

Ecological highway development in the area of Piacenza, Cremona and Brescia

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Autostrade Centro Padane (ACP) is the Society which manages the A21 highway, between Piacenza, Cremona and Brescia, in the north of Italy. From many years, ACP projects and builds new highways (Ospitaletto-Montichiari, Cremona-Mantova, etc.) in the largest respect of environment and ecological networks.

With this aim, a lot of innovative interventions have been applied in the ordinary and extraordinary activities.

Large farming areas have been bought and changed into woods, wetlands or natural ecosystems to restore the ecological damages induced by new highways. This process of ecological compensation usually goes through before the real highway construction (e.g. the Park of Mella River, near Brescia).

An original kind of vegetal barrier, the so-called “shaped roof” hedge, has been planted for a depth of 15 meters from the asphalt to reduce air pollution and crops contamination in the fields close to highways. Along the escarpments of new motorways, a lot of seedlings have to be placed to reduce landscape and environmental impacts (e.g. 160.000 trees for 20 km of new roads, between Azzano Mella and Montichiari). New and specific wetlands have been created, with a large use of grasses, trees and natural soil, to prevent water contamination close to the most busy areas (parking lots and toll booths). The particular kind of pollution, generated by the vehicular traffic, induces to innovative technical solutions (e.g. the new motorway station of Brescia Sud).

At last, part of the technical buildings of the new (and first) regional motorway of Lombardy, the Cremona-Mantova, will be supplied with renewable energies. Contracts between farmers and the managing Society will ensure about huge crops of maize for the biomass energy plants.