

REPORT ON THE 2007 WORKSHOP. LOCAL WORLDS. ECOMUSEUMS AND COMPLEXITY

TUESDAY 25

The workshop began on the morning of 25, in the rooms of the 'Mausolea' in Soci, in the presence of Italian participants in the Local Worlds network. During this first part of the workshop, the European participants visited the ecomuseum area.

The activities began, following the usual format for workshops of Local Worlds, with presentation of the various working group reports by the facilitators. The coordinator of the Casentino ecomuseum, Andrea Rossi, briefly summed up the situation for the working groups, of which there are 5: Training; Democracy and Network Structure; Landscape Day, Self-Evaluation and Travelling Exhibition. The latter three were postponed to a subsequent time during the workshop, while most of the time was taken up by the first two.

As regards 'Democracy and Network' Structure, Maurizio Maggi (Ecomuseum monitoring unit-IRES) presented an organisational proposal on behalf of the group (including Mauro Cecco from the Vanoi ecomuseum, Maurizio Tondolo and Etelca Ridolfo from the Acque del Gemonese ecomuseum). The group, which has been operational since around December 2006, identified three points which should lie at the base of future organisation:

1. certainty with regard to the identification and composition of the network and clear rules for taking decisions;
2. capacity to represent member ecomuseums at least with regard to common projects and decisions approved;
3. capacity to realise common activities; annual meeting; interface with national and international institutions; stable point of reference for discussions and the exchange of experiences between ecomuseums. The practical application of these points consists in the registration of a collective Local Worlds trademark, to be combined with regulations for the use of the trademark and hence rules for the inclusion of new participants; it was proposed to base representation on the dynamics already operational within the working groups and thus to identify the group facilitators as persons authorised to speak on behalf of the network on the issues they deal with and in accordance with the participants of the group; for activities cutting across different areas it was proposed to construct specific working groups (for example for the next workshop, but also on communication issues).

The debate, in particular on how to include new participants in the network, was relatively lively and saw the intervention of all the ecomuseums present (around 25 Italian museums). Finally, there was agreement on the principle of opening up to the outside, without prejudice to the principles already shared by the network in terms of objectives and methods of action, but also consolidation of the dynamics of cooperation already tried out by an initial group of ecomuseums and other groups similar to them. Thus an initial list of members was assumed, using past participation in common activities of the network as the criteria, to be updated after a period of at most 3-6 months. It was also decided that when evaluating all new members particular attention will be paid to the opinion of the member ecomuseum closest to the applicant geographically (this practice was subsequently also recommended by the representative of the French ecomuseum present, on the basis of the experience of FEMS and CPIE).

Fiorenza Bortolotti, from the Orvieto landscape ecomuseum, then summarised the situation as regards training, the working group also including Maurizio Maggi (Ecomuseum monitoring unit -IRES) and Giuseppe Petruzzo (Adda di Leonardo Ecomuseum). The proposal presented in the past by the group (the JET programme), which provided for 7 integrated modules and a list of trainers, has been put into practice by the ecomuseums only in part; it was noted that integral training programme has often been dismembered and put into effect using trainers partly coming from the network and partly from outside. The module on community maps was particularly popular. This situation demonstrates the need to carry out further trials of the JET programme and also to focus attention on areas in which the network has significant comparative advantages in terms of the competence and interests of individual museums. As regards this, the absence of a member more closely linked to environmental education, a field in which the network can boast specialist skills, was underlined by some. Similarly it was noted that cooperation with the university and research sector should be further developed.

The idea of a residential summer school, also a part of the initial proposal of the training group, was greeted favourably and further planning was proposed in order to allow it to be realised in 2008. To summarise, the working group was confirmed and the number of members increased. While agreeing on the suitability of continuing trials of the JET programme, it was proposed to:

1. realise at least an experimental module for a 2008 summer school, on an issue of interest to the host ecomuseum, open to members of the network, local players decided by the host ecomuseum and possibly those on work experience and students involved in ecomuseum research;
2. to establish closer relations between the ecomuseum network and universities, particularly with regard to the training of ecomuseum facilitators;
3. to proceed with analysis of the capabilities of ecomuseums in the network in the field of environmental education, with a view to training initiatives in this sector (possibly the object of a specific summer school in the future).

