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## THE G7 ENVIRONMENT MINISTRY MEETING

**T**he Group of Seven (G7) industrialized democracies includes the United States, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the European Union. As the 2017 G7 President (the responsibility rotates annually), the Italian government has so far organized a heads-of- state summit, six ministerials, and numerous preparation meetings throughout the year in various parts of the country.

The Italian Ministry of Environment, Land, and Sea staged the G7 Environment Ministers’ Meeting in Bologna, Italy on June 11-12. The U.S. delegation was headed by Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Scott Pruitt.

The Italians forged a substantive two-day agenda that included discussions about climate change with a focus on Africa; the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); the role of multinational development banks in helping countries meet the SDGs; G7 countries’ actions to curtail marine litter; and how ecologically-focused fiscal reform can improve sustainable development.

EPA’s negotiation team met with G7 counterparts over the course of several months preceding the meeting in Bologna so that the ministers could agree on a Communiqué (click [here](#) to read the document).

Highlights of this consensus reached include sharing environmental innovations; leveraging resource efficiency including the “3 Rs” (reduce, reuse, recycle) to create economic growth and new employment opportunities; and further implementing the G7 Action Plan to Combat Marine Litter that strengthens the coherence, efficiency, and effectiveness of existing international efforts.

The “5-year Bologna Roadmap,” an annex to the Communiqué, is an action plan ranging from sharing practices on international materials management to raising public awareness to encourage less wasteful lifestyles.



Meet your ESTH Rome team:

L to R: Kristin, Lee, Lee’s son Michael, Federica, and Caron

**Caron De Mars,**  
ESTH Counselor

**Federica Signoretti,**  
ESTH Specialist

**Michael Lee,**  
Office Management Specialist

**Kristin Williams,**  
Spring ‘17 Intern

**Maria Winters DiMarco,**  
Summer ‘17 Intern

## G7 SCIENCE SHERPAS MEET IN ROME

In advance of the G7 Leaders' or any G7 Ministers' meeting, negotiation of the agenda and the text of any final meeting communiqué is conducted and coordinated by designated high-level representatives called "Sherpas." On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, the first G7 Science Sherpa Meeting was convened in Rome, where all member states of the G7 were represented.

The U.S. Sherpa was State Department Science and Technology Cooperation Office Director Lisa Brody, who was accompanied by ESTH Counselor Caron De Mars. As the hosts of this year's G7 Science Ministerial, the Italian government proposed an agenda that echoed past areas for G7 science collaboration and recommended new priority science-related topics and ideas that should be pursued by the G7.



Photo: Sherpa meeting  
Photo credit: Caron De Mars

The G7 countries agreed that proposed topics must balance science, research, innovation, and education themes. The Sherpas concentrated on three key themes:

- (1) how to train researchers to produce innovative solutions to socio-economic questions;
- (2) the role of research to promote future technologies and research financing mechanisms; and
- (3) international cooperation in scientific research.



Discussions focused on the importance of building relationships among scientists, decision-makers, and the general public as advancements in technology and science require cross-sectorial contributions.

Working groups also provided updates on the progress of such topics as 'Seas and Ocean,' 'Poverty-related and Neglected Tropical Diseases,' and 'Global Infrastructure.' University professors and technical experts will meet virtually and in person in the coming months to formulate a packet of recommendations for the Science Ministerial, which will be held in Turin September 28 and 29.



Photo: Lisa Brody speaking at Sherpa Meeting  
Photo Credit: Caron De Mars

## G7 MARINE LITTER WORKSHOP

On April 20-21, Director of the Office of Global Affairs and Policy at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Walker B. Smith, and Chief of the Marine Debris Division at the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Nancy Wallace, represented the United States at the G7 Marine Litter Workshop.

Smith and Wallace outlined global, regional, and national best practices so that the Action Plan on Marine Litter experts were informed on the latest trends in the field, which then could be incorporated into the G7 Environmental Communique.

Various prevention strategies were discussed, including an example from the District of Columbia, where a plastic bag fee resulted in a 65% reduction in single-use plastic bags. Other prevention strategies include grants that fund outreach, education, and behavioral change programs. NOAA has also focused efforts on removal of existing marine litter, where a partnership with Fishing for Energy resulted in over three million pounds of fishing gear collected from U.S. waters.

The importance of collaboration emerged as a theme throughout the presentation, including exploring the efficacy of Public/Private Partnerships. Multi-national and bilateral initiatives were also discussed, all of which highlighted the importance of developing pilot programs and toolkits that can be shared across the world.

