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INTERREG VI-A ITALY-SLOVENIA 2021-2027

**STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL
ASSESSMENT**

APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

**Annex to Strategic Environmental Assessment
for the Interreg VI-A Italy-Slovenia 2021-2027
Programme**

(FINAL DRAFT)

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Introduction

The purpose of this document, attached to the SEA, is to provide useful elements for the Appropriate Assessment (VINCA in Italian, Dodatek in Slovenian, hereafter AA) referred to the Directive 92/43/EEC, the so-called Habitats Directive. Considering the cross-border extent of the assessment, and in the face of national and regional regulations that are not always homogeneous, the purpose of this document is to help to outline and facilitate the path of the AA during the implementation of the Programme and, therefore, on a project level. In fact, it must be remembered that the AA applies both to the planning and programming field, and to the project field, with all the implications and correlations of the case.

The SEA and AA procedures are characterised by a substantial difference in approach: the AA estimates the possible effects that plans/programmes (P/P) may have on conservation objectives and the integrity of the single Natura 2000 Sites, the SEA assesses the environmental effects of plans and programmes on the territory concerned. There are two aspects in particular that create problems for the integration of the two procedures:

1. the territorial dimension of the plan/programme: the AA may concern, in fact, vast area programmes that involve a very high number of Natura 2000 sites.
2. the definition of localisation choices: the AA, having a strategic value, often evaluates actions that do not have a localisation on the territory, especially in the case of a Programme (an aspect necessary, instead, for the implementation of a specific procedure of AA).

In order to have useful information and knowledge elements for the AA procedure related to programmes involving a high number of Natura 2000 sites, it may be appropriate to carry out an analysis on typologies of aggregated sites, identified with respect to criteria that can be traced back to the EU legislation (e.g.: habitat reference macrocategories).

This type of approach is extremely suitable for Interreg VI-A Italy-Slovenia 2021-2027 Programme, which falls within the typology of wide area Plans/Programmes that include numerous Natura 2000 sites and without localisation of choices. Therefore, the following will be done:

- Characterise the sites according to the criterion of habitat reference macro-categories;
- Identify their conservation objectives and relative vulnerability;
- Identify the main possible interactions between the types of interventions foreseen by the Programme and the habitat macro-categories and assess the categories of interventions that could have a significant impact on their vulnerability;
- Identify the general precautionary principles to be taken into account during the implementation phase, i.e., when more precise actions will be defined for which, it will be possible to carry out AAs on specific sites.

This document is composed of five sections, in addition to the Introduction and to a concluding chapter aimed to summing up the issues dealt with.

Basically, the framework of the Natura 2000 network in the Programme area is reconstructed and, on the basis of the type of Natura 2000 habitats, the main existing vulnerabilities are indicated, from which the Specific Conservation Measures established by the Veneto Region, the Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia and the Republic of Slovenia are derived. These measures are compared with the objectives and standard actions of the Interreg VI-A Italy-Slovenia 2021-2027 Programme and the potential interference between the Programme and the protection of Natura 2000 sites is assessed. In other words, the document provides the framework of the vulnerability of the habitats in the two biogeographical regions present in the area; the analysis of the potential interference of the Programme with the typology of the habitats; the analysis of the coherence of the objectives and standard actions of the Programme with the specific conservation measures.

1. The Natura 2000 Network in the Interreg VI-A Italy-Slovenia 2021-2027 Programme

There are a total number of 282 Natura 2000 Network sites in the programme area, in which structural and infrastructural interventions must be subject to an AA.

There are 63 Natura 2000 sites in the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, which fall within the Alpine and continental biogeographical area. The largest sites are mostly concentrated in the Alpine area and fall within sparsely populated areas that are not subject to anthropogenic pressures. There are important sites in the continental region, protecting wetland ecosystems such as the Grado and Marano Lagoons. 19% of the regional territory falls within the Natura 2000 network. The number of Natura 2000 habitats is 70, containing 92 animal and 22 plant species of Community interest. There are 15 habitats on the Italian side of the programme area defined as priority at Community level.

There are 32 Natura 2000 Network sites in the area delimited by the Metropolitan City of Venice, which protect 24% of the territory and belong exclusively to the continental biogeographical region. Prominent in terms of size and importance are the Lagoon of Venice and the northern portion of the Po Delta.

There are 187 Natura 2000 sites in the five programme regions of Slovenia, covering 41% of the territory of the area. As in the case of Friuli Venezia Giulia, they fall within both the Alpine and the Continental biogeographical regions. The largest areas are in the Alpine area, although in the continental region there is the Karst area, which borders with the homologous site in Friuli Venezia Giulia, and the two adjacent coastal sites of Strunjanske soline s Stjužo and Sečoveljske soline, characterized by the presence of salt pans. There are 198 habitat types, of which 50 are considered priority habitats. The total number of Natura 2000 targeted species (decree published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia Nos. 48/04, 33/13 and 99/13) includes 230 animal species and 483 plant species.

