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Agropastoralism and sustainable development: the recognition of agropastoralism in the framework of international conventions

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Abstract: *The presentation focuses on the integration of the agropastoralism in the operations of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, considering the “combined works of man and nature” in the Convention and since 1992 the inclusion of the cultural landscape categories into the Operational Guidelines.*

Furthermore, the paper presents a number of other international instruments and programmes including the Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB) which also covers Biosphere Reserves in the Mediterranean Region including agropastoralist systems, such as the Arganeraie (Morocco), and the agro-ecosystems of the Oasis of the South of Morocco.

The 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage also protects the living heritage related to agropastoral systems, but not the cultural and environmental values of the places as such, with the following elements as examples: Italy: Canto a Tenore, Sardinian Pastoral songs and Jordan: Cultural Space of the Bedu in Petra and Wadi Rum.

The presentation then reviews sites included on the World Heritage List, such as the Laponian Area (Sweden) or Hortobagy (Hungary) as well as sites included in national Tentative Lists such as “The Transhumance: The Royal Shepherd's Track” (Italie), the nominated site of “Les Cévennes et les Grandes Causses”, France or the “Mesta Livestock Trails” (Spain).

Finally the provisions of the Operational Guidelines concerning sustainable development, recommendations of previous expert meetings and Committee decisions are analyzed; as well as links to other programmes in the UN system (MAB, FAO-GHIAS) and beyond (IUCN) and the World Report on Cultural Diversity (UNESCO 2009).

Keywords. *Agropastoralism – UNESCO – World Heritage Convention – World Heritage List – Cultural Landscapes*

Vers une patrimonialisation de l'agro-pastoralisme comme vecteur de développement durable / La reconnaissance de l'agro-pastoralisme dans le cadre des conventions internationales

Résumé : L'article traite de l'intégration de l'agropastoralisme dans les opérations de la Convention du Patrimoine Mondial, considérant les « travaux combinés de l'homme et de la nature » dans la Convention et depuis 1992 l'inclusion de la catégorie paysage culturel dans les Directives Opérationnelles.

En outre, ce papier présente plusieurs autres instruments et programmes internationaux incluant l'Homme et le Programme de la Biosphère (MAB) qui couvre aussi les Réserves de la Biosphère dans la Région Méditerranéenne incluant les systèmes agropastoraux tels que l'Arganeraie (Maroc) et les agro-systèmes de l'Oasis du Sud du Maroc.

La Convention de 2003 pour la sauvegarde du Patrimoine Intangible et Culturel protège aussi le patrimoine vivant en relation avec les systèmes agropastoraux mais pas les valeurs culturelles et environnementales des sites comme les exemples suivants : Italie : *Canto a Tenore*, les chants pastoraux de Sardaigne et Jordanie : l'espace culturel des Bédouins à Petra et Wadi Rum.

L'article passe en revue ensuite les sites faisant partie de la Liste du Patrimoine Mondial comme le territoire de la Laponie (Suède) ou Hortobagy (Hongrie) aussi bien que les sites des Listes nationales provisoires comme la Transhumance : la Piste du Berger Royal (Italie), le site des Cévennes et des Grands Causses (France) et les pistes du bétail de Mesta (Espagne).

Finaleme nt, les dispositions des Directives opérationnelles concernant le développement durable, les recommandations de réunions d'experts précédentes et les décisions du Comité sont analysées comme des liens vers d'autres programmes du système des NU (MAB, FAO-GHIAS) et au delà (IUCN) et le Rapport Mondial sur la Diversité Culturelle (UNESCO 2009)..

Mots clés : Agropastoralisme – UNESCO – Convention du Patrimoine mondial – Liste du Patrimoine Mondial – Paysages culturels.

Introduction

The evolution of the interpretation of the 1972 World Heritage Convention with the integration of the cultural landscape concept in 1992 and the adoption of the Global Strategy for a balanced World Heritage List in 1994 has paved the way in recognizing the interaction between people and the land, between humankind and its environment. It has also opened a pathway to recognizing agropastoralism and transhumance practices as a specific form of cultural heritage.

Today, the World Heritage Convention has been signed by 186 countries and covers 890 sites in UNESCO's World Heritage List. However, despite considerable efforts to broaden the categories of heritage and the regional coverage, the World Heritage List still contains many sites of monumental heritage and historic cities and only a few living cultural landscapes and even less agropastoralist systems.

In the past two decades, cultural landscapes of different types have been accepted and, according to the analysis by Fowler (2003), are mainly in the category of living cultural landscapes. However the category of agriculture and animal husbandry systems seems to have been neglected, So far, very few state parties have included sites on their national Tentative Lists or have focused nominations on other values and have ignored agropastoral practices that are present and important for the values and customary management of the sites, with impacts on both cultural traditions and the environment.

The focus on the Mediterranean Region is particularly interesting, as it is the region which provides early evidence: *“C'est certainement entre le VI et le IVème millénaire avant JC (néolithique) que le pastoralisme et les pratiques de la transhumance, qui lui sont liées se diffusent à partir des rivages méditerranéens ...”* (G. Dalla Rosa and D. Julien, 2007, 4).