Due to lack of time, the decision on this proposal was postponed to a later time during the workshop, to be set aside within the programme provided for (approval took place on Thursday morning, see below).

Work continued in the afternoon with the presence of all the participants, both from Italy and abroad, with a round table on recovery of the historic-architectural heritage. There were a large number of contributions on the agenda. From the direct experiences recounted by the speakers, it emerged that physical recovery is directly linked to social recovery and to the sense and role of the spaces concerned, an activity which also requires specific skills and new commitment in the field of training. In his closing summary, the Superintendent from Arezzo underlined the need to consider not just physical but also the functional recovery of spaces, as far as possible respecting their original role.

The group then transferred itself to the Ecomuseum of Castagna di Raggiolo, where, with the Mayor as guide, they visited the village, the areas realised by the ecomuseum (exhibition areas, functional recovery of a drying room and a watermill [which will allow reactivation of the whole production process for chestnut flour, also linking up to the local producers consortium], community map, joint collection of information, then translated into signs and other forms of communication) and by the commune and above all where it was possible to meet the protagonists in the field: the volunteers of the Raggiolo group. After dinner in the town's new restaurant, the group returned to the accommodation made available by the Casentino Mountain Community and the ecomuseum.

WEDNESDAY 26

The workshop continued the following morning with consideration of the European context. Some new participants presented themselves. There were four: Ceumannan Ecomuseum from the island of Skye (Meike Schmidt, Scotland), the Pantoufle della Charente Ecomuseum (Christian Magne, France), the Val del Vernissa Ecomuseum (Jordi Puig and Pau Rausell, Spain) and the ecomuseum project in Viminacium (Miomir Korac and Vojislav Stojanovic, Serbia). The reports of the working groups were presented. The only group set up at this level from the 2005 workshop in Argenta was the self-evaluation group. The report was presented by Nunzia Borrelli (Cilento ecomuseum project) on behalf of the group, made up of Gerard Corsane and Peter Davis (University of Newcastle, ICCHS), together with Carlo Alberto Dondona and Maurizio Maggi (IRES Piemonte, Ecomuseum monitoring unit). To date evaluation of ecomuseums has been proposed (in the literature and also, more rarely, in public administration) as compliance with a predefined framework of standards. The Local Worlds group has instead developed a check-list of a mainly qualitative nature, divided into three sections (participation, use of local resources and strategies, with more than 30 questions overall) designed for self-evaluation, a tool which is open to modification by those using it. The check-list was distributed in the room for trial completion. The subsequent discussion immediately led to the emergence of some problems, such as the lack of clarity of some questions (which will be revised), the need to consider a further section or at all events further questions regarding institutional relationships (on which the group undertook to work in the following two months) and finally the appropriateness of considering a scale of satisfaction on 5 levels instead of 4 (on which there was some disagreement with the

researchers involved, who underlined the lack of usefulness of a system which does not require a choice - with a "neutral level"). Overall, the system was considered interesting and worthy of further trials.

In particular, Christian Magne undertook to officially propose the system to FEMS for trial in France. Pau Rausell proposed to do the same in Spain, in the context of a national project promoted by the University of Valencia together with the Val del Vernissa Ecomuseum for the establishment of a Spanish network of ecomuseums. Barbara also believed it was worth trying out the list in the by now numerous Polish ecomuseums.

