

PRESS RELEASE

PROJECT “CHRISTMAS IN ROME – LET’S GIFT A SUSTAINABLE CITY” PRESENTED AT THE CAMPIDOGGIO. CHRISTMAS TREE LIT IN PIAZZA VENEZIA

The initiative is promoted by Roma Capitale, the FAO, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and Acea

*According to Roberto **Gualtieri**, mayor of Rome, the project aims at a “Christmas in the name of light and sustainability, symbolising the citizens’ willingness to act in compliance with their duty to save the planet”*

*Rome, 8 December 2021 - A Christmas made of sustainability and responsibility through a collaboration between Roma Capitale, the FAO, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and Acea. The traditional tree in *Piazza Venezia* and the installations in the other 14 municipalities ask citizens to join global efforts to build a more sustainable world.*

*The campaign, presented this afternoon in the *Sala della Protomoteca* at the *Campidoglio*, is entitled “*Natale a Roma – Regaliamoci una città sostenibile*” (Christmas in Rome – Let’s gift a sustainable city). The event included speeches from mayor **Roberto Gualtieri**, **Michaela Castelli**, Acea’s President, **Enrico Giovannini**, Minister of Sustainable Infrastructures and Mobility and **Qu Dongyu**, Director General of the FAO.*

*The lightening of the tree in *Piazza Venezia* came after the presentation. At its base, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations – represented as gift-wrapped parcels. The Goals are also recalled in a ring nut at the base of the Christmas trees in the other 14 municipalities. As always, the lightning has been completely provided by Acea for the innovative and sustainable project “Rome by light ACEA 2021™”.*

*“A Christmas in the name of sustainability – explained mayor **Roberto Gualtieri**, – which aims to join a time of celebration with a moment of reflection on the goals identified by the UN, to ensure a better future for all of us, starting from children. I am therefore grateful to all the partners involved in the project. The tree in *Piazza Venezia*, the installation in municipalities and the sustainable lighting system, the message to children – continued – are the symbols of our city’s willingness to act in respect of our duty to save our planet and, as Pope Francis wrote in his encyclical *Laudato si’*, to “unite the whole human family, searching for a sustainable and integral development”. Which means a form of development putting at the centre the individual and the construction of an “integral” and, at the same time, “environmental, economic, social and cultural energy”, capable to achieve a real improvement of the quality of people’s daily life and dedicated to common good and solidarity between generations”.*

*“The gifts under this ‘tree of actions’ are a sort of guide for all of us on how to be part of this change, through simple actions” stated FAO’s Director General **Qu Dongyu**. By inviting everybody to get information on “sustainable choices which everyone can make in his/her daily life”, **Qu** highlighted the importance of “working together to make our society – both in the countryside and in cities – more sustainable for a better production, nutrition, environment and life for all, with nobody left behind”.*

*“A Christmas trying to achieve sustainable development goals is an important message for everybody, in particular for younger generations: a message of trust for a different and better future – said **Enrico Giovannini**, Minister of Sustainable Infrastructures and Mobility*

–. *“Sustainable development is not just an environmental issue, but a wider concept ranging from health protection, social inclusion, overcoming of social gaps starting with gender gaps, to waste elimination and circular economy. These goals shall be integrated in territories, neighbourhoods and suburbs, to improve the quality of life and the way economic activities operate. My wish is that these 17 gifts under the Christmas tree in Piazza Venezia in Rome, representing the Sustainable Development Goals, could make Romans and tourists think about the commitment we are called upon to”* – concluded the Minister.

*““With its traditional Christmas lights, Acea confirms its closeness to the city and its attention to enhance the architectural heritage of Rome – said **Michaela Castelli**, President of Acea. “This year, with the “Rome by light 2021” project, the company has also participated in the initiative promoted by Roma Capitale and the FAO, aimed at raising awareness of sustainability issues. Seventeen symbols, representing the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN 2030 Agenda, have been integrated into the lights. This choice is coherent and perfectly in line with the commitment of the Group to spreading a sustainability culture, careful about environment and social issues.”*

“Christmas in Rome 2021”

The tree in *Piazza Venezia* as a message to all children

Each of the 17 gifts under the Christmas tree, representing the commitments of the United Nations 2030 Agenda, will be provided with a QR code to scan, showing some concrete actions to carry out for changing our lifestyle, starting from Christmas. A further gift, the eighteenth, illustrated by the Roman artist Lorenzo Terranera, will be dedicated to children. This will contain some simple actions to be taken by children at home or school to contribute to achieve a sustainable future for everybody.

The Sustainable Development Goals of the UN 2030 Agenda and the role of FAO

On 25 September 2015, the 193 member states of the United Nations adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda, including those most directly connected with the FAO’s commitment: the end of poverty and hunger, the response to climate change, the management of our natural resources, gender equality, sustainability of our cities and communities.

In order to make everybody participate, through personal actions, in the realisation of a sustainable future, the FAO has developed many communication campaigns, as the World Food Day. Moreover, through the Green Cities initiative, it collaborates with municipalities to increase green areas, improve the connection to rural areas, share the best practices to help fighting against climate change.

The initiative “Christmas in Rome-Let’s gift a sustainable city” builds on the experiences of the G20 Green Garden in the Appia Antica Park in Rome, an open-air museum celebrating biodiversity, nature and ancient heritage of the Capital, claiming global solidarity to create a sustainable future for everybody.

“Rome by light ACEA 2021™”

It is an initiative launched by Acea in 2019, allowing to create innovative, technological and sustainable Christmas lighting in the centre of the Capital (Via del Corso) and in other fourteen municipalities hosting their own Christmas trees. A total of 300,000 led lights, with low environmental impact – reducing 45% of daily energy consumption –, have been used to combine energy saving with enhancement of the city's artistic heritage. The project has a modular structure that allows to create, modify and, first of all, reuse installations.

This year, Acea is still working alongside the FAO, integrating in its lightning installations the iconic elements of the campaign for the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations. Via del Corso will be characterized by a 1.5 km-long installation with 17 panels with the SDGs wheel, while two further panels with the partners' logo will be placed respectively at the beginning and at the end of the street. 17 images, selected for an original artistic concept telling the Capital's beauty and history, through a luminous graphic representation of the most significative monuments of the city.

App, totems and photo contest

Citizens and tourists can see the contents of the project using a web app (also available on the FAO's website). Using a QR code, they will have access to the installations and to the different info points (totems) in the city.

Among the contents available: the 17 Goals of the 2030 Sustainable Agenda, the section with actions for children, the map of trees distributed in the municipalities and the link to the photo contest promoted by Acea, opened from 8 December to 10 January, to invite visitors to tell and enhance the traditional Christmas lightning installations in Via del Corso and the trees by sending their photos. Besides, through the project's web app, it will be possible to participate in the contest "Rome by light Acea", from which multimedia content will be available for detailed information on the monuments depicted in the installations.