



Generalitat de Catalunya
Departament de Cultura

The inventory of intangible cultural heritage in biosphere reserves : a case study in Catalonia (Spain)

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SYNERGIES FOR DEVELOPMENT – USING
NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE IN
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

International Conference on the UNESCO 1972,
2003 and 2005 conventions in Bergen

24-26 March 2014





The project “Methodology for the inventory of intangible cultural heritage in biosphere reserves : the Montseny experience” was developed between October 2009 and December 2011.

On December 2013 it was inscribed in the *Register of programmes, projects and activities that best reflect the principles and objectives of the Convention for the safeguarding on intangible cultural heritage.*





Partners

- Direction General for Popular Culture, Cultural Associationism and Action (Catalan Government)
- Montseny Biosphere Reserve
- Montseny Ethnological Museum “la Gabella”
- UNESCO Centre of Catalonia
- Biodiversity Foundation (Spanish Ministry for Agriculture, Food and Environment)
- Direction General for Citizen Participation





Context

Confluence of two Unesco initiatives:

- 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage
- Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Program





Context

- ICH as guarantee of sustainable development
- Inventoring ICH as first step to safeguarding
- NGOs as active partners in the implementation of 2003 Convention
- Biosphere reserves as (experimental) sites for sustainable development
- Links between cultural and natural heritage





The Montseny

- 31,000 ha extension
- 100,000 people
- 25 villages
- 200 to 1,700 m height
- Mediterranean to subalpine climate





Outcomes of the project

1. ICH inventory of the Montseny biosphere reserve
2. Methodology for the inventory of ICH in biosphere reserves
3. Contribution of ICH to sustainable development
4. Diffusion of the experience carried out at the Montseny





The methodology

- 1. Information**
- 2. Preparation**
- 3. Making the inventory**
- 4. Conclusion of the inventory**
 - The inventory as a tool
 - Economical aspects





Stage 1. Information

- What is ICH: definition
- The Convention: the framework of ICH
- What is an inventory
 - Not a deep research
 - Cataloguing systems
- Why an inventory: a means, not a goal
- Other inventories
- Sustainable development
 - Environment, society, economy





Definition of ICH

- The “intangible cultural heritage” means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage.





Definition of ICH

- This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.





Stage 2. Preparation

- Methodological choices
 - Practice, representation, expression, knowledge, skill
 - Recognition by community
 - Living: legends
 - Transmitted from generation to generation: 30 years, from older to younger, more than 2 generations...?
 - Identity and continuity: direct question, deduction...?
- Organizational structure
 - Selection of the team: anthropologist, environmentalist...
- Participation plan: involving community
- Categories and subcategories
- Field work file





Stage 3. Inventoring ICH

- Documentation
 - Previous catalogues on ethnology, folklore, festivals...
 - Bibliography
- Field work: 1 year or more (natural cycle)
 - Checking documented elements
 - Identifying new elements
 - Recording: pictures, videos, interviews...





Stage 4. Conclusion of the inventory

- Community validation
- Identification of elements that can best contribute to sustainable development
- Public presentation(s)





Sustainable development

“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. **Brundtland Report 1987**

“Improving the quality of human life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems.”
IUCN/UNEP/WWF 1991

“The expansion of the substantive freedoms of people today while making reasonable efforts to avoid seriously compromising those of future generations”. **UNDP 2011**





Dimensions of sustainable (human) development

Social
Economic
Ecological
Political

Economic
Ecological
Political
Cultural

Environmental
Social
Economic





Oral traditions and expressions

- Legends provide knowledge on specific sites that are mentioned.
- Sayings provide knowledge on agricultural calendar and local weather forecasts (*Si el Montseny està florit, fred a la plana de Vic*).
- Autochthonous vocabulary reflects cultural diversity and ensures sense of identity.
- Raw material for products and services: publications, touristic routes, theatre productions...





Performing arts

- Popular songs spread understanding about the environment (chestnuts gatherers dance, “Our town Palau”), contribute to raise awareness.
- Music, songs and dance are usually practiced in groups and non competitive and thus they promote gathering of people, strengthen social cohesion, involve different generations.
- Cultural tourism, festivals, recording.





Social practices, rituals and festive events

- Many festivals and fairs are related to natural heritage

Pine Festival in Centelles







Social practices, rituals and festive events

- Many festivals and fairs are related to natural heritage
- Some games contribute to social cohesion.
- Fairs and traditional weekly markets promote social gathering, consumption of local products and economic activity at the



Chestnut Fair in Viladrau





Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe: food practices

- Gathering of food products contributes to the valorization of the environment.
- Commercialization of products: mushrooms, marmelades, honey.
- Traditional cuisine: **identity**, **tourism**, **festivals**.



Sausage production



Honey collection



Licor production





Shepherding

Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe: environmental practices

- Vegetal charcoal production, cork extraction, shepherding
- Regulation of the ecosystem
- Strong identity to practitioners
- Comercialization of products



Charcoal production



Cork extraction





Pottery craftsman

Traditional craftsmanship

- Local raw materials use, small scale productions, ecosystem carrying capacity respect.
- Strong identity to practitioners or for a whole village (pottery in Breda).
- Commercialization of products, self-employment



Making of brooms





Conclusions:

- Every ICH element can contribute to sustainable development. It will depend on the “management”.
- When inventoring ICH, information on the element’s contribution to sustainable development should be recorded.
- Global approach of the various dimensions of sustainable development. General balance of the actions.
- The biosphere reserve and natural sites management should include actions related with the safeguarding of ICH.



Thank you for your attention!



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