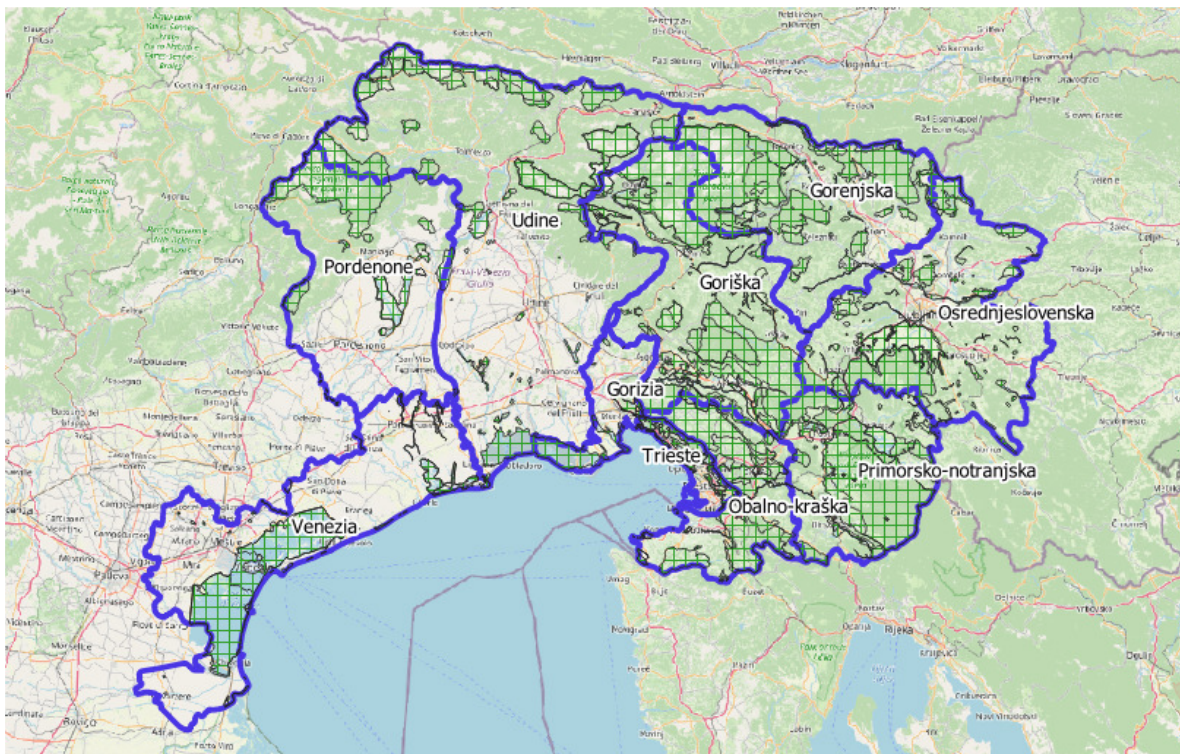


Figure 1.1: the Natura 2000 network in the Programme area

The greatest pressures on the natural ecosystems of the Natura 2000 Network can be expected in continental sites, where population density is higher. In these areas, however, there are the smallest sites, excluding the already mentioned lagoon sites, the Karst area and some river areas. The presence of smaller sites in areas with greater anthropic pressure will allow, in cases of projects potentially relevant to protected habitats and species, to propose alternative location solutions with minimum effort. On the other hand, in the Alpine areas, where there are the larger sites, a minimal incidence of projects can be expected, and essentially those aimed at improving the quality of natural ecosystems.

2. Identification of the habitat macro-categories present in the programme area, specification of the relative sustainability objectives and their vulnerability

Considering the nature of the Interreg VI-A Italy-Slovenia 2021-2027 Programme, in order to facilitate the management of information for the analysis of the impact on the Natura 2000 sites, the sites will be analysed by homogeneous groups, adopting as criteria the habitat macrocategories of reference (Habitats Directive, Annex I). This will allow us to consider habitats that have common ecological characteristics and can therefore be analysed in a similar way.

The European Directive 92/43/EEC defines nine types of habitats of Community interest, each of which is divided into a set of subgroups, which we call habitat macrocategories, which in turn comprise different habitats, as summarised in the following diagram.

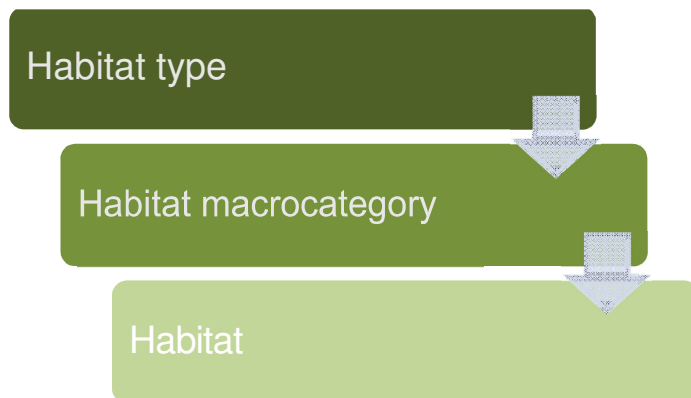


Figure 2.1: hierarchy for habitats of Community interest

The following table shows the types and macrocategories of habitats present in the programme area (identified with the help of the Ministry of the Environment and Protection of Land and Sea's Interpretation Manual of European Union Habitats) and, on the side, potential vulnerabilities and ecological risks that characterise them.

Habitat types	Habitat macrocategory	Main vulnerabilities/ecological risks									
		Alteration of hydrodynamic balances	Alteration of water status and chemical composition	Alteration of the state and chemical composition of soils	Greenhouse gas emissions and hydrocarbon aerosols	Sealing and reduction of natural land cover	Direct and indirect damage to local flora and fauna	Introduction of exotic or genetically modified species	Fire	Agriculture, forestry and livestock abandonment	Noise pollution
1-Coastal habitats	1110 Open sea and tidal areas										
	1210 Sea cliffs and shingle or stony beaches										
	1310 Atlantic and continental salt marshes and salt meadows	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	
	1510 Salt and gypsum inland steppes										
2-Coastal sand and continental dunes	2210 Sea dunes of the Mediterranean coast					x		x		x	
3- Freshwater habitats	3110 Standing water	x	x	x		x	x	x			
	3210 Running water										
4-Temperate heath and scrub	4010 Lands and temperate heath and scrub							x	x	x	
5-Mediterranean arborescent matorral	5110 Sub-Mediterranean and temperate										
6- Natural and semi-natural grassland formations	6110 Natural grasslands										
	6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	
	6410 Semi-natural tall-herb humid meadows										
	6510 Mesophile grasslands										
7- Raised bogs and mires and fens	7110 Sphagnum acid bogs	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	
	7210 Calcareous fens										
8-Rocky habitats and caves	8110 Scree										
	8210 Chasmophytic vegetation on rocky slopes			x				x	x		
	8310 Other rocky habitats										
9-Forests	9110 Forests of temperate Europe										
	9210 Mediterranean deciduous forests										
	9310 Mediterranean sclerophyllous forests	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
	9410 Temperate mountain coniferous forests										
	9510 Mediterranean mountainous coniferous forests										

Table 2.1. Habitat's type and macrocategory with the main vulnerabilities

In a nutshell, the marine-coastal habitats of the programme area include very different environmental systems: the rocky coast (on Flysch and limestone), where habitats of considerable interest and rarity develop, and the vast system of the North Adriatic sedimentary coast, which also includes lagoon environments with rare and threatened habitats. In general, beaches and dune habitats are strongly affected by the presence of touristic, industrial and port facilities, whose widespread presence in the programme area has partly compromised existing habitats and species. In these types of habitats, the main risk factors are linked to: pollution/alteration of the water component, soil sealing, damage to biodiversity, also deriving from the presence of allochthonous species, and noise pollution; conservation measures are: the prohibition of modifying the morphology of the banks, salt marshes and dune areas, the prohibition of activities involving changes in the water level, the prohibition of nitrogen fertilization, the prohibition of excavation of salt marshes, the implementation of action plans and works of rehabilitation, protection and nourishment, beach cleaning campaigns.

