

Climate change: the map of crazy weather in Lombardy

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Mantua and Pavia hold the record of climate change in Lombardy. In Mantua, the province of the Gonzaga noble family, maximum temperatures rose by 2.7°C in the time frame of a decade, changing from 19.48°C, recorded on average between 2005 and 2014, to 22.18°C measured in the first ten months of 2015.

In the territory of Pavia, however, the highest rise was that in minimum temperatures, which have increased by over 2°C in the last decade (from 7.92°C to 9.97°C). These are the limit values recorded in Lombardy, as emerged from a study carried out by Coldiretti and based on Mipaaf Observatory's data, which was published during the UN climate Conference in Paris.

According to **the analysis of Coldiretti Lombardia, Pavia is the province where it rained the most in the last ten years:** 901 millimetres of average annual rainfalls were recorded, against 858 millimetres in Lombardy. On the contrary, the “driest” provinces are Sondrio (819 mm) and Como (855). Data were calculated considering the Lombard area, where 2014 was one of the rainiest year, with almost the double of average monthly rainfalls in the last ten years. “The weather phenomena are becoming more and more disastrous, both because of their violence and their speed. As a consequence, the work of farmers becomes more complicated and the risks for productions and harvests increase”, explains Ettore Prandini, President of Coldiretti Lombardia.

In the rise in temperatures, stresses Coldiretti, **overbuilding and soil consumption play an important role:** actually, cement retains heat during the day and gives it off during the night, causing a rise in

temperatures even when they should go down, and altering the normal difference between day and night temperatures.

“Usually All Saints’ Day temperatures used to drop below zero in our area: this year, on the contrary, there were almost 20°C in November,” claims **Franca Sertore**, 66, President of “Pensionati Coldiretti” in **Sondrio** and Lombardia. “I remember that when I was child, in this period it started to snow, then it froze, creating a reserve of water for summer. But nowadays, by contrast, even our glaciers are melting.” This year, July has been the most “scorching” month: in the province of Mantua a peak of 34.5°C was recorded, followed by 33.9°C in Cremona and 33.3°C in Lodi. On the contrary, the lowest temperatures were measured in January and February, with a record of lower than 6°C below zero in Sondrio, followed by -3.3°C in Varese and -3.2°C in Como.

“It is fundamental to monitor the situation and support agriculture as a resource for land management and land conservation against soil consumption, considering that during fifty years, from 1955 to 2011, the utilised agricultural land in Lombardy decreased by over 25.4%, dropping from 1,322,017 to 986,853 hectares, whereas urban areas increased by 235%,” stresses **Ettore Prandini**. And he adds: “Without agriculture, we lose first of all an efficient land management. This is an assumption which is even more realistic in mountain areas, where the risk of being abandoned and isolated is higher.”

di Translated by Carcano & Carnevale (Reviewed by Prof. Robert Clarke)