Strasbourg, 31 July/31 juillet 2003

13 CEMAT (2003) 4

**EUROPEAN CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS
RESPONSIBLE FOR REGIONAL PLANNING (CEMAT)**

_____

**CONFÉRENCE EUROPÉENNE DES MINISTRES
RESPONSABLES DE L'AMÉNAGEMENT DU TERRITOIRE (CEMAT)**

Ljubljana (Slovenia/Slovénie), 16-17 September/septembre 2003

**EUROPEAN RURAL HERITAGE
OBSERVATION GUIDE –
CEMAT**

Document by the Secretariat General prepared by the Spatial Planning and Landscape Division
Document du Secrétariat Général préparé par la Division de l'aménagement du territoire et du paysage

At its 80th meeting held in Budapest (Hungary) on 28 March 2003 (CEMAT-CHF 80 (2003) 19), the Committee of Senior Officials of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Spatial Planning (CEMAT) adopted the "*European Rural Heritage Observation Guide - CEMAT*" as set out in the present document, deciding to bring it to the attention of the Ministers responsible for Regional/Spatial Planning when they met in Ljubljana on 16 and 17 September 2003 for the 13th Session of the CEMAT.

The Ministers responsible for Regional Planning of the Member States of the Council of Europe/Heads of delegation are invited to take note of this document.
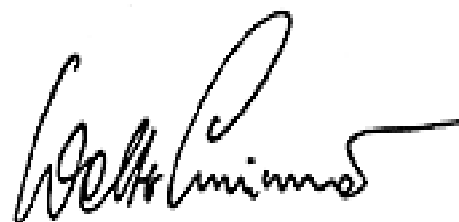
PREFACES

With both material and immaterial aspects, the rural world is a treasure trove of the cultural, natural and landscape heritage. In search of authenticity, the modern man draws on his rural roots, seeking an identity in the rural world. This heritage is also an engine of development. Its preservation is fundamental and gives meaning to the development of our societies. It is our responsibility to recognise the value of the past, and to protect and promote this heritage, an essential factor in economic, social and cultural development.

Adopted in Hanover in September 2000 by the Ministers responsible for the regional planning of the Council of Europe's Member States and endorsed in the Recommendation (2002) 1 of the Committee of Ministers, the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent detail a series of measures to foster development of rural areas as life settings for both economic and recreational activity and as natural environments.

This "European Rural Heritage Observation Guide – CEMAT" contributes to the implementation of the Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers: helping to restore the town-countryside balance and seeking to promote the rural world's resources as a development factor. It is indeed essential to put these principles into effect so as to promote sustainable rural planning combining economic growth and protection of the heritage assets inherent in both natural and cultural landscapes.

Moreover, this Guide contributes to the implemention of the provisions of the Guiding Principles devoted to "broadly-based participation of society in the spatial planning process", which emphasises the importance of active public participation in the spatial planning process, in local, regional and supra-regional projects.

I hope that this Guide will be developed in later editions taking into account the Council of Europe's various Member States' specificities and the richeness of their rural world's heritage.

Walter SCHWIMMER
Secretary General of the Council of Europe

Realised and adopted by the CEMAT Committee of Senior Officials in view of its presentation at the 13th Session of the Council of Europe's European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (Ljubljana, 16-17 September 2003), the "European Rural Heritage Observation Guide – CEMAT" implements the provisions of the Recommendation Rec (2002) 1 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent.

It therefore contributes towards achieving independent development of rural zones as areas for living and carrying on economic and recreational activities, and as physical regions and to set out guidelines for the management of this heritage linked to regional/spatial planning.

The European continent is rich in rural heritage, shaped over the years by human activity and made up of an exceptional variety of land types, reliefs, climates and crops. The Guide invites all those who feel concerned by their territories' future to be able to meet together, through national and local committees, for the purpose of listing and describing the rural heritage, and thinking about how best to promote this rural heritage

Reconnecting with – sometimes even just discovering – this rural heritage, acknowledging its contemporary potential and not imprisoning it in the past, appreciating and recognising the different types of cultural, natural and landscape heritage as components of identity, are challenges we currently face.

There is no justification for preserving heritage, which links the past and the present, unless it can be given a guaranteed future and handed on to future generations, which is why it is essential to stir the key players into action. It has a potential richness and can become a valuable resource, not necessarily in commercial terms but for those carrying out projects and for the locality concerned. It accordingly becomes part of a sustainable development approach as it becomes a product, factor or source of development.

We are satisfied that the work is done in the framework of the activities of the CEMAT, which brings together representatives of the Council's 45 Member States, united in their pursuit of a common objective: sustainable spatial development of the European continent.

Margarita JANCIC
Chair of the Committee of Senior Officials of
the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional/Spatial Planning

EUROPEAN RURAL HERITAGE OBSERVATION GUIDE – CEMAT

What is rural heritage?

The landscapes carved out over centuries by people who lived off the land and, more generally, through the exploitation of natural resources,

The buildings that make up what is referred to as rural architecture, whether or not they are clustered together (villages, hamlets, isolated houses and buildings),

The local products, adapted to local conditions and the needs of those who developed them,

The techniques, tools and know-how that have made creative activity possible and which remain essential for maintaining, restoring, changing and modernising its results, in accordance with the design logic and aesthetic of the buildings/environment/landscape as a whole. These techniques extend to symbols and cultural meanings in the widest sense.

However, we cannot discuss rural cultural heritage without referring to two obvious facts.The people who use the countryside, who live there and who have often played a decisive role in ensuring that these assets have survived are increasingly aware that it belongs to them and are becoming more vocal on this issue. At the same time, the countryside, and the heritage that it represents and contains, is considered the property of every individual, including those from towns as well as from the countryside.

Isac Chiva
Une politique pour le patrimoine culturel rural
Report to the French Culture Ministry, 1994.

CONTENTS

I.   Challenges and objectives

1. *Definition: what is heritage?*
2. *Approach: how can one take action in the field of heritage?*
3. *Project: what is the meaning of the project?*
4. *Implementation: how are projects to be implemented?*

II.   Methodology of observation

1. *Clarifying the project*
2. *Selecting a locality*
3. *Identifying rural heritage*
4. *Classifying and describing heritage elements*
5. *Understanding relationships and change*
6. *Heritage and development*
7. *Evaluating heritage*

III.   Heritage's component parts

1. *Reading a landscape*
2. *Buildings*
3. *Private space*
4. *Agriculture*
5. *Food*
6. *Crafts and industries*
7. *Community life*

IV.   Rural heritage, a key factor in sustainable development

1. *Means of action*
2. *Management methods*
3. *Means of support, particularly financial*

I.   CHALLENGES AND OBJECTIVES

1.   Definition: what is heritage?

Until very recently, rural heritage was defined in very narrow terms. It was considered to consist of buildings associated with agricultural activity, and particularly with "minor rural heritage" such as wash-houses, mills or chapels. Planners now assign a wider definition to heritage, which is considered to include all the tangible or intangible elements that demonstrate the particular relationship that a human community has established with a territory over time.

1.1.   Tangible heritage

This is the most easily identifiable part of heritage. It is made up of various elements:

–   landscapes, since they result from centuries of human activity on the environment;

–   property: this includes buildings for agricultural use and those related to crafts or industry, holiday homes or public buildings that are evidence of specific activities or simply of an architectural style;

–   moveable property: this includes objects for domestic use (furniture in regional styles), for religious purposes (furnishings in churches and chapels) and for festive events (carnival floats, village or corporation emblems);

–   products which result from an adaptation to local conditions and to cultivation, rearing, processing and culinary traditions. These include plant varieties (plants, fruit, vegetables, etc.) and local animal species as well as more "elaborate" produce (wine, cheese, pork products, etc.).

What does it mean to "assign heritage value"?

"Assigning heritage value" to property or knowledge (individually or collectively) means investing it with meaning. No object or skill is a heritage item in itself. For example, a low wall has heritage value only in terms of its aesthetic value in a landscape, of the construction techniques used or of its link with local history.

The consequences of "assigning heritage value" to an item are:
–   It makes a specific item "common property" with potential collective value.
–   It introduces a specific type of bond, frequently emotive in nature, between a given item and persons who have no legal tie with it. Accordingly, use of the item supposes that a consensus has been established between the various potential users, i.e. the legal owner and potential "other users". However, the latter may themselves have different views about possible use.

The participative approach
–   Unless we assume that problems will be settled by legal means such as expropriation, the only possible course of action is negotiation between the parties concerned.
–   In order to avoid new arguments or antagonisms arising regularly on what is at stake when defining heritage items, it is essential to include as many potentially interested parties as possible right from the start of any discussions on the use of a heritage item, and to draw on as much information as possible when considering possible uses.

1.2.   Intangible heritage

This part of heritage is made up of a series of intangible assets that are inseparable from tangible heritage:

–   the techniques and skills that have enabled landscapes to be created, houses and furniture to be built and local products to be developed;

–   the local dialects, music and oral literature that have emerged from non-written traditions. These means of expression are evidence of a community's particular influence on its territory and, more generally, of a specific way of living together. This includes stories and legends describing individuals or sites that played a part in local history, as well as place names (toponyms), which reflect particular uses or representations;

–   ways of organising social life and specific forms of social organisation, such as certain customs and festivals (seasonal, agricultural, etc.).

All these elements make up a living heritage. By identifying and laying claim to these elements, the various parties involved in the rural world invest them with meaning, both for the community and in terms of their heritage value.

> *How is heritage created?*
>
> –   Some communities may believe they have "less" heritage than others. However, the absence of monuments does not indicate a lack of heritage: every community possesses archives, an oral tradition, forms of social life, persons with skills, etc.
>
> –   All, from the richest to the poorest, may make use of their creative capacities.

2.   Approach: how can one take action in the field of heritage?

Taking action in the field of heritage means, firstly, identifying its social, cultural and economic value. In so doing, it is essential to know it – and have it recognised – as a heritage item. Secondly, it has to be ensured that it is safeguarded and, possibly, to assign it a new use as part of a project. Finally, it means ensuring that it is handed down to future generations.

2.1.   Enhancing one's heritage

–   Enhancing means adding value. This value depends on how one views heritage: many heritage items have long been considered in purely functional terms, and the issue of how to conserve them after use never arose. Fascination with scientific, artistic or technological "progress" led to old objects being replaced by new ones, which were thought to be more effective or more in tune with an era's tastes.

–   Enhancement is described as direct when it focuses mainly on the item itself, and indirect when it focuses primarily on the item's surrounding. In each case, one aspect reinforces the other. Similar houses may have different values (economic, social, cultural, in terms of quality of life, etc) depending on whether they are located in a prestigious area or near a public rubbish tip.

2.2.   Thinking about heritage in a new way

–   Attitudes towards heritage have changed. Things that were previously valued only as tools are nowappreciated for their historical value. Equally, they assume a potential cultural, social or economic value, beyond the functional reasons justifying their existence.

–   It is impossible, and probably not desirable, to conserve everything, since such conservation is often expensive. Consequently, it is logical to seek to make the most of the heritage's potential by integrating it into development projects.

Why should heritage be enhanced?

– For the sake of tourism. Heritage undoubtedly contributes to an area's tourist potential and to the economic benefit that may be expected from it. Evaluating the potential for visitors – and possibly improving it – is an integral part of the enhancement project.

– For social and cultural reasons. Heritage does more than contribute to aesthetic pleasure and the quality of life: it anchors a population in its history, and roots (inherited or chosen), and gives meaning to the territory. As such, it is one of the constituent elements in local identity and the sense of belonging, a driving force in citizenship and solidarity.

– For economic reasons. The benefits of direct enhancement are easily identifiable: income from entrance fees, rental of farms that have been converted into holiday homes, the sale of bread baked in traditional ovens, etc. However, the indirect effects should also be recognised: visitor structures, shops, etc. This is also true explicitly, in terms of employment (guides, caretakers, escorts) or implicitly, in terms of the quality of life (the arrival of new residents, new businesses).

– For educational reasons. Nothing can replace *in situ* dialogue, demonstrations and activities when teaching history, techniques, aesthetics, geography, etc.

2.3. Knowing one's heritage

– The history and background of the most remarkable heritage items are usually the best known. Other items, however, seem at first glance to have no particular intrinsic value. Nonetheless, they bear witness too, and are sometimes the only indication, trace or remnant of a wider system that awaits reconstitution. For example, a corner tree indicates how land was divided up, a mound of earth might point to a former medieval *castrum*, while vine stock grown wild or place names might indicate previous cultivation practices.

– Research in county or municipal archives, documentation centres (museums, libraries, etc) and interviews with older people will give these heritage items a "voice", and enable us to understand their origins and purpose.

– Questions might also be asked about the rarity of certain objects: although wash-houses are frequently found across a national territory, certain styles are typical of certain regions, or may occur isolated among other dominant and more spectacular styles. This only serves to make them even more interesting.

2.4. Obtaining recognition for one's heritage

– Obtaining recognition means drawing everyone's attention to the heritage value of the item concerned. By explaining their origins, history, function and context, such items will assume their heritage status and volunteers can be mobilised to preserve them.

– Obtaining recognition for heritage primarily means assigning it meaning. Even the most humble item may tell us about history, lifestyles, spatial organisation or social relationships. As such, and regardless of its aesthetic or dramatic nature, it merits interest. This may explain the current enthusiasm for industrial tourism, memorial sites, communal ovens, and objects and places which are not monuments and which, in addition, were never intended for display.

– The choice between aesthetic and historical value may sometimes be difficult: for example, should one ensure that all the shutters on a façade are the same colour, so as to ensure uniformity, although their diversity is proof of joint individual ownership?

Interpretation: giving meaning

–   Interpretation, which is a technical term, aims to explain heritage and give meaning to it. It focuses on promoting possible knowledge of heritage as much as heritage itself. Many methods are used, including displays, exhibitions, particular layouts (sign-posting, traffic), lighting, etc.

–   Narration may be used in visits and for interpretation panels, as well as for catalogues, plaques, postcards, photos, or even multimedia: video cassettes, CD-ROMs, an Internet site, etc.