Freshwater habitats, which can basically be classified according to water dynamics into still or stagnant waters and running waters, are susceptible to the same risk factors as the previous two categories. Some conservation measures are: prohibition of the use of nitrogenous, chemical, phytosanitary and organic fertilizers within a buffer zone; adoption of action protocols for watercourses and drainage basins.

The scrub habitats in the programme area contain elements of high historical and landscape value and are subject to ecological risks mainly linked to: possible damage to flora and fauna; introduction of alien species and fire.

Grassland habitats are widespread throughout the programme area and, as they are often the result of anthropogenic changes on the environment, they are phytocenosis due to replacing woods. Especially at low altitudes a phenomenon of reduction of grasslands and pastures can be observed, because, on the one hand, in the lowland areas more favourable to agriculture, permanent meadows have been progressively replaced by cultivated land, while on the other hand, in the marginal areas the abandonment of grazing has made scrubland increase. All the species linked to these habitats therefore show a generalised regression. The main conservation measures are: a ban on nitrogenous fertilisation and its regulation; a ban on new silvicultural installations; a ban on modifying the water network; periodic scrub clearance.

Raised bogs and mires and fens, except in a few cases at high altitudes, have undergone a strong regression and are at great risk of disappearance, as a large part of the wetlands have been progressively reclaimed to make room for agricultural systems, which is in fact a high-risk factor, together with alterations to the water and soil components and, once again, noise pollution. The main conservation measures are: prohibition of new silvicultural plantings; prohibition of modification of the water network; prohibition of soil alteration; prohibition of nitrogenous fertilisation; elimination of anthropogenic drainage systems.

Rocky habitats, characterised by extreme ecological conditions, have often had a conservation function, providing refuge for many species during the last ice age. They are subject to risks mainly linked to soil alteration and to the introduction of alien species that can damage flora and fauna. Main conservation measures: prohibition of nitrogenous fertilisation, prohibition of lighting fires, obligation to use scree only on marked trails.

Forest habitats are widely distributed throughout the programme area and contain a large variety of species. This group is susceptible to almost all of the ecological risk factors considered, including the emission of hydrocarbons and greenhouse gases. The conservation measures concern: the prohibition of artificial renewal of the tree structure (except in specific cases); the prohibition of non-naturalistic silvicultural interventions; the prohibition of nitrogenous fertilisation; the prohibition of cleaning up water courses that could damage habitats; pilot tests for the control and containment of allochthonous herbaceous and shrub species.

3. Assessment of potential impacts on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites

The overall outlined picture represents the cognitive basis for the identification of the possible interferences of the Programme on Natura 2000 targeted habitat and species types present in the area of intervention. In this respect, we generally do not expect that activities under this IP will have implications for the sites in view of the sites conservation objectives nor it will adversely affect the integrity of Natura 2000 site

The following tables associates the individual priorities of the programme with the specific reference objectives, the standard actions and the potential impact, which it is reasonable to assume at this stage.

Following the same assessment scale of the SEA procedure, potential impacts have been associated with values ranging from -2 (significant adverse impact) to +2 (significant positive impact). The second aspect borrowed by the SEA procedure is the list of potential identified impacts, each of them associated to one or multiple Specific Objectives.

Environmental aspects	Indicators	ZA trends	Identified IP impacts and their type	
Natura 2000 sites	Integrity of Natura 2000 sites is preserved	↔ (IT) ↗ (SI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Overall reduction of environmental footprint (SO 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.6) + New research on environmental protection (SO 2.4, 2.7) + Reduction in pesticide use (SO 2.6, SO 2.7) + Reduction in the use of raw materials (SO 2.6) + Improved management, environmental accessibility and risk management (SO 2.4) + Reduction in GHG emis. (SO 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.6, ISO 1b) + Improved condition (state) and management of natural heritage Natura 2000 (SO 2.7, 4.6, ISO 1b) + Improved monitoring of Natura 2000 sites (SO 2.7, 4.6, ISO 1b) + Reduction in water pollutants (SO 2.7) + Improved knowledge and skills on biodiversity (SO 1.4, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, ISO 1b) + Green technologies for sustainable enhancement (vineyards, gardens, parks) (SO 2.6) + A more sustainable tourism (SO 4.6) + Circulation of information on common environmental issues (SO 1.4, 2.4, 4.6) + Increased networking and cooperation in the field of nature conservation (SO 2.4, 2.7, ISO 1b, ISO 1c) - Increased pressures to environment due to increased tourism flows (disruption of flora/ fauna in Natura 2000 sites) (SO 4.6) - Impact of new infrastructures (energy sites, e-mobility infrastructures) (SO 2.7, 4.6) 	+/-
	Favourable condition of species of European interest	↘ (IT) ↘ (SI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Improved knowledge and skills on biodiversity (SO 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, ISO 1b) + New research on environmental protection (SO 2.4, 2.7) + Reduction in pesticide use (SO 2.6, 2.7) + Improved condition (state) and management of natural heritage Natura 2000 areas (SO 2.7, 4.6, ISO 1b) + Improved monitoring of Natura 2000 sites (SO 2.7, 4.6, ISO 1b) + Green technologies for the sustainable enhancement (vineyards, gardens, parks) (SO 2.6) + Improvement and conservation of the coastal and 	+/-

			marine habitat (SO 2.7) + Increased networking and cooperation in nature conservation (SO 2.4, 2.7, ISO 1b, 1c) – Increased pressures to environment due to increased tourism flows (disruption of flora/ fauna Natura 2000 sites) (SO 4.6) – Impact of new infrastructures (energy sites, e-mobility infrastructures) (SO 2.7, 4.6)	
Favourable condition of habitats of European interest	↗ (IT) ↗ (SI)		+ Improved knowledge and skills on biodiversity (SO 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, ISO 1b) + New research on environmental protection (SO 2.4, 2.7) + Improved condition (state) and management of natural heritage Natura 2000 areas and protected areas (SO 2.7, 4.6, ISO 1b) + Improved monitoring of Natura 2000 sites (SO 2.7, 4.6, ISO 1b) + Reduction in water pollutants (SO 2.7) + Improvement and conservation of the coastal and marine habitat (SO 2.7) + Increased networking and cooperation in the field of nature conservation (SO 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, ISO 1b, 1c) – Increased pressures to environment due to increased tourism flows (disruption of flora/ fauna in Natura 2000 sites) (SO 4.6) – Impact of new infrastructures (energy sites, e-mobility infrastructures) (SO 2.7, 4.6, ISO 1b)	+/-

Zero Alternative (ZA) foreseen development:
 ↑ Improving trend; ↗ Partially or gradually improving trend; ↔ Unchanged trend; ↘ Partially or gradually deteriorating trend; ↓ Deteriorating trend

Assessment of the Interreg Programme (IP) in Comparison to the ZA:
 + potential improvement; 0 no relevant change; – potential deterioration; x no assessment possible at this stage

Significance:
 ! potentially significant impact

The next table allows to take a further step in assessing the potential impacts of individual specific conservation objectives on targeted habitats and species of Natura 2000 sites.

