

2016 ECOMUSEUMS AGENDA

“Strategic document” of ecomuseums

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The following text represents a first instrument, the result of a joint work and of moments of confrontation made repeatedly from 2014 by a group of Italian eco-museums, anticipation of the establishment of a eco-museum national network.

Ecomuseums are participating processes to recognize, manage and protect the local heritage in order to improve social, environmental and economic development; they are planning identities through which reconnect techniques, cultures, productions, aspirations of an omogeneous landscape relate to its cultural heritage and its specificity; they are also creative and inclusive paths, based on the active participation of people and the cooperation of organizations and associations.

a) Premise

Pointing out the principles that have inspired the ecomuseum italian network's aims since its beginning, with this document we want to contribute to **the birth, the development and the evolution of ecomuseum experiences that are able to produce virtuous models of sustainable local development**. The new horizon of ecomuseums will be characterized by a museology increasingly committed to find alternative strategies of local development, which are linked to the request of change, emerging from local communities; a museology that intends to encourage the management and the use of cultural, environmental and landscape heritage for local and community development, through the formation of responsible human resources, that is actors who are aware of their development. Ecomuseum lives apart from collections, it exists because it works starting from **the centrality of a special heritage, PEOPLE**, whose sensibility and intentions it mobilizes.

b) Current situation

Italian ecomuseums had an intense season in the first ten years of the early two thousand when regional laws were developed and several opportunities of interaction and comparison, of national and european nature, were organized. These are: Meeting of Argenta in 1998; Ecomuseums' National Meeting in Piemonte, 2003; officialization and brand registration of the practice community “Mondi Locali” in Casentino (after participation paths in Trentino, Argenta and Gemona in Friuli); 2007 “Carta di Catania”. The ecomuseums' laboratory of Regione Piemonte, the ecomuseums' observatory of IRES Piemonte and Mondì Locali (Local Words) had a priority role to define points of reference and instruments of relationship between ecomuseums.

Today in Italy there are one hundred of initiatives defined as ecomuseums that are full operative and that are localized in all Italian Regions, principally in the north-centre of the nation. In early 2015, 12 regions or provinces had a specific laws about ecomuseums: Piemonte (1995), Trento (2000), Friuli Venezia Giulia (2006), Sardegna (2006), Lombardia (2007), Umbria (2007), Molise (2008), Toscana (2010), Puglia (2011) Veneto (2012), Calabria (2012) e Sicilia (2014). Depending on these laws, Regions recognized a series of reality that reproduce the formula's quality and complexity adopted as well as their ability to affect the territorial processes in place; the situation varies greatly from case to case and all Regions with a law, under the pressure of the most active ecomuseums, are using or are seeking selection tools that support the more dynamic and participatory ecomuseums. Another Regions (es. Emilia Romagna) choosed different ways to identify and finance ecomuseums adopting shared projects.

Today, even if some public authority ended the economic support, ecomuseums are still an alive and dynamic reality that, on the base of concrete achievements and the path done, hope for a new season.

c) Mondì Locali's experiences

Born in 2007 with the aim of share projects and work's paths, Mondì Locali (Local Worlds) practice's community represented for a lot of ecomuseum an efficient instrument for comparison and growth.

We remind some activities:

- **Landscape's Day**: announce in 2007, for the first time it saw the participation of a lot of Italian ecomuseums from 11 different Regions. To participate, the realization of action of active citizenry is necessary. The circulation of practices take place with a web site (www.ecomusei.eu). An itinerant exhibition show on the theme was realised too.

- **Parish Map** (see tools)

- **Short supply chain of local agricultural products** (see tools)
- **Training** (see tools)
- **Participated trail** (see tools)

d) strategies and proposes

In order to give continuity to the process launched in recent years, and to affect both locally and nationally, the Italian ecomuseums think that is strategic strengthening their experiences through the synergistic and dynamic exchange with a number of subjects operating in the territory, according to the principle of subsidiarity and also through the creation of a national network of ecomuseums. Municipalities with Regions are important partners of ecomuseums to ensure solidity and value to participatory processes and to objectives of local development.