Restoration

–   A constant concern for public authorities or the scientific community is that heritage seems sometimes to have been "hijacked" by a few specialists (or private owners). As humanity's common property, it should be accessible to all. Museums, for example, have a duty to restore the treasures they guard to the public through exhibitions.

–   Although access may be restricted for various reasons, these must be clearly explained: knowing about heritage also means understanding how it must be preserved.

Taking action in the field of heritage: what approaches can be used?

–   Conservation means ensuring that heritage items do not deteriorate; it is carried out through preventative measures concerning their surroundings. Such protection sometimes requires that an item be removed from its environment where this represents a danger (e.g. items found during archaeological digs, certain endangered animal or vegetal species, etc.).

–   Restoration implies that an item is returned to its original condition.

–   Returning an item to its original condition, either partially (when, for example, restoring a machine with several missing parts) or more thoroughly when restoring it. In the latter case, virtual restoration is now possible.

–   Safeguarding means taking measures such as shoring up buildings that are threatening to collapse and is usually done urgently and provisionally, so as to avoid further deterioration. Legal and statutory tools are frequently used, but these are only a partial solution: protection does not solve management issues.

2.5.   Restoring one's heritage

–   Restoring means repairing repairing an item and returning it to its original condition. This is the ultimate goal, and concessions should not be made to personal interpretation or taste. Intervening work that does not conform to this spirit should be removed.

–   There are now "fashions" in restoration, and it is appropriate to appreciate their full impact. Many façades were originally designed to be coated, but have been left with exposed stone for aesthetic reasons, this is no longer genuine restoration.

–   Restoration also implies a return to technical efficiency and to a useable condition: a mill should be able to grind, an oven, to cook bread. Where certain parts of heritage must be replaced, only traditional materials, techniques and procedures are legitimate.

Two golden rulesin order to avoid mistakes
–   Don't do too much: our predecessors copied and adapted the most frequently used models in their neighbourhoods. Originality should be avoided at all costs, since it gives "mock-antique" results.
–   Do nothing that is irreversible: any work on the heritage, including work carried out to safeguard and protect it, should allow for a return to the original condition.

2.6.   Re-assigning one's heritage

–   Re-assigning means allotting a new use. Many heritage items, like fortified castles or hay-cutters, no longer serve their traditional function. Finding a new use often seems the best way of ensuring their conservation, which depends on the type of heritage concerned.

–   Small heritage items may be preserved in museums or collections as evidence of the past. They can be appreciated for their simple aesthetic value (philosophers referred to "artialisation", making things art) and end up as decorative objects.

–   Some heritage items are not easily transportable (buildings, landscapes) and the cost of preserving them may thus threaten their survival.

–   Among existing solutions, the most commonly used involve: conversion of heritage into visitors' sites, e.g., writer's home, blacksmith's forge; conversion of former farmhouses into second homes; conversion of buildings into holiday accommodation, social housing, exhibition areas, municipal halls, community centres or new industrial areas.

2.7.   Renovating and rehabilitating one's heritage

–   These two ways of modifying heritage scarcely help to enhance it and are therefore not recommended, but must be mentioned as they often interfere with restoration or re-assignment.

–   Renovating means making a building or item that is considered dilapidated look like new. It may require the complete destruction and rebuilding of an item, with no concern for restoration. This solution is almost always the least expensive and results in traditional farms being converted into standard villas, or in simple desertion for a new building, usually on the outskirts of a village.

–   Rehabilitating consists in bringing modern comforts and health and safety standards to houses that are considered too old for modern requirements. However, the strict application of urban planning regulations, which were intended for new buildings, often threatens the integrity of traditional buildings, e.g. raising of floor levels, disproportionate openings in old walls, etc.

Rehabilitation or renovation?

–   Rehabilitation, legitimate in its own right, concerns mainly the interior of buildings. However, introducing modern standards of comfort may encourage the rejection of certain constraints on the exterior (service lines, etc) and rejection of restoration in favour of renovation: for example, concrete may be used for window frames rather than local materials, viewed as too expensive.

–   For the same financial reasons, renovating a façade could do irreversible damage to an old house's traditional character.

–   Various solutions exist: for example, local authorities could take responsibility for at least some of the extra cost entailed by "non-invasive" restoration work that respects old materials and know-how.

2.8.   Handing down one's heritage

–   Heritage is often defined as a set of assets inherited from one's parents. In this respect, it is appropriate to consider what we will leave to our own descendants. Revitalising heritage means ensuring that it is handed down in good condition.

–   However, handing down one's heritage also means sharing a community-based culture, an identity and a sense of belonging. Consequently, heritage may make for exclusion of those who have not known their ancestors. It should be remembered that heritage is the common property and responsibility of everyone: it is not only those who are born in a particular country who have a stake in its heritage, but all those who share, in one capacity or another, a number of communal values.

–   Accordingly, heritage should contribute to building an identity that respects diversity and also binds together all the users within a territory.

> *How can one improve one's heritage?*
>
> –   Although "prudent" management of family assets is defined as handing them down to future generations in the same condition as we inherited them, it also implies improving this legacy.
>
> –   Improving heritage through enhancement may contribute to this process: restored buildings, preserved items, revitalised traditions, etc.
>
> –   While certain monuments and art objects have always been intended as future heritage items, the majority of old objects that we now conserve were not originally intended for this purpose. What we build today is tomorrow's potential heritage, but which items will achieve this status? Which of today's farm buildings can hope to compete with traditional farms?
>
> –   Quite apart from strictly functional and economic approaches, only a constant concern for quality, in any construction whatsoever, can contribute to this goal.

2.9.   Handing down practices, skills and know-how

–   Heritage items are inseparable from the practices, skills and know-how that are connected with them, that gave rise to them and that invest them with meaning. Handing down heritage should thus focus on these elements as much as on the items themselves. One might even ask which is more important: preserving a swing plough whose origin, method of construction and use are unknown, or preserving the skills and know-how that will enable an exact copy to be made and used? One should aim to preserve both.

–   Understanding skills and techniques should be extended to entire fields: knowing how to construct a dry-stone wall also means knowing how to select the right stones, knowing the locality, the methods and criteria for extracting stone, etc.

–   Collecting information, its detailed description and its dissemination are preconditions for handing down skills successfully. However, nothing can replace practice in the context of training courses or demonstration workshops, which are the only ways of ensuring faithful restoration or, where necessary, exact reproduction, without being unfaithful to the original design.

3.   Project: what is the meaning of the project?

Before taking any action involving heritage, it is important to define what one wishes to achieve, why and for whom. When drawing up projects, one must take into account existing general policies and the public, on whose behalf one wishes to act. It is essential that such projects mobilise a great number of partners and that local residents be involved through a participative approach.

3.1.   Putting policies in place

–   All forms of heritage are characterised by a relationship with time and space. In terms of time, heritage ensures, at a given moment, a link between the past, which it represents, and the future, which is connected to how one plans to use it. As a spatial marker, it is linked to a given territory, itself identified by all the heritage elements that make it up and which have certain features in common.

–   Accordingly, enhancing this heritage presupposes a two-way analysis: (1) analysis of the components of the spatial and temporal relationships, (2) analysis of the "good use" of the heritage concerned, in terms of territorial development prospects.

–   The concept of a project arises at this stage. It is advisable to construct projects to enhance elements of a given heritage in the local context.

–   Sustainable development of a territory results from an appropriate balance between the meaning assigned to their heritage (in the widest sense) by local populations and their partners, and society's expectations (i.e., partners from outside the region). The participative approach should take this requirement into account. The prospective uses put forward for heritage items (an essential step) should be developed from this perspective, which allows greater light to be shed on the choices regarding different types of use, whether social, cultural or economic.

–   At the same time, any proposed action must take into account a number of constraints. Apart from those relating to procedures linked to the very nature of heritage, the approach must seek to define what specific measures will be used to implement the enhancement project. The financing and action methods, outlined elsewhere, are factors that will affect the direction and content of the project itself.

–   The participative approach implies that each legal entity or individual potentially concerned by "good use" of some heritage element takes part in the enhancement process.

3.2.   Who are the partners in a participative approach?

–   Implementation of a policy to enhance heritage usually results from initiators, who can be divided into four groups. It could be a specific private or public initiative by individuals, organisations, professionals, elected representatives etc. The methods used to mobilise resources will depend on how these groups are represented.

–   The first concern of these "initiators" should be to identify all the interested partners, who have: interest or even passion for its nature or function; a relationship of proximity; specific knowledge or related skills; decision-making powers regarding its use or the process of preserving and enhancing it.

When these partners come together, a forum for dialogue and co-operation is created. Depending on the situation, one or the other type of partner may play a dominant role.

–   Experience suggests that a fifth category of partner should be able to intervene, namely professional communicators, who have professional training for such a role, knowledge of the heritage field concerned and experience in public communication.

3.3.   What are the various steps in the participative approach?

–   The first step involves becoming aware of and recognising the nature of heritage. Here, an inventory is the key element. It should not be drawn up by specialists alone but prepared with the participation of residents and associations.

–	The next step is the presentation of heritage. This is most frequently done through on-site visits and exhibitions. This should preferably be accompanied by genuine items for the promotion of heritage and the themes that they symbolise.

–	Next come discussion and audit. This can be done through a debate forum, since it determines the nature and form of the consultation on the potential use, through public discussion or consultation through oral and written surveys.

–	The next steps concern the implementation of the project and its inclusion in the development process. Participation is required both in developing the decision-making process and in constructing partnerships for action. These two steps often overlap, since various partners are involved in decision-making, although this is most frequently the responsibility of an "elected" partner, for funding reasons. Nevertheless, in analysing the components of the participative approach, it is essential to distinguish the various steps.

–	An important element of the process lies in defining who will direct the project. Obviously, once a project reaches a certain size, it is essential to put in place a steering committee. Even within such a body, the task of publicising the project is essential.

## 3.4.	Projects must be integrated into more general approaches

–	Heritage is the result of various activities on a territory. As such, it is part of the natural, economic, social, human and other potential activities that the audit should bring out. Any action should thus be planned in the context of the overall policy and major guidelines for the area under consideration.

–	There are various ways of working. Work on heritage may sometimes move away from the above policy (e.g. urgent archaeological digs when marking out a motorway) and may also contribute to policy implementation.

Restoration of traditional buildings: one way of fighting rural exodus

Many communities must cope with the abandonment of traditional buildings in village centres. Faced with the problems of joint ownership or restoration costs that are too high, people looking for housing are likely to build on the outskirts of villages and thus to contribute to urban sprawl. Otherwise, when they cannot afford this, they look for rented property in other communities and accelerate the rural exodus.

After drawing up inventories and audits of abandoned buildings, some local authorities have secured authority over land transactions, undertaken the necessary restoration work in line with the heritage character of these houses, and offered them for rental, either short-term (municipal holiday accommodation) or on an annual basis (municipal rented housing).

There are many advantages to this approach:
-	the traditionally built heritage in village centres is safeguarded;
-	local authorities supervise the quality of restoration, in line with previously determined construction specifications;
-	an end to depopulation or sometimes even repopulation in the municipality, via the offer of rented property.

## 3.5.	Projects are targeted towards particular groups

–	How is heritage to be discussed?

Heritage can be discussed in its own right, but also in terms of environment, economic and/or tourism development or regional planning.

–   What public will be targeted in particular?

It is advisable to target particular groups for any heritage project. "Everyone" or "the general public" is not a good definition of a group. It is absolutely vital to identify an audience to prioritize, which does not however mean that there is no need to consider possible overlaps between different groups' various expectations.

Four questions to be asked

- Why do we want to take action in the field of heritage?
-      Is it in order to safeguard a threatened asset or to support a long-term general policy?
-      Do we only want to ensure that heritage is handed down, or do we also want to attract tourists and businesses, to improve human environment and to combat rural depopulation; can these four things be reconciled, and, if so, how?
-      How will the proposed activity support – or invalidate – this policy?

3.6.   Projects must mobilise all players

–   Every person and practice affects, or may affect, heritage to some extent or another, whether in terms of creation, maintenance, management or enhancement. Projects are therefore the responsibility of all, and cannot be the prerogative of specialists alone.

–   Collaboration and involvement of all partners (residents, elected representatives, authorities, etc) are necessary from the outset in preparing a long-term activity. Even more than awareness-raising, mobilising these various partners around a common project is a crucial step in the operation's success.

3.7.   Projects are drawn up along with local residents

–   Public authorities cannot do everything because they do not have enough resources and they have only a limited capacity to intervene in the private sector. Maintaining and enhancing a territory's overall heritage thus rests largely with the residents themselves.

–   Steps should be taken to convince the public of the value of a freely accepted collective project that unites the public and private sectors and that is based largely on citizenship and personal initiative.

–   Accordingly, particular attention should be paid to the question of what motivates residents to become involved. It will then be easier to launch new projects on heritage elements that are less consensual but which require urgent or priority action.

3.8.   Heritage policies concern all the elements of heritage

–   Heritage is defined by all of its elements.

–   Prestigious monuments and sites should be given prominence in line with their status.

–   More modest examples of a territory's heritage deserve equally consistent attention.

–   Assigning varying degrees of value to these heritage elements is only justified to the extent that this makes it possible to consider action adapted to each particular case, in a search for complementarity.

3.9.   Today's creations are tomorrow's heritage

–   Heritage that is now so appreciated is no more than yesterday's creative activity, and while its preservation is a legitimate concern, this should not disguise the need for reflection on the quality of current and future constructions.

–   Various activities, including economic activities, are not necessarily opposed to heritage: if well thought out, they can be mutually enriching.

–   Shopping centres, agricultural buildings, factories or housing, built with a view to quality, contribute to a territory's overall image and represent tomorrow's heritage.

4.   Implementation: how are projects to be implemented?

Implementation of heritage projects involves various phases. Setting up a committee to enhance items of heritage makes it possible to obtain better recognition, clarifies the wish to take action, and involves the parties concerned from the outset. Preparation of the preliminary project covers the selection of a contractor, looking for partners and drawing up specifications. Formalisation of a project leads to funding applications and the project becomes the "property" of the territory's other users.

