required to draw up a picture of how it is produced and managed, and the manufacturing firms in the Veneto such waste derives from. Finally, with regard to composting, the Agency collects data on organic waste, subsequently turned into compost, a material able to enhance the chemical and physical properties of the soil. ARPAV gathers information on the amount of material treated and produced by composting systems in order to build up a picture of how it is managed at regional level, and carries out regular monitoring in order to guarantee the quality of the compost produced. It also promotes study, research and coordination activities at regional level, aimed at find-

ing out more about technical, management and procedural aspects related to the sector and therefore how to intervene and fine-tune the various stages of the waste processing cycle. (*Waste and Composting Service*)

■ **SOIL** The soil is a limited resource and an essential element in the ecosystems. Therefore, any alterations to it can have repercussions not only on its yield, but also on the quality of the water we drink and the farm produce we eat. The only way to learn about the soil is through a systematic study of the characteristics of an area whose scientific and methodological foundations are rooted in soil science, in particular in soil mapping. In order to fulfil the mandate conferred upon it by the Law that set it up, i.e. to “carry out checks on soil characteristics”, ARPAV manages the system that archives all the data regarding soil in the Veneto, as well as producing the maps required to standardise information and catalogue soils in accordance with national and international standards.

Further activities for the protection of the soil regard three main areas: overseeing operations for the characterisation of the soil and the distribution of sewage sludge in agriculture; technical support for soil fertilisation practices,



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and monitoring the environmental effects of agricultural practices. *(Soil Service)*

■ **PHYSICAL AGENTS** ARPAV carries out activities aimed at preventing and controlling environmental pollution deriving from noise, sources of electromagnetic fields and radioactive substances. In this area, it provides support to the administrative functions of the competent bodies and legal authorities. Each of ARPAV's Provincial Divisions has an operations unit in charge of carrying out activities regarding physical agents in its own area. With regard to noise pollution, ARPAV checks focus on the main sources of disturbance, such as productive and commercial activities and transport systems. On behalf of local entities, ARPAV also handles the investigation procedures that regard noise management in the area: from the noise classification of the municipalities to impact forecast and noise climate documentation for new businesses, as well as specific projects to monitor the source of noise. One of ARPAV's most important activities is the preliminary assessment of electromagnetic impact, the main sources of which are telecommunications aerials and long-distance power lines. ARPAV also checks on environmental radioactivity, through a network of laboratories



located in the Provincial Divisions, which keep tabs on environmental contamination deriving from fall-out episodes in the past (e.g. the Chernobyl disaster), as well as detecting, in real time, any radiological anomalies present in the atmosphere and keeping an eye on the level of radioactivity in the environment. ARPAV sees to the coordination and standardisation of procedures in operation within the framework of the province, in addition to providing technical support both to the Region and to a number of central bodies (ISPRA, the Institute for Environmental Protection and Research, Ministries, etc...), taking part in inter-regional projects and taking care of innovation in the sector. *(Physical Agents Observatory)*

■ **INDUSTRIAL RISK** Industrial risk prevention and management is currently an issue of particular interest and importance, especially in situations where there is a significant risk of accidents related to specific substances or work processes. The development of widespread awareness of the urgent need for an overriding intervention and control system involving local institutions, businesses and the general public has led to the conception and set-up of SIMAGE. The Integrated System for Environmental Monitoring and Emergency Management -

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is an innovative prevention and action system designed to reduce both the dangers associated with establishments that present particular risks and the effects of accidents on Man and the environment. The set-up of the system, deriving from the Programme Agreement on Chemistry of Porto Marghera, signed in 1998, was made possible thanks to the Veneto Region, responsible for the promotion and entire financing of the project, in complete synergy with the Entity in charge of the Industrial Area of Porto Marghera. ARPAV runs SIMAGE from an operations room that functions round the clock, has its own staff and is separate from the petrochemical sector companies. From the operations room, controls are carried out on a specific network that promptly monitors air quality in the industrial site, as well as assessing any accidental industrial emissions. The accident management system communicates with the companies, the authorities involved and the on-site staff, as well as guaranteeing post-accident surveillance through the activation of instruments able to carry out pollutant sampling. Based on the indications provided by the Competent Authority, it handles communications aimed at the population using totem displays, variable message panels, websites and text messages. With the aim of cop-



ing with environmental emergencies in the most efficient way possible, ARPAV is now also placing the support of the SIMAGE operations room at the disposal of the Emergency teams of all its Provincial Divisions, through palm-top devices linked up to applications in the room. This enables the operations room to provide technical support during emergencies, based

on the knowledge stored of the risks associated with the various establishments, and to provide prompt, accurate information on the type and amount of substances involved in the accident. This makes it possible to organise the appropriate rescue operations, evacuate the establishment if necessary, and thereafter to allow it to begin functioning normally once more. (*Industrial Risk and Decontamination Service*)

