

New tools and methodologies in the design of long-distance cycle paths: an experiment on the cycle path of lake Maggiore

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# NEW TOOLS AND METHODOLOGIES IN THE DESIGN OF LONG-DISTANCE CYCLE PATHS: AN EXPERIMENT ON THE CYCLE PATH OF LAKE MAGGIORE



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With the Decree of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport dated 29/11/2018, *Progettazione e realizzazione di un sistema nazionale di ciclovie turistiche (SNCT)*, the great economic and socio-cultural potential of the Long-Distance Cycle Paths (LDCP) was recognized in Italy. On the other hand, the subsequent Directive 375, which governs the drafting of the technical-economic feasibility projects of national interest's cycle routes, presents fundamental problems. In addition to containing a series of inconsistencies of a technical nature, it does not seem to provide adequate indications, especially concerning the aspects linked to attractiveness and consequently to the requirements relating to the architectural and landscape quality of the cycle paths. The quantification of these requirements is treated with a completely superficial approach, generating difficulties in understanding, and applying the directive.

Consequently, the main PFTEs developed for the SNCT still need to be completed in the methods of territorial planning, omitting important architectural, urban, naturalistic, and economic-social aspects. Therefore, the methodological definition of an LDCP design tool is of fundamental importance. It is helpful for guiding professionals in drafting the project itself and ensuring that the best possible result is obtained.

Considering the inadequacy of the legislative context, can a specific case study assume the role of a significant field of experimentation for the precise and adequate definition of the technical and methodological requirements that should guide the project of long-distance cycle

paths?

To answer this question, the research hypothesizes that the Piedmontese shore of Lake Maggiore, characterized by a historical, cultural, and environmental heritage of national importance, could represent a particularly effective context for tackling and hopefully solving most of the current critical issues. In its peculiarities, Lake Maggiore has a sustainable and varied mobility system that allows travel by train, boat, and some historical routes along the coast. Valuable panoramic points qualify the latter, connect a system of Romanesque churches and Borromeo interventions, intercept numerous Art Nouveau villas, and have systematic connections towards the lake, which, if connected to the waterways, would constitute intermodal exchange nodes.

Within this scenario, the research intends to test two hypotheses that can assume a general character.

The first concerns the possible role of cycle routes as

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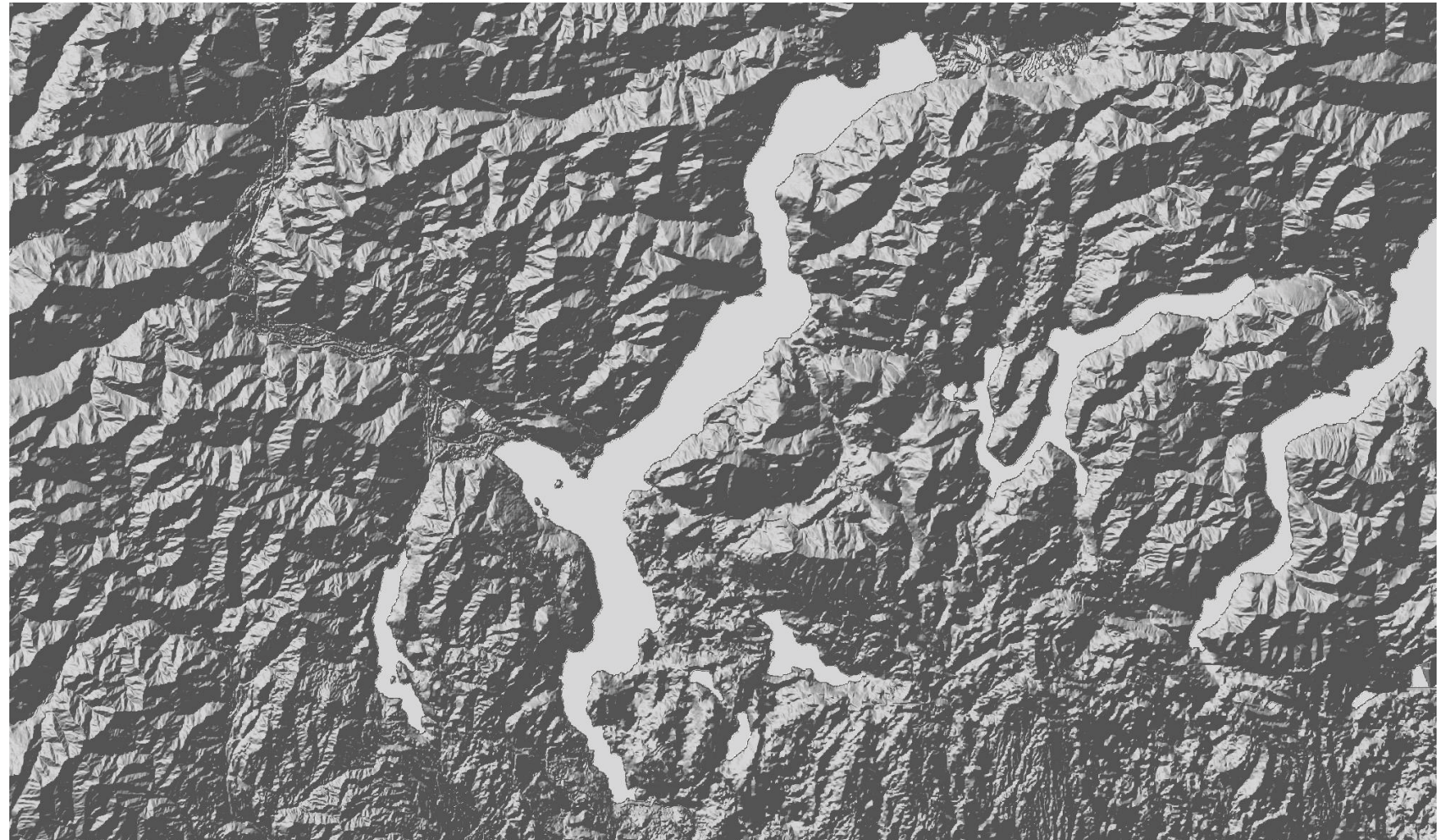


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a territorial axis capable of economically relaunching those fragile areas which, although adjacent to the touristically consolidated linear regions, are often obscured by them. In the case of Lake Maggiore, the question that the research asks is, therefore: can the routes and areas along the coast, thanks to the project of the cycle path, reveal their multiple identities and attractions, passing from the condition of "backs" concerning the famous and busy coast to that of new centralities?

The second hypothesis concerns the re-functionalization or co-functionalization of historic infrastructures for cycling purposes, which is one of the

main objectives of Law 2/2018, which established the Bicitalia network of cycle routes of national interest. Since the analyzed territory lacks historical infrastructures capable of hosting a cycle path, the question, in this case, is: can the cycle path project assume the architectural-territorial model of the historical infrastructures even in their absence, recognizing systems composed of serial architectures in the places?