4.1.   Bringing projects to life

–   *Creating an "enhancement" committee*

This first committee will have the task of obtaining recognition for an item of heritage beyond its immediate circle, so that regional partners may grasp the idea that action can be taken. At this stage, the issue is not so much one of identifying enhancement tools, but of attracting attention. The committee could also be referred to as a "support" or "defence" committee. Such committees could be set up by associations that are not directly involved with heritage, or even by private individuals, whose opinions would be followed up by the voluntary sector.

–   *Membership of the "enhancement" committee*

The follow-up committee could be composed of legal entities or individuals involved in the territory. Proximity often helps to unite people around a project. In order to have the widest membership possible, restrictions should not be imposed on the areas of interest of those contacted, and the group should be cast beyond the local community.

This initial committee should gain the widest possible support from the parties concerned, both throughout the territory and among the public. With this in mind, public meetings can be organised, the issue publicised in the local press, and contacts sought with the voluntary sector. It is not essential that elected representatives be involved in the initial states, since it is advisable that the idea of necessary enhancement be promoted outside the framework of political issues. Securing the services of at least one expert will also help with recognition.

One way of avoiding pitfalls is to clarify, from the outset, each person's position, stressing the committee's consultative role, and to clearly highlight the innovative role that this body wishes to maintain, although it will necessarily change as the project develops.

–   *Integrating the enhancement project into a collective approach*

In order to integrate the enhancement project into a collective approach, attempts should be made to involve all the parties in the territory concerned:

  - the local population (which will encourage elected representatives to take an interest);
  - representatives of associations (an essential network at regional level and a focus for skills);
  - professional representatives, (e.g. farming unions if the heritage involves farming trades). By involving professions, the project will reflect social and economic challenges more accurately;
  - various experts (from local scholars to tourism specialists: scientific competence could help give the project legitimacy in the eyes of institutional bodies).

–   *What can be done to improve projects?*

The "enhancement" committee must be able to change, especially by seeking contributions from partners involved in similar projects. It is important to break out of the format of formal meetings and advisable to hold additional on-site meetings, so that space and environment can be taken into account. Additionally, at this stage of the project, it is necessary to seek first-person accounts rather than expert opinions.

–   *The need for structure*

United by the first enhancement activities, those involved in the project now try to define a status for their group, which will act as interlocutor with institutions and local authorities.

Three scenarios are possible: (1) the committee may be "hosted" by an existing association, (2) an *ad hoc* organisation may be set up, (3) where a project has been launched by an individual, this person may maintain his or her autonomy.

Associative status should not be sought solely for the sake of having a "letterhead", but should reflect a genuine commitment on the part of its members.

–   *Drawing up an inventory of cultural and tourist potential*

When drawing up the draft project, it is advisable to look for information and technical advice about similar projects, available budget headings, etc. However, it is also necessary to step back from the project to analyse the potential of the environment, by evaluating the territory from the perspectives of tourism, culture and social questions.

Specific activities

–   For example, a film about a similar experience could be screened, or an appropriate person from such a project invited to speak; better still, a small study visit could be organised for some of the committee members.

–   These activities should provide tangible and original material for discussion. In particular, they should demonstrate the strength of the first partners' commitment.

This first list will highlight certain areas of potential in the project, without however shaping it completely. For example, a project aimed at enhancing a small heritage aspect should demonstrate how it could be used for developing tourism or cultural activities, or its key role in regional planning. The requirements of this inventory mean that a formalised study should be carried out.

4.2.   Drawing up the pre-project

Once the first document has been drawn up, identifying the general ideas in the heritage enhancement project, a more formal phase begins. During this phase, scientific collaboration can be sought, and financial partnerships envisaged. It is at this stage that the project's scale and feasibility are determined.

The project's scale will determine the challenges ahead.

–   *Selecting a contractor*

If the project is not directed by a body (such as a union of local authorities) that is the de facto contractor, the steering committee will select one. The contractor should be able to provide financial considerations in funding applications.

The contractor may be a private individual (e.g., the owner of a manor, a farmer), an association (with sufficient financial resources for the project) or a local or regional authority (municipality, inter-municipal body).

The choice of contractor is made on the basis of various technical criteria (ability to mobilise expertise), financial (for example, a religious heritage trail across a small region is frequently beyond a municipality's resources) and political criteria. With regard to the last factor, it is advisable to take into account political contexts and strategies, even at a local level (for example, ensuring that implementation of the project will not be impeded by elections).

– *Setting up a steering committee*

It is the project initiator's task to suggest to the follow-up committee that a steering committee be set up. This body will have several functions:

- approving or appointing the contractor (the steering committee will choose the best contractor);
- appointing a head of project, who will have a leadership role; the steering committee could legitimise the initiator by appointing him/her head of project, or look for new skills that correspond to the project's development needs. However, care should be taken to avoid the aberration of taking the project "away" from its initiator; he or she should be found an honourable role, in order to maintain a link between the project's birth and its future;
- associating all the parties concerned is of major importance for the project's future. The steering committee will be the forum at which the various partners can express themselves and explain how the project fits into their policies;
- choosing the service providers. The project leader will use the steering committee as a jury for selecting architects, consultancy firms and other experts;
- approving the outcome of proposals, whether those of the head of project or of the experts and consultancy firms contacted; accordingly, the steering committee should meet regularly throughout the project's implementation; the minutes of its meetings will be distributed to committee members and will help in decision-making about project development;
- approving the final project. The final project should be viewed as the tool which will allow the activity to take shape; it is the result of summaries and guidelines prepared on the basis of proposals from all the contributors (experts, architects, the project initiator, head of project, elected representatives, etc.) and discussions within the steering committee.

– *Bringing in experts*

It is important to clearly identify the reasons for bringing in experts. It is also essential to define the questions that they are to be asked. Also, when working with consultancy firms on heritage enhancement or tourism development, it is vital to treat their contribution in terms of objectives to be attained. There are certain consultancy firms that can look after a project from start to finish, but in such cases it is often much more difficult to make it "belong" to local partners.

– *Establishing time and quality requirements*

The steering committee's very first meetings should be used to discuss deadlines for future activities and the quality of the desired results. A good schedule of work will enable the partners to monitor the project's progress; in turn, it becomes a framework, facilitating dialogue between the various partners. This qualitative framework of action on the project can be guaranteed by drawing up technical specifications, where an expert is involved, or through the work of a special committee.

The experts

Experts bring a specialist's view to particular aspects of the project. They fall into two categories: heritage experts and promotion or communication experts. For example, a historian or an ethnologist could help define the project's scientific content, whilst a specialist in tourism or cultural communication will advise on bringing this content to the public.

These experts include:

– Specialists in an area of heritage: geographers, historians, ethnologists, archaeologists (these experts may be contacted via universities).

– Communication specialists: architects, scenic artists, museographers, publishers.

4.3. Formalising the project

In this phase, the main partner could call on a technical adviser, who would be recruited for a given period, or on a consultancy firm. These two options have their respective advantages: for example, a technical adviser could quickly obtain a high profile among those involved in the territory and thus help with publicising the project, whilst a consultancy firm would bring useful external benchmarks for specific activities such as the evaluation of target groups.

– *Funding applications and preparing documents*

The main partner, assisted by various experts, will monitor the tourism and cultural aspects of the project in a coherent and appealing way and put together the financial aspects of the operation.
The financial arrangements are prepared on a provisional basis, and it is recommended that they be spread over three years. However, the file should be brought up to date as new partners make commitments. There should be a proportion of self-funding, which will be linked to development of the project's core activity.

Opportunities for sponsorship should not be neglected, and businesses should be contacted. Each funding request will take a particular angle, in line with the interests of the party being solicited.

The technical specifications

This may contain:

- the forms that the commissioned research may take;
- the methodology for dealing with the list of persons and bodies to be consulted;
- schedules;
- deadlines for presenting intermediary work;
- definition of the item requiring work;
- evaluation of the various phases of the work.

– *Winning the population and regional partners over to the project*

Publicising a project is not easy: at what stage should this type of activity be undertaken, and what aspects of the project should be presented? Here too, the scale of the project will determine the practical communication arrangements. The local and regional press remains a key information channel. Public meetings are another method. For example, when rehabilitating an aspect of the built heritage, information should be disseminated well before the application for building permission is lodged, and certainly well before work actually begins. Equally, when tracing a landscape discovery trail, a public meeting will allow the views of other users to be sought; those who define themselves as traditional users should be able to express their views.

Advice for the funding application

– When looking for funding, care should be taken in replacing the professionals involved in preparing the dossier: one should be able to co-opt their experience. For example, specialists' help is essential in applications for European funding, since it is important to have in-depth knowledge of the texts and practices relating to such applications. Thus, they can give opinions on the nature of co-funding arrangements, the percentages required for such arrangements, and on the inter-relationship between the various measures (investments, mechanisms).

– Before sending a funding application to a partner, it is advisable to be aware of the amount of support that it usually grants, so that the application can be matched to its capacities. In practice, funding applications that do not correspond to a partner's capacities are quickly ruled out. This information can be obtained by asking a specialist in the institution concerned, by asking to consult previous applications, or by negotiating with these partners if they are part of the steering committee.

Advice on improving the public's knowledge of the project

– Depending on the project's content, contact, for example, teachers (there is sometimes a strong link between the school population and the public at large);

– Organise on-site visits (for elected representatives and the architect).

– Don't forget public meetings.

– Make a "comments book" available, especially when a project is likely to have impact on the life of those living in or using an area (such as a wetland landscape).

– Having monitored a number of previous cases, it seems that the point at which the steering committee is set up is an appropriate time to begin communication activities. The project's cost should also be one aspect dealt with in any information campaign. Whilst financial transparency may sometimes provoke fears about public reactions, it will facilitate decision-making and help guarantee success.

II.   METHODOLOGY OF OBSERVATION

The methodology (i.e. a series of methods and techniques that allow for a coherent and effective approach) proposed in this guide should enable to learn to observe rural heritage in greater or lesser depth, depending on the situation and the objectives, by following the approach set out below:

The approach

–   Clarifying the project: to clarify your project, you must enlist the communication specialists and population concerned, and finely tune in to the activities planned.

–   Selecting an area: if the project is to be as coherent and effective as possible, you must first choose an area, i.e., focus your research within a specific and meaningful locality.

–   Identifying rural heritage. Using appropriate tools, both geographical (site exploration) and historical (identification of documents), you will then identify the various elements of the area's rural heritage. To do this, you will establish their existence both by an inventory and through discussion on the component parts.

–   Classifying and categorising heritage elements: this inventory will enable you to classify the elements of heritage and categorise them using one or several specific approaches. It will enable you to bring out all the hidden, ignored or forgotten aspects of heritage.

–   Understanding relationships and changes: it is important that you should also able to understand the relationships which unite these elements among themselves and which make it possible to categorise the context or the set of circumstances in which they exist. Of course, this context and background have developed over time. You will be able to understand these developments better by placing the various elements in a historical perspective.

–   Understanding heritage from a local development perspective: the impact of enhancement on the region's economic interests.

–   Evaluating heritage: aside from its state of preservation, a heritage element can be better evaluated by integrating it into environmental and territorial concerns.

---

1.   Clarifying the project

Local populations are at the heart of rural cultural heritage. They identify it and assign it an identity-based value. It is they who can make it come alive on a daily basis and can be enlisted to assign it a role in local development.

–   *Initiating an enhancement project*

If you wish to launch a project to enhance and develop rural cultural heritage, you have to ask which intermediaries you should contact and which population groups they can help you mobilise?

Leaders of associations (members of youth clubs, senior citizens' clubs, rural life and heritage clubs); local elected representatives (members of municipal committees, the public in the municipalities and areas concerned); teachers, adults receiving training, those in adult education; agricultural advisors (farmers); those responsible for tourism (those working in this sector).

–   *Determining the appropriate methods*

What are the most appropriate methods for involving them?

This can be done through meetings, exhibitions, audiovisual programmes, articles in municipal and trade journals, training activities, guided visits, "fun" visits.

–   *What activities should be proposed?*

What activities can you offer in order to develop your project steadily?

Exploration, locating items, drawing up an inventory, research, preservation and upkeep, enhancement, a conservation or development project, new use.

2.   Selecting a locality

Heritage elements assume meaning and value within a specific territory. In return, they assume that territory's identity and strengthen it.

You should opt for a locality that allows for identity-based references and that corresponds to the target audiences, communication strategy and objectives that you have identified.

You must select a locality:

–   *that allows for a comprehensive approach*

You can choose a locality that allows for a comprehensive social, cultural or economic approach, such as a municipality, which is the most convenient research unit, since it corresponds to long-standing human communities.

–   *with biogeographical unity*

You can choose a territory with biogeographical, climatic or soil unity, such as a valley, plateau or terrain.

–   *that is made up of several local authorities*

You can choose a territory that is made up of several local authorities with similar architectural, economic and cultural features, or which share a common project (regional nature parks, districts, cantons, territories…).

3.   Identifying rural heritage

The use of varied and gradual techniques to identify the elements of heritage should be accompanied by debate between the representatives of all the parties involved. This will facilitate the emergence of the identity-based references that invest such elements with a cultural value.

Depending on the target audiences and objectives you have set, it is advisable to identify rural heritage using suitable tools that will allow for observation and analysis, moving from a responsive approach to analysis, from locating items to an inventory as appropriate.

Rural heritage should be identified:

–   *On the ground*

The techniques are: a responsive and sensory approach on the ground; specific methodical observations (interpretation of a landscape, analysis of a built element, thematic route, etc.); comprehensive identification of relevant items in a territory by travelling around it; reading the official 1/25,000 map; sketches, photographs, drawings; classification and systematic summaries; comparative cartography, comparison of old and new land registers.

–   *At documentary level*

The techniques are: inventory (consultation of existing databases, organisations, bibliographies); research in old and recent photography collections (post cards, local photographers' archives, family archives); consultation of local archives (municipal, parish administrative and private); interviews and oral enquiries (collection of residents' and farmers' memories).

