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Achieving
SUSTainability
through
an
integrated
approach
to
the
management
of
CULTural
heritage

SUSTCULT

Dear reader, Welcome to the first issue of the SUSTCULT Newsletter.

From now on, almost on a six monthly basis, this Newsletter will keep you updated on project activities and outcomes, relevant initiatives, events and project activities related to cultural heritage in the SEE area and beyond. Enjoy reading!



**SOUTH EAST
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Transnational Cooperation Programme

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1. SUSTCULT IN A NUTSHELL

Many valuable heritage sites in the SEE region are under pressure. Improving the effectiveness of cultural sites management is a priority and a great cultural and political challenge throughout the region. The SUSTCULT approach is that cultural heritage has a social and ecological intrinsic significance which shall be safeguarded as a source of sustainable development (SD).

The SUSTCULT project's main objective is to Improve the effectiveness of heritage sites management through the development of a common methodology capable of valorising the complexity of the SEE cultural heritage.

Main project activities:

- Setting-up of 7 local networks and a transnational SEE network in the field of cultural heritage management,
- Development and running of a Web GIS platform for heritage knowledge management and promotion;
- Definition of a common transnational methodology for integrated management of cultural heritage sites
- Design and realisation of a transnational training package (on-line and on site training courses) to increase management capacity;
- Development/improvement of management plans in partner sites based on the common methodology
- Definition of a sustainable marketing strategy framework for site-specific cultural resources based on local market analyses and business plans

Expected results:

Improved local and transnational collaboration through the involvement of key stakeholders; Increased awareness among wider public and stakeholders of the SEE heritage value and its potential for attracting financial resources and sustainable growth; Shared knowledge and geo-referenced information on cultural heritage; Transferable framework for the sustainable management of heritage; Greater institutional capacity in management and promotion of heritage; Greater use of ICT for mapping and promoting cultural resources; Improved management and integration of cultural heritage sites in planning instruments; Better understanding and knowledge of market opportunities and strategies for increasing attractiveness of targeted sites and income generation.

2. THE KICK - OFF MEETING IN VENICE (14-15 April 2011)

The official launch of the SUSTCULT project took place on April 14 in Venice in the prestigious framework of Palazzo Ducale in St. Mark's Square. The presence of almost all project partners and local stakeholders from the whole Veneto Region as well as their precious contributions resulted in a highly successful kick-off meeting. The event was open by the Venice Deputy Mayor for Urban Planning, Mr. Ezio Micelli, who welcomed the audience and gave a brief introduction regarding the main project themes and foreseen goals. Following, a very interesting speech focused on the territory's main problems and challenges was made by Renata Codello, Head of the Office for the Protection of Architectural, Natural, Historic, Artistic and Ethno-Anthropological Heritages in Venice and Its Lagoon. To conclude the brief presentations from the hosting partner, the City of Venice, the managers of European and International Policies and Urban Planning presented their respective structures and staff working on the project management and scientific coordination of SUSTCULT. The representative of the SEE JTS gave an overall view of the Programme's objectives and expectations towards the SUSTCULT project: very interesting inputs were provided to project partners for a successful development of the project in the forthcoming months. In order to enter deep in the project main features, the Venice team presented in detail the project partners, main objectives, activities, expected results and target groups: this preliminary presentation was essential to start familiarising with the project structure and actors. Also the UNESCO Venice Office, as observer partner, participated in the meeting by providing very good inputs on the UNESCO procedures for drafting the heritage site's management plan. This presentation traced the necessary framework to better understand the work to be carried out by the partners during the life of the project. To conclude the works of the morning, all partners gave a brief presentation of their organisations and role in the project: a first occasion to meet our colleagues for the next three years!!

The afternoon of the 14th as well as part of the morning of the 15th was dedicated to project and financial management procedures and implementation rules to be discussed among the partnership. As a final note, the first SUSTCULT Steering Committee took place on the 15th followed by a boat tour of the northern Venice Lagoon (including San Servolo and San Erasmo islands) which represents an important part of the UNESCO Venice site.



3. BRIEF PRESENTATION OF THE 7 HERITAGE SITES

Italy - "Venice and its Lagoon"

Cultural site. Founded in the 5th century and spread over 118 small islands, Venice became a major maritime power in the 10th century. The whole city is an extraordinary architectural masterpiece in which even the smallest building contains works by some of the world's greatest artists such as Giorgione, Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese and others. Venice is a unique artistic achievement. The influence of Venice on the development of architecture and monumental arts has been considerable. Venice possesses an invaluable series of architectural ensembles illustrating the age of its splendour. It presents a complete typology whose exemplary value goes hand-in-hand with the outstanding character of an urban setting which had to adapt to the special requirements of the site. Venice is surrounded by one of the most ecologically rich bodies of water in the Mediterranean: the Venetian Lagoon. The Lagoon is a vast body of water located between the mainland and the Adriatic sea. It is a unique environment and a historical witness of the delicate balance between man and: in the Lagoon the natural landscape has been constantly modified by the human being, though maintaining its habitat, biodiversity and dynamic processes. The Repubblica Serenissima strongly intervened on the city and the lagoon in order to maintain the evolutionary processes and the fragile dynamic equilibrium.