The activities then continued with a request for proposals for new network initiatives at European level. Two were proposed: a web site and communications in general and the next workshop in 2008. As regards the first proposal, the difficulties were underlined, not so much technical or financial as linked to the continuous commitment necessary for a site to be efficient. There was consideration of whether the site should be a showcase or intended as a form of support for the network. It was also underlined that there are serious limitations in terms of the ADSL network, at least in Italy, limiting the effectiveness of internet as a tool. It was nevertheless decided to structure the site on the basis of working groups, without unnecessary repetition of information regarding individual ecomuseums, information which is already present at the sites of each participant. It was decided to proceed step by step, modifying the current site www.retilunghe.net (currently a static site in html) with the new working groups, trying out new architecture, translating the site into English and only subsequently proceeding with verification of appreciation and effectiveness by users, continuing with transformation into a dynamic site (in php) so as to be able to give individual participants in the groups (which make themselves available) personal passwords for maintenance of the parts they are responsible for. There was also a proposal to realise a newsletter for the network, in Italian and English, to be distributed via computer but also to be disseminated on paper, on the basis of local needs (*on demand*). For the 2008 Workshop, it was decided, given the many candidates, to form a specific group. It was also decided to ensure that the meeting moved around the various European countries as much as possible and to always hold a workshop in Italy for the Italian network (obviously open to all). As an indication, the two initiatives will probably be held in May-June and September-October. For the 2008 event the Ruze ecomuseum in the Czech Republic put itself forward at European level, whereas there were several candidates for the Italian event.

For 2009 there was a pre-candidature for Spain and several candidates put themselves forward for Italy. All agreed that this was a positive aspect and it was decided that the choice of future sites would be delegated to the Workshop working group, which thus becomes the third task-force at European level (together with self-evaluation and communication).

In the afternoon the round table on the landscape began. Once again there were a large number of speeches on the agenda, Giuseppe Pidello's contribution being particularly worthy of note (Valle Elvo Ecomuseum). As the facilitator for the Landscape Day group he also reported on the activities of this group, whose members also included Maurizio Maggi (OE), Donatella Murtas (Terraces and Vines Ecomuseum), Mauro Cecco (Vanoi Ecomuseum); Sandra Becucci (Landscape Museum), Fiorenza Bortolotti (Orvieto Landscape Ecomuseum), Maria Pia Flaim (APT), together with (as a member from outside the Local Worlds network) Andrea Del Duca (Lake Orta Ecomuseum). The results of this project were very satisfying, with 30 ecomuseums setting up joint initiatives involving citizens in ten Italian regions. It was also proposed that the Local Worlds network participate in the Civicscape network, promoted by Council of Europe to act as a go-between for initiatives coming from above and below regarding the implementation of the European Landscape Convention. On 16 November in Biella, during a work session on the subject promoted by various Italian and European bodies, it was proposed to call a meeting of the Landscape Day group, to evaluate and put into effect the proposal and to formulate initial ideas on the 2008 Landscape Day. Subsequently Maria Barbara Liccardi, on behalf of Federculture, made a proposal to carry out a study (together with IRES Piemonte) on the 2007 Landscape Day, presenting the results to the Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities and then to organise together (Federculture, Local Worlds and MiBAC) the 2008 event. Rita Micarelli from the Mediterranean Landscape Workshop (based in Pescia, Tuscany) concluded the introductory part with a report on initiatives and projects

linked to the European Landscape Convention, realised within the context of the Rural Med programmes with the title “The Landscapes of Contemporary Ruralism”.

At the end of the round table, the participants adjourned to the Cetica Charcoal-burner Ecomuseum. Here it was possible to visit the charcoal burners’ museum and talk to former workers in the woods, viewing some video sequences taken from the “Memory Bank”, which gathers oral testimony and life stories about local history. The poor weather conditions unfortunately prevented the country kiln from being lit. Dinner, based on a range of local specialities (obviously including Cetica potatoes), was therefore served in the dining-hall of the museum, after which the participants returned to their accommodation, bringing forward the appointment for the following day, in order to approve the proposals made during the first two mornings.

THURSDAY 27

The activities began with a meeting called for the Italian network alone. The list of Italian working groups established to date with their respective tasks (see below) was read through and approved. Furthermore the proposals for training and registration of the Local Worlds name were also approved.

This was followed, as scheduled, by the seminar on responses to complexity by ecomuseums. Following the greetings and encouragement of local authorities and the introductions of Giorgio Pizziolo and Maurizio Maggi (both representing the Casentino scientific committee), the seminar moved on to the reports of the various countries represented within the network: Andrea Rossi (Italy), Christian Magne (France), Christina Lindeqvist (Sweden), Pau Rausell (Spain), Robert Dulfer (Czech Republic), Barbara Kazior (Poland). The various speeches demonstrated, in very different situations, all nevertheless characterised by a wide variety of forms and cultural initiatives in the area, how different ecomuseums are making efforts to find an internal structure that responds to the challenge without establishing fixed rules, apart from the need to act on the basis of the requirements of local society and the repercussions of the action taken on it.