–   *By simply locating the elements*

Prior to any classification work, the ideal scenario is to launch a stage of simply locating the elements. You will suggest approaches using landscapes, buildings, regional products, craft skills, social practices (life and work), symbolic representations, etc.

There should be a phase in which the partners familiarise themselves with local heritage. This completes the identification through identity-based benchmarks. It is carried out:

–   *By contrasting various portrayals*

Contrasting portrayals: the value assigned to the elements in their own right, as common property, from emotional, aesthetic, identity-based perspectives, etc.

–   *By comparing opinions*

Contrasting points of view: owners, mayors, farmers, residents, visitors, ecologists…

–   *By defining heritage concepts*

Definition of the concept of cultural and historical heritage, of common property.

4.   Classifying and describing heritage elements

Classification is only meaningful if it allows for better knowledge of all the elements in heritage, from the most visible to those that are less well-known, hidden in our daily use, pushed from our memory or abandoned because they are no longer useable.

You can classify and categorise heritage elements for the purpose of drawing up an inventory that is as exhaustive as possible and considering rural cultural heritage in all its dimensions.

–   *Thematic classification*

Water: wash-houses, fountains, watering places, ponds, canals, locks, etc.;
Religion: chapels, oratories, crosses, etc.;
Work: craftwork, agriculture, small traditional industries, etc;
Travel: trails, paths and roads, railways, etc.;
Crossings: fords, bridges, aqueducts, etc.

–   *Classification by location*

Locations: historic sites, areas for residence or work, public places and areas for social life, private and domestic contexts, far out in the countryside, etc.

– *Classification by function*

Functions and uses: residence, farming, agricultural, herding, forestry activities etc, social or symbolic functions (beliefs, tales and legends).

– *Gradual classification*

Going from aggregates (landscapes, villages, etc.) to isolated elements.

– *Categorising the elements*

Assets may be tangible (buildings), intangible (know-how, portrayals) or fungible (animal and vegetable species, regional products).

– *From the most visible to the most secluded*

From the most visible to the most hidden, from protected to threatened elements, from the exceptional to the everyday: "obvious" heritage is recognised (tourist publications, press articles, magazines, routes, etc), listed (or could be) and often imposing; the "everyday" heritage is assigned a range of uses, and people are not always aware of its heritage values: recognition is therefore necessary. This concerns the majority of the built heritage that is still inhabited, the agrarian landscape, but may also be true of a line of trees, irrigation networks, a culinary tradition, etc.

– *From the operational to the obsolete*

From working heritage to heritage that has been abandoned or is obsolete: the second category is of no current use and is threatened by slow deterioration or disappearance (destruction, neglect, etc.); this could include olive terraces that have been left untended, a hay-barn in ruins, a craft skill that is not handed down, etc.

5.   Understanding relationships and change

No heritage element can be understood in isolation. It must be reconstructed as part of a wider whole, in which uses, social and agrarian practices and imagination infuse life and connect it to other elements of heritage. Oral and historical research are essential in achieving this objective.

For a clearer understanding of the relationships between one heritage element and another, and its role in a wider context or group, focus on relationships in a geographical framework (mountains, the coast) associated with a specific culture or in the context of a complex group of elements, such as a landscape or architectural entity (functional and aesthetic relationships).

By collecting people's memories and using chronological observation, historical research makes it possible to trace changes in uses, techniques and know-how.

– *Historical development*

Taking historical development into account (through archival documents, library holdings); dating; by analysing the contexts in which heritage elements were created.

– *Landscape development*

Taking account of changes in landscapes, buildings and agricultural practices: through comparative analysis of cartography, land registers, iconographs and photographs.

–   *Changes in use*

Taking account of changes in the use of buildings and land parcels, in the light of economic, technical, social and cultural conditions: by gathering first-person accounts.

6.   Heritage and development

Understanding heritage from local development perspectives. Rural cultural heritage has become a modern asset. Far from being a nostalgic trip back in time, it is a springboard for development projects and can mobilise a region's business community.

It is advisable to:

–   *Encourage dialogue*

You can encourage dialogue on regional planning issues, new uses of farming, sustainable development, etc.

–   *Identify enhancement activities*

You can evaluate rural heritage's integration into development projects by identifying potential enhancement activities:

- traditional skills in their economic and cultural context (exhibitions, demonstrations, interpretation centres, traditional houses, various events, etc.);
- re-assigning traditional buildings to public use (such as cultural premises);
- cultural activities and events;
- developing tourism (tourism facilities, circuits, itineraries, welcome services);
- marketing quality local products (markets, on-farm sale, etc.);
- agricultural landscapes and practices (heritage management as part of agricultural and environmental measures, "sustainable development plans", "land use contracts", etc.).

–   *Identify inter-municipal projects*

You can take account of inter-municipal projects (regional nature parks, territories, districts, etc.)

7.   Evaluating heritage

Rural cultural heritage can be evaluated within a civic approach. Since it is much more than a matter for experts alone, all the partners should be concerned by collective recognition of its public interest, via increased vigilance in conservation and the wish to enhance it.

–   *Evaluating changes*

Each element of heritage can be evaluated: its development, state of preservation or the indicators of change.

- Development: stability, neglect, "natural" deterioration, rehabilitation, enhancement;
- State of preservation: very deteriorated, would lend itself to restoration, well-preserved;
- Signs of change: different uses (land parcels, buildings, etc.), disfigurement, the risk of destruction connected with building work.

–   *Assessing the positive and negative aspects*

You can carry out an environmental-type evaluation:

        - By assessing both the positive and negative environmental aspects, based on an approach that is: sensory (smells, noise); visual (electricity cables, water towers, industrial buildings, materials, architecture, etc.); ecological (proximity of waste dumps, stockpiles, warehouses, etc.).
        - By identifying abandoned areas (lack of maintenance, threat of deterioration, especially as regards the built heritage).

–   *Exchanging and discussing*

You can debate the value of heritage:

        - By discussing on the value of the elements of heritage in their own right, for others, for the community: emotional, aesthetic, identity value (recognition, social link, citizenship, etc.).
        - By discussing certain elements' vitality (through their current strong economic, social or symbolic function) and, conversely, the "extinguished" or totally abandoned heritage.
        - By discussing the value of existing facilities and their integration: improving what is already there, reallocation, tourism or cultural facilities, etc.
        - By discussing the relevance of tourism development projects in relation to community identity.
        - Discussions about backward-looking and superficially picturesque visions of heritage, the danger of a ghetto mentality, the search for a "bolthole" or, conversely, modernity and its appropriateness in local development, the need to be open to multiculturalism..

III.   HERITAGE'S COMPONENT PARTS

1.   Reading a landscape

Compiling a list of the items of rural heritage in one's region or territory begins by reading the landscape in front of us. You should therefore identify the various elements that make it up, and locate and date them, so that you can then examine them using the various sheets in this chapter. Make a point of describing the relationships between them, and considering how they were (and still are) structured as part of a coherent whole: how, for example, can the co-existence of crops and animals on a single territory be reconciled? This approach should make your audit easier and help to identify possible activities for safeguarding and highlighting heritage.

–   *Spatial organisation – the elements that give shape to a landscape and divide it into major sections: cultivated, pastoral, forest, aquatic and built land (from the village to dispersed habitat).*

–   *Agrarian landscapes – the way in which agricultural activities shape the landscape: open fields, woodland, marches, terraces, vineyards, mountain landscapes.*

–   *Reference points – proof of human presence: signs/landmarks, water channels, religious buildings, commemorative edifices and installations to protect against natural risks.*

–   *Communication channels – everything that contributes to establishing links within a specific community and between the various communities in the landscape under study: roads and paths, navigation routes, railroads.*

1.1.   Spatial organisation

This is the broad view of a landscape. Various activities are distributed over the land on the basis of environmental (relief, climate, soil type…) and cultural constraints: identical constraints do not always correspond to identical responses. Some old and recent landscapes have a homogenous appearance. Others are in flux, and a single area will have visible traces of traditional activities juxtaposed with new uses of the countryside.

a.   Assessment criteria

–   *Cultivated land*

How is it composed (open fields, hedgerow, terraces…)? How are the parcels of land arranged (in strips, pie-shaped wedges, etc.)? Are the fields enclosed, and, if so, how? How are the land parcels reached?

–   *Land for animal husbandry*

What areas are used for animal husbandry (meadows, trails,…)? Are there several distinct areas? Do these vary according to the season? How are these areas marked out? Do they include permanent structures (mountain farms, shepherds' lodges, etc.)?

–   *Forestry land*

Where and how is wooded land divided up in the territory? What types of afforestation are seen (forests, woods, copses…); what are the dominant species? How are these wooded areas arranged (high forest, coppice, coppice-with-standards, etc.) and who manages them (private forests, state forests)? Do the residents enjoy particular rights (right to gather wood, etc.)?

> – *Aquatic areas*
>
> Where is water present (rivers, lakes, ponds…)? Have these expanses been created or laid out by man? How and why?
>
> – *The built area*
>
> What form has the built area assumed (village, hamlets, scattered habitat, etc.), where and why? How does this compare with the past, and how such buildings were laid out (see the old land register)?

b. *Evaluation*

> – *Positive aspects*
>
> Study the landscape's coherence, the relationships between its various elements, the permanent features and transitory features: try to identify to what extent it can still serve as a setting for future conversions and transformations.
>
> – *Negative aspects*
>
> Lack of control over the area (pockmarked development, chaotic urban planning, "dotted" areas of woodland, fallow land…), particularly unsightly areas (no harmony between buildings in terms of their scale, rubbish dumps…). Try to predict possible long-term development on the basis of identified trends.

1.2.   Agrarian landscapes

a.   *Assessment criteria*

> – *Open fields*
>
> Are they characteristic of the regional landscape? What types of crops are they intended for? How are the edges of fields and land parcels marked? Have some paths disappeared, been restored, or created? Why?
>
> – *Hedgerows*
>
> What do they look like (relief, size of parcels, "meshing", proportion of crops and meadows, etc.)? How are the hedges constructed (pollards, shrubs…)? How has land consolidation affected hedgerow landscapes?
>
> – *Marshes*
>
> Are there several specific areas (dry marsh, wet marsh, temporary meadows, etc.)? Are they still used? By the community?
>
> – *Terraces*
>
> Why were they laid out? When? For which crops? What are their features (construction, slope of the beds, are they irrigated and/or drained…)?
>
> – *Vineyards*
>
> What is their role in the countryside? Since when? What forms of vegetation are found alongside them (rose bushes, willows…)? What are they used for?

–   *Mountain landscape*

How have the various buildings been erected in terms of natural risks? What are the characteristics of mountain flora and fauna, both natural and domestic? What types of problem does this pose?

b.   *Evaluation*

–   *Positive aspects*

The elements that form part of agrarian landscapes, and contribute to diversity in all its forms (bio-diversity, cultural and landscape diversity), as well as the people who maintain them (farmers).

–   *Negative aspects*

Old practices that are now out-of-date, new uses of the countryside. Study the reasons for abandoning agrarian landscapes and the possibility of finding a new use for them, as well as the respective contributions of farmers and new users to maintaining these areas.

1.3.   Communication channels

a.   *Assessment criteria*

–   *Roads and paths*

How is the local network of roads and paths organised, and on what hierarchical basis (national or county roads, by-roads, access to land parcels…)? Is this network as dense as in the past? Why? Do they have any special features (sunken lanes, cliff roads, drove roads…)? What are they lined by (embankment, trees, fencing…)? Are there any noteworthy roads (Roman road, paved road…)? What is their history? What is their current condition? Are they covered by any particular protection measures?

–   *Navigation routes*

Is the river navigable? Developed (have the banks been reinforced, are there any art works)? Are they used, and for what purposes? When was the canal built, and for what purpose? Has it been developed (locks, port, bridges…)? Is it still used, by whom and why? What condition is the towpath in?

–   *Railways*

Are there pieces of art and buildings alongside the rail tracks (tunnels, bridges, viaducts, stations, level-crossing houses…)? When do these date from? Who built them? Are there old tracks that are no longer used? Old tools? What has happened to them? Why did they fall into disuse?

b.   *Evaluation*

–   *Positive aspects*

Regular maintenance, a wish to integrate these elements into the landscape. Old paths may now be used for new purposes, through tourism and leisure activities.

–   *Negative aspects*

Standardised and badly-integrated equipment, pointless signs (advertising). Paths that go nowhere (access paths to former land parcels), circular paths (walks) and communication paths. Investigate why they have been abandoned and the potential for rehabilitating them.

1.4. Neighbourhood constructions

a. Assessment criteria

– *Signs and landmarks*

What are the reference points (milestones, landmarks, steeples, silos…)? What methods were used to mark farm boundaries, the intersection of roads and paths, ownership or land parcel boundaries…? Which trees are characteristically found in cemeteries, around important houses and alongside roads?

– *Water supply*

Where does the community's water supply (for feeding or watering) come from? Are there structures linked to water conveyance or distribution (aqueducts, water towers, furrows, sluice gates…)? What springs, fountains or wells still exist on the territory? What condition are they in?

– *Religious constructions*

What small religious monuments exist ? Where are they located? Where is the cemetery? Are there isolated tombs? Why? Why were roadside crucifixes and crosses erected (expressions of gratitude, mission cross…)?

– *Commemorative items*

What commemorative structures exist (statues, plaques, monuments to the dead, thanksgiving plaques, graffiti…)? What important events have shaped the community's history?

– *Natural risks*

How did the community organise protection against natural risks: watches, mandatory work, isolated buildings (attics, barns), etc. What equipment was – and is – specifically designed as protection against such risks?

b. Evaluation

– *Positive aspects*

Some items of equipment have distinct regional features. However, their old or modern use is not always properly understood, especially by visitors. Nonetheless, they could be used for display or particular explanations.

– *Negative aspects*

Lack of maintenance, standardisation that ignores specific local features and trivialises the landscape. Do modern amenities, often considered as "eyesores", have the potential to become works of art?