I – Agropastoralism: the current situation on the World Heritage List

Analysis of the current World Heritage List (2009) reveals that there are only a few agriculture sites and even fewer demonstrate outstanding forms of agropastoral systems. Among them however, exceptional sites like the Puszta, illustrated by Hortobagy National Park - The Puszta (Hungary), the nomadic reindeer systems of the Laponian Area (Sweden) or the forms of transhumance crossing the political borders between France and Spain at the Pyrénées - Mont Perdu or the Orkhon Valley (Mongolia).

A great number of other sites cover agropastoral practices but were not nominated for these values. For example the Costiera Amalfitana (Italy) was recognized as an “outstanding example of a Mediterranean landscape with exceptional cultural and natural scenic values resulting from its dramatic topography and historic evolution”. In the ICOMOS evaluation, however, one finds references to “large areas of open pastoral land” and “to dairy farming whose roots are ancient in the area, based on sheep, goats, cattle and buffalo” (ICOMOS evaluation of September 1997, p.133).

Again, since the meeting in 2007 the Tentative Lists have not changes considerably: the Causses et Cévennes area, France (nominated and presented to the World Heritage Committee in 2006 and 2008 but not inscribed yet), "The Transhumance: The Royal Shepherd's Track" (Italy) and the Mesta Livestock Trails (Spain). The latter specifically refers to the "practice of transhumance livestock raising" with a "road network for cyclical migrations along livestock trails". These trails are considered to be unique and have different names such as *canadas*, *cordeles* or *veredes*. They were created by the Mesta livestock farming guild in 1273 and are protected by legal provisions today. So far, no nomination dossier has been prepared in the case of Italy

Two areas on the Croatian Tentative List refer to livestock breeding and pastoralism: Kornati National Park and Telascica Nature Park on an isolated island with extensive sheep breeding since prehistoric times. In the 17th century, frequent livestock thefts by pirates and executions of shepherds were even reported. Today, a complex pattern of drystone walls shows the intense pastoral use over the centuries. Another site included on the national Tentative List is Lonjsko Polje Nature Park. This has also has been nominated but not recommended for inscription.

It seems that in recent years, despite considerable efforts (see Proceedings of the Meeting held in Meyrueis in 2007), not much progress has been achieved.

Concerning the nomination of the Causses et Cévennes area, debate by the World Heritage Committee revealed that there was still little understanding of the global importance of such systems.

At its 33rd session, the Committee referred the nomination back to the state party of France, specifically for a detailed inventory of attributes relating to agropastoralism. It also requested justification of the delimitations of the site and for provision of a basis for management and the maintenance of the attributes including the processes of practices related to agropastoralism and in essence to re-orient the dossier on agropastoralism and its manifestations. (Decision 33 COM 8B.32)

In the end the reworking of this dossier may help to better understand the exceptional values of such sites and to prepare a basis for a regional/global framework within which further sites could be considered for nomination and could assist States Parties to consider sites for integration in national Tentative Lists.

II – Heritage and sustainable development

The notion of sustainable development was introduced as sustainable land use in 1992 and only in 2005 as a general concept for World Heritage, embracing both cultural and natural heritage sites as driving forces for regional development. Despite the fact that pastoralist practices have existed in most parts of Europe and the Mediterranean since prehistoric times, these often failed to continue into the 20th century due to disruption by conflicts and war but also by on-going urban development and rural exodus.

The revival and renaissance of some of the practices gave new impetus to their understanding and also to their recognition as cultural heritage or for their special, unique interaction between people and nature. The creation of heritage museums on the theme of agropastoral systems such as the Maison du Berger (Haute Provence), the Écomusée de la Crau (France), the Virtual Museum of Transhumance (Slovenia), the ecomuseum of pastoralism in the Stura de Demonte valley (Italy) and the farming museum Romania) demonstrates this shift. It also illustrates the value given to these processes by local communities, municipalities and visitors. With other forms of support including through agrotourism, related cultural industries (crafts linked to pastoral products) as well as labels promoting products, such projects also contribute to the economic basis for continuing this flexible form of subsistence that is often resistant to global and climate change processes.

III – International collaboration: agropastoralism and other programmes

1. Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme

The UNESCO MAB programme, which provides for the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, covers a number of sites relevant for pastoralist practices. The Cévennes area, mentioned above, is already a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. The Monfrague Biosphere Reserve in Spain is a landscape shaped by cattle raising and is representative of the Mediterranean agro-sylvo-pastoralist system with rich biodiversity modified by human action. This site is also on the national Tentative List as “Plasencia – Montgrague – Trujillo: Mediterranean Landscape” and agropastoral practices are covered. Similarly, the Biosphere Reserves in the south of the Mediterranean, such as the Arganeraie (Morocco), and the agro-ecosystems of the Oasis of the South of Morocco demonstrate exceptional agropastoral systems, one of which produces the famous argan oil, often by women’s cooperatives.

