

## Ecomuseum Blaca Hermitage, Cultural Centre of Brač



The project, which concerns the Ecomuseum Blaca Hermitage and its surrounding landscape, aimed to enhance a former monastic complex. Now a contemporary museum, it captures the local identity and immerses visitors in the local history and culture, allowing them to enjoy a landscape of exceptional aesthetic value. The Hermitage was built in the 16th century next to the caves in the cliffs in the isolated canyon on the southern side of Brač Island. Its great natural, cultural and aesthetic values were recognised by the island's people, local authorities and national institutions, all of which contributed to its inclusion in the national Tentative List for subsequent inclusion on the Unesco List of World Heritage. The project serves as an outstanding example of sustainable heritage preservation in a region with the highest degree of landscape appreciation. Between 2007 and 2011 the complex was renovated and extensive interdisciplinary research has been carried out. The project is continuously improved upon with new curatorial programmes and restoration works.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe acknowledged and praised the great value of the project presented for the 4th Session 2014-2015 of the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe's European Landscape Convention and recommended making it well-known to the general public for its exemplary value, and as a source of inspiration. Because of its great cultural value, the Ecomuseum Blaca Hermitage, a former monastic settlement, has powerfully strengthened local sustainability and inhabitants' sense of belonging to a place. The measures taken to facilitate access to the site during its renovation led to the development of walking trails and bike paths, allowing the enjoyment of the landscape. The project is thus a particularly positive experience of enhancement of a landscape surrounding a historical monument.