Where the relationship between ecomuseum, municipalities and instances of participation of the inhabitants are closer, there are good perspectives in order to intervene effectively in the territory and to consolidate the local network of collaboration.

Today the complexity of the "local worlds" imposes the need to seek new alliances with conform experiences and subjects, to share principles and objectives.

Some examples:

At local scale: museums, regional institutions (eg.: IBC Emilia Romagna, Institute for Cultural Heritage of Friuli Venezia Giulia ...), "Soprintendenze", national and regional parks, university departments, Slow Food convivia, environmental and cultural associations, agricultural districts, biodistricts, "GAS" (solidarity purchasing groups), districts of the solidarity economy, fair trade organizations, schools, local authorities, health care companies.

At national and international scale: ICOM, Società dei Territorialisti, Slow Food, operators of the new museology, international networks of ecomuseums and community museums.

Italian Ecomuseums intend to make more effective and clear their work through the establishment of a permanent network at national level. It is expected, for this purpose, to establish a **constituent phase** through the planning of a specific path which will consist of steps; in different locations, ecomuseums will define tools, methods and specific objectives of the network.

In parallel, they will carry on **concrete sharing**, opportunities through:

1. the organization of activities and projects that engage together ecomuseums from Italy and from outside of it around shared themes, in order to foster the national and international exchange and the cooperation.
2. networking and communication of planning in place;
3. monitoring of the achieved results.

The opportunities of exchange and cooperation through European Union funds, have to be highlighted as also forms of self-financing that can involve several ecomuseums around issues of common interest (i.e. the project "Eco Slow Road" coordinated by Ecomuseo delle Acque del Gemonese).

e) Ecomusei 2016: projects for the future

In this perspective, according to the possible use of the European Union funds for culture 2014-2020, the 2016 Ecomuseums Agenda will promote ecomuseum formulas that can make possible locally small cultural revolutions that invest cultural environmental and landscape heritage and methods for its knowledge and use that are as much as possible shared with people.

Ecomuseums will have to promote heritage laboratories / observatories, local centers that support the idea of a "local culture", that is able to activate the processes of heritage development not only by intellectual and moral solutions, but also by technologies and practices that local knowledges ensured in order to solve several problems.

The purpose of Agenda 2016 on which the ecomuseums will have to operate are:

- **Fostering processes of regionalization**, promoting activities increasingly directed to the definition of territorial identity, from a regional scale (networks) to a local scale (single ecomuseum) to undertake processes of re-territorialization in a moment of lack of care and attention to the territory, especially in Italy. To do this, ecomuseums will identify good practices that provide reproducible rules (construction, settlement, environmental, relational, etc.) to promote the work of sustainable transformation, based on criteria and innovative forms also using in a participatory manner the tool of the "landscape project".

The identity of the places, the virtuous relationship between a community and its surroundings will be value; ecomuseums will contribute to the care of landscape in which the local community recognize a value with a renewed sociability.

Ecomuseums can play an important role in the process of repopulation of marginal areas (mountains, but also less favoured region), especially through the involvement of "new residents", subjects that often combine sustainable lifestyles, innovative skills and keen sensitivity to cultural expressions of the local tradition.

- **triggering processes of capitalization** heritage development to determine how to regenerate the local heritage without this being depleted by consumerist models of development, namely: take permanent methods of participation, active citizenship and triggering processes of vertical and horizontal subsidiarity, open up to new participatory paths through

social innovation and interactivity of the world wide web. From the complex relationship between new technologies and communication, ecomuseums will act as tools to make cultural contents more accessible, transferring them adequately to the social networks. Ecomuseums will propose actions and tools to make citizens able to no longer be passive recipients of cultural content; to recognize citizens as real partners, in order to redefine the relationship between people and institutions; to build participating heritage inventories affecting the construction of the "heritage chain". Heritage inventories will be new tools to cataloging, enhance and manage the local heritage, as a set of essential and indispensable elements to build territorial identity. Ecomuseums will consider the heritage as an indispensable resource for the local development and not only the scenario in which this development takes place; Ecomuseum will considers the different social actors as creators of cultural heritage, before being passive users, through a recognition and interpretation process of the traditions and authentic values of the territory. In this context the theme of intangible heritage (Faro Convention) takes on particular strategic value.

