

Recreation Management in Venice Lagoon

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Le opinioni espresse nel presente lavoro non rappresentano necessariamente
la posizione della Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei

SUMMARY

Contingent Valuation (CV) is one of the most used methods for environmental resources evaluation, within cost benefit analysis. Here, CV is used to estimate boating demand function of an important wetland in Italy: the Venice lagoon. Demand functions have been utilised to assess the consequences of annual charge for lagoon recreational use by boats. Valuation has been carried out using the classic "bidding game" approach during interviews to a representative sample of boat owners which go on a trip to the lagoon. The representative group has been gained from a preliminary search within the wet docks facing the lagoon and within the moorage holders on the canals in the Venice historic centre.

Keywords: Lagoon use-value, contingent valuation, recreation management

NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The Venice lagoon is the largest one in the Mediterranean Sea (550 km²). It is a relevant site for both professional fishing and recreation (fishing and boating). The paper estimates the recreational and sport-fishing demand using the contingent valuation method. A stratified sample-based survey has been made in order to a) quantify and describe the visitors, b) estimate the demand function of homogeneous recreational users' subgroups, c) estimate the total annual recreational use value of the lagoon, d) simulate potential financing by users aimed to improve conservation management. Main results are: a) the survey has shown that around 13,000 users per year can be estimated (71% boating and 29% fishing); the average number of annual visits per user is 5.4, b) the demand functions resulting from contingent valuation have been estimated, c) the total recreational surplus differs significantly both between fishing and boating users, and between users living in Venice (25%) and in the mainland (75%), d) the simulations of management policies financing conservation measures have been evaluated from the viewpoint of the users' welfare. Different users' charges have been considered. For example, a € 31 annual entrance fee could be charged on mainland recreational users without reducing the total visitors' number. However, management policies have to take into account redistributive effects and access rights of residents in Venice.

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