Considering that the overall objective of the Programme is the promotion of sustainable development, impacts on habitats and species will be generally positive. However, it may happen that a material intervention, although generating a positive impact in terms of reducing the entropy of the environmental system, have negative impacts on Natura 2000 targeted species and habitats. In these cases, it will be appropriate to intervene with a project-specific AA, as requested by national legislations.

It should be borne in mind that more than half of the Natura 2000 sites in the Programme area are small, not exceeding 500 hectares in size. In cases of material actions with a potential adverse impact, the hypothesis of relocating the intervention outside the perimeter of the Natura 2000 site should be considered in the project design. On the other hand, the largest Natura 2000 sites have an important concentration in the sparsely populated alpine areas, where project actions will be on a reduced scale.

All this leads to the assumption that the recourse to AA procedure in the implementation phase will be quite limited.

Interreg VI-A Italy-Slovenia 2021-27 Programme Specific Objectives	Interreg VI-A Italy-Slovenia 2021-27 Programme Specific Actions	Benefits & risks			Explanation
		+	-	TB	
SO 1.1 - Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies	Promoting a cross-border ecosystem for R&D and strengthening the innovation capacities of local actors	0	0	0	<p>The Natura 2000 network is a fundamental asset of the programme area for both well-being and sustainable development of local communities. Besides of transversal to all POs considered by the IP, Natura 200 sites are directly mentioned in the PO 2, and specifically of the SO 2.7.</p> <p>As a consequence, the cumulative impact of the IP on this environmental aspect is significantly positive, with a set of objectives and actions specifically destined to the protection of the ecosystem and the natural capital.</p> <p>Furthermore, SOs and actions dealing with biodiversity protection have a positive synergic impact on the Natura 2000 Network in the area: nature conservation represents a pre-condition to a boost-in sustainable tourism, but it could also have positive impact on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites, and the conditions of species and habitats of European interest.</p> <p>According to the proposed exemplary actions, this would be true for: “Promoting active awareness of risks due to anthropogenic changes and related climate changes on local ecosystems (including forest areas), ...” (SO 2.4); “Supporting projects relating to ecosystem services (e.g., pro biodiversity business) and water management”(SO 2.6); “Developing integrated tourism products based on the natural and cultural resources of the area” (SO 4.6), and for all exemplary actions included in SO 2.7. Furthermore, a significant and positive impact on Natura 2000 sites should come from the implementation of the strategic project POSEIDONE, aimed to the protection of nature and biodiversity, the development of green and blue infrastructure in Natura 2000 sites and in the agricultural field, and the decrease of touristic pressure on natural parks, and of the strategic project for the joint management and sustainable development of the Classical Karst Area on rocky, forest and grassland habitat.</p> <p>Albeit not significant, the risks of potential negative impacts on Natura 2000 sites could be expected due to the increase in tourist flows in pro-</p>
SO 2.4 - Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, and resilience, taking into account ecosystem based approaches	Fostering resilience capacity to climate change and mitigating risks related to natural disasters	+1	-1	0	
SO 2.6 - Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy	Developing shared model/solutions for the circular economy	+1	0	0	
SO 2.7 - Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	Conservation, protection, promotion of the cross-border area natural capital	+2	0	0	

<p>SO 4.6 - Enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation</p>	<p>Preservation, maintenance and promotion of the cultural heritage, implementation of sustainable and innovative practices in tourism, support to education and training to foster employability and social inclusion</p>	+2	-1	0	<p>tected area that are also Natura 2000 sites (SO 4.6, even due to the strategic project for the joint management and sustainable development of the Classical Karst Area), and to the construction of infrastructures, for both sustainable tourism (the ADIONCYCLETLOUR strategic project) and small infrastructures for risk prevention (SO 2.7).</p> <p>In general, the increase in tourist flows could increase the risk of damage to flora and fauna and accidental fires, as well as having effects in terms of noise pollution, aspects that affect the entire range of habitats and species present in the programme area. However, since the programme aims at sustainable tourism, the risk of real negative impacts is small.</p> <p>The potential impacts are considered and made object of mitigation measures (see Section 5).</p> <p>In addition, it must be recalled that each project with impact on a Natura 2000 site will necessarily provide a specific appropriate assessment procedure.</p> <p>Due to the place-based nature of the specific environmental object, the considered actions spread their effects within the programme area, with no actual transboundary dimension.</p>
<p>ISO 1.(b) - Enhance efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation and between citizens, civil society actors and institutions, in particular, with a view to resolving legal and other obstacles in border regions</p>	<p>Increasing governance capacity to optimize services for citizens</p>	0	0	0	
<p>ISO 1.(c) - Build up mutual trust, in particular by encouraging people-to-people actions</p>	<p>Supporting small-scale projects through people-to-people cross-border initiatives</p>	0	0	0	

4. Analysis of coherence with the specific conservation measures in the Natura 2000 sites of the Programme area

It is opportune to expand the analysis already addressed in the SEA Environmental Report, analysing the degree of coherence between the Priorities of the Programme and the contents of the conservation measures in force in the Natura 2000 Sites of the Programme area. The analysis is carried out by making explicit any relationships between the Programme actions and the measures taken into consideration.

This analysis is useful also in order to suggest possible mitigation measures and to facilitate the definition of selection criteria at tender stage.

