

## **Mountains, a survey reveals: 60% of the territory are at risk**

**60% of the Modenese territory is prone to landslides. Hydro-geological distortions are frequently causing landslides crashing suddenly down on the streets and villages highly exposed to this risk. Even the most established experts are not able to predict these disasters in advance. The only way forward is prevention. Therefore prevention and monitoring are the two key issues of the fourth workshop "Monitor II" that has been started yesterday at the Department for Earth Science in Modena.**

The mountainous territory of the province is to an extent of 60% formed of landslide bodies, of which 40% are in a quiescent status, one could say that they are 'sleeping'. But be careful, their inactivity is not eternal. One day they could recover from their torpor creating various problems. However, explains Professor Alessandro Corsini from the University of Modena, 99% of the landslides that are forming our territory would advance with a slow movement in the case of a reactivation. These slowly flowing landslides in the province of Modena are moving on average only a few centimetres per year - is enabling residents to rescue themselves only losing their real estates. In common language the term landslide only means a subsidence of land. But landslides are describing flows of geological materials originating in the millennia following the period of glaciations. For this reason we are speaking of landslide bodies. A term that indicates a territory that has been created by a landslide and subsequently stabilized itself. The timely limitation of stability should be considered adequately by local authorities in any regional planning activity.

In Emilia Romagna 30 thousand landslides were surveyed, of which one quarter is active, the remaining part is quiescent. The territory of Sestola and Fanano are to a large extent situated on a dormant landslide body. Furthermore, Fellicarolo has been built on a quiescent landslide body formed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In comparison to previous years, the number of landslides has not increased. However, the extent of damages has increased. In a progressively urbanizing situation, in which citizens tend to abuse the environment, it is more likely that the reactivation of landslides might damage constructions made by man. "In this sense, the relationship between planning of the territory and landslides is a real problem" specified Prof. Corsini. To minimize the risks for human beings, it is necessary that local authorities are informed and know the characteristics of the territory under governance. Knowledge and culture of prevention are the two pivots around which Monitor II is currently holding a workshop at the University of Modena.