*"Marine Waste is fast becoming one of the BIGGEST environmental catastrophes facing our seas."*



Photo credit: Edinburgh Marine Network



Società Gestione Impianti Nucleari (SOGIN), the entity responsible for complete decommissioning of all Italian nuclear installations by 2024 and the safe management of the spent fuel and radioactive waste, welcomed visitors from the Department of Energy, the ESTH team, and State Department to tour its facilities on March 21.

Photo credit: SOGIN



EPA's Walker B. Smith looks on as NOAA's Nancy Wallace talks about U.S. clean water initiatives.

Photo credit: Caron De Mars



Photo credit: VisLab

## SELF-DRIVING CARS

Can you imagine if the taxi you ordered on your app arrived without a driver? Autonomous vehicles could be on the road within five years, according to University of Emilia-Romagna Professor Francesco Leali. He and Vislab's Alberto Broggi talked to the Science and Diplomacy Club in Rome's Brazilian Embassy on May 9. Five Italian universities and automakers including Ferrari and Lamborghini founded the Italian company Vislab that develops cutting-edge technology in the areas of computer vision and environmental perception for driverless automobile applications.

The presenters showed a clip (<https://youtu.be/dmD6kqBjnLM>) of their car. VisLab developed a number of vehicle prototypes integrating different functions, including vehicle, obstacle, pedestrian, and lane detection; traffic sign recognition; and terrain mapping. Challenges for the industry include regulatory regimes, liability issues, cost, and privacy concerns. Some potential benefits include alleviation of parking woes, elimination of driver error, and less traffic congestion.



## ROMA DRONE CAMPUS



Photo credit PEXEL

On February 21, the ESTH team previewed the newest drone technology at the 2017 Roma Drone Campus at Roma Tre University. Massimiliano Lega, Director of the Environmental Engineering Forensic Lab at the Parthenope University of Naples, gave a wonderful presentation on the history of drones in Italy and nonmilitary uses of drones.

Lega applies his environmental engineering background to study civilian drones deployed in aerial imaging and surveying; precision agriculture; search and rescue during disasters; and for researching environmental concerns like changes in land use. Following a long Italian tradition of creative technology applications, Italian photographers even use drones to photograph wedding parties.



Lee with i Droni event bag  
Photo Credit: Caron De Mars



## USGS VISITS ROME

On February 27-28, three United States Geological Survey (USGS) representatives, Chief Dr. Ingrid Verstraeten (Europe, Russia, Central Asia and Arctic, Office of International Programs), Deputy Associate Director for Environmental Health Dr. Patricia Bright, and Biological Sciences Specialist Matthew Andersen, traveled to Rome for meetings with Italian government entities and various offices within the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO). The ESTH team accompanied USGS on this visit, which focused on enhancing science and technology cooperation between USGS and Italian entities, as well as with FAO.

The U.S. delegation had the opportunity to receive an overview of the Italian Civil Protection Authority and explored establishing a relationship to share best practices under the U.S.-Italy Science and Technology Agreement, which includes a Working Group on Earth Sciences. Moreover, the USGS team met with the Italian Space Agency (ASI) attorney and international relation specialists to determine the next course of action to engage in increased science and technology exchange using ASI data and information obtained from ASI's Cosmo-SkyMed satellites. FAO and USGS discussed forging a memorandum of understanding to combine technical expertise in ecosystems, wildlife health, and One Health to pursue projects in FAO priority countries.

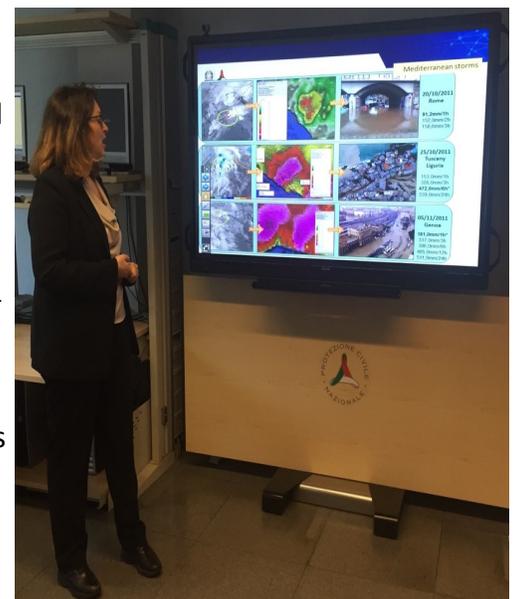
In addition, USGS brought in U.S. experts via videoconference to review joint earth science accomplishments and discuss future cooperation with several Italian government entities, including a potential project on landslides that would include expertise from three Italian government entities and USGS. The Italian National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology (INGV) and USGS Working Group Executive Committee Members reviewed the collab-



oration between USGS and INGV in earth sciences including volcanological studies such as joint research on the Campi Flegrei in Italy and Yellowstone in the U.S. Both areas have similar volcanic structures and associated natural hazards.