The seminar also occupied part of the afternoon, as scheduled, and at 4 p.m. moved to Stia for inauguration of the travelling exhibition “Local Worlds: needs, energy and opportunities”, realised by the “Exhibition” group of the Italian network.

The exhibition was made up of three sections dedicated respectively to the value of people, places and choices. It provided for different forms of interaction with the inhabitants of the place hosting the exhibition and was designed to travel, thus representing an opportunity for the host groups to consider the issues dealt with and for the network to gather opinions, proposals and ideas, listening to the different communities visited,

The exhibition was in Italian, but an illustrated brochure was available with translation of all the text and captions into English. The exhibition has been very successful and there are numerous bookings for sites to host it starting from November (when it will leave the Casentino).

The trip to Stia continued with a visit to the Weaving Museum (and a meeting with participants in the weaving laboratory promoted by the ecomuseum), the Museum of the Woods and finally to the Senior Citizens Centre, accompanied by local music. Dinner was served here, followed by song and dance with local music. Late in the evening the participants returned to their accommodation.

FRIDAY 28

In the morning it was time to say goodbye to participants from abroad, while the Italian participants transferred to Arezzo to participate in the annual meeting of Tuscan museums, dedicated to the topic “Museums listen to the public”. The Local Worlds network was invited to present a report, illustrated by Donatella Murtas (Terraces and Vine Ecomuseum and a member of the scientific committee of the Casentino). It was an opportunity to present the point of view of ecomuseums on listening, something which lies at the foundation of ecomuseum activities, giving numerous examples: from community maps to the travelling exhibition inaugurated in Stia. In the same context, the contribution of James Bradburne was interesting. The Director of Palazzo Strozzi confirmed how a certain sensitivity to the need

for a different way of interacting with the public and more in general with the local community is also present in traditional museums, albeit to a relatively limited extent.

Additional information at: www.retilunghe.eu or www.mondilocali.eu.

SUMMARY OF THE SITUATION OF THE WORKING GROUPS. Italian network only.

Training. This group aims to undertake further trials of the JET programme, realise an initial experimental summer school, extend collaboration with universities and analyse possible initiatives involving environmental education. The members are: Fiorenza Bortolotti (Orvieto Ecomuseum, facilitator), Francesco Baratti (Acquarica Ecomuseum and Univ. Lecce, co-facilitator), Nerina Baldi (Argenta Ecomuseum), Giuliano Canadese (Chiaverano-AMI Ecomuseum), Giuseppe Pidello (Valle Elvo Ecomuseum), Emanuela Renzetti (Univ. Trento), Andrea Rossi (Casentino Ecomuseum), Tiziana Sassu (Barbagia ecomuseum site), Maurizio Tondolo (Gemonese Ecomuseum).

Technical knowledge census. This group deals with planning and realisation of a compilation of technical knowledge present within the network or known to the network (such as rare trades and similar). It requires an initial phase for analysis, as for all new working groups, also to define the objectives of the working group. The members are: Andrea Rossi (Casentino Ecomuseum, facilitator), Mauro Cecco (Vanoi Ecomuseum), Stefania Emmanuele and Helmut Mazzocca (Valle del Raganello Ecomuseum), Donatella Murtas (Terracing Ecomuseum), Giuseppe Pidello (Valle Elvo Ecomuseum).

Travelling exhibition. This must be managed in the travelling phases, bearing in mind the following criteria: it is managed by the last host ecomuseum, it is supplied on the basis of a commitment to return it to circulation by a predefined time and to enrich the content in the sections provided for in agreement with the working group; priority is given to LW members in the event of simultaneous requests; in the event that it is lent to external organisations, someone from LW will ensure correct inclusion within the context. The members are: Donatella Murtas (Terracing Ecomuseum, facilitator), Stefania Tron (IRUR).