The complementarity of the MAB Programme and World Heritage Conventions is evident—larger areas are often covered by the MAB programme and smaller areas within are nominated for World Heritage Listing. Thus in some cases Biosphere Reserves serve as buffer zones and a support system in terms of sustainable regional development.

2. GHIAS Programme

The “Globally-important Ingenious Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS)” of FAO (www.fao.org) is covered by another article (see David Boerma). UNESCO has collaborated since the beginning of the project and is represented on the Steering Committee. It is important to note that this initiative could assist countries in the identification of potential sites; this could include the provision of technical and financial assistance to prepare project documents which could later assist in a World Heritage nomination.

3. 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

Since the last meeting in the Cévennes, the 2003 Convention has moved into the operational phase with the inscription of elements beyond the “Masterpieces”. This opens new options for cooperation between the 1972 Convention which inscribed sites, that is to say physical places which demonstrate the outstanding universal value and in the case of cultural landscapes of the interaction between people and their environment, and “cultural spaces” with intangible heritage rituals, stories and practices. In the case of pastoralism, the cultural space could be nominated as a place, site or heritage route for the World Heritage List, whereas at the same time a traditional practice could be recognized under the 2003 Convention. Currently the two examples linked to pastoralist traditions are in Italy, the Canto a Tenore, Sardinian Pastoral songs, and in Jordan, the Cultural Space of the Bedu in Petra and Wadi Rum.

Further cooperation between the 1972 and 2003 UNESCO Conventions should be encouraged and state parties should obtain the best advice on how to best prepare dossiers and technical advice on which Convention should be considered for the safeguarding and conservation of elements and sites related to agropastoralism.

4. Alpine Convention

Some forms of pastoralism (nomadic, transhumance, common fields and sedentary) have also been discussed in the framework of the cooperation between the Alpine Convention and the 1972 World Heritage Convention which started with expert meetings in Hallstatt (Austria), in 2000 and in Turin (Italy) in 2001. A working group on World Heritage was created under the

Alpine Convention to discuss nominations and a coordinated approach to harmonizing Tentative Lists and potential future serial and transnational nominations, some of which cover specific transhumance forms in the Alps. A number of sites on Tentative Lists could be considered both for the Alpine and Mediterranean region, such as the Fuzina Hills (Slovenia), focused on Alpine pastures in the karst region cleared for grazing during the Middle Ages; specific architectural features can be found as archaic forms of herdsmen's huts. The links between the alpine pastoral forms, often covering three vertical stages of transhumance and the large-scale transhumance found in the Mediterranean, should be further explored and the 2009 report by the Alpine Convention working group analyzed in this respect.

5. Programmes of other bodies

For a number of years the World Conservation Union (IUCN) has considered agropastoralism among the practices which can support biodiversity. With the support of IUCN, UNDP and GEF a "World Initiative for Sustainable Pastoralism" was launched. This initiative also published a *Revue mondiale de l'économie du pastoralisme*.

Within Europe, many different projects to enhance and strengthen agropastoral practices demonstrated the new interest in the 1990s, including Pastomed or Transhumount (financed by the European Union).

Conclusion

Despite the lack of items related to agriculture and forms of pastoralism, in the Mediterranean region among others, on the UNESCO World Heritage List, a shift in paradigm can be noted.

Different forms of livestock subsistence and pastoral practices have been recognized as specific forms of cultural heritage linking cultural and biological diversity (UNESCO 2007). The 2009 UNESCO World Report on cultural diversity (UNESCO 2009) specifically mentions the global importance of cultural landscapes; furthermore, a World Initiative on Pastoralism was created in 2006 (with the support of IUCN and GEF). At local and regional levels, the recognition of these practices is illustrated by many initiatives and museums including specific eco-museums on transhumance and pastoralism.

Following a first expert meeting in the Cévennes (France) in 2007, the second expert meeting held in Tirana (Albania) in 2009 enhanced the understanding of processes and provided for a methodological framework for identifying sites and contributed to a future comparative study of the global phenomenon of pastoralist systems.

Pastoral and agro-pastoral systems have shaped the cultural landscapes of Mediterranean countries in a very specific way. They are adapted to environmental conditions and are the basis for the collective identity and cultural traditions including intangible elements of songs, rituals, clothing and food. They provide a rich heritage that can be protected under the World Heritage Convention for outstanding and exceptional sites, including transnational and serial nominations; at the same time, cooperation and coordination with other international programmes and projects can improve understanding by decision makers and the general public of these complex systems that include major movements of people and livestock.

The agropastoralist systems on which millions of people depend in all parts of the world also illustrate an important resource: they are resilient and adapt to new challenges, including globalization, urban encroachment and climate change. For this reason, they could enhance the concept of sustainable development by providing practical examples and experiences.

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Note

* See WISP Policy Brief, September 2006, www.iucn/wisp/

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