2. Buildings

A building is defined as a permanent structure composed of walls and a roof. In rural world, castles, houses, farms, barns, stables, factories, places of worships, etc, fall into this category. Their form frequently depends on their purpose, as well as the technological skills available when they were built, regional materials, site restrictions, traditions, regional architectural styles, local ways of life. In addition, construction techniques are constantly developing and contribute valuable historical points of reference. In rural world, however, built heritage is not limited to buildings per se. It also includes fountains, washhouses, food markets, archaeological sites, ruins and walls, etc: everything that, in one way or another, helps to structure space.

–   *Public buildings – buildings which played or play a role in public life: religious buildings, places of worship, official buildings (town halls and schools), commercial buildings (food markets), community edifices (fountains and washhouses) and sports facilities.*

–   *Farms and residential houses – includes village houses and farms (as places of residence, a key element in farming) and certain types of architecture characteristic of such buildings.*

–   *Craft and industrial buildings – all the edifices and buildings that house, or housed, craft or industrial activities: factories, plants, workshops, cellars and mills.*

–   *Working buildings – all the buildings that are or were used for farming, with the exception of residential buildings: barns, livestock buildings, dovecotes, temporary buildings.*

–   *Historical buildings – these are witnesses to the past, but may nonetheless still be in active use: castles, abbeys, archaeological sites, ruins and remains, walls, keeps and towers.*

2.1.   Historical buildings

a.   *Assessment criteria*

<div style="border:1px solid">

–   *Castles*

Is it a castle, manor, small castle, fortified house, abode, family mansion, etc.? What is its role in the community? For the neighbouring settlements? What was its social and political importance at various dates? Who lived there? Is it still inhabited? Is it architecturally noteworthy? Is there an identifiable style (medieval, baroque, Renaissance, etc.)? Can its architectural development be reconstituted?

–   *Abbeys*

What is the political and social significance of its location? What was its role in structuring the surrounding agrarian and industrial landscape? Which monastic order built it? Does the same order still live there? What comparison can be made between its past and current influence? What is it now used for (spiritual, cultural, artistic or economic activity)? What is its architectural style (Roman, Gothic, other)?

–   *Archaeological sites, ruins*

What traces have they left on the countryside (ruins, burial mounds, embankments)? Have objects been found (coins, flints, ceramics)? Is it known what the site was used for (living area, Roman hill-fort, necropolis, industrial site…)? What stories are linked to it? Do we know when it was occupied?

–   *Walls, keeps, towers*

Are they remnants of old buildings or boundaries? What was their previous function? Do they have a value in terms of identity?

</div>

b.   ***Evaluation***

> –   *Positive aspects*
>
> Study the features that make the site attractive, the quality of various restoration work, the existing or potential tourism development, the current social use, the way in which the surroundings have been laid out, etc.
>
> –   *Negative aspects*
>
> Take note of failure to maintain edifices, all forms of pollution (environmental, visual, sound, aesthetic) which prevent normal enjoyment of the site, or any downgrading of the site following recent or past conversion, as a result of a change in activity, etc.

2.2.   Farms and residential houses

a.   ***Assessment criteria***

> –   *General questions*
>
> What are their architectural features? Do they belong to several periods? If yes, is it possible to retrace their architectural development? Do the architectural features have a practical role, a social or religious significance or are they merely ostentatious? Have they changed over time? Are they still used today? If not, why (new, more efficient or economic techniques)? Is the farm or residential house typical of the region? What materials have been used? Are they traditional? Where have they come from? Are they well preserved? What comments can be made about their location?
>
> –   *Farmhouses*
>
> Are they single buildings or built around a courtyard? Are these courtyards open or closed? Is the farm still in use? If not, what has it become (residential home, holiday home, other use)? Has it been abandoned? If so, what condition is it in?
>
> –   *Village houses*
>
> How are these designed and what form do they take? Are the houses grouped together? Are there fortified houses? Why (aesthetic, functional, economic, social or other reasons)? Who used to live there? What was their main purpose? What about today?

b.   ***Evaluation***

> –   *Positive aspects*
>
> Take account of activities still carried out in the houses and farms, the preservation of traditional architecture, the existence of skills in local architecture, environmental preservation of the sites, the local population's investment in this preservation, etc.
>
> –   *Negative aspects*
>
> Study why regional building styles have been abandoned, and the lack of reference to them in new buildings, the lack of interest on the part of local people, the neglect of specific skills, environmental dangers, etc.

2.3. Farm buildings

a. Assessment criteria

– *General questions*

What are their architectural features? Do they belong to several periods? If yes, is it possible to retrace their architectural development? Do the architectural features have a practical role, a social or religious significance or are they merely ostentatious? Have they changed over time? Are they still used today? If not, why (new, more efficient or economic techniques)? Is the farm or residential house typical of the region? What materials have been used? Are they traditional? Where have they come from? Are they well preserved? What comments can be made about their location?
What materials have been used? Are they traditional? Where have they come from? Are they well preserved? What comments can be made about their location?

– *Barns*

Do they belong to a farm or to the wider community?

– *Livestock buildings*

What animals do they house? Are the structures typical of this kind of building? Were they built specially or have they been taken over for use as livestock buildings?

– *Dovecotes*

Where are they located? In castles or on farms? In the middle of the countryside? Why? What are they used for today? What role did they play? Are they still used for collecting pigeon droppings? What is this used for? What shape are they (round, square, octagonal, porches)?

– *Temporary buildings*

Are they still standing?

b. Evaluation

– *Positive aspects*

Study the condition of the buildings and environmental features, the extent to which they fit in with the regional style, their current function, renovation or rehabilitation, the quality of any such work, etc.

– *Negative aspects*

Architectural features and any deterioration in the buildings should be taken into account, as well as their poor architectural quality or lack of style (e.g. prefabricated buildings), the juxtaposition of ill-assorted buildings, the visual pollution that this causes, abandonment or lack of upkeep, etc.

2.4.   Crafts and industrial buildings

a.   Assessment criteria

> –   *General questions*
>
> When was the building constructed? What does that correspond to in terms of economic development (national, regional, local)? What products were originally manufactured? Are the same products made today, and if, not, why? Are they local products? What was their social and economic importance? What about today? Have these activities disappeared? Are the same products still manufactured in the region? On an industrial scale? Is the architecture noteworthy? How have they been preserved? Have they been converted, and what are they currently used for (commercial uses, tourism, socio-cultural uses, etc.)?

b.   Evaluation

> –   *Positive aspects*
>
> First of all, study the existing economic activity and trade, its impact on keeping the local population in the area, the architectural qualities of such buildings, the measures adopted to safeguard them and initiatives to ensure that specific activities are continued.
>
> –   *Negative aspects*
>
> Evaluate the impact of closure of these production sites on the population and on regional decline, the failure to preserve such buildings, environmental dangers (including those that could be a consequence of past activity), etc.

2.5.   Public buildings

a.   Assessment criteria

> –   *General questions*
>
> Is the building's architecture remarkable in terms of regional style? Are the buildings still in use? If yes, what? Has it changed over time? Where in the village is the building located? Why? What materials have been used? Are they traditional for the region or territory? Where do they come from?
>
> –   *Religious buildings*
>
> Have these buildings always been used for religious purposes? Have they been converted from their original use? Are churches in identifiable styles (Roman, Gothic, etc)? When do they date from? Are they now out of proportion with the village's size? Are there other buildings or architectural elements of a religious nature?
>
> –   *Official buildings*
>
> Are they in a recognisable style? Why? Do they house several activities (town hall, post-office, school, etc.)?
>
> –   *Commercial buildings (food markets)*
>
> When do they date from? What were they used for? What was their socio-economic importance? Have they been conserved? Have they been rehabilitated or renovated? Are they free-standing or placed next to other buildings?

> – *Community edifices (fountains, washhouses, etc.)*
>
> What was their community role? What is their history?
>
> – *Sports facilities*
>
> Are sports still practiced here? If yes, which? Do they have an identity value? Is the sport practiced part of the regional or local culture?

b. *Evaluation*

> – *Positive aspects*
>
> The features that enhance a site are architectural quality and the quality of any restoration work, development for tourism, current social and economic usefulness, work carried out to landscape the surroundings, etc.
>
> – *Negative aspects*
>
> Negative aspects include a lack of maintenance, various forms of pollution (environmental, visual, sound) that prevent normal enjoyment of the site, the site's deterioration following recent or past conversion arising from a new activity affecting its value, etc.

3. Private space

The concept of private space covers private life (i.e. family life and how it is organised) and social life (i.e. the relationships between the family unit (or individual) and the persons living in its (his/her) vicinity and who are, for example, neighbours).

– *Private life: family life, family memories, private space, gardens, everything that plays or played a role in family life. Family memories include objects that may be connected with it as evidence of the family's history (e.g. furniture).*
– *Social life: extended family (brothers, sisters, cousins, relatives), neighbours, meetings, hunting and fishing, everything that plays or played a role in the relationship between the individual or family and his/her/its immediate social environment.*

3.1. Private life

a. *Assessment criteria*

> – *Family life*
>
> What is each person's role in the family? Who lives under the same roof? Is this connected with regional or local traditions? How are tasks distributed within a family? Has this changed? What are the key moments in family life? Who takes part in them (on a daily, weekly, annual basis…)? Do family rituals have long-standing roots? How have they developed?
>
> – *Family memories*
>
> What are the key moments in the family memories? What are the rituals, traditions and celebrations surrounding the birth, marriage or death of a family member? What objects embody the family memory (furniture, clothes, curios, photographs, assorted documents, etc.)? How are the family memories handed down?

> – *Private space*
>
> Are there places or moments for meeting (such as mealtimes) that must not be missed? Are parts of the house specifically allocated to men, women or children? Which room is preferred for gatherings? Has allocation of the rooms changed to adapt to current lifestyles? Are relatives or employees part of family life?
>
> – *Gardens*
>
> What is their purpose (pleasure garden, vegetable garden, a combination of the two)? Who looks after them? Who looked after them in the past? Who eats the garden produce (family, extended family, neighbours etc.)?

b.   *Evaluation*

> – *Positive aspects*
>
> Account should be taken of the vitality of family life, the importance of memory and whether it is handed down within a family, family conviviality at home, use of the garden as a communal area, etc.
>
> – *Negative aspects*
>
> In assessing negative aspects, study the absence or disintegration of family ties, whether the family history is handed down or neglected, etc.

3.2.   Social life

a.   *Assessment criteria*

> – *The extended family*
>
> Do members of the extended family live in the same settlement (brothers, sisters, grandparents, cousins)? Is this a choice, tradition or the result of legacies? Do they help each other as a matter of priority?
>
> – *Neighbours*
>
> Do people enjoy special links with their close neighbours? Do they help each other out professionally? Do the children form a group?
>
> – *Meetings*
>
> How do people meet each other? Are there specific local forms of greeting? Are invitations extended mainly to family, friends and neighbours? Are traditional festivals a particular opportunity for entertaining?
>
> – *Hunting and fishing*
>
> Are hunting and/or fishing still practiced? Why? Who takes part in these activities? Why? Is there a strong link to local identity? Why? Do they contribute to upkeep the agrarian landscape? In what way? Do they contribute to preserving the local population by reinforcing community ties? Are they protested about by some of the local population? Why?

b. *Evaluation*

> – *Positive aspects*
>
> The vitality of the bonds connecting the various levels of relationships, internally and externally, the duration of these bonds over time and their significance may be viewed as positive aspects.
>
> – *Negative aspects*
>
> The absence or gradual disappearance of community ties between the various circles of contact, their impact on social life and on the isolation experienced by families, single persons and/or the elderly, are the distinctive marks of low levels of social life.

4. Agriculture and fishing

In terms of rural heritage, agriculture and fishing are two essential activities which serve as the focus for many others.

– *Cultivation practices: all methods used by humans to "tame" the earth, cultivate it and make the most of it, e.g. animal traction, materials and tools, cultivation techniques and ways of organising work.*

– *Livestock and related practices: all forms of livestock rearing and the techniques adopted, e.g. the animals, rearing, feeding and production techniques.*

– *Crops: all crops found in the rural area, e.g. cereals and fodder crops, industrial crops, vegetables, fruit and flowers, vines, forestry (maintenance and cultivation of forests).*

– *Coastal fishing: species, types of fishing, techniques, fish farming, all aspects of coastal sea fishing and the techniques adopted and used, as well as fish farming and shellfish farming.*

– *Fresh-water fishing: practices and techniques of fishing in rivers, lakes and other fresh-water areas as a professional activity, and the techniques adopted and used, as well as the farming of particular species.*

4.1. Crops

a. *Assessment criteria*

> – *General questions*
>
> How long have they been in existence? Why have some been abandoned, and since when? What is/was the dominant crop?
>
> – *Cereal and fodder crops*
>
> What fodder and cereal crops were cultivated in the past? What were they used for? What is the current situation? How much land is sown? Is there land lying fallow? In what proportion? Why?
>
> – *Industrial crops (sugar beets, hops, sunflowers, sugar cane, hemp, linen…)*
>
> What is their relative importance in the local agricultural economy? What processing will they undergo?

> – *Vegetables, fruits and flowers*
>
> Is market gardening practiced in open fields or greenhouses? Which old varieties of cultivated fruits have disappeared, and why? What use is made of cultivated flowers (essential oils, cut flowers…)?
> – *Vines*
>
> If vines are not cultivated in your region, were they in the past? What is the role of vine products in local production? How do soil types and the direction of slopes influence where various types of vine are planted?
>
> – *Forestry*
>
> What species are cultivated? Since when? What does forestry produce (resin, cork…)? What is timber wood used for? What was it used for in the past? Is there selective or complete felling? How is the wood felled, lumbered or hauled?

b.   Evaluation

> – *Positive aspects*
>
> Diversification of crops or a dominant monoculture based on traditional agricultural practices.
>
> – *Negative aspects*
>
> The slow decline in agricultural activity with consequent neglect of fields and the disappearance of certain typical crops, etc.