Scientists from the Institute of Environmental Research and Protection (ISPRA) discussed habitat mapping, ecosystem assessments, wildlife diseases, and deforestation of many species of trees in central Italy. Italy's National Research Council (CNR) showed images of the devastation wrought by landslides during central Italian earthquakes and discussed opportunities for cooperation in coordination with ISPRA, INGV and USGS.

Overall, the meetings created a very optimistic outlook for future science and technology cooperation furthering the existing bilateral activities in the earth sciences, including natural hazards.



Above and below: Monitors at INGV  
Photo credit: Caron De Mars





## EPA ADMINISTRATOR PRUITT JUDICIAL ROUNDTABLE



**J**udge Luciano Panzani, President of Rome’s Court of Appeals, hosted a roundtable and invited six Italian prosecutors and judges with backgrounds in environmental law to brief EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt in Rome on June 9, 2017.

The EPA Administrator highlighted his three main concerns: the “Rule of Law” – the laws must be clear and certain; “Process” – citizens and stakeholders will have time to comment on EPA proposals, but after a set time period, the rule will be fixed and enforced; and “Federalism” – environmental law, policy, and progress are all based on cooperation among the states, cooperation between the states and EPA, and cooperation between regulators and the public.

Among EPA priorities, Administrator Pruitt mentioned investment in water infrastructure, improvement of air quality, and the appointment of a task force for prioritizing the 1,320 Superfund sites and expediting their clean-up process.

Regarding climate change, Pruitt stated that, even though the United States has decided to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, President Trump and his administration will certainly continue to engage on the subject. Pruitt added that the United States has already made progress in decreasing CO2 emission by 18% from 2000, and environmental pollutants by 65% from 1980.

The Italian participants explained Law 68 of May 22, 2015, also known as the “Eco-crime” law, which added five new crimes to the Italian Criminal Code: environmental pollution; environmental disaster; radioactive-waste trafficking; obstruction of monitoring; and omitted environmental remediation. All the Italian participants stressed the importance of cooperation among administrative bodies and judicial authorities to combat environmental crime.



EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt (center left) listens to Judge Luciano Panzani (center right) Photo Credit: Public Affairs

## 50th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE FIRST ITALIAN SATELLITE LAUNCH

On April 26, La Sapienza University Aerospace Engineering Faculty celebrated the 50th anniversary of the first Italian satellite launch from the Luigi Broglio Space Center in Malindi, Kenya, which was launched on a NASA Scout rocket on April 26, 1967.

The center was named after its founder, Italian space pioneer Luigi Broglio; the event heralded a partnership forged between the University of Rome La Sapienza's Aerospace Research Centre (CRAS) and NASA in 1964. The Italian government transformed a mobile oil platform into a launch pad in Kenya, which was operational until 1988, and was used to launch 30 satellites, including three NASA small astronomy satellites.



Photo credit: NASA

of Understanding between the U.S. Virgin Galactic and Thales Alenia Space to place a port in Italy for a space tourism program; 18 contracts for Cygnus cargo space modules manufactured by Thales Alenia Space; the leading role of ASI in European Space Agency (ESA) programs; and Italy's strategic space plan, which will leverage up to 1.1 billion euro for the space economy from central, regional, and private contributions.

NASA European Representative Tim Tawney gave an overview at the event of the many past, present, and future bilateral space cooperation programs between the United States and Italy.

Additional photos and video footage from the launch can be found here: <http://sanmarco1964.wixsite.com/>



Tim Tawney and other panelists  
Photo credit: Fede

Italian Space Agency (ASI) President Roberto Battiston highlighted Italian successes, including: the April 2017 Italian stock market listing of Avio, which makes [small rocket launchers](#); the Memorandum



Photo credit: <http://sanmarco1964.wixsite.com>

## NASA INTERNATIONAL SPACE APPS CHALLENGE

**E**STH attended the opening session of Rome’s fifth edition of the NASA International Space Apps Challenge, the world’s largest hackathon, on April 29. The Embassy Public Affairs Section has organized Italy’s participation since 2013 with partners ESA, La Sapienza, the Italian Space Agency, corporate sponsors, and hundreds of participants from across Italy.

