Blended Intensive Programme (BIP) – Mediterranea University of Reggio Calabria, Italy

Double Landscape for Water Architecture

BIP Partners

Landbúnaðarháskóli Íslands / Agricultural University of Iceland, Iceland

Czech Technical University in Prague, Czech Republic

Wageningen University & Research, Landscape Architecture, Holland

Lublin University of Technology, Poland

Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Faculty of Landscape and Society (LANDSAM), Norway

EMADU of Fes, Morocco

Beijing Forestry University

Dates:

- Online phase September 23-24 – h. 14/17
- On-site phase October 12/17 – h. 9/17 - Mediterranea University of Reggio Calabria, Italy

The city of Reggio Calabria

Reggio Calabria, Calabria's main urban center, lies along the eastern shore of the Strait of Messina, in a highly complex geological and orographic context. The city extends along a narrow coastal strip, immediately overlooked by the steep Aspromonte slopes, characterized by steep elevation differences and predominantly metamorphic lithology. These conditions have favored the formation of the so-called fiumare, ephemeral torrential waterways with wide, gravelly beds, subject to sudden floods and considerable erosive power.

From a hydraulic and geomorphological perspective, the fiumare are a distinctive feature of the Calabrian landscape, they literally define the territory: their alternating periods of prolonged drought and violent floods make them highly hydrogeologically critical systems. At the same time, throughout history, they have constituted both constraints on settlement expansion and strategic resources for water supply, territorial demarcation, and, more recently, urban planning.

Site Issues

The Calopinace River, a waterway that flows through the central part of Reggio Calabria's urban fabric, fits into this context. The etymology of its name, a subject of debate, derives from the Greek kalòs pinax ("beautiful picture" or "fertile plain"), likely indicating the agricultural importance of the alluvial areas near its mouth during the Magna Graecia period. In the Middle Ages, it was also documented in the form "Alepò," indicating the historical continuity of the toponym.

The Calopinace played a decisive role in the urban evolution of Reggio Calabria. Settlements settled along its banks since the Greek colonization, and its presence influenced the layout of the main roads. However,

recurrent floods, often devastating, also made it a risk factor: as early as the 17th century, historical sources document destructive events that struck the lower city. After the 1908 earthquake, the new master plan for reconstruction (the so-called De Nava Plan) necessarily had to address the presence of the Calopinace, adopting hydraulic regulation and canalization solutions that profoundly altered its appearance.

https://www.google.com/maps/place/Fiume+Calopinace/@38.1007048,15.6526976,333m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m6!3m5!1s0x13145081903aed9f:0x5ff8eb17f1861d1!8m2!3d38.1003626!4d15.6607559!16s%2Fg%2F120y8g9c?entry=ttu&g_ep=EgoyMDI1MDgzMC4wIKXMDSoASAFQAw%3D%3D

An urban linear park for Calopinace river's banks

From a landscape perspective, the river today represents an ecological and morphological break within the urban continuum, simultaneously a barrier because the banks are hidden and partially covered by a motorway, but it represents an high potential green corridor. Recent urban redevelopment projects, linked to the enhancement of the waterfront and the integration of natural systems, have highlighted the strategic value of the Calopinace as an environmental infrastructure, capable of combining the needs of hydrogeological safety, ecological restoration, and landscape enjoyment.

The Calopinace river embodies a paradigmatic case of the interaction between natural dynamics and urban development: from a hydraulic threat and a constraint on settlement, to a potential resource for a sustainable city model, capable of recognizing its defining geomorphological elements not as an obstacle, but as an opportunity for territorial regeneration.

In this context at the students will be required the creation of an urban linear park, as a new vision of the city, along the banks of Calopinace fiumara. The project aims to provide the city of an effective green area, to dismiss part of the motorway, to find innovative ways to capture subsoil and surface waters, to transform the area in a place entirely integrated with the urban tissue.

Programme Goals:

1. To create innovative methods for designing urban spaces in line with sustainable development principles.
2. To strengthen students' interdisciplinary skills in using modern tools and technology.
3. To increase awareness of sustainable development in landscape design, including adaptation to climate change and accessibility.
4. To foster international collaboration between students from various universities, with respect for local landscape values and criticisms.

Programme Description:

The BIP programme involves intensive workshop, where participants, working in international teams, will develop spatial and landscape solutions that address the ecologic, environmental, cultural, and current needs of the city of Reggio Calabria.

The workshop aims to create projects that represent a vision of a new relation between the water and the urban landscape through a linear urban park overlapping the different systems like water system , ways and streets systems, vegetation and facilities.

Students will work on maps, creating hand-drawn sketches, project concepts, and drawings on their own computers.

Learning and Teaching Methods:

- Students will analyze landscape matters, gaining practical experience and insights into different cultures.
- Workshops will be tailored to various skill levels to ensure effective learning for all students.
- Participants will engage in a full design process, from analysis through concept development to the presentation of detailed solutions.
- Online tools will be used to facilitate effective teamwork, enabling students to work in mixed groups.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Competences in approaching landscape design according to sustainable development principles.
2. Proficiency in digital tools and spatial visualization methods.
3. Skills in mold with different materials to represent the project.
4. Awareness of challenges related to site-specific elements.
5. Enhanced skills in interdisciplinary and intercultural teamwork.

Virtual Component Description:

The virtual part of the programme includes introductory presentation of the schools participating at the workshop and an introduction of the project area with its challenges.

Participants will have a first vision on landscape issues and methods and will increase the understanding and the importance of an interdisciplinary approach.

Workshop Plan:

During the workshop students will mature strategic landscape competences in order to:

- Develop inclusive design, taking into account accessibility for people with different needs
- Develop systems to preserve water
- Implement sustainable and innovative solutions to improve the relation between the water and the landscape
- Studying social dynamics related to the territory to increase the quality of life for residents and tourists

Cultural Programme:

To enhance understanding of the city context, the programme includes visits to significant sites in Reggio Calabria, such as:

- The Waterfront of the city: Lungomare Falcomatà;
- National Archeological Museum of Reggio Calabria;
- The Cathedral of Reggio Calabria;

Logistics tips:

The Airports closer to Reggio Calabria:

- Reggio Calabria Airport – Aeroporto dello Stretto Tito Minniti
- Catania Airport – Aeroporto di Fontanarossa
- Lamezia Terme Airport - Aeroporto di Lamezia Terme Sant'Eufemia

How to go from Catania to Reggio Calabria

- By bus of SAIS Company or by train from Catania Airport to Messina Central Station
- From Messina to Reggio Calabria Hydrofoils of LibertyLines Company

How to go from Rome or Lamezia Terme to Reggio Calabria

- By train
- From Lamezia Terme there are private shuttles to Reggio Calabria

SAIS Bus: www.saisautolinee.it
Trains info: https://www.trenitalia.com/it.html
Hydrofoils info: https://www.libertylines.it/