4.2.   Cultivation practices

a.   Assessment criteria

> – *Animal traction*
>
> Has animal traction been reintroduced? For what particular tasks are animals used? What animals were used in the past? For which activities? What equipment was required in using them (yoke, collar…)? What trades were associated with animal use (blacksmith, saddler…)?
>
> – *Equipment and tools*
>
> When was the tractor introduced? What large-scale equipment is used (harvester, binder, threshing machine…)? What was used in the past (plough, harrow, seeder…)? What has happened to this old equipment? Are specific tools used for particular crops (e.g. vines)? Which?
>
> – *Cultivation techniques*
>
> How does the climate influence cultivation practices? Are there specific soil preparation methods corresponding to particular soil types? Is the soil irrigated or watered? What harvesting methods are used? Where is produce stored (silos, drying sheds…)?
>
> – *Organisation*
>
> Is work carried out individually or as a group? How is work distributed among the working members of a farm (husband, wife, employee)? When is it carried out collectively, and how are such working teams composed? How does collective work influence community life (e.g. celebrations at the end of work)? What happened in the past?

b. **Evaluation**

> – *Positive aspects*
>
> Positive aspects will be evaluated by considering the modernity of cultivation practices, the extent to which they correspond to traditional practices and environmental needs, their impact on agricultural development.
>
> – *Negative aspects*
>
> Technological backwardness in cultivation practices, damaging rejection of traditional practices and the harmful environmental effects of certain practices may be among the main negative aspects.

4.3. Animal husbandry

a. **Assessment criteria**

> – *Animals*
>
> What are the traditional races, and what races have been reintroduced? Why and since when? Which animal is representative of your region? Are there particular types of husbandry? Are animals bred to maintain uncultivated land?
>
> – *Breeding techniques*
>
> What reproduction techniques are used? Are they selective? Have some races been genetically improved? What is the purpose and outcome of these improvements? How do births take place? Are the young raised with their mothers? Are the animals moved about? How is this organised? Does it take place on a daily or seasonal basis? Do the animals have distinctive signs (bells, etc)? Are there competitions and agricultural shows? For all these aspects, what has changed in comparison with the past?
>
> – *Food*
>
> What food is used? Where does it come from? How frequently is it distributed? How does this food affect product quality? What are the differences with the past?
>
> – *Production*
>
> What are the direct products of animal husbandry (meat, milk, eggs…)? What marketing methods exist for farm products? Are some products processed on site (butter, cheese)? If so, by whom, how, and using what equipment?

b. **Evaluation**

> – *Positive aspects*
>
> Study the work being carried out to preserve the specific characteristics of local races and develop new, more productive, races, allowing for quality husbandry and their introduction in the region, etc.
>
> – *Negative aspects*
>
> Abandonment of local species and races, disorganised introduction of species and races that could lead to degeneration of livestock quality, and certain intensive practices that could have a harmful effect on quality.

4.4. Fresh-water fishing

a.   Assessment criteria

–   *Fish*

Where are they found (rivers, ponds…)? Are they specially-bred young fish that have been released? What is the most common species? Have some species disappeared? Since when, and why? Have new species acclimatised in the region's waters? Are there crayfish? If not, why have they disappeared?

–   *Practices*

What permanent facilities exist for fishing (landing stages, huts, trails…)? How long have they existed? What is the most common type of fishing? When does collective fishing occur? What is its purpose? Are competitions held? Have fishing records been established (quantity, size of fish…)?

–   *Techniques*

What tools are used (lines, nets, drop-nets…)? Is (was) their use linked to a professional activity? What snares are used (worms, insects, tricks…)? Is there a particular fishing technique? Is fishing done from boats? If yes, does this take a particular form?

–   *Fish farming*

Are there fish-breeding centres? How long have they existed? Where are they located? Why? What species are bred? What is the purpose of breeding (restocking, food…)?

b.   Evaluation

–   *Positive aspects*

Study fishing practices that respect the ecosystem and the environment, the quality of farms and their impact on dietary and other habits.

–   *Negative aspects*

Study out-of-date practices that could have detrimental effects on the aquatic environment.

4.5. Coastal fishing

a.   Assessment criteria

–   *Fish, shellfish and crustaceans*

What fish species are commonly present in the coastal waters? Is their presence seasonal or permanent? What kinds of shellfish are found (winkles, razor-shells, mussels…)? What kinds of crustaceans (prawns, velvet swimming crabs…)? Have certain species become rare?

–   *Types of fishing*

Which species are fished or gathered (fish, shellfish, crustaceans)? What is the purpose of this activity (leisure, food, trade…)? What happened in the past? Are there particular times in the year when fishing occurs? Are sea plants collected (algae, kelp…)? Why?

–   *Tools*

What tools are used for fishing (lines, nets…)? Are there fixed amenities? What type of fishing do they correspond to? What equipment is used for collecting catches? What was done in the past?

–   *Fish farming*

What fish species are bred (bass, sea bream, turbot…)? What form do these farms take (ponds, sea-cages…)? What difficulties are connected with their upkeep? Is shellfish farming in practice? Since when? What are the main species of shellfish bred (oysters, clams, mussels…)? Where are the beds located? For what reasons? Are there crustacean farms (e.g. lobsters)?

b.   Evaluation

–   *Positive aspects*

Examine how the traditions and practice of fishing and fish-farming work according to economic realities, and how they might even contribute to the collective memory.

–   *Negative aspects*

The gradual abandonment of fishing activity in the region should be examined, together with the reasons behind it and the direct and indirect consequences.

5.   Food

Food covers eating habits as well as regional and local products that are commercialised and/or contribute to the reputation of the area under study.

–   *The region's foods: the foods that are cultivated, raised, fished, gathered and eaten in the area or in other regions or countries, e.g. meat, fruit and vegetables, drinks, bread and confectionary, fish and shellfish, as well as gathered produce.*

–   *Emblematic products: these are frequently "endangered" products, either commercialised and originally prepared in family contexts. They include traditional regional products which, although not frequently eaten since they are "endangered", have a value in terms of identity.*

–   *Traditional recipes: these recipes are regional in nature, like the techniques used to prepare them or the occasions for which they are prepared, but are now used beyond the local level.*

–   *Traditional food: dietary habits, e.g. ways of preparing and eating food, eating customs.*

5.1. The region's food

a. Assessment criteria

– *General questions*

Note the word used to designate the variety, species or race. Is the product unique to the region? Is it typical of the population's diet? How is it eaten? Daily, regularly, rarely, only on particular occasions (which)? Why? Is it used in traditional recipes? Are there any stories linked to the product?

– *Meat*

Is the animal raised only in the region? Is the species or race found only in the region? Were they introduced at a particular period? Why?

– *Fruit and vegetables*

Are they cultivated only in the region? Since when have they been grown? Were they introduced at a particular period? Why?

– *Drink*

Is it manufactured industrially or non-industrially? Does it have a history? What is it? Are there particular techniques or skills?

– *Bread and confectionary*

Are they prepared by craft workers?

– *Fish and shellfish*

How are they fished or farmed?

– *Gathered products*

Where and how are they gathered?

b. Evaluation

– *Positive aspects*

These products can easily be found, their price is affordable, and their quality and the efforts made to improve it are particularly praiseworthy.

– *Negative aspects*

The gradual decline in their consumption. The reasons why the population is rejecting them should be studied.

5.2. Emblematic foods

a. Assessment criteria

> – *General questions*
>
> How well-known are these products in the region where they are produced? And elsewhere?
>
> – *"Endangered" products*
>
> Why are they disappearing (different lifestyle, higher living standards, change in the public's tastes, death of the majority of producers, etc.)? Who still makes them? Are these people traditional producers or enthusiastic newcomers? Are they made in the same way as in the past, or have they been adapted to suit modern tastes? Where and how are they marketed? Have measures been taken to protect or relaunch them?
>
> – *Commercialised products*
>
> Who manufactures them? Is it a local industry or major group, or even a multinational agro-food company? Are they found only in the region? Have their ingredients changed over time? If yes, why? Does their emblematic nature make them expensive?
>
> – *Home-produced foods*
>
> Where are they still prepared? Within families or by craft workers from the food trades (confectioners, pork butchers/delicatessen dealers)? Are there still links with a tradition? If yes, which? Are they eaten mainly for their taste or to follow a tradition? Have their ingredients changed over time? If yes, why?

b. Evaluation

> – *Positive aspects*
>
> Study the scope of the culinary practices incorporating these emblematic products, the extent to which the populations concerned are attached to them, the existence of dynamic local producers.
>
> – *Negative aspects*
>
> Most of the negative aspects boil down to lack of support for local producers, as well as the tiny number of such individuals, which makes it impossible to continue market-scale production.

5.3. Traditional recipes

a. Assessment criteria

> – *Recipes*
>
> Are they regional or local? Are they variants of recipes adapted from another region? Are they still prepared? By whom? Are they written or handed down orally? Are they identical everywhere or do they vary according to the locality? Are they well-known to all, or known only to a small group of people and professionals? Have they changed over time? Why did any such changes occur? Are they also prepared by the agro-food industry?

–   *The ingredients*

Do these come from the region? Are they still cultivated, farmed or gathered in the area? Is this done especially for this recipe? Have they been changed over the years? Are they rare? Why? Does this add value to the recipe?

–   *Preparation techniques*

Are these still widely practiced or do they concern only part of the population (the elderly) or professionals? Are they the same as in the past, or have they developed? If so, why? Are they mainly used in restaurants or within family circles? Has the agro-food industry adapted them for mass production?

–   *The occasions*

Are these family celebratory meals or local, regional, national or other celebrations? Are these one-off or daily events? Does this have a historical connection? Are these well-established traditions or are they related to marketing or tourist ventures or attempts to highlight the heritage? Are they the main reason for preparing the dish?

b.   *Evaluation*

–   *Positive aspects*

Take account of how the selected area or community's culinary traditions are highlighted, the extent to which they are currently embedded, how the relevant occasions are given prominence, and local production of the ingredients.

–   *Negative aspects*

Study the ways in which culinary traditions are forgotten, how they are rediscovered for commercial or cultural reasons, the use of products which were not included in the original recipes, whether the populations concerned have forgotten the reasons for preparing them.

5.4.   **Traditional food**

a.   *Assessment criteria*

–   *Foods*

Are they typical of the region? Are they commercialised everywhere or only in certain localities? Why are they eaten (sustenance, festive occasions, other)? Have they changed over time?

–   *Ways of eating these products*

Are these foods eaten on their own or accompanied by condiments, spices, sauces, or mixed with other products? Have the ways of eating these foods changed over time? During which meal(s) are they eaten? Why? Has this always been the case? Are there particular eating rituals? If yes, what are they? Is there an habitual way of distributing the various portions?

> – *Eating customs*
>
> What objects are used during ordinary meals or during celebratory meals? Are there typical regional or local objects? Which room is used for eating in everyday life or during celebrations? How has this changed in comparison with the past? How is the table decorated and laid out (think about everyday and celebratory meals)? Who takes part in everyday or celebratory meals? What is the role of children, that of extended family and guests? How has this changed compared with the past?
>
> – *Medicinal plants*
>
> Are they cultivated or gathered in the region? Who cultivates or collects them, who markets them? Are they still used? Why? By whom? Are they associated with a traditional practice in the region?

b. Evaluation

> – *Positive aspects*
>
> Study how traditions have been preserved as living practices, their relevance, how they fit into modern life, and how they are used for cultural, tourism, economic and community purposes.
>
> – *Negative aspects*
>
> Record the absence of distinct regional food that has resulted from voluntary or involuntary neglect of this aspect of their heritage by local populations. Analyse the superficiality of so-called traditional practices which have only a commercial basis.

6. Crafts and industries

Whilst farming is evidently a part of rural life, this is less clearly the case for craft and industrial trades. Nonetheless, they have always co-existed. Craftsmen made items that farmers used. Later, the need for large quantities of particular items led to the creation of large workshops, that is, manufacturing plants or factories.

For all the trades and skills studied in the guide, the questions remain general. In reality, both trades and skills could be the subject of specific research.

– Traditional trades and skills – trades and skills practiced now or in the past: construction, clothing and trimmings, manufacture of tools and equipment, animal-related trades…

– Local industrial manufacture – current or previous industrial production, using, for example: wood, glass, metal, stoneware and earthenware, cloth and leather, as well as complex production (objects composed of several materials).

6.1. Traditional trades and skills

a. Assessment criteria

> – *General questions on trades*
>
> What is the origin of the trades being studied? Where are/were they practiced? Are they seasonal? Which trades produce goods and which repair and maintain goods? Have the specific tools of each trade been preserved?
>
> – *General questions on skills*

What are the traditional skills? What name was given to those who practiced them? Have some now been abandoned? Were these skills practiced on a full-time basis?

– *Construction trades*

Does the preparation of materials for roofing, carpentry, etc., require particular skills depending on the material (slates, roofing stones, shingles, thatch…)? Was this true in the past? Are there specific practices associated with the beginning and/or end of work?

– *Clothing trades*

Is the work individual or collective (lace, weaving, spinning…)? What use is made of the goods produced? Are clogs decorated?

– *Tool trades*

How is/was the forge organised? What woods are used by coopers (oak, chestnut…)? Do baskets have distinctive styles depending on their use and/or the region?

– *Skills linked to animal husbandry*

Are pigs and sheep killed at home? What is done with goose feathers? Is wool processed in the locality?

b.   *Evaluation*

– *Positive aspects*

Analyse the quality of the region's industrial and craft infrastructure, the production of typical regional products, the reputation enjoyed by such products and their economic impact.

– *Negative aspects*

Analyse how inadequate industrial and craft infrastructure, the rejection of traditional production and skills has an adverse effect on regional identity.

6.2.   Local industrial production

a.   *Assessment criteria*

– *General questions*

What types of local production exist or existed in the past? Is local production dominated by one particular industry? Do these goods enjoy a regional or national reputation? When were they first produced? Are they functional or decorative? Where are they sold? How is the workforce trained?

– *Wood*

Depending on the objects produced, what woods are used (e.g. briar roots, boxwood, oak, resins…). Why?

– *Glass and metal*

Does glass-working produce specific objects (e.g. bell-glasses for chrysanthemums)? Is the glass blown with a blowing-iron or cast? Are metal objects cast or hammered?

–   *Cloth and leather*

Which animals provide the leather prepared in tanneries? Are tanning extracts, oak-bark or chestnut-bark used? Is cloth decorated with motifs?