Italy

For the FVG Region and the Metropolitan City of Venice, the following were considered:

Conservation measures of continental Natura 2000 sites - For our purposes, cross-cutting conservation measures have been considered, which apply to all Natura 2000 sites in the continental biogeographical region of FVG and Veneto, since they refer to situations or anthropic activities that are widespread and affect a plurality of habitats and species transversally. These are grouped according to the type of activity (1 - Infrastructures 2 - Animal husbandry and agriculture 3 - Hunting 4 - Freshwater fishing 5 - Lagoon/sea fishing 6 - Aquaculture 7 - Fruition 8 - Extraction activities 9 - Interventions in watercourses 10 - Interventions in lagoons 11 - Waste 12 - Military activities 13 - Management guidelines and protection of species and habitats 14 - Proposals for incentives 15 - Monitoring 16 - Dissemination). Considering the areas of action of the Programme, for the purposes of the coherence assessment, areas 1 (only for the sub-themes: forest roads, energy infrastructures, hydraulic infrastructures), 7, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15 and 16 are considered relevant. The picture that emerges is one of general synergy, even if it is possible to identify some areas in which contrasting elements could arise, as summarised in the following diagram, which highlights the situations of potential interference:

Topic/subtopic to which cross-cutting continental conservation measures relate	Main conservation measures potentially interfering or to be considered in the implementation of the strategy (summary)
Forest roads	Prohibition of building new forest roads on areas of ecological and natural value (habitats 2130, 6110, 6410, 7210, 7220, 7230, 8240, 91E0, 91F0)
Energy infrastructures	Prohibition of new ground-mounted photovoltaic installations and prohibition of extensions of existing installations. For the construction of new power lines the planting of conductors should be considered as a priority
Hydraulic infrastructures	In the case of new construction or renovation projects involving the interruption of the ecological continuity of rivers and streams, it is mandatory to provide for the construction of structures suitable for allowing fish to ascend. In natural watercourses, only hydroelectric power plants that do not disrupt ecological continuity or use low-impact technologies are permitted.
Interventions in lagoons	Obligation to provide for and install settling tanks upstream of the discharge into the lagoon of hot water used for geothermal resources

Table 4.1: potential interferences between programme strategy and conservation measures of Continental Natura 2000 sites in the FVG and Veneto regions

Conservation measures of the Alpine Natura 2000 sites - Also in this case cross-cutting conservation measures have been considered, which are divided into 13 thematic areas (1. Infrastructure 2. Animal husbandry and agriculture 3. Interventions in water courses 8. Waste 9. Military activities 10. Management guidelines and protection of species and habitats 11. Proposals for incentives 12. Monitoring 13. Dissemination). Of these, considering the IP, it is considered that Areas 1 (with the exception of road infrastructures), 5, 7, 10, 11, 12 and 13 are relevant. As before, it emerges that the

IP may be synergic in the pursuit of the conservation measures considered, with particular reference to Areas 10, 11, 12 and 13. Potential interferences are summarised in the following diagram.

Topic/subtopic to which cross-cutting continental conservation measures relate	Main conservation measures potentially interfering or to be considered in the implementation of the strategy (summary)
Forest roads	Prohibition of building new forest roads on areas of ecological and natural value (habitats 6110, 6230, 7110, 7220, 7140, 7230, 8240)
Energy infrastructures	Photovoltaic systems are allowed on the roofs of main or secondary buildings or located near buildings as long as they are sized to meet the self-consumption energy needs of mountain huts, refuges or other buildings.
Hydraulic infrastructures	In the case of new construction or renovation work that involves interrupting the ecological continuity of rivers and streams, there is an obligation to provide for the construction of structures suitable for allowing fish to ascend.
Use	Obligation to verify the significance of the impact for organised activities linked to tourist use that involve the use of motorised vehicles or large numbers of people

Table 4.2: potential interferences between programme strategy and conservation measures of Alpine Natura 2000 sites in FVG and Veneto

Slovenia:

Management Programme for Natura 2000 areas (2015-2020) approved by Decree of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia No. 0000719-6/2015/13 defines the specific safeguard objectives for the entire country and the measures aimed to achieving the conservation objectives for each Natura 2000 area with the measures defined so as to contribute to the conservation or achievement of a good conservation status of species and habitats. The conservation measures foreseen for the Natura areas within the Programme area do not appear to be incompatible or contrary to the Programme strategy, but on the contrary, most of them indicate a high level of compatibility with the activities foreseen by the Programme. In the absence of adequate mitigation measures, some of the activities could have negative impacts on Natura 2000 targeted species and habitats.

Topic/subtopic to which cross-cutting continental conservation measures relate	Main conservation measures potentially interfering or to be considered in the implementation of the IP (summary)
Management of visitors	Any increase in the number of visitors represents an environmental load and therefore it is necessary to carry out measures to direct visitors.
Water	Protection of aquatic ecosystems, protection of the flow capacity of watercourses and reduction of hydro-morphological loads.

Table 4.3: potential interferences between programme strategy and measures in the Operational Programme for the management of existing Natura 2000 sites

5. Proposed mitigation and enhancement measures

Based on above provided assessment, it is expected that the IP have no significant direct, cumulative and synergic negative impacts on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites. The occurrence of them depends greatly on types of projects to be supported, and on the amount of funds allocated to individual projects. Due to the “non-investment” character of the IP, the scale and type of projects supported in the previous programming periods, as well as the fact that all projects must be developed and implemented in line with the existing legislative framework, we can expect positive impacts in terms of immaterial support, managing solutions and further reduction of risky activities for biodiversity.

Since no potential significant direct, indirect, cumulative, synergic or transboundary adverse impacts on the Natura 2000 network are expected, no additional proposals of alternatives are suggested. Nonetheless, the SEA team identified the following mitigation measures:

- for projects aimed to support sustainable tourism, consider potential impact on sensitive habitats, running an Appropriate Assessment not only when the projects are planned within the border of, but even whenever they have a predictable effect on Natura 2000 sites.

The Interreg VI-A Italy-Slovenia 2021-2027 Programme provides for a single strategic infrastructure project, which concerns the coastal cycle route that connects the Istrian coast with Venice. This itinerary represents a stretch of the largest European cycling route Eurovelo 8, connecting the Mediterranean coast of Spain to Greece: from Venice, it follows the Adriatic coastline, crossing Trieste, Istria, the Dalmatian coast, Montenegro, Albania and Greece.

The cycling route of the programme area already exists and is active, as it joins the Parenzana cycle route on the eastern side and, to the west of the city of Trieste, retraces the Adria East cycle route, up to Venice, on its way to Turin. Currently, the itinerary is partially present in its own cycle path and partially on low-traffic roads.

In the executive planning phase, the need to carry out the Appropriate Assessment for the sections of the cycle route that will cross the Natura 2000 network areas will arise. The decision to submit the project to Appropriate Assessment will depend on the one hand on any structural works that will be carried out and, on the other hand, on the forecast of flows of cyclists that will affect the Natura 2000 sites.

Conclusions

This document, attached to the SEA of the Interreg VI-A Italy-Slovenia 2021-2027 Programme, is not an Impact Assessment itself, since the SEA has a precise meaning in relation to localised projects for which it is possible to objectively establish the impacts on habitats and species protected under the Natura 2000 sites.

In a Strategic Environmental Assessment of a programme of actions such as the Interreg VI-A Italy-Slovenia 2021-2027 Programme, the evaluator's attention on habitats and species protected in the Natura 2000 Network sites is limited to the general coherence between the Programme's objectives and actions and the Natura 2000 protection strategy. This in order to exclude, if necessary, some actions that are incompatible with the nature conservation objectives, or to refer to the assessment of the impact of projects during the implementation of the Programme.