To achieve these objectives we propose three thematic lines of work of the 2016 Italian Ecomuseums Agenda:

- **Training and research.** Promote partnerships with public and private research institutions, associations and foundations. Encourage the training of facilitators of participatory processes and establish agreements with academic spin-offs to make innovative company within agribusiness, crafts and typical social tourism in the territory of the ecomuseum.

This, with a view to promote autonomous livelihood forms of financial management through a participatory and innovative planning. Ecomuseums will develop a format for the call of cooperation that will to be circulated in universities, foundations and the third sector to encourage the creation of new relations between ecomuseums and third parties, operating in the training on issues related to the government of the territory.

- **Landscape and planning.** Much has been done in recent years in Italy on the relationship between ecomuseums and landscape planning in different Region: Puglia, Umbria, Emilia-Romagna. In particular, the model of Puglia Region showed its dynamism in the new landscape plan, approved recently and, first in Italy, include ecomuseums in the production of the social landscape. Borrowing the Puglia model, ecomuseums proposes the development of a specific plan for the implementation of this subject line, starting from considering ecomuseums as local branches of Regional landscape observers. The European Landscape Convention is another reference, in the context of this issue, which inspired and continues to drive many of the Italian ecomuseums actions, also through the creation of parish maps and landscape maps, which now represent a longstanding practice level in Italy.

Ecomuseums will develop a guide dedicated to the subjects that desire to undertake on this theme. To this purpose ecomuseums will watch with interest also the activation of a relationship of collaboration with external subjects like the "Società dei territorialisti" or organizations like the Italian Forums of Movements for the Land and the Landscape (www.salviamoilpaesaggio.it); these subjects are engaging in the affirmation of new interdisciplinary models in the landscape planning and testing new patterns of self-sustainable local development.

- **food production and quality of life:** this is the sector where the italian ecomuseums spent the greatest effort and energy in those years If you think at the important experiences of Gemona and Casentino. We will to raise the importance of our projects of short supply chains of local agricultural products including projects developed with Slow Food Italy, with agricultural districts and with emerging forms of fair trade, to optimize their results in view of EXPO 2015 guidelines "feeding the planet". In 2016 agenda ecomuseums will search for to new forms of local economy in order to have experience of short supply chain of local agricultural products that combine agriculture-environment-tourism-culture-social.

Ecomuseums, in their reference areas, **cannot be restricted to the cultural sphere** or to specific subjects; in this time of transformation that is a changing the economy and lifestyles they work where the problems of the populations become more acute. The themes of long-term knowledge and practical crafts, homemaking, linked to the heritage and landscape, somehow resurface in front of the need and economic restrictions and personal family.

Ecomuseums can promote **reconciliation between practical knowledge and technological innovation** through experimentation with new forms of employment that link young people with traditional knowledge.

Ecomuseums can represent a real perspective of development in economic, social cohesion and fields by **establishing new scenarios, the design of a future with centrality of beauty, human relations, respect for the land, the quality of life in all its shades.**

Starting from the already active processes, Ecomuseums will prepare guidelines which may facilitate the start up and/or the accompaniment of local productive systems, related to the classification of products (typical and quality), that is the result of local cultural heritage for economic, cultural and social growth of the community.

- **Education and sociocultural activities**

In recent years, in their respective territories, Ecomuseums showed they can be effective **workshops for teaching and educational activities**, around issues of sustainability, landscape and cultural heritage at the service of schools but also of other age groups, being an instrument of "continuous learning" and intergenerational mediation. Ecomuseums, also are **active places of social and cultural entertainment activities**, promoting concrete actions towards a more conscious life quality. Just think of the countless experiments, projects and initiatives that characterize the planning of ecomuseums, firstly addressed to and agreed with the inhabitants, but also to careful and responsible visitors. Each

Ecomuseum is the bearer of a singular identity heritage and of projects and relationships that express themselves in creativity.

