

**THE SURVIVAL
OF VENICE IS
DEPENDENT ON ITS
LAGOON SYSTEM
BUT THIS IS BEING
SERIOUSLY ERODED
BY SHIP TRAFFIC**

SOURCE: Fast shoreline erosion induced by ship wakes in a coastal lagoon: Field evidence and remote sensing analysis. PLoS ONE 12(10): e0187210, October 2017.

Awareness campaign by We are here Venice / weareherevenice.org
Psewarherevenice / Campagna informativa a cura di We are here Venice.

**AIR POLLUTION
CAUSES SERIOUS
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DISEASES. IN VENICE,
WE BREATHE FINE
PARTICULATES AT
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HIGHER THAN W.H.O.
GUIDELINES**

SOURCE: World Health Organization report – Ambient air pollution: A global assessment of exposure and burden of disease, 2016; www.who.int/airquality

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**EMISSIONS FROM
CRUISE SHIPS
ARE HAZARDOUS
TO THE HEALTH OF
THEIR PASSENGERS
AS WELL AS TO
PEOPLE LIVING IN
PORT CITIES**

SOURCE: Plusminus, TV programme on ARD, Germany's leading public broadcaster, 08th March 2017.

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UPDATE: Air Quality, the Biennale and Environmental Justice

We continue to provide the people of Venice and the world with a greater potential to understand the critical issues affecting Venice.

We work with different partners, through multiple channels, to disseminate key facts about the threats to the city and lagoon system alongside opportunities to address them, and encourage broader participation in decision-making.

Our strategy - and mission - combines RESEARCH with ACTION.

Biennale stickers:

Our campaign began with a letter in April 2018 to Biennale curators, offering them a way to show support and help spread the word about the importance of Venice as a living city and evidence-based approaches to policy making (more generally).

Many replied, expressing support for WahV's initiative. In some cases, this triggered a significant response: the curator of the Danish pavilion raised the issue with the Minister of Culture and ARUP are discussing adopting the campaign at a corporate level.

Meanwhile, over 20 national pavilions at the XVI Venice Architecture Biennale as well as other collateral events have been and are continuing to distribute our sticker envelopes in their official press packs during the vernissage and/or directly to exhibit visitors. Over 8,000 stickers have been released -- around Venice, on bags, phones, laptops and elsewhere. [The distribution continues!](#)

New poster:

Our fourth series of posters has been rolled out around the city, with the the following message: **AIR POLLUTION CAUSES SERIOUS HEART AND LUNG DISEASES. IN VENICE, WE BREATHE FINE PARTICULATES AT LEVELS UP TO 5X HIGHER THAN W.H.O GUIDELINES.**

These posters are timely considering the new data released by the World Health Organisation in May concerning the impact of air pollutants on health¹, which make for alarming findings following the European Environment Agency's 2017 report on air quality². Italy has since been referred to the EU Court of Justice for exceeding legal levels of particulate matter (PM₁₀); failing to respect air quality limit values and failing to take appropriate measures to keep exceedance periods as short as possible. The Veneto is one of the air-quality zones where daily limit values have been persistently exceeded.³

¹ WHO (2018). 9 out of 10 people worldwide breathe polluted air, but more countries are taking action. World Health Organisation.

² EEA (2017). Air Quality in Europe – 2017 Report. European Environment Agency.

³ COM(2018)330. A Europe that protects: Clean air for all. European Commission.



While the stickers focus on the impact of cruise ships - emblematic of Venice's problems and easily identifiable as out of proportion and incompatible with the physical and ecological realities of our fragile lagoon and urban environment - the new posters highlight the alarming implications for the health of both the city's residents and visitors, due to pollution from ship and boat traffic.

Both campaigns pinpoint the deficiencies of policy makers: Several misconceived plans to reroute cruise ships have been proposed but a concrete solution has not yet been found and no inter-disciplinary, objective, comparative analysis of all the options has been formally carried out. Moreover, to date, infringement procedures for persistent exceedances of other limit values for air quality, including nitrogen dioxide levels, have been launched by the European Commission against Italy.

In light of these failures, our campaigns invite international support to strengthen our appeal. They are also relevant across the world in different disciplines: we need rational approaches to complex problems, based on the best available scientific knowledge.

British Council

Once again WahV is a "Supporting Partner" of the British Council Fellowship Programme, providing regular orientation sessions for the fellows who come to Venice to conduct research while working at the British Pavilion during the Biennale, to help them better understand the physical, economic, ecological and social realities.

Antigua and Barbuda

WahV was invited to develop and manage the Outreach Programme for Antigua and Barbuda's first national pavilion at the XVI Architecture Biennale, with the theme of *Environmental Justice as a Civil Right*.

We are firmly committed to this theme as it is closely connected to our underlying principles: small islands worldwide face significant challenges related to global environmental changes, just as Venice does, and everyone needs to be empowered to understand the issues and make their voices heard and preferences known.

A series of video-conferences were held in April, connecting highschool students in Venice, Antigua, Barbuda and Manhattan. They shared personal experiences of island living and the consequences of climate change, leading to fruitful discussions on the concept of environmental justice.

Others who share our commitments are invited to make use of the space at the Centro Culturale Don Orione Artigianelli before the Biennale ends in November. If you are interested or would like to participate in the programme, please get in touch with gabriella@weareherevenice.org

