



# Monitoring the success of eradication programmes in inhabited islands in Italy

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## Working on inhabited islands

honours...

- Opportunity to combine the benefits to the ecosystem with those to resident communities
  - Reduce zoonotic risk
  - Reduce damage to crops
  - Reduce damage to wires and tubes
  - Reduce impacts on commercial activities (restaurants, diving centers)
  - Reduce impact on food stores
  - Reduce the amount of rodenticide spread
- Great consensus among residents and tourists increase the awareness on eradication programmes





# Working on inhabited islands

## honours...

- Great support from residents and tourists increases acceptance of eradication projects
- Important and very effective communications activities







Working on inhabited islands

...and burdens

- great challenges, increased complexity
- presence of non-target animals (including pets)
- highly diversified habitats
- important food sources for rats (garbage dumps, poultry houses, food stores...)





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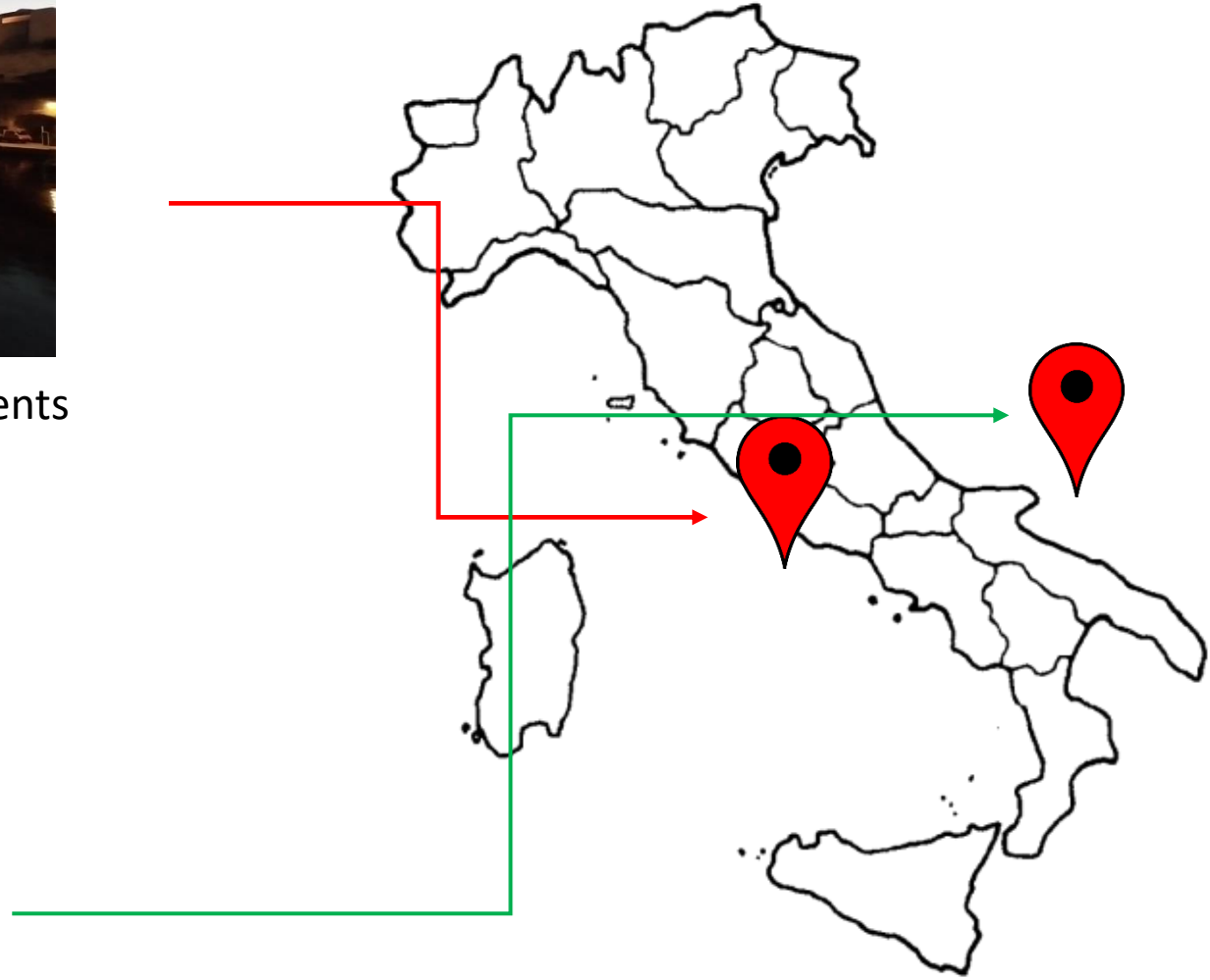