This year, the global event involved 187 locations in 69 countries with a record-breaking 25,000 participants worldwide; the challenges focused on Earth. In Italy, 500 students, technologists, and scientists participated in the three Mission-sponsored locations, including Rome, Naples, and, for the first time Vicenza, with the support of the Consulate General in Milan. Timothy Tawney, NASA’s representative in Europe, traveled to Italy to be the keynote speaker at the press conferences in Vicenza and Naples and at the opening in Rome.



A winning Rome Space Apps team Photo credit: Sentinel Hub



Space Apps Logo

## BILATERAL COOPERATION ON NASA’S JUNO MISSION JUPITER



Dr. Brooks shows JUNO images

Photo credit: Caron De Mars

**E**STH organized a lecture on NASA’s Juno Mission to Jupiter for Liceo Righi high-school students on February 23. Dr. Shawn Brooks, a Jet Propulsion Laboratory scientist, and his Italian research partner Dr. Alberto Adriani from the Istituto di Astrofisica e Planetologia Spaziali, showed the stunningly beautiful images of Jupiter.

The images sent from the Mission back to Earth help scientists to better comprehend the origin and evolution of this giant gaseous planet, which will pave the way to a deeper understanding of our solar system. Juno was launched on August 5, 2011, and entered Jupiter's orbit on July 4, 2016. The Italian Space Agency funded the image spectrometer JIRAM (Jovian InfraRed Auroral Mapper) and the Ka-Band Translator. The Public Affairs team created a video featuring the work of Drs. Adriani and Brooks (<https://youtu.be/2lserBVBAOA>).

## NASA – A FORWARD LOOK

During the visit of National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Acting Chief Scientist Dr. Gale Allen to Rome, ESTH organized her “NASA – A Forward Look” lecture for Aerospace Engineering Faculty and Space Policy Master’s degree students at the University of Rome La Sapienza on April 10.

Dr. Allen presented NASA’s operations; current and future research and missions, including Earth systems and environment; human spaceflight effects on the body; and [NASA's twins study](#).

In addition, she discussed the next steps for the James Webb Space Telescope, NASA’s mission to Jupiter's moon Europa, and NASA’s Journey to Mars, a strategy forward for a deep space gateway and transport plan, highlighting the need for international participation.

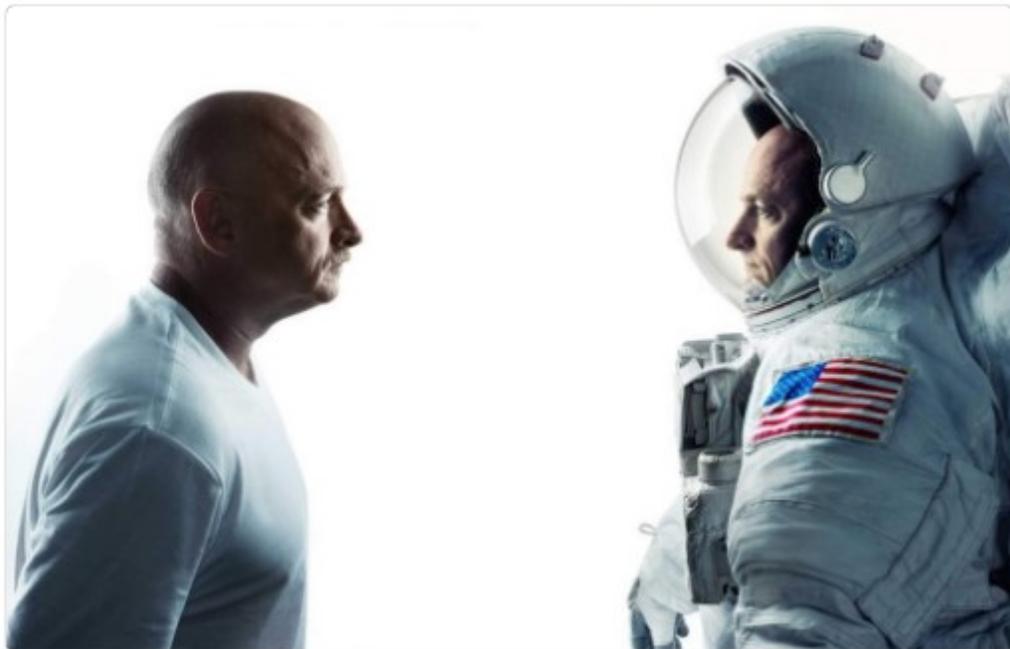


Dr. Gale Allen addressing La Sapienza students  
Photo credit: Caron De Mars



**Scott Kelly**  @StationCDRKelly · Jan 28

1st results of @NASA's Twin Studies w myself & @ShuttleCDRKelly are out. Turns out we are related! But there's more: [to.pbs.org/2keRr6A](https://to.pbs.org/2keRr6A)



