



**Associazione Comunione
Isola di Albarella**

Albarella Srl

Amministratore

Downburst Report Albarella, 10th August 2017

An extraordinary downburst ravaged many areas, especially wooded areas, in Isola di Albarella on 10th August 2017.

The island was struck by this extraordinary event which generated unprecedented wind velocities up to approx. 200 km per hour. The quick intervention of the emergency teams on the island and the Security Guard service contributed to preventing harm to people, although they could not avoid major damages to the arboreal heritage of the island and remarkable damage to both real estate and movable property. Some areas were damaged more severely than others where the vegetation resisted uprooting and is still standing despite the strong impact suffered by the roots.

Immediately from the beginning, our emergency toll free number was contacted by many of our guests who reported about fallen trees and blocked roads. The information given was collected and evaluated by our emergency staff.

The first interventions were carried out under the coordination of the Technical Works Supervisor in collaboration with the contractors working in Isola di Albarella, i.e. Albatech Ambiente srl, Termo Tecnica sas, Civis spa as well as other privately owned companies (Cestari Pino & Cestari Lorenzo), who helped our teams remove the trees that had fallen along the ridges.

With the help of Civis, incoming traffic was immediately suspended and the internal road traffic was managed to avoid chaos-generating and hazardous situations.

Given the magnitude of the event, help was necessarily requested from the competent Local Authorities. The Prefecture and the Rovigo Fire Brigade were initially contacted for support and for the provision of the available teams, who arrived on the island a few hours after the event to help our emergency teams, working 24 hours a day.

The Director of the island asked for the involvement of the Local Authorities and support from the Civil Protection Teams: the teams from Rovigo, Rosolina, Vicenza, Padua, the Volunteer Associations of the Civil Protection from Sarcedo, the Environmental and Civil Protection Leogra Timonchio from Schio, and the Civil Protection Cogollo del Cengio joined us in alternating shifts. We also received support from the Regional Forestry Service.

The Fire Brigade and the Civil Protection teams stayed on the island for a few weeks until the beginning of September and they worked both in areas owned by Associazione Comunione and for private owners.

Starting from Friday 11/08 the Director began looking for contractors, capable of offering skilled staff and proper equipment, specialising in macro areas and emergency situations such as what we were faced with in Albarella, for the immediate or at least timely removal of the trees that had fallen and/or crashed to the ground. It was a very extensive and complex search, considering the time of the year and the extent of damage. The list of contractors who spontaneously offered their services or were contacted by the Director for the removal and the disposal/recovery of the trees includes: Alpha - Bioenergy, Aluffi Srl, Ica Energia Srl, and Massoni P&M. Each contractor put forward an

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intervention plan, an implementation timescale and an estimate of the costs. Massoni P&M was eventually selected as they were the only contractor who offered to start work immediately and to fully compensate the costs incurred for the cutting, collection, transport, chipping and transfer of the trees to recovery plants by assignment of ownership over the material. The only remuneration they asked for was for the transport of their equipment and board and lodging for their manpower. All the other contacted contractors could not supply the necessary equipment timely and quoted the costs of the above-listed operations in addition to the assignment of ownership over the material. The selected Contractor also accepted to perform volume reduction operations of all the material delivered to the storage area by private Contractors. After a thorough examination of the quotations of the other Contractors, the selected Contractor was awarded a dedicated contract for root volume reduction and chipping. Contractor Massoni was also awarded an order for volume reduction operations of unrecoverable waste branches so as to cut down the transport costs incurred to deliver them to the storage area located in the former "cafeteria" zone. Thanks to the support of the Prefectures of Rovigo and Lucca, the Director was successfully granted the authorisation required by contractor Massoni P&M to arrange for heavy trucks to the island despite the restrictions to heavy vehicle traffic.

Under the coordination of the Technical Works Supervisor and with the help of the Security Guard service, the Contractor started works on 13th August 2017 using forestry equipment such as a "FELLER BUNCHER", a "FORWARDER" and a chipping machine, which were used to cut the trees at their roots, to stack and chip the logs, and to remove any fallen or precarious trees. In addition to special machinery, the Contractor made available chainsaw operators to cut trees, access to which was not possible with the above machinery. All the fallen trees and any damaged or hazardous trees, as identified after a thorough on-site inspection and census performed by forestry consultants and the Veneto Regional Authorities, were eventually removed. These operations were carried out until 30th September 2017.

The intervention of additional specialised contractors (Albion Vivai, Coppiello P. & C. snc, AcegasApsAmga spa, Terme Recuperi srl, Polaris Srl, Agriverde snc) was necessary for the removal of stacks of trees that were cut in the most urbanised areas, where access was not possible with special machinery. These contractors used material handlers to collect the material stacked along the roads on the island and to transfer it, as explained above, to the storage area located in the former cafeteria zone where contractor Massoni P&M chipped the material for volume reduction. Standard contracts with hourly market rates were entered into with these Contractors.