In order not to lose the wealth of experience gained and to ensure that this can achieve maximum profit in relation to the socio-economic impact on the territory, ecomuseums will promote within them a monitoring of the results obtained about educational projects and educational youth work initiatives on sustainability issues, the enhancement of the landscape and cultural heritage.

2. HANDBOOK

ECOMUSEUM IS LANDSCAPE It's expression of community (or part of it), acting on landscape; landscape is transformation, culture, landscape is a dynamic, productive, creative, vital resource

IT'S COMMUNITY and people, who are the "main and substantial" heritage of ecomuseum, from whom come its actions and the creation of a sense of belonging to a territory.

IT'S IDENTIFICATION - Ecomuseum exists if inhabitants identify in it. It' an active process for local development; not just a museum or cultural institution devoted to preservation and promotion of collections; it's mission is to facilitate and improve people knowledge upon heritage, landscape, ecosystem so that they could became an economic and social resource for community's needs and problems. Ecomuseum has a scientific value and tests actions for sustainable development.

IT'S MANAGEMENT - Ecomuseum is a cooperative network between volunteer, associations, public and private stakeholders and professionals.

Management should guarantee delegation and balance between stakeholders.

Public companies should be not authoritative organizations, but actors for a sharing governance.

Experience suggests the creation of sharing companies between public and private.

IT'S EDUCATION AND RESEARCH, GOVERNANCE AND TERRITORY DEVELOPMENT PLANNING -

Ecomuseum does research, interpretation, education, planning and active governance of landscape; it uses social memory, heritage knowledge and Participatory Processes to work with community. Ecomuseum may use cartography and cataloguing. Instruments used in Participatory Processes are: Parish Maps, Participatory Inventories, River agreements (see "Instruments"). Participatory Processes are a support for landscape planning and cultural certification.

IT'S DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMY - Contemporary social and economic challenge puts ecomuseum working in an economic dimension, on community "sensitive border".

Nutrition and food: they are elements distinguishing rural, cultural and "know-how" Italian landscapes they link health, food and environmental wellness with the need for recovery of crafts and skills; they support quality processes with innovation for new job opportunities they offer opportunities against depopulation of rural and marginal areas.

Craftsmanship and training: Crafts and handmade knowledge, linked to environmental resources and landscape, stand as domestic economic help in a period of economic and personal problems. Ecomuseum can start processes of re-utilization of knowledge, predisposing them to technological innovation, education to new handmade jobs, creative competence, in a pact between generations, directed to small and medium firm and job opportunities for young people.

Tourism & Reception, "seductive" action and emotional values. Competence is an obliged system requirement where tourism is a strategic choice. Ecomuseum moves from the seductive and affective perspective that inhabitants give to their own landscape but landscape may offer critical aspects landscape is beautiful if a community takes care of it, if inhabitants are able to offer and narrate it, with stories, atmosphere, tradition, products, in an informed and widespread way, from pedestrian to shop keeper, from volunteers to expert: museum and tourist guide, hotelier and waiters. Ecomuseum promotes awareness on community welcome and communicates in a modern way with media, web, social network.

IT'S NETWORK – **Exchange, experience fusion.** For linking national and international ecomuseums and Community Museums working with other subjects (f.e. natural parks) involved in landscape development.

3.1 - TOOLS

Parish maps: with a parish map the inhabitants of a place can represent the heritage, the landscape, the knowledge in which they recognize themselves and wish to pass on to future generations

(see www.mappadicomunita.it). Parish maps

highlights the way in which a community see, perceive, and value its territory, its memories, its transformations, its current reality and its wishes for the future.

Parish map consists of a cartographic representation or any other similar product where the community can identify itself. In Puglia region this is kind of map became social tools provided for the new landscape "PPTR" (the regional landscape plan). In homogeneous Italian areas, parish maps became tools both of planning and local development (i.e.

Casentino; Gemonese; Trentino; Argentano, Bosco Mesola, Primaro-Ferrara, Orvietano and Trasimeno, Barbagia and Alto Flumendosa, Monti Sibillini, Biellese, etc.);

Landscape maps - They are analytical reader tool of the tangible and intangible landscape, obtained from the collection of overlaid maps in order to obtain a parish map (i.e. Cervia).