■ **MAJOR WORKS** In recent years, a number of major infrastructure building projects have been set in motion in the Veneto Region. In close agreement with the Region, ARPAV ensures these Major Works are compatible with the environment, town planning aspects, the road network and the community, through checking and control activities carried out by operational bodies specifically identified for this purpose for each project.

In each case, ARPAV acts as a technical auditor, dealing both with environmental monitoring and with the building activities necessary for each specific project. The activities carried out by ARPAV's technical staff vary according to the stages of the Major Works they are dealing with. Specifically:

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•Before: implementation of the client's environmental monitoring plan and identification of the points at which environmental variables are to be monitored before work begins on the project, as well as of any existing environmental criticalities.

• During: control of activities aimed at measuring environmental variables during the construction phase of the project and checking its fitness for use.

• After: control of activities aimed at measuring environmental variables during the execution phase of the project or building and comparison of those variables with the measurements carried out before the work began.

The environmental protection checks carried out by ARPAV's technical staff include regular inspections of building yards to verify the conduct of the construction firms, with particular reference to measures to reduce noise, air and

water pollution to a minimum. (*Major Works Observatory*)

■ **IPPC** The European Union, with the aim of reducing the environmental impact caused by manufacturing companies, has introduced Directive 96/61/ CE, known as the "IPPC - Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control - Directive". This measure has had a direct effect - through a push for technological development - on those companies that create the greatest environmental impact, thus guaranteeing the proper management of natural resources. In Veneto the IPPC Directive affects over 900 companies, i.e. 20% of all the companies in Italy. These firms vary widely in terms of products and average plant size, and include, for example, thermoelectric plants, metal foundries, paper mills, stock rearing businesses, cement works and food industries. In accordance with the law, ARPAV is in charge of deciding, together with the companies concerned, the self-regulatory activities to be carried out - reported in the Integrated Environmental Authorisations - as well as ensuring compliance with the operating conditions, control regulations and the communication of the environmental data reported in the Authorisations. ARPAV has acquired the role of providing tech-

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nical support to the competent authority - the Region or the Province - and is also involved in an important process designed to bring environmental inspections in companies into line with the principles and methods set down by European regulations. The control activity the Agency carries out consists of drawing up documents and carrying out inspections that regard all those environmental matrices companies can have a negative impact on, i.e. air, water, waste, noise emissions, smells and, in some particular cases, the soil. The Agency also promotes a series of information and communication projects which, thanks to the involvement of the Veneto Region, the Provinces, the Trade Associations and the companies themselves, come together to form a communication network able to create opportunities for dialogue on technical and other aspects among the stakeholders involved. (*Technical Management*)

■ **NATURE AND BIODIVERSITY** Natural environments, such as forests, grassland, lagoons, rivers and coasts are essential for life on earth; they host animals and plants that are the result of thousands of years of evolution and they are an irreplaceable source of resources for humans, as well as an essential part of our cultural



heritage. The preservation of nature is therefore one of the primary objectives - supported at EU level - on which action should be focused. This action should be aimed, for example, at protecting natural systems and allowing them to function as they were intended, at halting the depletion of biodiversity and protecting habitats and animal and plant species, in order to conserve our natural heritage intact for future generations. Therefore, activities to guarantee

the preservation of natural habitats must focus both on direct territory planning and management - aimed at identifying natural areas to be preserved and applying specific protective measures thereto - and on environmental education and information, aimed at engaging the local population in environmental issues. ARPAV's commitment in this area is organised in particular around activities design to collect and spread information on the region's