 65  1.3K  3.2K

Photo credit: NASA

## WORLD HEALTH DAY

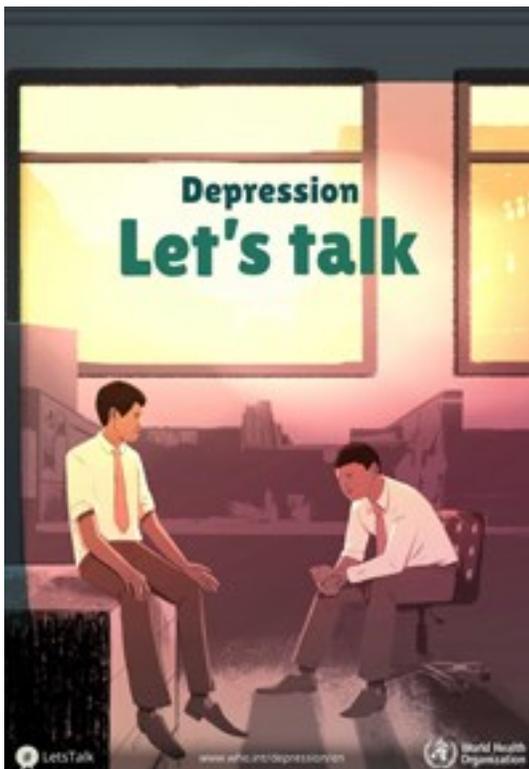
**E**STH coordinated with Public Affairs’ Social Media team to highlight World Health Day on April 7, and amplify the work that the United States government does to improve global health.

The slogan of this year’s campaign was “Depression: Let’s Talk.”

The campaign reached over 7,600 people on Facebook and 186,000 on Twitter.



Above, left, bottom: World Health Organization



## ITALY RENEWS HEALTH MOU WITH CDC ON OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

**O**n February 22, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Italian National Institute for Insurance against Accidents at Work renewed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to collaborate on preventing work-related diseases and improving workers’ health.

The State Department’s Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES) facilitated the MOU renewal through close collaboration with Mission personnel, CDC, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Assistant Legal Adviser for OES, OES’ office of Science and Technology Cooperation, and the Western Europe office in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, to continue to advance State’s goals of strengthening bilateral relationships and encouraging global health cooperation.

## UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH MEDICAL CENTER (UPMC) ITALY

On May 16, ISMETT (Istituto Mediterraneo per i Trapianti e Terapie ad Alta Specializzazione, the Mediterranean Institute for Transplants and Highly-Specialized Therapies) celebrated its 20th anniversary, as well as the opening of its new Cardiology and Pediatric Departments.



ISMETT was established in 1997 as the result of an international partnership between the Region of Sicily and the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC). Regarded as a center of excellence in the field of transplantation and highly specialized therapies, ISMETT serves patients from countries throughout the Mediterranean region. It conducts important research projects aimed at providing patients with the most advanced therapies and appropriate responses to end-stage vital organ failure.

The ISMETT medical team performed the first liver transplant in Sicily in June 1999. As of today, over 1900 transplants have been performed, including 80 pediatric transplants and more than a thousand liver transplants.

ISMETT operates under an innovative model of health care and is the first hospital in Italy entirely dedicated to liver, kidney, heart, lung, and pancreas transplants, as well as to treatment of end-stage organ failure which can avoid or delay the need for transplantation. Physicians and health care professionals from all over the world work closely with UPMC and bring clinical expertise acquired and perfected in leading international academic institutions and hospitals to Palermo, Sicily.



Photo credit: Medsupex

## 83rd ANNIVERSARY OF ITALIAN INSTITUTE OF HEALTH

ESTH accompanied John Tavenner, Acting Chargé d'Affaires, as he delivered opening remarks at the Italian National Institute of Health (ISS) 83rd Anniversary celebration on April 20. ISS was established in 1934 to fight malaria with a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. Over the years, its mission has expanded, and it is now the Italian government's technical institute for health research, surveillance, control, prevention, communication, and training.