–   *Stoneware, earthenware, brick…*

Does the earth used come from the area under consideration? What firing methods and temperatures are used? What are the main decorative symbols? Do they refer to a specific story? Is it possible to identify when they were first used?

–   *Complex production*

What materials and skills are used in producing these objects?

b.   *Evaluation*

–   *Positive aspects*

In assessing the positive aspects, consider the presence of typical craft and industrial production, product quality, the actual circumstances in which the activity is conducted, incentives for development and the positive consequences for the region.

–   *Negative aspects*

In assessing the negative aspects, consider the gradual or total abandonment of typical craft and industrial production, the local population's lack of interest in such production, the poor quality of products, neglect of traditional manufacturing methods, etc.

7.   Community life

Celebrations, fairs, markets, language, dance, etc. are important elements of rural community life that allow the public to participate in a shared background.

–   *Celebrations: These are regular events that punctuate community or village life, e.g.religious festivals, trade fairs and school-leaving celebrations.*

–   *Fairs, markets and itinerant trades: This covers professional markets, fairs, markets for one particular product, and whether there are still, or have ever been, itinerant trades.*

–   *Community culture: all the elements that contribute to public life and forge a region or area's community culture, e.g. costumes, music and dance, oral literature, sports and games.*

–   *Languages and place names: the regional language, dialects and place names (also known as toponyms), the words and names unique to a community of individuals who use them to communicate between themselves, and to assign an identity to their region or area.*

7.1. Celebrations

a. Assessment criteria

– *General questions*

What are the local celebrations? On what date or occasion do they occur? How long do they last? How long have they existed? How well-known are they beyond the immediate locality? Are they opportunities for preparing and eating specific dishes, for wearing traditional costumes? For all these questions, what happened in the past?

– *Village fêtes*

How is the annual village fête organised? How long does it last? What activities are organised? Are floats made? If yes, what is used to decorate them? Is there a dance? Where is it held?

– *Religious festivals*

What form do they take (processions, pilgrimage…)? To what saint or locality are they dedicated? What is the purpose of these processions? Are they still practiced? Are they restricted to parishioners? Do several religions have festivals? If so, which?

– *Trade celebrations*

Which trades are organised in guilds? Do the guilds have a banner? Do guild members wear a sign or distinctive clothing? Which celebrations occur when work is completed (harvest time vintage season…)?

– *School-leaving celebrations*

What school-leaving celebrations take place? What happened in the past? What kinds of behaviour do they give rise to? Are roles distributed according to gender?

---

b. Evaluation

– *Positive aspects*

Study how various celebrations are established in the region, their current popularity, whether some have been revived, the support they receive, the local population's participation, their value for developing tourism in the region, etc.

– *Negative aspects*

Study whether certain celebrations have genuine roots, their gradual disappearance, neglect of traditions by the local population, their superficial nature, etc.

7.2. Markets, fairs and itinerant trades

a. Assessment criteria

– *General questions*

Since when have they existed? What is their history? Are they now better known than in the past? Why? Are they known locally, regionally, nationally or internationally? How often are they held?

– *Trade markets*

What trade(s) do they target?

– *Fairs*

Which products or animals are presented?

– *Markets for specific products*

Which products are sold? Are they local products or regional specialities? Who makes them?

– *Itinerant trade*

Does it still exist? If yes, who practices it? Which sector is concerned? What has changed? Why? Is it typical in the region? If it has died out, why?

b. Evaluation

– *Positive aspects*

Take account of the positive impact of events like fairs and markets on the public (economic, social, cultural, community) life, and whether itinerant trade is still practiced.

– *Negative aspects*

The disappearance of fairs and markets, and the adverse effect that this has had on community life and the region's economic development; the disappearance of itinerant trade, which has created supply problems for some individuals (isolated and/or elderly farmers).

7.3. Community culture

a. Assessment criteria

– *Oral literature*

Is there a repertory of traditional songs? What are their themes? Are they related to the area under consideration? Do stories involve localities or residents? Who tells these stories (family members, storytellers…)? When are they told (evening gatherings, public performances…)? What proverbs are used? Do they refer to natural elements in the area studied? If yes, which? Which language is preferred for oral literature?

– *Music and dance*

What are the main musical instruments? Is music played individually or in groups? If played in groups, how many musicians are involved? Which dances are practiced? When? Are they danced in groups or couples? Are they co-ordinated by someone? What happened in the past?

– *Costumes*

What specific costumes or articles of clothing exist? What about accessories (necklaces, belts, jewels…)? When are these objects worn? By whom?

– *Games and sports*

Which game is most popular? What are the rules? Are they specific to the area? What are the objectives? Are there two opposing teams? Do they require special clothing? Are they played on particular occasions?

b. *Evaluation*

– *Positive aspects*

How deeply the various elements of community culture are rooted in the region, their current vigour and whether some have been revitalised.

– *Negative aspects*

Negative aspects are seen in the lack of any genuine support for the various aspects of popular culture, their gradual disappearance and neglect of these traditions by local populations.

7.4. Languages and place names

a. *Assessment criteria*

– *Languages*

What are (were) the characteristics of local dialects, compared with other forms spoken in the region? Who still uses these languages? In which circumstances? Are they still handed down, and in what way? Are there words, expressions or forms of pronunciation that distinguish your village or area from others? Are these specific features influenced by the former language spoken? Are there words, expressions or forms of pronunciation in the local dialect that are specific to certain trades?

– *Place names*

Are place names in the area still easily understandable? Which are not immediately understood? What are the proportions? Do they come from languages that are still spoken, and which, or from old languages? Are there place names in your region that refer to your community's history? Of the place names listed in the land register (micro-toponyms), which are connected with geography or with former activities or ways of life? Have some places changed their names over the centuries, and why? Who knows the place names of your area well, and are there variations in the names?

b.   *Evaluation*

–   *Positive aspects*

The practice and transmission of local languages. They reflect a way of looking at the area, and of naming and classifying it. The words used to describe the landscape are almost always much more numerous and specific in local dialects.

–   *Negative aspects*

Failure to practice and hand down the local language. When languages and place names disappear, an entire system of in-depth local knowledge – popular geography – is lost.

IV.   Rural heritage, a key factor in sustainable development

–   This Guide is intended as an instrument to contribute towards the preservation and enhancement of rural heritage. For it to be used effectively in development matters, decision-makers must first of all implement policies which will act as incentives.

–   Political and social bodies must draw up appropriate means of action, and define management, support and funding measures.

1.   Means of action

Means of action are aimed at incorporating rural heritage within a sustainable development process drawing on its role in forming development players and its role as a development factor and catalyst for development.

1.1.   Its value in forming development players

Although essential, an interest in or passion for heritage or a heritage item is not in itself enough.

Heritage education will nurture recognition of the value of heritage. The moment of recognition is crucial for the implementation of a process.

There must therefore be concerted deliberation on the type of action to be carried out and on where such education should be dispensed.

Beginning at school, activities, practices and instruction should be aimed at nurturing awareness of a heritage approach. Heritage education should not be viewed in isolation but should be integrated into mainstream education.

Schools as places for teaching about heritage

Incorporating heritage into school activities can be done in a great variety of ways.

Virtually all subjects taught lend themselves to some heritage dimension: not only the obvious subjects of the arts, history, and literature but also sciences, with the cultural, environmental, genetic heritage, etc.

A variety of activities can help raise such awareness and teach about heritage: heritage classes, classes on artistic and cultural practices, study topics, field trips, educational holidays, etc.

Instruction in the new technologies can offer an opportunity to put onto the Internet the heritage characteristics of individual regions in an entertaining way.

> Other approaches include the use of external speakers, twinnings with museums, ecomuseums or cultural and archaeological organisations, environmental awareness bodies, the adoption (or sponsoring) of heritage.
>
> Once their awareness has been raised, young people will more readily become involved in heritage-related activities outside school.

In the life of citizens, the majority of heritage-oriented activities are to be found in associations and are often heavily dependent on the voluntary sector.

Civil society's receptiveness to heritage depends on the approach adopted. The participatory approach, which has been portrayed as a key factor in the successful implementation of projects, presupposes the existence of training institutions and approaches available to all.

–   It is essential for there to be *premises* for meetings and public debate. These could be public, private, voluntary-sector, cultural, social, sports facilities etc. The most important thing is that they should be at neighbourhood level to ensure that they are accessible to and become part of the life of residents.

–   Heritage is not naturally considered in rural areas as a common means of approach.

Accordingly, if action is to be taken there must first of all be appropriate *means of training*. Experience has shown that the efforts made, particularly in the context of adult education, play a very important role in influencing the relationship with heritage and culture in general.

–   Nonetheless, such training must be based on technical skills in the areas concerned.

> *Knowledge and skill transmission in the field of heritage*
>
> –   *"Rural universities" along the lines of the Scandinavian adult education establishments*
>
> Encounters in a particular location, for a given period of time, between players from rural environment, keen to share knowledge, expertise and life skills.
>
> Participants seek to enhance their own knowledge by learning from those with the relevant skills, but not exclusively from the university or institutional sectors. They bring along their own skills and questions. The exchanges are topic-based and generally take place in the form of workshops, with a final joint group session for conclusions.
>
> In European rural universities, in particular, there is a profitable exchange and mutual benefit from learning about action carried out in the field.
>
> In some countries, rural universities have been and still are an opportunity (via the workshops) to collect, recover and enhance traditional skills.
>
> There is increasing consideration being given to pooling knowledge and to dialogue between stakeholders and decision-makers for the implementation of projects in particular localities.
>
> –   *Players' forums*
>
> Meetings between those already involved in enhancement activities, offering:
>   - exchanges of experiences with a thematic and/or methodological introduction,
>   - exchanges of information and points of view, including from the institutional sector, and a discussion on new concepts, via round tables, in the presence of observers.
>
> Nonetheless, such forums are open to all interested persons.

Technical skills in the field of heritage relate to:

- the way heritage is dealt with in the various disciplinary fields concerned, and,
- traditional vocational, agricultural or craft-working skills, the disappearance of which would compromise the very existence of certain heritage items.

– To facilitate the acquisition and transmission of such skills, the decision-making bodies must first of all make clear training choices.

– To promote the transmission of skills, an emphasis must be placed on (i) labour force qualifications and (ii) efforts to adapt traditional skills to modern techniques without any loss of quality; this would be one way of compensating for the shortage of skilled labour, which is getting more acute as an increasing number of craftworkers retire.
– Monitoring heritage initiatives involves attempting to induce a pyramid effect amongst various categories of partners – hence the need to train trainers targeted at certain types of key players:

- decision-makers and operators, including elected representatives, generally required to take action at one or more stages of the initiative,
- those running the relevant associations or organisations, who would then be responsible for cascading the training received,
- administrative players who have the necessary promotional means but need to learn to decompartmentalise the way they are implemented,
- specialists in vocational and personal skills,
- representatives of the media, often inclined to deal with local rural heritage in an anecdotal and "quaint" way,
- mediators, who have a key role to play in the setting up of projects and who can come from the above-mentioned categories, particularly development agents.

– This variety of key players is indicative of the complexity of heritage initiatives and points to the need for a consensus-based approach in putting operations together.

This attempt to seek out consensus in society fits in with the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent – Recommendation (2002) 1 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, namely participation of society in regional/spatial development.

1.2.   Its role as development factor

– There is no justification for preserving heritage, which links the past and the present, unless it can be given a guaranteed future and handed on to future generations, which is why it is essential to stir the key players into action.

– It has a potential richness and can become a valuable resource, not necessarily in commercial terms, for those carrying out projects and for the locality concerned. It accordingly becomes part of a sustainable development approach as it becomes a product, factor and/or source of development without – by definition, as it is heritage – being destroyed or adversely modified.

The continuation as heritage therefore presupposes consideration being given to the use made of it: such an approach is the result of genuine cultural change.

A change of cultural approach vis-à-vis rural heritage

– The perception of rural cultural heritage is linked to traditional country society viewed by modernists as an image of the past and doomed to extinction as it is contrary to economic and social progress. Some tend to stress the harshness of country life, the deprivations, isolation and resistance to progress. According to this view, heritage linked to obsolete practices has no value and rural culture was deemed not to be noble. In such a context, it is not surprising that this heritage denied and even scorned has been destroyed irrationally and is still under threat as its value is not acknowledged.

– Modernism has reached its limits. The recognition of economic disorder and ecological disasters has led to a challenging of the prevailing predominantly urban model (also termed, a short while ago, the "industrial society") and a questioning of the means of production, management and consumption – in other words lifestyles.
– Changes in society itself, particularly in the means of communication and organisation of work, are leading to a re-evaluation of the relationship between urban and rural environments in terms of complementarity and no longer oppose each other. Rural environment – and its heritage and potential – is consequently being looked at differently.

Insofar as the meaning given by local players to their heritage and the purpose assigned to it correspond to society's expectations, it becomes a virtual vector for cultural and economic development.

– First of all, it is for people in rural environment to define the optimum use of heritage – for society as a whole and for themselves – which will generate products. Such products are not necessarily commercial in nature, even though economic enhancement should be pursued via the creation of activities, and therefore jobs.

– Experience has shown that traditional production methods or what is termed traditional skills which may appear retrograde can offer alternative solutions to mass production as they can be adapted and result in high quality products.

– Heritage can be enhanced by tourism, craft, local and cultural products. It is unnecessary to enumerate all the possible avenues to be explored.

– An analysis of potential should be made of all the potential, by seeking out the values that rural heritage can help rediscover, aesthetic value of nature, cultural heritage and landscapes. Authenticity and quality are often closely bound up in the manufacture of products, lifestyles, togetherness promoted by the social bond (festivities and cultural events which are part of the region's traditions, including oral traditions, etc).

– However, this search for potential, although it should be conducted by local players, needs to be supported or indeed initiated and encouraged by public authorities at national, regional and local levels, and by professional structures.