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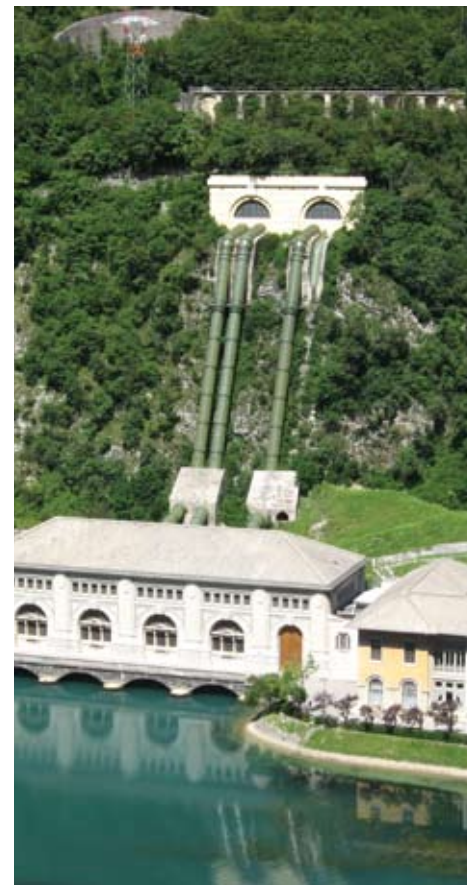
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natural heritage, thus creating an exhaustive, updated list of the “natural values” present in the area and how “vulnerable” they are, as well as defining a monitoring system aimed at the conservation of the region’s nature, plants and animals. (*Prevention and Communication Department*)

■ **ENERGY** Demand in the Veneto region accounts for almost 10% of the national figure. The demand for electrical energy has grown to such an extent that in the last few years regional production has been insufficient to satisfy it. All the oil and natural gas products used are imported. In 2007, ARPAV set up an “Energy & Environment” team with the aim of providing the Region and local bodies with support for drafting basic technical and scientific documentation regarding priority energy aspects, such as renewable sources, fossil fuels, environmental impact, energy efficiency, etc., as well as for creating campaigns to raise awareness on the issue of energy savings, directed at the Public Administrations in the Region. ARPAV also promotes or lends its support to countless environmental education activities on saving energy, in collaboration with local bodies, Ministries and the European Union. (*Energy Observatory*)



ARPAV. PREVENTION AND RESEARCH FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH - SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION
SCHOOL OF SPECIALIZATION FOR ENVIRONMENT
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION - ENVIRONMENTAL
MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS - ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
COOPERATION**



PREVENTION AND RESEARCH FOR SUSTAINIBLE DEVELOPMENT. THE RIGHT VALUE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT



■ **ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH** There is a growing body of scientific evidence indicating that the lifestyles brought about by the current socio-economic and productive context pose a risk to both the quality of the environment and to human health, causing an increase in the risk of disease and premature death. This is why the Agency and the Regional Health Service are working together to create a system able to integrate data on the conditions of the environment with information on human health, identifying methods and tools suitable to conduct assessments, monitoring plans and surveys that bring together environmental and health aspects. Specifically, ARPAV is involved in:

- designing a methodological approach containing guidelines and study criteria for the assessment of environmental and health aspects;
- drawing up a picture of the data and information available that is required to carry out such an assessment, through the standardisation, management and processing of health data and the integration of this information with environmental data;
- promoting and organising projects and events in the areas of health and the environment, in particular to provide information on environmental and health risks.

Within the framework of the specific projects,

the Agency provides support for assessing the impact of environmental pressure on human health, as well as carrying out epidemiological analysis of the data and the health risks linked to the environment and statistical analysis of environmental and health data. (*Environmental and Health Assessment Service*)

■ **SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION** One of the pillars on which ARPAV's operating strategies are based is the promotion of research, information, training, communication and environmental education with a view to guaranteeing sustainable development, in order to help change the cultural approaches, behaviour and lifestyles that affect the use of environmental resources. The promotion of environmental education and information activities is one of the aims ARPAV was set up to ensure, and in order to do so, the Agency works together with a series of stakeholders - both public and private, and at both regional and national level - that take care of information, communication, training and education on the environment, within the framework of the Regional and National INFEA (Environmental Information, Training and Education). The Veneto Region has entrusted ARPAV with the role of Regional Centre for the Coordination of the INFEA network, and the Agency promotes an integrated system that allows a

