

Communication as a tool for human-bear coexistence: the challenging experience of Trentino (Italian Alps)



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The brown bear has always been present in the Alps, but in the late '90s only few free-ranging individuals remained in Trentino. Thus, in the early 2000s, ten bears were reintroduced, within a LIFE Project, from Slovenia. Since then, the brown bear population has grown up to about 60 individuals, inhabiting the western part of Trentino and coexisting with people and human activities, reason for which an efficient communication plan has been necessary and it has been implemented since the reintroduction of the new bears.

A good communication helps conservation - the way in which we communicate about brown bears makes the difference for their conservation. Incorrect information can be misleading and provide a wrong picture of reality. This leads to false beliefs and unuseful alarmisms.

Highlighting a specific information in respect to others having a general bigger impact influences people's perception of a certain phenomenon (e.g. big article about a bear killing 2 sheep and small article of a lightning killing 110 sheep).



Allarmistic articles as a consequence of misleading information = higher social alarm and lower bear acceptance



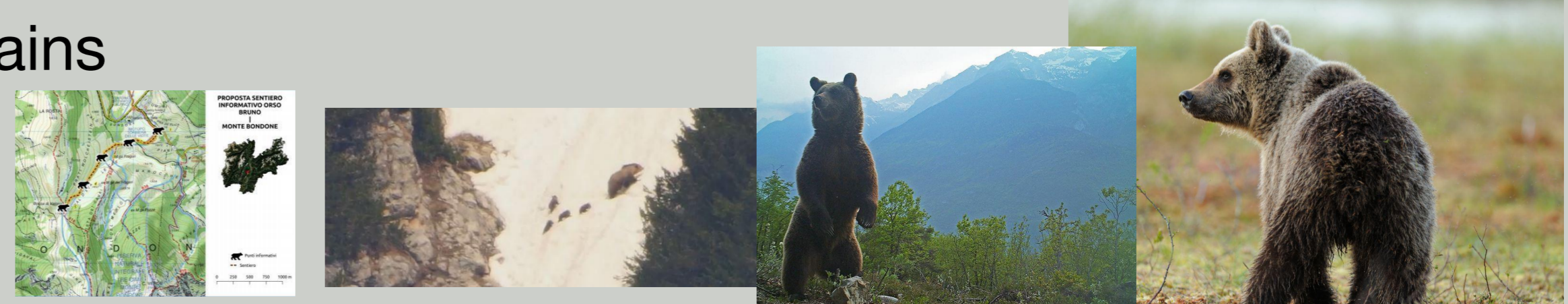
The importance of networking for an effective communication



The Forest and Wildlife Department works with many local institutions, volunteers and other people interested in brown bear conservation, which according with their aims and at different levels, helps to inform people about brown bears.

Future projects and perspective for a better, innovative and cutting-edge communication strategy

- Didactic path with panels about the brown bear, set in the mountains
- Large-scale information/awareness campaign about brown bears
- The realization of a new logo, a new concept and a new coordinated theme



Photos (from the left): Rizzoli R., Zeni M. e Frapporti C., Forests and Wildlife Dept. Archive, Autonomous Province of Trento