Chargé Tavenner highlighted the broad U.S. National Institute of Health-ISS research cooperation on topics ranging from cancer, rare diseases, and aging to pandemic preparation. He noted that U.S. and Italian scientists have worked together to publish papers, conduct research projects, and support scientific exchanges, and concluded, "The constant collaboration of our two countries over the decades has improved the health of our citizens and people around the world. The United States looks forward to this collaboration continuing in the future."



Photo Credit: <https://www.facebook.com/32706176871/posts/10154642467041872>

## VIRTUAL VISIT OF ATLAS

**A**merican Physicist Steve Goldfarb took the ESTH team on a virtual tour of the ATLAS particle detector experiment. The European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), which was founded in 1954 just outside of Geneva, Switzerland, hosts the experiment.

ATLAS is one of four particle detectors on the Large Hadron Collider, which gathers information by making protons collide with each other at immense speeds. CERN uses the world's largest and most complex scientific instruments to study the basic constituents of matter – the fundamental particles. CERN has 22 member states, but over 100 nations are represented in the lab and one third of the human resources are PhD students who conduct observations 24/7.

Dr. Goldfarb's entertaining style makes physics fascinating and easier to grasp; we hope our ESTH newsletter readers take advantage of the opportunity to learn more about ATLAS, CERN, and particle physics. For more information on the virtual visit please click [here](#) or for an on-location guided visit click [here](#).



Inside the ATLAS particle detector. Photo credit: CERN



Photo credit: Read the Spirit

## PI DAY

**E**mbassy Rome's Community Liaison Office (CLO) hosted a pie contest on March 14, also known as Pi Day. Geeks worldwide have celebrated Pi ( $\pi$ ) Day on March 14, which coincides with the first three digits of Pi—3.14—since physicist Larry Shaw organized the first Pi Day in 1988 at the [San Francisco Exploratorium](#).

ESTH Intern Kristin Williams contributed science trivia games to stimulate the mind before satiating the appetite. Overall, the CLO created an event that was simultaneously fun and educational. Who doesn't love a pie competition?



## PUBLIC RESEARCH FUNDS ARE INVESTMENTS AND NOT COSTS

**D**uring a February 13 press conference, National Research Council President Massimo Inguscio and Universities Rectors Association President Gaetano Manfredi highlighted public research outcomes and needs to an audience of specialized press, young researchers, and the presidents of the major public research institutes in Italy (e.g. the Italian Space Agency, the National Institute of Health, the National Institute Geophysics and Volcanology, the Institute of Environmental Research and Protection).

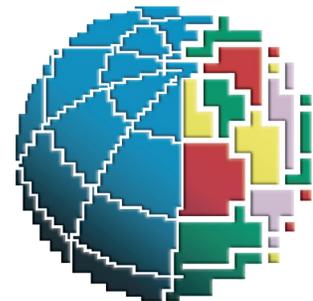
Drs. Inguscio and Manfredi reported that GOI research funds increased in the past two years. The GOI policy switched from budget cuts and a hiring freeze (which resulted in a 15% budget cut – equal to one billion euro – and the loss of 10,000 research jobs in 2008-2014), to stable budgets and the possibility of hiring 1000 researchers at universities and 250 at the research institutes.

The budget cuts had increased professors' average age (currently 50 years), perpetuated outdated infrastructure, and caused a 15% decline in student enrollment. Notwithstanding its small R&D public investment (still at 1.33% of GDP vs. an EU average of 2.03% in 2015), relatively low salaries for researchers, and a low overall number of research positions (only 4.7% of 1000 employees are researchers vs. 7.4% in the EU), Italy's H-index, which measures both scientists' productivity and the citation impact of publications, is #7 in the world after Japan and ahead of the Netherlands, whose R&D investments are much higher.

The presidents asked the press to let the citizens know that science plays an essential role in society by fostering innovation, increasing economic development and growth, and improving the wellbeing of citizens.



**ISPRA**



**INGV**

# Going Green in Rome



## GOING GREEN ON SAINT PATRICK'S DAY!

On March 17, Green Team members attended the Community Liaison Office's St. Patrick's Day party to raise environmental awareness within Tri-Mission community. The ESTH team had devised a Green Pledge, allowing people to choose from a menu of promises to commit to a more sustainable lifestyle. Here are some photos of our sustainability champions who took the Green Pledge.



### My Personal Pledge to Curtail Plastic and Waste

I pledge to avoid buying water in bottles and start taking carrying a water bottle with me to refill from the tap or in Rome's fountains.