The analysis of the framework of the Natura 2000 Network in the Programme area highlights a very diversified complex of sites: more than half of the sites have a surface that does not reach 1,000 hectares of extension; therefore, they are quite small. The largest sites are concentrated in the Alpine areas, with the exception of the lagoon areas of Venice and Marano and Grado in Friuli Venezia Giulia and a few other sites belonging to the continental biogeographical region. It can be expected that any interventions that may generate negative interferences with the protection of habitats and species will be concentrated in the continental biogeographical region, where the smallest sites are located and where it will therefore be easier to shift the location of interventions. Mountainous areas are less densely populated and can therefore be expected to be less affected by the projects in this programme, particularly if we exclude those relating to the protection and enhancement of the natural heritage, which should in any case generate positive impacts on the conservation of protected habitats and natural species.

The main indication provided by this Assessment is the acknowledgement that no Programme objective is incompatible with Habitat and Birds directives, the latter being represented by the specific conservation measures for habitats and species outlined by the competent Institutional Bodies,

namely the Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia, the Veneto Region and the Republic of Slovenia.

Coherently with National and Regional legislations, the Assessment confirms the main prohibitions in the specific conservation measures in the Natura 2000 areas of the Programme and refers to the Appropriate Assessment for single projects, for material interventions that may generate impacts on species and habitats. In this sense, the only mitigation measure proposed is almost plethoric, being the recall of the need for a specific Appropriate Assessment procedure for any project aimed to support sustainable tourism planned within the border of Natura 2000 sites. This instruction has been reinforced by the suggestion of running the procedure even in case of projects external to Natura 2000 sites, but with a predictable effect on them.

The main result from the Appropriate Assessment of the Interreg Italy-Slovenia 2021-2027 Programme is the acknowledgement that no IP objective nor prospected action is incompatible with the Habitat and Birds Directives. Besides of the application of specific Appropriate Assessment procedures according to national legislations, the mitigation measure proposed is to run the procedure even for project aimed to support sustainable tourism external to Natura 2000 sites, but with a predictable effect on them.

List of Natura 2000 sites in the Programme area

Name	Area (ha.)	Region	Type
Bosco Zacchi	0,75	Veneto	SAC/SAP
Bosco di Lison	5,56	Veneto	SAC/SAP
Sile Morto e ansa a S. Michele Vecchio	5,61	Veneto	SAP
Dune residue del Bacucco	12,50	Veneto	SAC
Bosco di Carpenedo	12,90	Veneto	SAC/SAP
Fiumi Meolo e Vallio	13,63	Veneto	SAC
Garzaia della tenuta "Civrana"	23,59	Veneto	SAP
Cave di Noale	43,41	Veneto	SAC/SAP
Palude le Marice - Cavarzere	46,43	Veneto	SAP
Ex Cave di Martellago	50,17	Veneto	SAC/SAP
Ambito fluviale del Livenza e corso inferiore del Monticano	51,59	Veneto	SAC
Fiume Sile da Treviso Est a San Michele Vecchio	53,04	Veneto	SAC
Ex Cave di Villetta di Salzano	64,43	Veneto	SAC/SAP
Cave di Gaggio	114,85	Veneto	SAC/SAP
Lido di Venezia: biotopi litoranei	145,78	Veneto	SAC/SAP
Bosco Nordio	156,81	Veneto	SAC/SAP
Delta del Po	163,24	Veneto	SAP
Laguna del Mort e Pinete di Eraclea	212,65	Veneto	SAC
Foce del Tagliamento	242,60	Veneto	SAP
Penisola del Cavallino: biotopi litoranei	311,09	Veneto	SAC/SAP
Ambiti Fluviali di Reghena e Lemene - Cave di Cinto Caomaggiore	450,15	Veneto	SAP
Fiumi Reghena e Lemene - Canale Taglio e rogge limitrofe - Cave di Cinto Caomaggiore	627,5741	Veneto	SAC
Valle Vecchia - Zumelle - Valli di Bibione	1.864,32	Veneto	SAP
Valli Zignago - Perera - Franchetti - Nova	2.502,35	Veneto	SAP
Laguna di Caorle - Foce del Tagliamento	4.322,64	Veneto	SAC
Laguna superiore di Venezia	20.339,49	Veneto	SAC
Laguna medio-inferiore di Venezia	23.694,57	Veneto	SAC
Laguna di Venezia	51.455,24	Veneto	SAP
Area marina di Miramare	0,07	FVG	SAC
Magredi di Coz	10,14	FVG	SAC
Bosco Marzinis	10,56	FVG	SAC
Bosco Torrate	10,61	FVG	SAC
Palude di Racchiuso	11,53	FVG	SCI
Torbiera di Sequals	13,52	FVG	SAC
Palude del Preval	13,79	FVG	SAC
Paludi di Porpetto	23,85	FVG	SAC
Rii del Gambero di torrente	27,51	FVG	SCI
Palude Moretto	39,09	FVG	SAC
Colle di Medea	41,46	FVG	SAC
Magredi di Firmano	57,45	FVG	SAC
Quadri di Fagagna	61,92	FVG	SAC
Palude Selvate	67,97	FVG	SAC
Bosco Boscat	71,59	FVG	SAC
Anse del Fiume Stella	78,30	FVG	SAC
Lago di Ragogna	82,57	FVG	SAC
Paludi di Gonars	89,09	FVG	SAC
Torbiera di Casasola e Andreuzza	98,01	FVG	SAC
Cavana di Monfalcone	117,42	FVG	SAC
Pineta di Lignano	117,61	FVG	SAC
Bosco di Golena del Torreano	139,87	FVG	SAC
Bosco Sacile	144,99	FVG	SAC
Valle del Rio Smiardar	193,39	FVG	SCI
Monte Matajur	211,60	FVG	SAC
Magredi di Campoformido	241,90	FVG	SAC
Risorgive del Vinchiaruzzo	261,29	FVG	SAC
Valle Cavanata e Banco Mula di Muggia	275,05	FVG	SAC/SAP
Forra del Torrente Cellina	289,25	FVG	SAC
Forra del Cornappo	299,15	FVG	SAC
Boschi di Muzzana	350,37	FVG	SAC
Torrente Lerada	363,73	FVG	SAC
Magredi di Tauriano	368,95	FVG	SAC
Val Colvera di Jof	395,71	FVG	SAC
Lago Minisini e Rivoli Bianchi	402,49	FVG	SAC
Monte Auernig e Monte Corona	447,23	FVG	SAC
Confluenza Fiumi Torre e Natisone	603,93	FVG	SAC
Monti Dimon e Paularo	701,67	FVG	SAC
Risorgive dello Stella	801,62	FVG	SAC
Monte Ciaurlec e Forra del Torrente Cosa	874,42	FVG	SAC

