



**Politecnico
di Torino**

Honors Thesis

Master's Degree Architecture for Sustainability.

Abstract

***Reuse of the area of the Military Semaphore of Punta Mesco.
A network of accommodation facilities to mitigate the "overtourism" in the Cinque
Terre.***

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"Overtourism" represents one of the most pressing challenges for contemporary tourist destinations. This phenomenon occurs when an excessive number of visitors exceed the destination's carrying capacity, causing degradation of natural and cultural resources, and a decrease in the quality of life for local residents. Although this has been matter of studies for decades, its consequences have become more evident with the increase in global tourism demand. Some factors that have driven this development include: the reduction in travel costs, the growth of the global middle class, and the influence of social media in promoting tourism.

Italy, the fifth country in the world for number of visitors, urgently needs to develop sustainable tourism policies that preserve its priceless cultural and natural resources, while ensuring the long-term attractiveness of its destinations. Moreover, excessive dependence on a single sector like tourism, negatively affects the economic resilience of destinations, making them vulnerable to sudden changes.

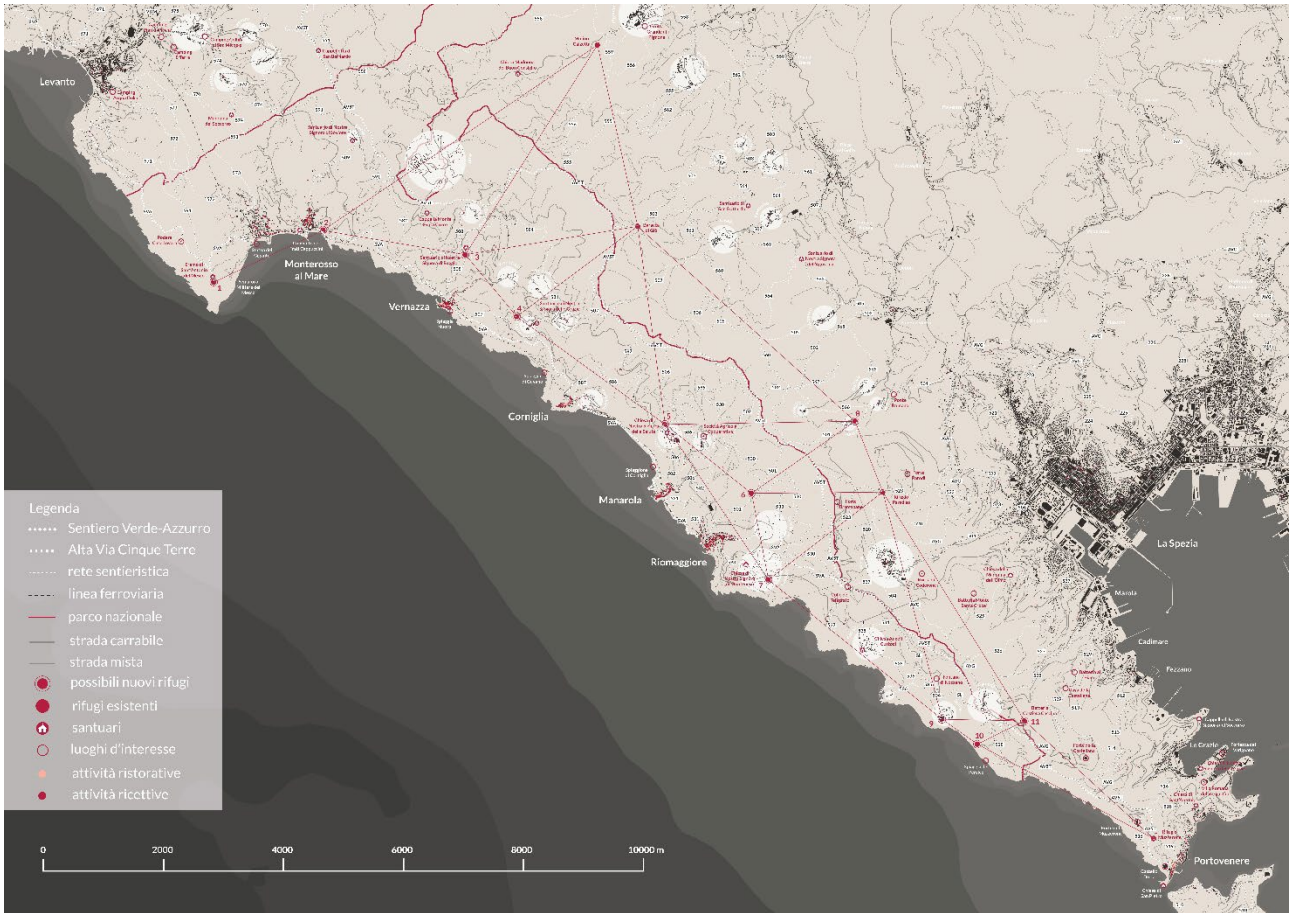
To mitigate this phenomenon, it is mandatory to develop sustainable and responsible tourism that focuses on eco-friendly practices and the conscious management of tourist flows. Strategies such as promoting alternative itineraries, introducing capacity limits, and enhancing local heritage; can help better distribute visitors and reduce pressure on the most frequented areas, thereby distributing the benefits of tourism more equitably.

The Cinque Terre National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site, has also seen its visitors number skyrocket, with a record annual influx of around 3.4 million tourists in 2023. The deterioration of the natural environment and the reduced quality of life for residents have prompted the Park to actively address the problem through internal flow analysis and the adoption of integrated governance tools such as the "European Charter for Sustainable Tourism" (ECST).

The thesis proposes the creation of a network of accommodation facilities along the Park trails by recovering and repurposing the abandoned and degraded building heritage, especially in rural areas. This new system of services, in addition to enhancing a unique landscape, aims to attract a particular type of slow tourism that ensures low and better distributed tourist pressure and greater economic benefits for the local area.

In particular, the proposal focuses on the recovery of the Punta Mesco Military Semaforo, an abandoned optical military signaling structure located on the promontory that marks the boundary of the Cinque Terre. The project envisages the enhancement of the entire area surrounding the military structure, which is notable for the ruins of the ancient Augustinian church of Sant'Antonio Abate, dating back to the second half of the 13th century. The final goal of the project is to bring the semaphore back to life by transforming it into an off-grid refuge with a

small adjoining restaurant. This new landmark for hikers will be able to convey the centuries-old history of this magnificent promontory.





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