

08:30
◀ Mail

The Telegraph News

WORLD NEWS

Italian outcry over nuclear dump plans in land of the Etruscans

NICK SQUIRES in Rome

ITALIANS are in revolt against a plan to dump nuclear waste in rolling hills once inhabited by the ancient Etruscans.

Locals in Tuscia, a large rural area north of Rome, say they have spent decades promoting organic farming and wildlife conservation and that the facility would threaten their livelihoods.

€900m

The estimated cost of the waste facility, which experts say is suited to the geology of the earmarked area

08:30
◀ Mail

The Telegraph News

Italian authorities have identified 51 potential sites across the country for the dump, 22 of which are in Tuscia, meaning that there is a high probability it will be located there.

The name of the area, which is in northern Lazio, derives from the Etruscans who once ruled it, building elaborate tombs, rock-hewn sunken roads and aqueducts that survive to this day.

Experts from Sogin, Italy's nuclear decommissioning agency, say the geology of the area makes it particularly suitable as a location for the dump, which will cost an estimated €900 million (£770 million) to build and maintain. But they now face fierce opposition from local communities.

About 2,000 people from 60 towns and villages in Tuscia held a protest march recently, vowing to oppose the project.

One of the proposed dump sites is close to a World Wide Fund for Nature reserve called



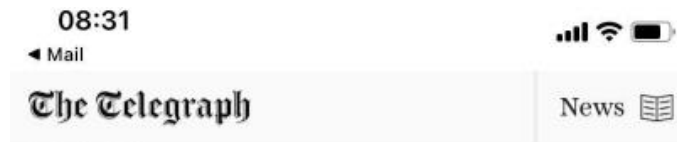
One of the proposed dump sites is close to a World Wide Fund for Nature reserve called Pian Sant'Angelo, which boasts centuries-old oaks and archaeological remains. It is a habitat for pine martens, wild cats and Hermann's tortoises.

"It seems a very strange choice of location. This is an area that from an environmental point of view has been ahead of the game for years," said William Urquhart, a British conservationist who has an organic farm in the area.

"This was one of the first parts of Italy to embrace organic farming and to push biodiversity.

"Farms around here produce organic olive oil, honey and hazelnuts. The dump has to be put somewhere, but locating it here seems really odd," he told *The Telegraph*.

Mr Urquhart questioned whether the area was geologically suitable for the facility. "The last time there was a big earthquake in



"This was one of the first parts of Italy to embrace organic farming and to push biodiversity.

"Farms around here produce organic olive oil, honey and hazelnuts. The dump has to be put somewhere, but locating it here seems really odd," he told *The Telegraph*.

Mr Urquhart questioned whether the area was geologically suitable for the facility. "The last time there was a big earthquake in central Italy, in 2016, massive cracks appeared in the walls of our house," he said. "Our neighbours were so scared that they slept in their car that night."

Danilo Piersanti, the mayor of Gallese, a village in the area, said: "There's a 50 per cent chance that it will be built in Tuscia, even though we have been promoting organic agriculture for years. We are determined to oppose it."