



60 years after the K2' first ascent , the Central Karakorum National Park becomes fully operational partly thanks to the Italian support

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Gilgit, Pakistan: The dazzling Rakaposhi Face, the K2 and the other 8000s, the wide glaciers Baltoro and Biafo, but also the snow leopard, the junipers, the Markhor (the rare mountain goat), and still ancient inlaid columns as symbol of a land junction of different cultures and traditions.

Exceptional Peaks, Mountains covered by glaciers and Valleys eroded by wild rivers. The world's longest glacial system outside the polar region and the most important water stocks in Asia.

It is not easy to describe in few words the Central Karakorum National Park: the highest Park all over the world. A National Park that, thanks to the collaboration between Pakistan and Italy and with the official approval by the Gilgit Baltistan Government of its Management Plan, becomes fully operational, ready to receive visitors

In the Cknp Management Plan are officially specified the definitive Park' borders, the different zones, the rules for the resources management (as pasture, mining, wood management...), the entry fees, the visitors centre, the trekking routes, ect. The Cknp has been established in 1993 but in 2014 thanks to a strong support of the Italian research, during the last five years, the official version of Management Plan becomes effective.

On July 31,1954 Achille Compagnoni and Lino Lacedelli reached for the first time the K2 Summit. The Italian team was lead by the scientist Ardito Desio, who had great dream: to establish a Park to protect the beauty and the resources of this land. Now, sixty years later, that dream comes true also thanks to EvK2Cnr , a scientific research association funded by Desio.

During the last 20 years different projects and institutions have been working hard to implement the Park. In 2009 born the Seed project (Social Economic Environment Development) implemented by EvK2Cnr and the Karakorum International University, and financed under Pakistan-Italian debt for development SWAP agreement. The project aims at an integrative development of CKNP region through supporting the implementation and management of CKNP, improving local wellbeing and livelihood options.

The project's first step has been to obtain a scientific "picture" of the Park, studying and mapping forests, glaciers (711 glaciers located), water resources, flora and fauna, monitoring climate changes. These kind of research activates have been carried out thanks the contribution of other EvK2Cnr such as Share (Stations at High Altitude for Research on Environment).

In collaboration with KIU and CKNP directorate and with a continuous consultations with the Gilgit Baltistan Government it has been decide to follow a participatory approach, involving more than 150 villages, in order to share with local communities rules, regulations, borders definition etc

"Italy 'reaches' K2 once again. This time in a figurative way but it's the same passion for this lands and its people that has been lasting since more 100 years and that links Pakistani and Italian explorers, alpinists and scientists – said Agostino Da Polenza, EvK2CNR President –. One hundred years ago De Filippi organized an Italian expedition involving the Royal Geographic Society; he spent the winter in Skardu, the same place from which Desio departed to 'reach' K2 summit 60 years ago. Amazing challenges sometimes forgotten. Thanks to Seed project: 300.000 trees have been implanted, 10.000 sheep vaccinated, 40.000 Kg of waste brought down from Baltoro Glacier and disposed, 250 trekking guides, 50 high altitude guides, 40 watch guard have been trained, 58 development projects in agriculture and handicraft fields. Concrete actions and tangible facts in order to develop the Park. A Park that now exists, that has been built together with local people and authorities. So I can say that we are proud of the friendship that join us to this complex, hard and fragile land and to its people."

The Park has also a [new website](#) for all the tourists and mountain lovers coming from all over the world: new trekking route, useful information, maps, logistic advices, services, pictures and video and much more. .

This summer, sixty years after the Italian K2 ascent, the first official Pakistani Team will attempt to the summit with the support of Italian friends, and several events will be organized to celebrate this anniversary and the Peak symbol of this wonderful land: the K2.

Pietro Coerezza

Press Office - Ufficio stampa EvK2CNR Associazione riconosciuta

Via San Bernardino 145 - 24126 Bergamo

email: pietro.coerezza@evk2cnr.org - Skype pietro.coerezza

Tel. dir. + 39 035 32.30.552 Cell. + 39 338 1203727