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variety of players (entities, associations, schools, local communities, educational establishments, workshops) to communicate and interact with each other and to provide environmental education users with information regarding the facilities available in the area, the activities currently under way or at the planning stage, the services provided and the events due to take place. The Agency is involved in jointly drawing up shared methods and guidelines and developing educational projects. It also provides the network with support in terms of planning, resources and tools such as the information system, as well as imparting training to the educators, observing conduct for monitoring services and assessing action and developing a quality system for the self-evaluation of facilities and projects. (*Prevention and Communication Department*)

■ **SCHOOL OF SPECIALIZATION FOR ENVIRONMENT** Environmental well-being is one of the core values that must be defended in modern society. The technical complexity of the question and the specialised skills required to intervene effectively have led to a rise in the demand for new environmental professionals and the need to adapt traditional training courses. Since its creation, ARPAV - a technical body in charge of environmental prevention as well as protection - has seen the training of highly

specialised environmental professionals as a key aspect of its mission. In order to respond to this demand, the Agency has set up the School of Specialization for Environment. The aim of the School is to help improve the quality of the environment by creating opportunities for training and study in the field of environmental issues, paying particular attention to the needs of businesses and harnessing environmental performance to innovation. Among the outstanding achievements of the School is the 2nd level Masters Degree in Methods and Techniques for Environmental Prevention and Control, a training course that provides the Regional, Provincial and Municipal Public Administrations with professional figures specialised in the Veneto, boasting first-rate specific training in environmental issues and thus able to tackle not only technical problems regarding environmental control, but also the administrative aspects inherent in environmental protection management. ARPAV has also established an agreement with the Unitary Committee of Professionals of the Veneto Region, with a view to creating common training courses for professionals registered with the various Orders and Colleges. These professionals have a pivotal role to play in liaising between businesses and the Public Administration, and in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of action aimed at protecting the environment.

PREVENTION AND RESEARCH FOR SUSTAINIBLE DEVELOPMENT.

THE RIGHT VALUE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

■ INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

All the international and national programmes focusing on sustainable development place the accent on the need for actions regarding environmental information and communication, highlighting its central role in policies aimed at bringing together economic development, quality of life and environmental protection.

ARPAV has chosen to combine its technical and scientific activities and environmental educational and training courses with information, awareness-raising and communication activities. Most of these activities are largely aimed at the general public, at people without specific technical skills or knowledge, and take the form of technical and scientific publications, communication campaigns, the promotion of public events and participation in fairs in the sector.

A central role is played here by the web portal www.arpa.veneto.it. Through the use of Internet, ARPAV promotes the agency's image and services, offering the user information in real time: from reports and live data on atmospheric pollutants and indications for bathing to notification in the case of events with an impact on the environment, as well as technical information and documentation and a wide range of other detailed information concerning the main environmental issues and the services the Agency offers. *(Prevention and Communication Department)*



■ ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Environmental management systems and environmental certifications are voluntary instruments that provide official recognition to companies that, in managing their business, demonstrate continual improvement in terms of respect for the environment and are committed to preventing pollution. ARPAV certifies environmental standards for companies and bodies that request EMAS registration, and provides the Ecolabel and Ecoaudit Committee - EMAS Section Italy (the body appointed for the purpose by the Italian government) - with an opinion on the observance of environmental legislation, following documentary checks

and inspections. In addition, the Agency is the Regional Hub of the National EMAS Network. This network is designed to building an active system to introduce EMAS throughout the area, explaining the logic behind it, its procedures, innovations, and opportunities for improvement, in close agreement with the Trade Associations, Business Consortia and Certification Bodies themselves.

In this area, ARPAV also provides businesses with information and explanations regarding the various environmental management tools, such as the Environmental Management System (EMS), which consists of authentic production management techniques aimed at integrating environmental issues into the management process, thus fostering organisational and management options directed at reducing the impact of company activity on the environment. Alongside the EMSs, other methodologies to support environmental management have been developed, in particular the Environmental Balance Sheet, a voluntary instrument for the demonstration of environmental accounting, life cycle analysis (LCA) and the self-evaluation of legislative compliance, outlining "routes" (guidelines, operational protocols, etc.) for the various sectors of production and improving communication with the public. *(Environmental and Health Assessment Service)*

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■ **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT** Environmental assessments are studies that allow for a preventive, transparent and participatory verification of the environmental consequences and social acceptability of a given plan, project or intervention programme to be implemented in the area.

