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AGROVOLTAIC PLANTS IN ITALY: AN INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY BETWEEN RES AND AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPES

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A SHORT HISTORY OF AN OPPORTUNITY MISSED

The 2007 - 2012 PV booming:
the raise of incentives costs and
a new threat in terms of land-use.

The land-use concern and the NIMBY and NIMTO
syndrome: the beginning of the agrovoltaic era.

ITALIAN LEGAL FRAMEWORK: THE 2012 “STOP LOSS” ACTION ON THE INCENTIVES UP TO THE “*SPALMA INCENTIVI*”

- ▶ Article 65 of the Law-Decree no. 1/2012: the prohibition for PV plants on agricultural area to benefit from RES incentives.
- ▶ The so - called “Spalma Incentivi” : in 2014 the stop loss action is completed with a “game over” move.
- ▶ Credit crunch and market crisis
- ▶ Escape of the foreign investors

**BUT NOW THE
TIMES ARE
CHANGING..**

Indeed, after a decade of legal and (also) cultural fights, on 2021 the prohibition of article 65 has been superseded for all these PV plants having features of

AGROVOLTAIC PLANTS

THE ITALIAN RES FRAMEWORK

Although the combined production of both renewable energy and food production has been proposed and discussed since the early 90s, the agrovoltaic technology has been boosted by the Governments only from July 2021 with the first law ruling this specific kind of plants.

AGROVOLTAIC TECHNOLOGY, WHAT IS THIS?

An integrated and hybrid system capable of:

- ❖ meeting both energy and food production needs;
- ❖ make real the possibility of producing electricity while maintaining the direct cultivation of (underlying) lands.

A WIN-WIN SOLUTION

FARMERS

- ▶ water savings;
- ▶ energy costs saving;
- ▶ Increase of total revenue;
- ▶ crops protection from extreme climatic events;
- ▶ recover of abandoned agricultural plots.

A WIN-WIN SOLUTION

ENERGY PRODUCERS

- ▶ the vegetation beneath panels can have potential positive implications for PV plants in hot climates, as solar PV efficiency is diminished where ambient temperature increases;
- ▶ vegetation also acts as an effective dust suppressant, typically a significant inhibitor to solar module efficiency.

AGROVOLTAIC IN THE PNRR

The Recovery and Resilience Plan boosts the development of agrovoltaic plants in order to ensure and promote both the ecological transition and climate neutrality.

PNRR “*Mission 2, investment 1.1.*”, expressly provides for the development of a production capacity from agrovoltaic plants. → 1.1 € Billion

PNRR “*Mission 2, Investment 2.2*”, expressly provides for the development of the Agrisolar Park. 1.5 € Billion

AGROVOLTAIC: FURTHER REGULATORY CHANGES

Law Decree no. 77/2021 (“Simplification Decree 2021”) has provided the possibility for agrovoltaic plants to benefit from RES incentives thus superseding the abovementioned prohibition set forth under article 65 of the Law-Decree no. 1/2012.

Simplification Decree 2021 has specified that the access to RES incentives is subject to the simultaneous implementation of monitoring systems that make it possible to verify both the impact of the agrovoltaic plant on crops and the continuity of the agricultural activities.

AGROVOLTAIC: FURTHER REGULATORY CHANGES

AUTHORIZATION PROCEDURE SIMPLIFIED

Within 3-kilometers from an industrial area, without any limit of power capacity, the Simplified Authorization Procedure (*i.e.*, PAS) shall apply.

In this case, the EIA shall not be carried out up to 20 MW power capacity.

The government is going to issue the technical guidelines to be complied with to be actually considered “agrovoltaic” plant, that are expected shortly, as well as the incentives plan to be applied.

AGRISOLAR PARK

PNRR Mission 2, Investment 2.2. allocates euro 1,5 billion to promote solar panels installation on farms' buildings without consuming new soil.

Measure already enacted by way of Ministerial Decree 25/03/22

- a) PV plants with capacity power between 6 kWp and 500 kWp;
- b) Non-refundable contributions equal to euro 1,500.00 for each kWp;
- c) for each project the maximum non-refundable contributions is equal to euro 750,000.00 (max euro 1,000,000 for each beneficiary)

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