



## II INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE ALLIANCE OF WORLD HERITAGE CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

*“SPIRIT OF PLACE AND DEVELOPMENT”*

Sintra, from the 30th September to the 3rd October 2008

### CONCLUSIONS

More than actual conclusions, we would like to present a synthesis of what was said, by explaining, exploring and highlighting the possible fields of intervention and of action offered by the different presentations.

Each one of us, in our own way, and according to our knowledge of the Cultural Landscapes where we are located, stated and delimited goals or procedures and confirmed that our doubts and/or methodologies were shared by others, and also perceived aspects upon which we had not yet reflected.

For 3 days, Sintra was the host for several speakers and national and international experts, which came here to debate issues related to Cultural Landscapes.

It is a need that becomes imperative from time to time to all those working in privileged sites classified by UNESCO. It is the responsibility of all of us to act upon the Landscape, and so it becomes necessary to check with other partners the common denominator for new changes.

Thus, Sintra had the honour to receive His Excellency the Portuguese Minister of Environment, Spatial Planning and Regional Development; the Representative of the European Commission in Portugal, Mrs. Margarida Marques who conveyed a message of encouragement from Mr. Durão Barroso; His Excellency the Ambassador of UNESCO in Portugal, as well as a whole set of international experts, Kerstin Manz from UNESCO, Ana Luengo from ICOMOS, Gerard Collin from IUCN, Maguelonne Déjeant Pons from the Council of Europe, Filipe Duarte Santos from the Faculty of Science of the Lisbon University, Teresa Andresen from the Faculty of Science of the Porto University, and Georges Zouain, as well as different persons responsible for several Cultural Landscapes, such as Rita Johansen from the Vega Archipelago; Kristin Huld from Iceland; Ruta Baskyte from the Curonian Spit, from Lithuania; Richard Giefing from Austria; Luciano Sanchez from Aranjuez; Ricardo Magalhães from the Douro Wine Region; Fernando Oliveira from Pico Island, in the Azores; Paulo Oliveira who made a presentation on the Natural Landscape of the Laurissilva Forest in Madeira and António Lamas from the Parques de Sintra Monte da Lua.

From the Alliance of Cultural Landscapes we had the presence of Aranjuez, Granada, Palmeral de Elche, Ibiza and Las Medulas, which, in and of itself shows the interest, the need and the timeliness of the Alliance.

The different presentations, either from international entities or from the different Cultural Landscapes, enabled us to reflect upon the following aspects:

- The proliferation of multiple entities related to landscapes and to classified heritage in general, issuing different recommendations, regulations and even standards to be integrated in the daily activities of Heritage managers. We are referring to the conventions and resolutions of UNESCO, ICOMOS, IUCN, ICCROM, the Council of Europe;

- Existence of different levels of decision for managing classified heritage, and which are not always in harmony;
- The specificities of Landscapes, which are dynamic and evolving processes, should take into consideration, for the sake of their own sustainability, the technical and prospective documents, such as for instance world forecasts on climate changes and everything else associated to it, being certain that the changes that occurred in the last 30 years were accelerated due to the human factor.  
Using the image left by Gérard Collin...”the next time you use your car, remember the poor polar bear“, considered as an endangered species due to ice shortage caused by global warming!  
But quoting Filipe Duarte Santos these large uncovered areas that opened up with ice melting, may offer new sources for oil prospecting!
- Urban pressure or the temptation to copy “pastiche” models, and to replicate traditional landscapes, are two different realities but that come to the manager’s mind when the scenic value of the Landscape is at stake. So one must ponder, reflect and listen to different national and international partners.

An important part of the Conference was dedicated to two types of Landscapes: those of Northern Europe, with the representatives from Iceland, Norway, Lithuania, Austria, and the Wine Growing Landscapes.

As far as the first ones, they impressed us for the novelty of the landscapes, for the different architectures, as well as for the different solutions for preserving traditions, stimulating a type of modernity that does not corrupt the spirit of the place.  
They were also impressive for the entrepreneurial spirit of the tourism sector, according to the values or the traditional goods.

The Natural Laurissilva Landscape of Madeira is a successful case, in our opinion of the preservation of a centuries old forest, associating protected fauna and flora.

Wine Growing Landscapes configure another type of reality and as such, different types of issues. However, it is clear that in this case, wine growing regions develop along side with the development of human activity, and so one does not know whether it was Man that

adapted himself to the singularity of the region, or if it's the latter that surrendered to Men's whims of building walls and terraces and thus obtain from them a unique productive activity, which has been going on for centuries, like in Fertö-Neusiedler See and in the Douro or Pico regions.

As stated by Ricardo Magalhães, these are evolving landscapes, combined between Men and Nature. However, this Cultural Landscape must always be seen as a generous strategic and financial resource and presently incremented is tourism along the river as well as eno-tourism and tourism in rural farms.

By resorting to the Vitour Project presented by Richard Giefing, and with funds obtained from the European Union, a very stimulating networking was accomplished.

After these formal and informal debates, we may state that:

1. We are not alone in pondering the challenges ahead;
2. Networking is imperious;
3. We need to come closer to UNESCO, IUCN or ICOMOS;
4. A Classified Landscape is not something static and should be prospectivated considering the scientific indicators and the needs of the populations;
5. A serious effort has to be made in order for civic participation to become a consistent and coherent reality.

Thus, we shall have the pleasure of meeting again, to debate all these issues as well as new ones, at the III International Conference of the Alliance of Cultural Landscapes, which, for now, is to be held in Granada, in 2009.



## **Alliance of World Heritage Cultural Landscapes SINTRA, 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2008**

During the II International Conference of the Alliance of World Heritage Cultural Landscapes (AWHCL), one of the highlights was the presentation of the Alliance itself to all participants, as well as the very First General Assembly of the Alliance, attended only by its present members.

### **Presentation of the Alliance**

After the Round Table with members of the Promoting Group was set up (Aranjuez, Sintra, Ibiza, Elche, Alhambra de Granada and Las Medulas), the Mayor of Aranjuez, Jesus Dionisios Ballesteros, presented a summary of the topics that have been addressed the most since the initiative was launched in Aranjuez (in November 2006), and until the present initiative which closes this first stage of setting up the Alliance (2006-2008).

At the above mentioned Round Table, each member of the Founding Group presented the respective Declaration of World Heritage and the specificities for which their site was considered as such, and which gives them access to take part in this Network. After these presentations, the diversity and complementarities of the Cultural Landscapes involved in the Alliance was quite clear.

By the end, the AWHCL Chairman, Fernando Seara, invited all representatives of the Cultural Landscapes present at the Conference to join the Alliance.

### **Main Resolutions from the General Assembly**

The General Assembly of the AWHCL ratified the agreements undertaken last 15<sup>th</sup> September in Aranjuez, which consisted in the approval of the Statutes of the Alliance, in signing the Minutes of Incorporation, and in the appointment of the Managing Board.

The AWHCL offers itself to be the interlocutor and support for all works related to Cultural Landscapes to be undertaken by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and by other international institutions, such as the Council of Europe, and their application in the European Landscape Convention.

On the other hand the Assembly resolved to order its General Secretary to prepare a draft document for a Plan of Action, Structure of Organisation and Functioning, and for a Financial Plan, to be discussed by the Managing Board within 3 (three) months.

Thus, it was agreed to start a Communications and Dissemination Plan of the Alliance, specifically aimed at attracting more members from other countries to join the Alliance, to be developed at national and international forums related to World Heritage in general and to Cultural Landscapes in particular.