**PRESS RELEASE**

**FROM NATURE THE BENEFITS FOR MAN AND THE OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE POLICIES**

Venice Mestre 24 October 2019

The environment, nature and the territory are the first "suppliers" of the companies in terms of raw materials and services. That is what emerged in the meeting that took place with representatives of associations of entrepreneurs and networks of innovative companies in Mestre this morning.

Veneto Innovazione organized this event to present the Interreg Europe project IRENES (Integrating Renewable energy and Ecosystem Services in environmental and energy policies) in which it participates together with IUAV University of Venice. IRENES intends to explore all the benefits deriving from nature in synergy with renewable energy sources, sharing experiences with other European regions. At this point IRENES will propose tools and forms of financing to policymakers to improve and develop sustainable energy policies.

"To understand what the benefits of nature are - explained Ms Elena Gissi of the IUAV University of Venice - let's think about the woods. It offers the possibility of walking - that is good for health, but it also amazes us or allows us to spend some time with our friends. Still, at the same time, it makes us safe from landslides. It, therefore, offers health benefits, educational services, good social relations and soil protection".

"IRENES - continued Eng. Gissi - intends to collect all the projects that affect the benefits deriving from nature, involving as many sectors as possible. "

The project awakened great interest among companies. They explained that the territory and nature constitute the capital of food producers. Many producers are turning to biodiversity by reintroducing native productions that protect and improve the soil. Some companies draw energy from the exploitation of biomass; other companies study new technologies for the integration of renewable energy together with the universities.

However, business representatives complained that to sustainably exploit the benefits of nature and renewable energy, it is necessary for them to start testing phases which unfortunately are subject to complicated and discouraging regulations.

"IRENES - Ms Gissi clarified - aims to identify the gaps, the limits and the barriers in the current planning tools. Pointing out to policymakers the need for simplifying norms is part of its activities.

The next appointment is in Venice on 19 and 20 November with the European partner regions and regional representatives.

Veneto Innovazione Spa