

SUMMARY OF EUCALAND PROJECT WP 4.

ASSESSMENT OF INTERNATIONAL POLICIES CONSIDERING CULTURAL HERITAGE AND AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPES

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The work done in WP4 “International Policies” had two objectives: (1). To review the main policies that, at international and European levels, had an influence on preserving the values of cultural heritage significant to agricultural landscapes and (2) To initiate thinking on an evaluation process, which is, like other policies, closely linked to operational goals. In particular, WP4 examined the activities carried out at the world level by UNESCO, ICOMOS and IUCN, and those conducted at the European level by the Council of Europe and the European Union. It also checked national policies. Before discussing about legal conditions and frameworks for the protection and maintenance of our cultural heritage in our agricultural landscapes, assessment methods for European agricultural landscapes within the framework of international heritage policies and conventions have to be developed. Some agricultural landscapes maintain visible traces of historical structures of the past more than others do. Others appear overall more transformed by modern living. The palimpsest of historical traces can be impoverished, degraded, abandoned and threatened, but it has hardly been destroyed if you are informed and want to read about it. This research therefore had two objectives. First, it aimed at assembling the main international and European policies relevant to preserving values of cultural heritage in agricultural landscapes. Second, it analysed issues of assessment that are important to reach operational goals. After knowing about legal instruments and backgrounds on the different levels: national, European and international, an evaluation of the critical aspects and potential of sites in order to manage economic, social and productive transformations could be conducted. But this was not part of the research objectives of this introduction project.

The Working Group searched for the legislative basis on national, especially European and international level on that landscape protection and maintenance is carried out or that might act as catalyst for the acting parties. Therefore it was necessary to conduct a survey, which kind of legal instruments does exist. Which content and even more important which force do they have. The research focus was laid on examining the following actors:

- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)
- International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

The latter two are so called advisory bodies that provide scientific and operational support to UNESCO.

At the European level, it examined the activities of the

- Council of Europe (CoE) and
- the European Union (EU).

Finally the implemented legal guidelines and laws in several partner countries of the Eucaland Project have been evaluated.

The method was mainly based on the analysis of laws, regulations and guidelines. The Working Group assessed documents' general aims, subjects, concepts, policies and strategic approaches, as well as the criteria used for assessing the cultural character of agricultural landscapes as far as they exist.

The concerned researchers worked in groups. Each group examined a specific institution, gathering and cataloguing relevant documents and reporting results to the coordinator according to a common scheme. The data gathered and classified will allow other researchers to investigate them further. Working meetings established a common method of analysis and cross-evaluated results.

The Working Group closely cooperated with Work Package 5 (landscape planning) which focussed especially on the national planning legislation.

The research shows that there is no single document, which aimed specifically at safeguarding of the cultural meaning of agricultural landscapes. But it also showed how this theme is currently addressed by various institutional sectors. No institution has yet undertaken a systematic survey on the effects of policies in these documents. Only in the case of the Common Agricultural Policy (GAP) has some official information been gathered that gives a first impression of its impact at an international level. Such a test might also be performed at the national and local levels. The analysis and comparison conducted; show also, that there is no common guideline and understanding in acting on the topic of cultural and agricultural landscapes. Although many countries have already ratified the European Landscape Convention, there is no common understanding and treating of how to address, classify, maintain, protect and develop the cultural heritage in our agricultural landscapes.