I pledge to separate and recycle trash.

I pledge to start subscribing to periodicals and papers online rather than getting paper copies.

If I'm a smoker, I pledge to not throw cigarette butts on the ground. (It takes 10-15 years to break down.) I will carry a portable ashtray and dispose of them properly.

I pledge to avoid pre-packaged food as much as possible.

I pledge to take reusable bags to the market.

I pledge to seek items that use recycled materials (ex: textiles and bottles are made from recycled plastic from the beach).

I will sell or give away items I no longer need rather than throwing them away.

I pledge to only buy what I need (especially food).

I pledge to participate in clean-up events like Retake Roma, international beach clean-up day, etc.

If I see trash on the ground, I pledge to pick it up and put it in the next recycling container I find.

I pledge to share my knowledge of green practices with friends and family.

I pledge to join the Tri-Mission Green Team! Meetings are the first Thursday of each month. Our next meeting is on April 6 at 10:00 a.m. in the Public Affairs Meeting Room, MSB 1<sup>st</sup> floor.

Left: A collage of the Green Team Pledge participants  
Photo Credit: Caron De Mars

## SCHOOL CHILDREN BUILD A PARK FROM REPURPOSED MATERIALS

**B**oeing and NGO Retake Roma supported a project at a Rome school to transform a barren schoolyard into a park with repurposed tires and wooden grocery store pallets. Boeing representatives, school children, Retake Roma volunteers, city officials, and ESTH were on hand for the June 5 ribbon-cutting ceremony. Pinuccia Montanari, City of Rome Counselor for Environmental Sustainability, spoke about the importance of youth involvement in the environmental movement, and ESTH Counselor Caron De Mars applauded Boeing and Retake Roma for their joint efforts in youth education. The schoolchildren sang several songs about the environment during the festivities.



Children with environmental posters at Guiseppe Impastato School  
Photo credit: Caron De Mars

## RETAKE ROMA AND THE GREEN TEAM “RETAKE” A PARK

**O**n March 18 the Green Team and [Retake Roma](#) co-sponsored the cleanup of Parco Ponte Vecchio (the old bridge park) in the Ponte Nomentano area, known for its historical bridge Ponte Vecchio. Retake Roma is an eight-year-old non-profit movement composed of volunteers who remove graffiti from walls and take action to pick up trash, and refurbish public spaces.

Chargé d’Affaires Kelly Degnan and Pinuccia Montanari, City of Rome Counselor for Environmental Sustainability, were two guest speakers. Chargé Degnan’s speech can be seen [here](#). Volunteers gathered trash that included items as big as a weed-covered mattress, removed graffiti from walls, repainted benches, and pulled weeds.



Green Team members and CDA Kelly Degnan take a break from cleaning and pose for a picture.  
Photo Credit: Silvia Giovanazzi

Around a hundred people pitched in to restore the beauty of this park in just four hours!

green  
team

## “THREE SIDES OF THE SAME COIN”: GOVERNANCE, SUSTAINABILITY, AND INNOVATION

On June 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Pontifical Lateran University hosted a conference on “Governance, Sustainability, and Innovation,” featuring perspectives from politicians, academics, and business people. Cristiano Ceresani, Head of the Secretariat of the Council of Ministers in the Italian Prime Minister’s Office, spoke on the interconnectedness of the themes of governance, sustainability, and innovation, declaring that they are “three sides of the same coin.”

Counselor to the Minister of Economy and Finance Stefano Scalera discussed the role of globalization and innovation in reducing inequality, and emphasized that by increasing innovation (e.g. through tech start-ups), Italy could attract its “brain drain” generation to return.

Topics related to human development (education and equality), zero-carbon fuels, and rapid urbanization (including demographic and social change in developing countries) were also discussed throughout the day.



Photo credit: Caron De Mars

## CIRCULAR ECONOMY CONFERENCE

ESTH attended a conference organized by NGO Legambiente and COREPLA, the National Consortium for Collection, Recycling and Reuse of plastic packaging, at the American Studies Center on April 4.



COREPLA President Antonello Ciotti described an increasing trend in both plastic waste collection (from 4 kilograms to 16 kilograms per inhabitant per year from 2003 to 2016) and plastic recycling (from 10% in 2003 to 25% in 2016) in Italy. Ciotti noted that plastic waste sorting still needs to be improved, however, especially in Southern Italy, and new recycling technology will be needed to deal with more complex packaging, which is more difficult to recycle.