ARPAV takes part in the Regional EIA Commission and in the EIA Commissions set up in each Province, providing technical and scientific support regarding the issues it is responsible for, formulating opinions on environmental compatibility and setting out any regulations regarding the projects themselves, in order to ensure their implementation is compatible with safeguarding the environment, human health and the historical and cultural heritage of the area. ARPAV also provides technical and scientific support to the Regional SIA Commission as regards Strategic Environmental Evaluation, which, unlike the EIA processes, are aimed at assessing the overall impact of territorial programmes and plans, because of the essential role they play in territorial development and town planning. In addition, ARPAV provides Municipalities, Provinces and other relevant bodies with information on the various components of the environment that can be influenced by the plans and programmes, as well as guidance on the various actions that can be implemented to reduce the

overall impact on different environmental matrices. (*Environmental and Health Assessment Service*)

■ **COOPERATION** ARPAV promotes national and international cooperation projects, driven by the awareness that problems concerning the environment cannot, by definition, be tackled at local level alone, and by the conviction that dialogue and the exchange of information, skills and good practices are an added value for the professional figures working within the Agency. Cooperation with other bodies, public or private, national or international, offers excellent opportunities for growth and consolidation in the environmental field, since the Agency possesses a solid base of skills, particularly in areas such as water, air and soil, which it intends to develop further and which can also be applied at European level, thus allowing for access to EU funding. ARPAV pursues these objectives by taking part in projects with an international scope that promote planning activities aimed at spreading or acquiring know-how. In addition, ARPAV makes an ongoing commitment to keeping various institutions and other agencies informed of the experience it has gained during projects, with a view to strengthening potential partnerships design to help it gain EU accreditation. (*Technical Management*)

ARPAV. TERRITORIAL PROTECTION SERVICES

**WEATHER - REGIONAL CENTRE OF CIVIL PROTECTION
AND TERRITORIAL SAFETY**



TERRITORIAL PROTECTION SERVICES.

THE RIGHT VALUE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT



■ **WEATHER** In the 1980s, the Veneto Region was among the first in Italy to provide specific weather forecasting services for the area, out of the Avalanche Centre in Arabba and the Meteorological Centre in Teolo. In 1996, responsibility for these activities was transferred to ARPAV, and the Agency drew up a programme designed to complete and develop the activities, resources and services. Some years later, in 2007, the region also entrusted ARPAV with running the Regional Hydrographical Service, which covers meteorology and climatology services. The ongoing

commitment of the Veneto Region and ARPAV to these issues has made it possible to collect first-rate technical and scientific information. As a result, the ARPAV regional Weather Service has achieved a solid reputation for excellence throughout Italy and indeed Europe. The added value that weather forecasting will provide to life in the Veneto is destined to grow over the coming years, and this is why plans for ARPAV's activities provide for services that are closely and specifically connected to the various individual geographical areas and areas of interest in the region. The weather forecasts are drawn up by a team of expert meteorologists, who base them on data from European-scale meteorological models. Data and images from Meteostat satellites are taken into consideration, and the team also analyses data recorded in real time from some 300 weather stations ARPAV runs in the Veneto region. The meteorologists also use the data continually recorded by a weather radar network covering Teolo, in the Euganean Hills, in Concordia Sagittaria, in south-eastern Veneto and in Valeggio sul Mincio (Verona). This network - the most advanced regional monitoring system in the country - allows for the real-time monitoring of the onset and evolution of weather phenomena in the Veneto region, including at a detailed local level. ARPAV forecasts are widely

relied upon throughout the region, by public bodies and institutions for the purposes of territorial management, operators in the tourism and productive sector for planning their work, farmers and indeed ordinary citizens planning their leisure activities.