Slovenia - Vipava Valley

Cultural landscape. This site represents a valuable example of cultural landscape asset: the valley is surrounded by the high plateaus of Trnovski gozd, Hrušica and Nanos and by the Vipava Hills merging with the Karst. For millennia, the area has been a passage way between Italy and the Danube region but it keeps intact very peculiar natural features. The valley hosts viniferous hills, natural resources of great interest and sacred monuments, mostly churches from the Gothic period, and castles that constitute a highly valuable cultural landscape. Good examples are the Kromberk Castle, a renovated Renaissance fortress, the Bartolomei Mansion, a two-storey building with preserved late Baroque elements, the well-preserved hunting manor Zemono built in the 17th century, the 13th-century Rihemberk Castle, the Franciscan Kostanjevica Monastery and the 13th century Vipavski Križ village with its castle walls and the Capuchin convent. All these remarkable resources make this cultural landscape worth to be protected and further enhanced through the preparation of a specific management plan.

Greece - Corfu

Cultural site. The Old Town of Corfu, is located in a strategic position at the entrance of the Adriatic Sea and has its roots in the 8th century BC. The urban and port ensemble of Corfu constitute an architectural example of outstanding universal value in both its authenticity and its integrity. Despite the proactive policies of restoration, many works still have to be started/completed. The responsibility for the site protection involves the Hellenic Ministry of Culture, the Municipality of Corfu (MC) and the Superintendence for Byzantine and post-Byzantine antiquities. The cultural site has been inscribed in the WH List in 2007 after the submission of a Management Plan prepared by the MC and other relevant stakeholders.

Albania - Berat

Cultural site. The city of Berat, declared a Museum City in 1961 by the Albanian Government, was added to the UNESCO WH List in 2008 as a rare example of a well-preserved Ottoman town. Situated in Southern Albania, Berat is a fortified historic centre that bears witness of the wealth and diversity of the architectural heritage of the region. Berat is located on the Osum River, between the mountain of Tomorri and the valley of Myzeqe. The site consists of three parts: the Castle of Berat built on a hill on the north bank of the river, the Mangalem quarter located at the foot of the castle hill, the fortress of Gorica and its quarter located on the south bank of the river. The urban centre of Berat bears outstanding testimony to various types of monument and vernacular urban housing belonging to the Classical Ottoman period.

Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia - Ohrid

Mixed site (cultural and natural): the city of Ohrid is a UNESCO WH mixed site (natural and cultural) and one of the oldest human settlements in Europe. The city and its historic cultural region are located in a natural setting of exceptional value, while its architecture represents the best preserved and most complete ensemble of ancient urban architecture of the Slavic lands. In 1979 the Ohrid Lake has been inscribed to the WH List under natural criteria and in 1980 also the cultural value of the area was recognised making Ohrid a mixed site. Ohrid indeed possesses extremely valuable Neolithic archaeological sites and others from the Bronze Age and the Hellenistic period: more than 250 archaeological sites have been excavated. Within the very heart of the city, lies the antique city of Lichnid, then named Ohrid, turning out to be one of the most significant medieval cities in the Balkans.

Romania: Bacau

Cultural site. Bacau rests on ancient settlements existing from 4500 BC, it is the core of the region (Bacau County) and hosts many of its monuments and archaeological sites. The County is situated in the Moldova Region and it boasts a great diversity of assets: cultural, historic, naturalistic and an important and rich cultural tradition. The cultural heritage includes: archaeological vestiges, churches, museums, memorial housing and architectural monuments, among which: the complex of Curtea Domneasca, Precista and Sf. Nicolae Churches, several memorial housings, Dendrological Park and Roşu Castle. The territory is characterised by the presence of many small villages where the local tradition is still preserved: Glavanesti, famous for its soft furnishing, Izvorul Berheciului known for its wood handicraft. Nevertheless a rich tradition of craft works characterises the entire Bacau County and most of its villages and cities host also important Romanian artistic events, giving evidence of the presence of high cultural intangible values.

Romania: Monastery of Hurezi

Cultural site. Founded in 1690 by Prince Constantin Brancoveanu, the Monastery of Hurezi, in Walachia, is a masterpiece of the 'Brancovan' style. It is known for its architectural purity and balance, the richness of its sculptural detail, the treatment of its religious compositions, its votive portraits and its painted decorative works. The school of mural and icon painting established at the monastery in the 18th century was famous throughout the Balkan region.

4. SUSTCULT KEY DATA

SUSTCULT Achieving SUSTainability through an integrated approach to the management of CULTural heritage

Programme: South-East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme – priority 4

Project start: 01/01/2011

Duration: 36 months

Total Budget: Euro 1.707.080,78

Lead Partner: City of Venice

Partnership: SUSTCULT involves 12 institutions from 7 countries (Italy, Slovenia, Greece, Romania and Hungary, FYROM and Albania) constituting a well-balanced partnership with a strong territorial relevance. 3 local authorities, 1 National authority, 1 Regional authority, 2 universities, 2 development agencies, 2 NGOs, 1 international organisation (observer)

5. BRIEF SEE PROGRAMME PRESENTATION

The South East Europe (SEE) Programme is part of the European Territorial Cooperation objective of the EU Regional Policy. The programme aims at improving the territorial, economic and social integration process in South East Europe and contributing to cohesion, stability and competitiveness of the area through the development of transnational partnerships and joint action on matters of strategic importance. The SEE Programme 2007 - 2013 is the transnational programme that gathers the biggest number of participating countries: 16 in total - www.southeast-europe.net