River contract - the River contract allows a community to adopt a system of rules where the public utility policy, the economic efficiency, the social value and the environmental sustainability are equally involve in the search for effective solutions to redevelop a river basin. The River contract is an opportunity to return to the people a natural environment (health, sports, leisure) activities. The protagonists of a River contract are local people that want to define and develop policies for the protection of the River, ending a bureaucratic and technocratic process not immune from authoritarian attitudes in the management of the common good. ("Lamone common good" - Villanova di Bagnacavallo - municipalities of Lamone River basin, Emilia Romagna Region)

Participatory heritage inventory: it's a process, to be started in advance, of actions for sustainable development, with the direct participation of the community. It is divided into several levels: emergence of social memory; cultural heritage and resources inventory; cataloguing of common goods; definition of development actions. It requires original approaches, interdisciplinary not dualistic methods and innovative practices and tools.

Statute of places. It is a document, a "pact" between citizens and institutions that is:

- 1) a participated process of recognition of the distinctive characteristics of the area, identified as common goods;
- 2) a defined, "rights and duties", for its care, enhancement, storage and processing; ultimately you could identify it as a "Constitutional Act for local development: a socially shared future project" (A. Magnaghi)

Short supply chains of local agricultural products. Their goals are the proper and resilient usage of resources and the enhancement of landscapes and of local identities, in order to create integrated economies of local development. The producers with their knowledge are at the center of the short supply chains that promote collaboration among multiple actors (farmers, processing labs, restaurants, tourist agencies) in order to link who produce and who consume, giving at first visibility and an adequate financial return and at the second the possibility of sharing techniques and local cultures that goes beyond the simple purchase of a product. (Gemonese, Casentino, Biellese; 2010-2013 editions of Ecomuseums Argenta fair)

Training. The Training working group produced a basic program, divided into modules (the i-JET), addressed also to non-members of the network.

Participative paths. This kind of participative planning of paths and trials is active mainly in ecomuseums of Piedmont and Trentino Regions (es. Biella area).

Day of the landscape. For the first time launched in 2007, it saw the participation of several Italian ecomuseums from 11 different regions. To participate you must make an action of active citizenship. The dedicated website is www.ecomusei.eu. A travelling exhibition on the theme of landscape was also created.

Facilitation – facilitation enable and makes aware citizens to consider the material and immaterial heritage and the resources of their territory; citizens facilitate adhesion and awareness of other residents, neighbors, friends, stakeholders, to consider, inspire and plan the future of the heritage and landscape. See in this connection the "Facilitator's Manual of Ecomuseums", this is a manual of techniques, tools and practical help (The manual can be downloaded from: <http://www.provincia.terni.it/ecomuseo/documenti/manuale%20del%20FE.pdf>)

Empowerments - with this process populations become able to know the heritage, to appropriate landscape culture and to express shared governance of local development.

Interpretation and narration

Ecomuseums use creative and innovative tools, in diachronic and multi-disciplinary key, through which interpreting and communicating the "genius loci" and the cultural identity of a territory. Ecomuseums use the narratives of other places and offers them to citizens, in easy and appropriate way to different audiences: to local audiences (in order to the good acknowledgment of themselves) and to the general public (in order to the good knowledge of the area). These tools can explicate in physical locations (interpretation Center) but also in specific actions (walks about heritage or reformances with the use of different forms of artistic mediation), multimedia and publishing activities.

3.2 – DIRECTORY OF DEFINITIONS

- ECOMUSEUM is PEOPLE, or part of them, that enable participation, knowledge of the landscape and the heritage. Ecomuseum promotes dynamic processes and shared choices for local development.

- ECOMUSEUM is a PACT with which a community takes care of a territory (Maurizio Maggi)
- ECOMUSEUM is something that represents what a territory is, what its inhabitants are, working from the living culture of people, their environment, what they have inherited from the past, what they love and what people wish to show to their guests and pass down to their children (Hugues de Varine)