

A composite index for defining territorial fruition of geopaleontological sites in inner area of Campania (southern Italy)

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This study addresses the issue of using composite indicators as a support decision-making tool in the definition of policies aimed at promoting sustainable development in inner areas. Inner areas chosen as case study refer to two geopaleontological sites that, despite their value as historical evidence, are considered as “external resources” not mainstreamed into their own territorial system. Starting from a systematic scientific literature review mainly aimed at defining the concept of “territorial fruition”, this study proposes to individuate and measuring the propensity of territory in which these resources locate to act as magnets for a global design of territorial revitalization. The use of the term revitalization within this study is no coincidence, it serves to underline the peculiarities of the two territorial settings as inner areas (affected by depopulation; aging population; lack of primary services; difficulty in accessibility, etc.) and thus their need to be studied as parts of a global territorial system to be really revived as a whole. The revitalization process must stem from the consideration of existing and potential interactions between the study areas and the broader territorial context. This includes integrating and connecting cultural assets, eco-environmental features, socio-ethnic singularities, and historical, architectural, and urban values into a joint-cohesive system. According to these premises and with the primary aim of pinpointing those variables that can express the essence of the chosen territorial contexts, this study investigates the aspects adequate to define their sustainable usability mainly referred to:

- identify a threshold value for the territorial attractiveness;
- define territorial accessibility (physical reachability, services accessibility);
- find out types of tourism compatible with the need to both preserve and promote such territorial heritage.

Case studies refer to the territorial contexts: a) “Ciampate del diavolo” in which have been identified some human footprints dating back around 350.000 years ago; b) “Le Cavere” that at present lays on the mountains but approximately 110 million years ago it was a tropical lagoon.

The study assumes the systemic complex approach to territorial analysis, and it aims at defining a scalable method for the evaluation of other geo-sites while recognizing the singularity of cases. It has been developed within the PRIN 2022 INSITE funded by the Italian Ministry of University and Research (MUR).