Landscape Day. This group will be responsible for managing the 2008 event and relations with the bodies involved, starting with the Ministry for the Cultural Heritage. The members are: Giuseppe Pidello (facilitator), Riccardo Avanzi (Orizzonte Serra-AMI Ecomuseum), Francesco Baratti (Acquarica Ecomuseum and Univ. Lecce), Sandra Becucci (Landscape Museum), Fiorenza Bortolotti (Orvieto Landscape Ecomuseum), Mauro Cecco (Vanoi Ecomuseum), Andrea Del Duca (Lake Orta Ecomuseum), Maria Pia Flaim (APT), Maria Barbara Liccardi (Federculture), Maurizio Maggi (Ecomuseum monitoring unit), Donatella Murtas (Terracing and Vine Ecomuseum), Andrea Rossi (Casentino Ecomuseum) Tiziana Sassu (Barbagia ecomuseum site).

Democracy and networking. This group manages the collective trademark and the initial phases involved in the acceptance new members (awaiting a spring or summer workshop in 2008). The members are Maurizio Maggi (Ecomuseum monitoring unit, facilitator), Mauro Cecco (Vanoi Ecomuseum), Etelca Ridolfi and Maurizio Tondolo (Gemonese Ecomuseum).

SUMMARY OF THE SITUATION OF THE WORKING GROUPS. European network

Workshop/08. This group will deal with managing the realisation of the next workshop. The members are: Angelo Valerio (Agro Pontino Ecomuseum), Nerina Baldi (Argenta Ecomuseum), Robert Dulfer (Ruze Ecomuseum), Maria Pia Flaim (APT), Andrea Rossi (Casentino Ecomuseum), Maurizio Tondolo (Gemonese Ecomuseum).

Communication. This group deals with planning the web site and a newsletter for the network. These products should not be just in Italian and English but also designed for the whole European network. This involves extending the use of Skype and verifying the diffusion of ADSL networks among participants. The members are: Stefania Emmanuele (Valle del Raganello Ecomuseum, facilitator), Nunzia Borrelli (Cilento ecomuseum project), Giuliana Castellari (Province of Ferrara), Maurizio Maggi (Ecomuseum monitoring unit), Helmut Mazzocca (Valle del Raganello Ecomuseum).

Self-evaluation. This group deals with managing practical trials of the checklist, provided for in four countries: Italy, Poland, France and Spain. The members are: Nunzia Borrelli (Cilento ecomuseum project, facilitator), Peter Davis and Gerard Corsane (ICCHS), Maurizio Maggi (Ecomuseum monitoring unit).

A total of 27 people registered with the working groups.

Representatives of the following ecomuseums and various institutions participated at the workshop: Valle Raganello Landscape Ecomuseum, Cilento and Diano Valleys ecomuseum project, Acquarica rocky landscape ecomuseum, Ecomuseum site of Barbagia Peope, Gemonese Ecomuseum, Valtaleggio Ecomuseum, Adda di Leonardo Ecomuseum, Agro Pontino Ecomuseum, Terracing and Vine Ecomuseum, Valle Elvo Ecomuseum, Clay Ecomuseum, Orizzonte Serra- Landscape Ecomuseum, Pistoia Mountains Ecomuseum, Casentino Ecomuseum, Castelnuovo Berardenga Landscape Museum, Vanoi Ecomuseum, Argentario Ecomuseum, Chiese Ecomuseum, Giudicarie Ecomuseum, Orvieto Landscape Ecomuseum, Lunigiana Mountains Ecomuseum, Val di Peio Ecomuseum, Argenta Ecomuseum, Bergslagen Ecomuseum, Ruze Ecomuseum, Environmental Partnership Central Europe, Val Vernissa Ecomuseum, University of Valencia, Pantoufle Charentaise Ecomuseum, Serbian Academy of Science and Arts, Ceumannan Ecomuseum, Politecnico di Milano, University of Lecce, University of Rome Tre, University of Siena, University of Florence, IRUR, IRES- Ecomuseum monitoring unit, Autonomous Province of Trento, Federculture.

Updated information available at: www.retilunghe.eu or www.mondilocali.eu.