Legambiente Director General Stefano Ciafani highlighted his associated campaigns to monitor and reduce beach/floating litter and micro plastic in the Mediterranean Sea, in cooperation with the Italian Institute of Environmental Research and Protection, National Research Council, and National Agency for New Technologies, Energy, and Sustainable Economic Development. All speakers on the subject of marine debris agreed that vigilant waste sorting, correct recycling, and citizen participation can stem this global problem.

Environment Minister Galletti stated that Italy had been supportive of the EU Action Plan on the Circular Economy, which establishes an ambitious path for waste management and recycling to stimulate Europe's transition towards a circular economy that will boost global competitiveness, foster sustainable economic growth, and generate new jobs, in addition to protecting the environment.



## LIFE, ANIMATED SCREENING

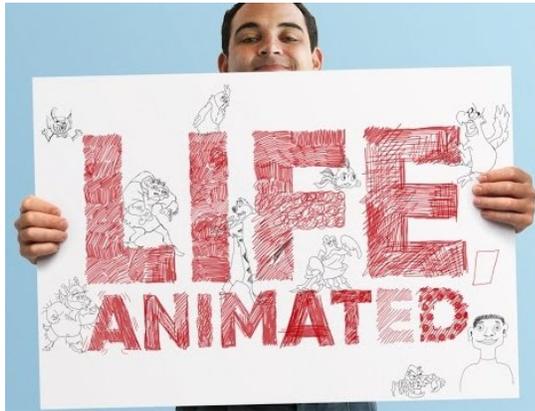


Photo credit: <http://lwlies.com/reviews/life-animated/>

## A PLASTIC OCEAN SCREENING

On March 13, the ESTH section organized a screening of the documentary *A Plastic Ocean* at the Ambassador's residential theater at Villa Taverna. Chargé d'Affaires Kelly Degnan hosted the event and led discussions with two experts: Fisheries Director General Riccardo Rigillo of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Forest Policies; and Dr. Cristina Fossi, a professor at the University of Siena and a scientist featured in the film.



Plastic bags in the ocean

Photo credit: NRDC.org

On February 1, the Embassy's Public Affairs Section screened the film *Life, Animated* at the Ambassador's residential theater. The ESTH team invited health sector contacts and were on hand to greet them, and join in the discussion after the screening.

Oscar-nominated *Life, Animated* is truly an inspiring story about a family that observed their autistic son's interest in animated Disney films, and transformed that interest into a unique way to communicate with him. The film is based on the 2014 [book](#) of the same title by the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and author Ron Suskind, who is the father of the autistic boy. To view the film's trailer, click [here](#).

The ESTH section was heartened by the standing-room only crowd and extremely pleased with the audience participation throughout the discussions. Because of the film's powerful message and visualization of the problems created by marine plastic litter, many of the guests asked how they could show the documentary in their schools and organizations.

The Green Team showed the film later for its Earth Day event at Embassy Rome on April 19. Here is the [A Plastic Ocean trailer](#).



CDA Kelly Degnan giving the opening remarks to a full house at *A Plastic Ocean*

Photo credit: Marco Iacoella

- July 30-August 3 [GLOBE](#) Annual Meeting (New Haven, CT)
- August 12 World Elephant Day
- Sept. 12-25 United Nations General Assembly (New York)
- Sept. 16 International Coastal Cleanup Day  
& International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer
- Sept. 26-27 G7 Industry and Information Communications Technology  
Ministerial (Turin)
- Sept. 27 World Tourism Day
- Sept. 28-29 G7 Science Ministerial (Turin)
- Oct. 5-6 Our Ocean Conference (Malta)
- Oct. 16 World Food Day
- Oct. 24 World Polio Day
- Oct. 26-Nov. 5 Genoa Science Festival
- Oct. 26-Nov. 30 State Department-sponsored Plastic Trash Exhibit (Genoa)
- Nov. 3 One Health Day
- Nov. 5-6 G7 Health Ministerial (Milan)
- Nov. 6-17 UNFCCC (Climate) Conference Of Parties 23 (Bonn, Germany)
- Nov. 7-10 Ecomondo (Rimini)
- Nov. 13-19 Education Week and Global Entrepreneurship Week
- Nov. 16-22 World Antibiotic Awareness Week
- Nov. 21 World Fisheries Day
- Dec. 4-6 UN Environment Assembly – 3 (UNEP, Nairobi)
- Dec. 9 International Anti-Corruption Day

*If you know someone who would like to be added to this newsletter mailing list, or if you would like to be removed, please contact*

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