Forra del Pradolino e Monte Mia	1.007,72	FVG	SAC
Col Gentile	1.038,05	FVG	SAC
Zuc dal Bor	1.414,72	FVG	SAC
Foce dell'Isonzo - Isola della Cona	1.418,20	FVG	SAC
Rio Bianco di Taipana e Gran Monte	1.702,88	FVG	SAC
Monti Bivera e Clapsavon	1.831,02	FVG	SAC
Monti Verzegnis e Valcalda	2.405,68	FVG	SAC
Foresta del Cansiglio	2.701,27	FVG	SAC
Greto del Tagliamento	2.718,61	FVG	SAC
Valle del Medio Tagliamento	3.580,04	FVG	SAC
Conca di Fusine	3.728,96	FVG	SAC
Creta di Aip e Sella di Lanza	3.889,00	FVG	SAC
Magredi del Cellina	4.371,61	FVG	SAC
Valloni di Rio Bianco e di Malborghetto	4.654,24	FVG	SAC
Gruppo del Monte Coglians	5.391,42	FVG	SAC
Jof di Montasio e Jof Fuart	8.001,18	FVG	SAC
Carso Triestino e Goriziano	9.456,68	FVG	SAC
Prealpi Giulie Settentrionali	9.587,31	FVG	SAC
Magredi di Pordenone	10.095,46	FVG	
Aree Carsiche della Venezia Giulia	11.996,73	FVG	
Laguna di Marano e Grado	16.185,31	FVG	ZSC
Alpi Giulie	18.030,18	FVG	
Alpi Carniche	19.470,63	FVG	
Dolomiti Friulane	36.689,33	FVG	ZSC
Jezerc pri Logatcu	0,33	Slovenia	SAC
Podbrdo - skalovje	0,24	Slovenia	SAC
Stiški potok	0,61	Slovenia	SAC
Bukovica	0,99	Slovenia	SAC
Ročevnica	1,06	Slovenia	SAC
Potok Reka s pritoki	1,13	Slovenia	SAC
Med Strunjanom in Fieso	1,50	Slovenia	SAC
Domaček	1,65	Slovenia	SAC
Tičnica	1,66	Slovenia	SAC
Kovnišca	2,20	Slovenia	SAC
Avče	2,51	Slovenia	SAC
Ščurkov potok	2,63	Slovenia	SAC
Štangarski potok	2,74	Slovenia	SAC
Cereja	2,81	Slovenia	SAC
Županova jama	3,09	Slovenia	SAC
Bohinjska Bela - skalovje	3,31	Slovenia	SAC
Koritno izvir - izliv v Savo Dolinko	3,32	Slovenia	SAC
Piranski klif	3,60	Slovenia	SAC
Bolska	3,68	Slovenia	SAC
Bajdinc	3,78	Slovenia	SAC
Dobovšek	3,91	Slovenia	SAC
Višnar - povirje	4,07	Slovenia	SAC
Bled - Podhom	4,40	Slovenia	SAC
Vir pri Stični	4,48	Slovenia	SAC
Breg pri Mali Loki	4,54	Slovenia	SAC
Povirje vzhodno od Bodešč	4,66	Slovenia	SAC
Pod Bučnico - melišča	4,82	Slovenia	SAC
Koritno	4,95	Slovenia	SAC
Lipovšček	5,10	Slovenia	SAC
Boštonova jama	5,16	Slovenia	SAC
Debeli Rtič	5,26	Slovenia	SAC
Vrhe nad Rašo	5,72	Slovenia	SAC
Strmec	5,82	Slovenia	SAC
Maljek	6,19	Slovenia	SAC
Žusterna - rastišče pozejdonke	6,96	Slovenia	SAC
Stahovica - melišča	7,02	Slovenia	SAC
Ankaran - Sv. Nikolaj	7,27	Slovenia	SAC
Pokljuška barja	8,59	Slovenia	SAC
Veliki potok	9,28	Slovenia	SAC
Mavelščica - povirni del	9,77	Slovenia	SAC
Jama v Globinah	10,16	Slovenia	SAC
Črna dolina pri Grosuplju	10,51	Slovenia	SAC
Znojile	10,89	Slovenia	SAC
Peračica	10,90	Slovenia	SAC
Pri Modreju - melišča	11,65	Slovenia	SAC
Duplica	11,69	Slovenia	SAC
Škocjan	11,80	Slovenia	SAC
Kozja luknja	11,83	Slovenia	SAC
Nakelska Sava	12,01	Slovenia	SAC