This ongoing relationship with the local population and businesses has allowed ARPAV to fine-tune and enhance a number of its forecasting services. The Agency now supplies weather reports in Italian, English and German (Meteo Veneto, Dolomiti Meteo, Meteo Garda, Meteo Spiaggia, Dolomiti Neve e Valanghe), as well as specific weather reports for agriculture (Agrometeo Informa, Agrometeo Tourist, Agrometeo Provincia), and climatological reports (Report on water resources in the Veneto, Dolomiti Clima, Agrometeo Mese). To date, the ARPAV website has exceeded 15 million hits a year for free forecasts, which are also accessible by dedicated answering machine services, selfax systems, mailing lists, and text messages.

■ **REGIONAL CENTRE OF CIVIL PROTECTION AND TERRITORIAL SAFETY** The Veneto is a very fragile region from the point of view of flood risk and hydrogeological risk. Flooding is an issue of particular concern in the plains, as a result of a complex network of natural and ar-

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tificial watercourses that run right through the large metropolitan areas of the Veneto. There is also a risk of landslides in the mountainous and hilly areas, deriving from widespread instability caused by unfavourable geohydrological conditions. These particular characteristics of the landscape mean that preventive risk management is essential. On April 2, 2009, The Region set up the Regional Centre of Civil Protection and Territorial Safety, implementing a



centralised management structure involving the Regional Civil Protection and Soil Protection Departments. In recognition of ARPAV's professional expertise on such issues, the Agency was assigned an important, decision-making role within the Operations Centre of the Veneto. Through the Regional Division for Territorial Safety, ARPAV has sole responsibility for carrying out hydrometeorological monitoring in the area, managing a network of 150 stations that transmit real-time data on rain, snow, wind, temperatures, and hydrometric levels to the operations room of the Centre. ARPAV is also in charge of producing weather forecasts aimed at defining the risks for the area. The Meteorological Centre in Teolo issues a specific forecast report 365 days/year for the Operations Centre, and during critical situations, it constantly monitors the evolution of phenomena, producing live reports based on the data collected, in real time, from the three regional weather radar systems. Through the Avalanche Centre in Arabba, ARPAV defines the avalanche risk scenarios for the mountain areas, road conditions, towns and villages and production facilities, so that the necessary measures can be implemented in the event of an emergency. With regard to avalanches, the Centre is considered the finest in Italy. ARPAV also

provides support to the Regional Soil Protection Division by mapping out hydraulic (floods) and hydrogeological (landslides) risk scenarios. This is one of the tasks of the recently established Hydrological Service, which observes the area, assesses data and draws up mathematical simulation models for flooding and the onset of landslides. During floods, ARPAV calculates the flow capacity at critical points. The result of this work is the daily classification of hydrogeological and hydraulic risk, which allows for the activation of Civil Protection procedures for emergency management. Finally, ARPAV supports the Regional Civil Protection Division by managing the operations room of the Regional Centre, a 12-hour organisational model in function 365 days a year that sees to the running of the technical equipment in the operations room, carries out data analysis, draws up daily reports and warnings during risk situations and sends information daily to the national Civil Protection Division and to other institutions in the area. By assigning ARPAV responsibility for these tasks, the Region underlines the trust the local area has in the technical and operational abilities of the Agency in these particularly sensitive sectors linked to the safety of the population.

ARPAV.

OUR REPUTATION



OUR REPUTATION. THE RIGHT VALUE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

■ **OUR REPUTATION** Throughout its fourteen-year existence, ARPAV has built up a solid, wide-ranging reputation among the institutions it has worked with as a reliable agency offering excellent technical skills. Recent research conducted by the University of Trieste has revealed that local bodies, local health boards, companies and associations representing the business community are unanimous in seeing technical skills as ARPAV's leading strength. Stakeholders expressed a positive opinion of ARPAV both in general terms (85% of those interviewed) and, more specifically, in terms of its activities related to the prevention and control of environmental pollution. This is an important piece of research, one that forms the base for re-considering the Agency's role in accordance with the way the approach to environmental issues themselves is changing. The challenge posed by environmental prevention and protection must increasingly be faced through partnerships involving the regulatory authorities, public bodies and the world of business. The survey also drew attention to the pivotal role played by the technical and information support provided by the Agency. Public bodies and local health boards, for instance, regularly consult the data collected on environmental monitoring, while businesses ask ARPAV for information on how to interpret and apply environmental legislation and standards. This information is crucial to these stakeholders in carrying out their normal, everyday activity. It is the acknowledgement of this ability to provide