Ventotene (Ponziante, Latium) 140 ha, 700 residents

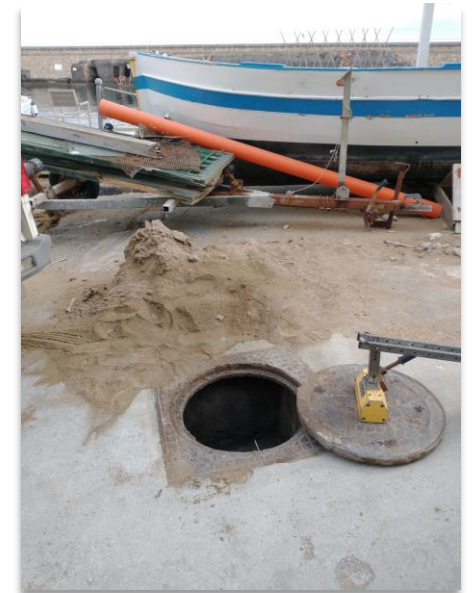


San Domino (Tremi, Apulia) 205 ha, 500 residents

## Two case study



Success must be proven above and below ground



**Sewer baiting, a first in rat eradication**



# Main tools

- In the last stages of eradication, rats do not enter the dispensers, and food is abundant (as for an invader on a rat-free islands)
- It is necessary to focus on detection with different tools
- Catching them with traps
- Camera traps are a key tools too
- Experimental use of bat detectors in San Domino





## San Domino

No consumption inside bait stations from September 2022 but every month some reports - only 1 in January-February 2023

All reports in areas with extra-food sources (survived or converged there?)



2 rats killed by an A24 in a hen house with no bait consumption from 2 months



Camera traps with many different foods are the best tools

Last rat sighting on San Domino: an adult male not in search of food



# Can residents help?

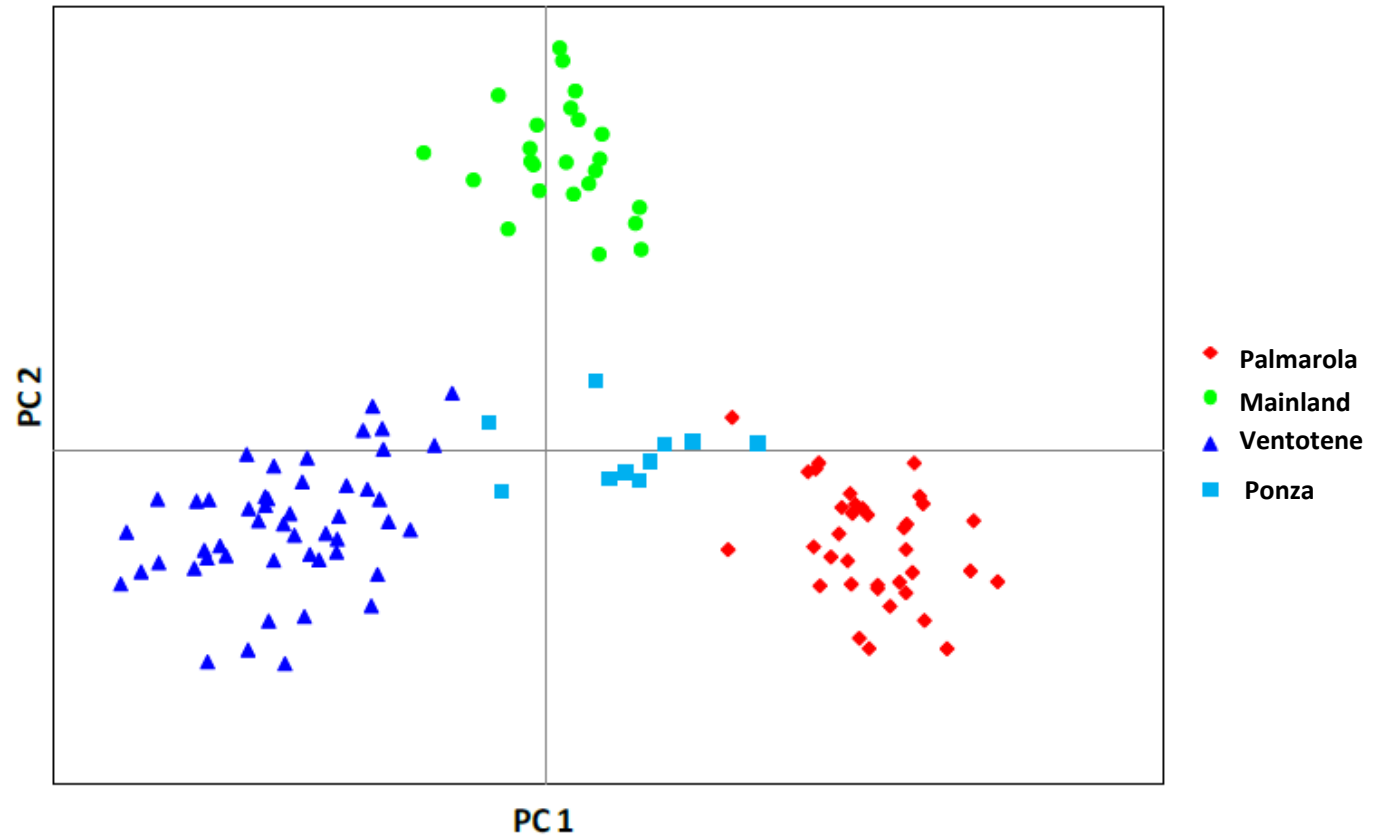
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- On inhabited islands, the cooperation of residents is extremely important
- On both islands, most of the reports were reliable => discovering of some rats surviving in very small areas
- Presence of unfounded reports





# Biosecurity: a help from genetic analyses





# Biosecurity activities



- Cooperation with maritime companies
- Awareness-raising of residents for involvement in biosecurity
- Camera trapping
- Wax blox, tracking cards
- Trapping and baiting in:
  - harbours and landing points on target islands
  - ships
  - harbours of mainland
  - harbours of other islands (Ponza)



**But the secret is...**



**... to check it well!**