Cerkniščica	12,80	Slovenia	SAC
Vintarjevec	13,07	Slovenia	SAC
Kanomljica s pritoki	16,18	Slovenia	SAC
Grahovo ob Bači	17,28	Slovenia	SAC
Rižana	18,47	Slovenia	SAC
Strunjan	18,80	Slovenia	SPA
Sušački, Smrdejski in Fabski potok	19,42	Slovenia	SAC
Kozje stene pri Slivnici	19,64	Slovenia	SAC
Ledina na Jelovici	23,19	Slovenia	SAC
Pajsarjeva jama	23,21	Slovenia	SAC
Kobariško blato	24,89	Slovenia	SAC
Babja luknja	28,44	Slovenia	SAC
Blato na Jelovici	29,29	Slovenia	SAC
Strunjanska dolina	30,21	Slovenia	SAC
Kanal Sv. Jerneja	31,81	Slovenia	SAC
Kropa	33,74	Slovenia	SAC
Strunjanske soline s Stjužo	35,22	Slovenia	SAC
Lijak	36,78	Slovenia	SAC
Pod Mijo - melišča	37,22	Slovenia	SAC
Divja jama nad Plavami in Zamedvejski potok	37,74	Slovenia	SAC
Idrija s pritoki	40,45	Slovenia	SAC
Ihanska jama	40,52	Slovenia	SAC
Sečoveljske soline in estuarij Dragonje	41,71	Slovenia	SAC
Jama pod Smoganico	41,85	Slovenia	SAC
Krška jama	43,13	Slovenia	SAC
Radovna most v Sr. Radovni - jez HE Vintgar	43,75	Slovenia	SAC
Reka	44,10	Slovenia	SAC
Lučka jama	44,18	Slovenia	SAC
Skedenca nad Rajnturnom	46,12	Slovenia	SAC
Ukovnik	47,36	Slovenia	SAC
Stržene luže	48,58	Slovenia	SAC
Jama pod Lešetnico	49,93	Slovenia	SAC
Breznica	52,11	Slovenia	SAC
Zadnje struge pri Suhadolah	54,00	Slovenia	SAC
Zelenci	54,16	Slovenia	SAC
Žejna dolina	54,78	Slovenia	SAC
Med Izolo in Strunjanom - klif	55,58	Slovenia	SAC
Vrhoveljska planina	56,67	Slovenia	SAC
Častitljiva luknja	57,77	Slovenia	SAC
Jama na Pucovem kuclu	60,87	Slovenia	SAC
Pesjakov buden	63,28	Slovenia	SAC
Jelenk	64,15	Slovenia	SAC
Mrzla jama pri Prestranku	66,12	Slovenia	SAC
Kendove robe	69,80	Slovenia	SAC
Vodena jama	71,91	Slovenia	SAC
Krasnica	74,85	Slovenia	SAC
Trojane	75,88	Slovenia	SAC
Zabiče	80,43	Slovenia	SAC
Zgornja Jablanica	80,87	Slovenia	SAC
Selca	82,44	Slovenia	SAC
Šimenkova jama	82,49	Slovenia	SAC
Bezuljak	86,56	Slovenia	SAC
Podpeška jama	87,92	Slovenia	SAC
Kosca	89,61	Slovenia	SAC
Medija - borovja	89,78	Slovenia	SAC
Debeli Rtič	92,72	Slovenia	SPA
Rodine	103,92	Slovenia	SAC
Globočec	105,59	Slovenia	SAC
Dacarjevo brezno - Žiganja vas	107,70	Slovenia	SAC
Banjšice - travišča	116,61	Slovenia	SAC
Slatnik	118,57	Slovenia	SAC
Škocjanski zatok	122,59	Slovenia	SPA
Škocjanski zatok	122,59	Slovenia	SAC
Nemški Rovt	126,31	Slovenia	SAC
Vrzdeneč	131,53	Slovenia	SAC
Ligojna	138,25	Slovenia	SAC
Poljanska Sora Log - Škofja loka	151,44	Slovenia	SAC
Nadiža s pritoki	152,69	Slovenia	SAC
Bidovčeva jama	153,61	Slovenia	SAC
Kompoljska jama - Potiskavec	154,72	Slovenia	SAC
Kožbana	163,25	Slovenia	SAC
Berje - Zasip	168,38	Slovenia	SAC
Ihan	180,32	Slovenia	SAC

Ljubljana - Gradaščica - Mali Graben	186,58	Slovenia	SAC
Sora Škofja Loka - jez Goričane	186,74	Slovenia	SAC
Medvedje Brdo	189,06	Slovenia	SAC
Nano	192,75	Slovenia	SPA
Mateča voda in Bistrica	197,83	Slovenia	SAC
Krimsko hribovje - Menišija	203,34	Slovenia	SAC
Zaplana	218,06	Slovenia	SAC
Karavanke	230,90	Slovenia	SAC
Pregara - travišča	239,14	Slovenia	SAC
Podreber - Dvor	279,44	Slovenia	SAC
Polhograjsko hribovje	296,51	Slovenia	SAC
Češeniške gmajne z Rovščico	329,64	Slovenia	SAC
Cerkniško jezero	335,06	Slovenia	SPA
Goriška Brda	401,06	Slovenia	SAC
Šumberk	433,22	Slovenia	SAC
Otalež - Lazec	493,80	Slovenia	SAC
Radensko polje - Viršnica	522,17	Slovenia	SAC
Cerkno - Zakriž	529,67	Slovenia	SAC
Grad Brdo - Preddvor	582,16	Slovenia	SAC
Mišja dolina	637,26	Slovenia	SAC
Bohinjska Bistrica in Jereka	727,26	Slovenia	SAC
Nanoščica	771,37	Slovenia	SAC
Bloščica	789,44	Slovenia	SAC
Gozd Olševek - Adergas	839,04	Slovenia	SAC
Porezen	849,37	Slovenia	SAC
Dolsko	871,23	Slovenia	SAC
Sečoveljske soline	969,14	Slovenia	SPA
Planinsko polje	1.046,13	Slovenia	SPA
Trnovski gozd	1.052,75	Slovenia	SPA
Kočevsko	1.067,94	Slovenia	SAC
Sava - Medvode - Kresnice	1.123,91	Slovenia	SAC
Slavinski Ravniki	1.185,67	Slovenia	SAC
Ljubljansko barje	1.236,97	Slovenia	SPA
Lubnik	1.267,55	Slovenia	SAC
Ljubljansko barje	1.296,06	Slovenia	SAC
Breginjski Stol	1.313,29	Slovenia	SPA
Vipavski rob	1.336,42	Slovenia	SPA
Kandrske - Drtiščica	1.360,42	Slovenia	SAC
Soča z Volarjo	1.411,81	Slovenia	SAC
Kamniško - Savinjske Alpe	1.456,81	Slovenia	SAC
Notranjski trikotnik	1.523,16	Slovenia	SAC
Blegoš	1.569,06	Slovenia	SAC
Breginjski Stol	1.600,86	Slovenia	SAC
Šmarna gora	1.694,07	Slovenia	SAC
Dolina Reke	1.865,75	Slovenia	SPA
Gozd Kranj - Škofja Loka	1.943,75	Slovenia	SAC
Raja peč	2.236,07	Slovenia	SAC
Matarsko podolje	2.307,89	Slovenia	SAC
Ratitovec	2.331,30	Slovenia	SAC
Krka s pritoki	2.447,74	Slovenia	SAC
Banjšice	3.119,06	Slovenia	SPA
Grintovci	3.195,83	Slovenia	SPA
Menina	4.177,51	Slovenia	SAC
Karavanke	4.330,44	Slovenia	SPA
Javorniki - Snežnik	4.403,88	Slovenia	SAC
Kras	4.804,13	Slovenia	SAC
Dolina Vipave	5.112,22	Slovenia	SAC
Slovenska Istra	5.252,54	Slovenia	SAC
Trnovski gozd - Nanos	5.323,50	Slovenia	SAC
Snežnik - Pivka	5.492,65	Slovenia	SPA
Kras	5.875,16	Slovenia	SPA
Dolina Branice	6.313,15	Slovenia	SAC
Julijske Alpe	7.408,56	Slovenia	SAC
Julijci	8.864,50	Slovenia	SPA
Jelovica	9.766,74	Slovenia	SPA

Map of protected areas involved in Interreg VI-A Italy-Slovenia 2021-2027 Programme