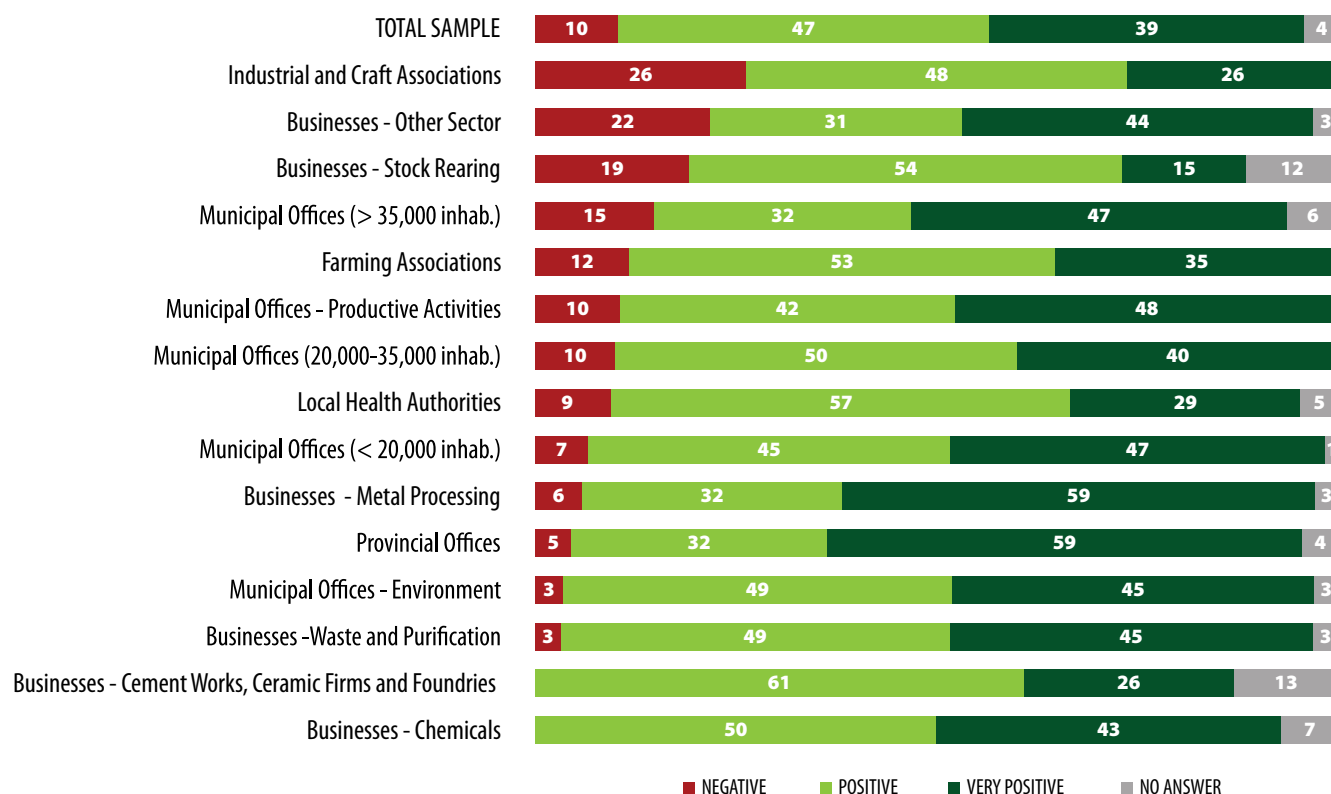
reliable, authoritative information that will guide ARPAV in its ongoing, indeed growing commitment to supporting local bodies in carrying out strategic assessments of public policy. Over the years ARPAV has also made an increasing effort to inform the local population on what it does. Today, one in three people are familiar with ARPAV,

are aware of what it does and the role it has to play, while one out of every two has at least heard of the Agency. What we feel it is especially important to underline, however, is the fact that those who are most familiar with ARPAV are those most likely to express a positive opinion on it and place their trust in its expertise.



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EVALUATION OF THE AGENCY'S ACTIVITIES Overall Opinion on ARPAV (% values)



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THE RIGHT VALUE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

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PHOTOGRAPHS.

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