The Director involved both Local and National Authorities from the very beginning in order for the event to be recognised as a national disaster. For this reason numerous on-site inspections were carried out by the Veneto Regional Authorities in the municipality of Rosolina and by the Under Secretary of State for Economic and Financial Affairs. With

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this respect, it is worth highlighting that the RESOLUTION OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL of Veneto no. 1699 dated 24th October 2017 specifies that “the territories affected by extraordinary events having regional significance are recognised the “Emergency Status”, pursuant to the Decree of the President of the Regional Council DPGR no. 144 of 10th August 2017, in compliance with art. 2 of the Regional Law L.R. no. 4/1997 and art. 106, para. 1(b) of the Regional Law L.R. no. 11/2001”.

More specifically, art. 106 of the Regional Law L.R. no. 11/2001 provides that, when adverse events occur, “*the President of the Regional Council, or the delegated Councilor, including when requested by the mayors of the affected municipalities and prior notification to the concerned provinces, declares the existence of an emergency status or a status of extraordinary adverse climatic events for the purpose of starting all actions required for civil protection interventions. This measure supersedes, in the specified cases, the measure laid down in Article 2 of the Regional Law L.R. no. 4/1997 - “Interventions to the benefit of populations affected by natural adverse events” and represents the recognition of an extraordinary event*”.

Following the natural adverse event in question, on 22nd August 2017 the Municipality of Rosolina, as well as the other municipalities in the *Basso Polesine* area, was granted a derogation by the Province of Rovigo from the reference standard on management of material resulting from wood volume reduction. This derogation excludes the wooden material from the definition of waste and compares it to a wood biomass, hence giving the opportunity to recycle it for energy recovery.

After removal operations, repairs were started to fix the damaged water pipelines, the electricity lines used for public lighting, the roads and their kerbs, and signage, which were all ravaged by the tree roots, with the help of contractors Albatech Ambiente srl and Termo Tecnica sas. In addition to this, repairs were made to the portion of the roofing in Villa Ca' Tiepolo that had been damaged by the wind.

The Director also contacted other specialised Contractors to remove the roots of the fallen trees with the help of mechanical equipment, at the same time of tree removal, and to provide for the rehabilitation of the soil by tillage or by laying a portion of the chipped material for mulching purposes. Some repair works are still in progress and, as of February 2018, works have been started to prune and secure high-stem trees that had been partially damaged by the event.

With reference to the recognition of the event as a national disaster, the Municipality of Rosolina drafted dedicated forms to collect applications for the estimation of damage and then forwarded them to the Veneto Regional Authorities. The applications of Associazione Comunione for damage suffered by its property were submitted to the above-mentioned Municipality of Rosolina on 11th September 2017: this is an initial estimation of the suffered damages, whose total cost was calculated based on some quotations and estimates.

So far, there has been continuous pooling of ideas with the Veneto Regional Authorities in order to determine the value

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of damages and whether they are refundable.

A Forestry Expert, Mr Enrico Longo, was timely appointed to locate the mostly affected areas using a specialised methodology: the expert surveyed an area of 1000 sq.m. Mr Longo produced a report dated 4th September 2017 according to which the estimated total fallen trees are 8,123.34. The map below shows the mostly affected areas, which have been almost entirely destroyed by the extraordinary event under examination.



In light of the above, the landscape of the island has been evidently and massively affected and, of course, modified. An invitation to tender for landscape remaking was issued to the following firms: Atelier Le Balto, Studio Dan Pearson, Studio Gustafson - Porter, Studio Boeri, Studio Bürgi and Atelier Coloco as well as the Universities of Padua and Venice. Among the others, the offers we received from Studio Bürgi (www.burgi.ch), based in Camorino, Switzerland, and Atelier Coloco (www.coloco.org), based in Paris, proved to be in line with the tender timescale and costs, and the need to preserve the trees that have been left undamaged by the event. Landscape architects from both firms and their staff conducted on-site inspections on the island as follows: Studio Bürgi on 27/10/17 and Atelier Coloco on 17/11/17. Both firms submitted their design ideas relating to the master plan and the landscape design of the areas affected by the event in question during two separate meetings with the Extended Council of Associazione Comunione: Studio Bürgi on 14/12/17 and Atelier Coloco on 26/01/18.

The Extended Council of Associazione Comunione evaluated both projects and selected the one submitted by Atelier

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Coloco. The Council decided that an event should be organised to present the selected project to all the property owners and the Public Authorities in order to highlight the importance of and promote such a significant project, which is key for the future of the island and the entire territory of the River Po delta area.

The appreciation of the Council for the project submitted by Atelier Coloco relies on several factors, including, but not limited to them:

- continuity with the urban planning project by architect Barbin, who created the original “matrix” of the so-called *Zona Fiordi* (lit. Fjord Area) of the island;
- the design solutions, based on an in-depth examination of the winds that blow over the island;
- the safeguard of the existing arboreal heritage;
- the contemporary approach of this solution, which can be developed at different stages.

Studio Coloco will draw up a final design in the next few months, which will be submitted to the Association Members' Meeting together with the related costs.

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