An example of a public enhancement initiative: an inventory of traditional food products

This initiative, begun in France, extended to the European Union and Hungary, broadly financed out of public funds and carried out by a team of researchers in conjunction with professionals, was designed to make an inventory of renowned traditional products (resulting from the transmission of local knowledge and usage over a long period) closely associated with the history of a region, and its human and physical characteristics. It is broken down by region or country and lists over 4,000 products.

Quite apart from the obvious interest in producing an inventory, the process itself is aimed at enhancement while at the same time preserving authenticity.

–   Obviously, the level of intervention from the public authorities will vary significantly in line with individual circumstances. But some of the choices are distinctly political.

–   In countries where rural life and activities still play a significant role, consideration must be given to how exactly the development should be approached on the basis of a transformation of existing activities and know-how.

–   The choice is between rural exodus towards urban centres and the development of local activities building on the largely heritage potential of rural areas, local skills which have been adapted, and the complementarity between market towns and the countryside.

–   This second focus of regional/spatial development and planning which, in relation to free enterprise, can only be promoted but under no circumstances imposed, presupposes the availability of support measures and an attempt to find technical innovations in order to strike a new balance between the town and countryside. As such it corresponds to the guiding principle in Recommendation (2002) 1 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe aimed at bringing about a new partnership between town and countryside and enhancement of cultural heritage as a factor of development.

1.3.   Its role as a catalyst for development

–   The involvement of inhabitants of rural environment in projects to enhance their heritage is likely to give the regions concerned a positive, renewed image and to boost a marked trend towards bringing new populations into the countryside.

A new type of rural life

– In some countries there is a reversal of the demographic trend with the emergence of a positive migration balance in predominantly rural areas.
– This is the case in France where at the last census, there was a 1.5% growth over 9 years, even though some regions classed as "disadvantaged" continued to become less populated. The reason for this change is primarily the arrival in the countryside of new inhabitants, most of whom are not retired folk or "marginalised" members of society, but working people. In France, a town-countryside collective facilitates such migration.
– The attractiveness of the countryside is no longer accounted for by people wishing to find nature and pure fresh air; this had led to a greater development of leisure pursuits and second homes rather than genuine migration. The new arrivals have chosen a living environment and lifestyle which are different from those in the city.
– In the rural environment itself there is a diversification of traditional activities. In particular, farmers have become increasingly more multi-functional with services rendered to the community (upkeep of the environment) and to private individuals (accommodation, sale of produce). The tourist industry is attaching an ever increasing importance to the discovery of the diversified resources of the countryside.
– The decompartmentalisation of activities is a key aspect of the new type of life in the country. This should be considered in strategic terms, including in countries where "traditional" country life is still very much a reality.
– Lastly, the growing similarity between living conditions and the development of new technologies have reduced the comparative advantages of the town and city and have altered working conditions, making it more and more possible for people to reside in various locations.

–   From this standpoint of attractiveness, heritage comes across as a life heritage. It renders the relationship with one's territory more dynamic. As a result of the gradual attraction it exerts on the population, and the mobilising effect it has, it helps give new meaning to rural regions.

–   However, for it to operate to the full, it must be supported by the institutional authorities, in particular by accommodating the expectations of the rural populations in terms of local services. There

should be an attempt to identify the specific nature of the needs to which appropriate use of heritage items can contribute. This too corresponds with the Guiding Principles set out in Recommendation (2002) 1 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States of the Council of Europe in the part dealing with rural areas.

By way of example, development of a heritage item can make it possible to:

–   offer services to the population: assistance or advice services for matters relating to employment, one's dealings with the authorities, or the voluntary sector; or to provide health-care facilities adapted to living conditions in the countryside,

–   provide housing for new arrivals or inhabitants wanting to work in the region, who often experience difficulties in finding accommodation because of the competition created by second homes.

–   In a development process, it is essential for the population not to be given the impression of being left in the dark or of living in a neglected locality. Everything which can bring a place alive is highly motivating.

–   Enhancement of heritage helps make inhabitants once again feel proud. By its very nature, heritage is linked not only to time but also to a territory and society.

The temporal, spatial and societal dimension of heritage

Heritage's relation to time is consubstantial as it represents tangible and intangible items from the past and the present which will be transmitted to the future. It therefore carries with it a sense of continuity and collective memory.

It has a two-fold relation to space. First, the heritage items are defined as such in relation to a given territory. Second, the territory is identified by all the heritage items of which it is composed and which have common features; the country in the generic sense is the territory in which, as a result of these heritage markers, people identify themselves.

The relation to a group or a society comes in part from the two relationships above, since it is based on a phenomenon of belonging, vis-à-vis items which are specific to a given area and which change over time.

In modern society, the consequences of the societal relationship have not been sufficiently analysed specifically for the rural heritage whose reference values, perceived as unchanging, seem out of sync with a world in perpetual motion.

This can be reconciled through the action taken, insofar as the enhancement initiative:

–   incorporates both the references of the past and the prospects of the future,

–   compares its own reference values with those of other groups residing in the territory, seeking out the points of convergence.

By way of example, the majority of immigrant populations come directly from the countryside and, accordingly, have a number of references comparable to those of countryfolk in the host country. As, more often than not, they live in an urban environment, they do not have the opportunity to express them.

–   The relational dimension of heritage is not always obvious, and yet, social dialogue, so necessary for the cultural construction of development, can be built on this.

Failing that, an interest in heritage can lead to introspection, which is the case of certain traditionalists promoting a quaint vision of the countryside.

–   In themselves, society's links with heritage are a potential factor of social cohesion. The debate on the uses of heritage avoids isolationism. It makes it easier to take on board the conditions in which the rural environment is evolving:

- the successful settlement of a "neo-rural" population,
- the overcoming of the supposed antagonism between the town and country.

–   For those marginalised from society, heritage initiatives can be a factor of integration as they result in greater involvement. But integration exercises, in particular in the form of site activities, presuppose full understanding of the process.

–   This human dimension is too often forgotten in the heritage initiatives undertaken, in that greater emphasis is placed on the object than on the role.

–   A heritage initiative is an opportunity for society. The diversity and wealth of heritage is a potential antidote to the standardisation and excesses of globalisation. With regard to the rural heritage more specifically, the discredit in which it has been so long held justifies the view that people in the rural environment, thanks to their heritage capital, can be the key players in the development of their territory, in the interests of themselves and society as a whole. But society must define the management methods and appropriate forms of support, in particular financial.

2.   Management methods

–   Because of the diversity and complexity of initiatives with regard to rural heritage, there is a wide variety of processes to be implemented. The multiplicity of types and levels of action presuppose the use of adaptable forms of co-operation.

–   It is obvious that the general rules of law apply, with responsibilities shared between supranational, national and infra-national authorities.

–   If the key heritage players are to have all the necessary information – and this is highly desirable – each country must publicise the relevant national rules in a specific guide and local and regional authorities should draw up a summarised document setting out their own provisions.

–   This guide attempts to do some sort of classification in order to inform operators about the very nature of management methods.

–   The first level of management concerns obligation that is reflected in regulations and formal rules.

–   Binding provisions concern chiefly the identification and protection of heritage items and heritage-related products, primarily in the form of quality markers.

–   Protection is enforced either in accordance with legal provisions (formal prohibition versus authorisation) or mandatory instructions versus safeguards. It takes the form of management arrangements related to the very characteristics of the heritage item and the risks incurred (threats to the site, species, etc) or the disciplines concerned (town planning regulations, etc). For the architectural or natural heritage, the approach often adopted is zoning.

–   In addition to legislation, regulations and the transposition of directives, at national or supranational level, a process of negotiation may lead to enforcement measures in the form of ratified charters or conventions.

–   The latter is one of the prime means of action of the Council of Europe. However, not all the components of heritage, and particularly rural heritage, are covered by the Council of Europe's conventions.

The four Conventions of the Council of Europe:

– the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern, 19 September 1979),
– the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada, 3 October 1985),
– the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (revised) (Valetta, 16 January 1992),
– the European Landscape Convention (Florence, 20 October 2000).

– Similarly, UNESCO has drawn up rules in the field of heritage protection; however, the binding measures are more specifically related to the "world heritage". In contrast, UNESCO refers specifically to rural heritage items in its principles of action.

The four principles of action of the United Nations Organisation for Education, Science and Culture:

– the local, national but universal value, comprising the preservation of the monumental and natural heritage, and the vernacular and rural architecture, constituting an exceptional example of a traditional way of life,
– the drawing up of a universal ethic reference framework, termed cultural diversity,
– promotion of a comprehensive vision of cultural heritage, taking into account the importance of the environment and the link between cultural site, natural site and all types of items associated with a cultural skill,
– promotion of ecotourism as a factor for economic revival and cultural enhancement for the development of regions and turning rural heritage to account.

The above are part of a less binding level of management, namely the drawing up of principles and recommendations. All the same, it should serve as inspiration for more formal provisions.

– The Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent – Council of Europe Recommendation (2002) 1 – have been referred to in various sections of this document.

– Article 7 of the UNESCO Declaration on the Responsibilities of Present Generations towards Future Generations, adopted by the General Conference on 12 November 1997, stipulates that "present generations have the responsibility to identify, protect and safeguard the tangible and intangible cultural heritage and to transmit this common heritage to future generations."

– In general terms, Article 22 of the Rio de Janeiro Declaration on the Environment and Development, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), provides for the involvement of communities and the public in the decision-making process and spells out arrangements for implementation.

It emerges from the texts in force that:

– the rural heritage items, in view of their specific nature, are not recognised as such in law; in all probability it is their diversity which precludes this;

– the "right to heritage" has not been established as a human right, i.e an individual's right to defend a heritage item, not to mention a "right of heritage intervention".

Accordingly, above and beyond a binding formal approach, management involving co-operation and consultation should be promoted.

–   In view of all the considerations on carrying out heritage activities, it is clearly necessary to adopt a consensus-based approach:

     - as regards both acknowledgement by key players of the heritage nature of an item or skill,
     - and the definition of "good use" and the carrying out of enhancement operations.

–   Advice on methods and instruments corresponding to these requirements have been provided. However, putting them into practice is not a foregone conclusion. This requires, on the part of decision-makers, recourse to a consultation-oriented method of management which is more difficult to implement than the simple application of regulations. It must take account of the existence of the institutional and legal framework, and at the same time seek out all the players potentially involved and, above all, allow the latter freedom of expression and action.

–   Such a process requires the readiness and freedom of expression which the players do not always have, and time, often limited by procedural constraints. In such conditions, consultation-oriented management is a means of regulation coming under social innovation, requiring genuine political will and involvement.

–   Such a management approach, however, has – like heritage itself – its roots in rural society.

–   Community practices, uses, local solidarities, community management in the fight against certain natural elements or in the upkeep of the territory are part of country civilisation.

In the renewed forms of common management, the institutional bodies must:

     - help explain this type of management,
     - open it up to players who have not traditionally been involved (ecologists, tourists, ramblers and other users of rural resources); in other words, facilitate and possibly legitimise their presence,
     - provide expertise,
     - ensure exchanges are carried out with the requisite degree of transparency and fairness.

–   The public authorities should also demonstrate to society the advantages of such an approach, which makes the common interest prevail over the sum of individual interests.

–   But it may prove necessary to put it on an institutional footing. Even where such a means of management is imposed, experience has shown that there is always room for tailoring it to local situations.

In the field of rural heritage, the local territorial framework is particularly suited to common management, which, because of the natural participation of the voluntary sector, will make for governance of territories. This provides scope for the proper discussion of the relational dimension and adaptation to the realities on the ground.

–   The logical conclusion of the consultation process with the involvement of a variety of players is the creation of contractual links. As this normally comprises a financial dimension, it is only logical to include this in the means of support for heritage policies.

3.   Means of support, particularly financial

–   In presenting the methods of action, an emphasis has been placed on the need for institutional support for initiatives to promote heritage.

This support may be in various forms.

–   It is the public authorities' role to support heritage:

- indirectly, as part of wider sectoral policies, or;
- directly in the shape of targeted action.

3.1. Indirect support through sectoral policies

It is not possible to look in detail at the arrangements here. However, an attempt to list them in a non-exhaustive way could help with the drafting of national guides by providing a number of reference points.

– As heritage education has a key role to play, this aspect should be taken into account in the fields of education and training, social policies, the measures taken for various social groups (young people, women, the elderly, etc) and the voluntary sector.

– Information on the action undertaken presupposes that such is incorporated into communication policies, and in particular, steps taken to develop the new technologies in the rural environment; support for heritage-related events (for example, Heritage Days, particularly with regard to the heritage of the country concerned) and the networking of players create a powerful leverage effect.

– Steps taken to build up infrastructure, adapt services to the rural environment, develop community facilities and meeting places (in villages) and improve living conditions are essential for embarking upon a development process based on heritage enhancement.

– In a spirit of innovation, one of the dimensions of research and technical development policies should relate to adaptation of more traditional skills and their use for product improvement.

– Cultural policies, quite apart from the fact that they make a direct contribution to heritage initiatives, should include a dimension relating to the development of sites and heritage practices.

– Inter-institutional co-operation can help promote exchanges of experiences. International co-operation, particularly in a form geared to field action (as in decentralised co-operation) provides greater scope.

An example of international action in the field of heritage

The "Europe, a Common Heritage" campaign

Launched in 1999 and run in 2000 by the Council of Europe, the aim of this campaign was to encourage projects and reflection on the importance of European cultural heritage, citizen participation in its enhancement and its role in exchanges and co-operation between peoples, particularly between those in West and East Europe.

The projects put forward were approved by national committees and specific events were organised to present them.

The campaign made it possible to pool ideas on practices and to highlight social and cultural forms of raising public awareness of common heritage.

It served as an observatory and forum for exchange on approaches, particularly via the main conferences held, and for debate on European society, particularly rural, and on development strategies.

It helped improve mutual awareness and the conditions for co-operation.

– Lastly, the indirect support of authorities may take an innovative form, which in the view of certain players in the voluntary sector, is particularly well suited to the very nature of heritage with its economic, financial and social aspects. This concerns recourse to forms of social economy.

–   Experience has shown that investment in rural heritage, even though it might generate activities, is often seen as not being profitable enough to interest the traditional private sector, particularly the financial sector.

–   In contrast, because of the motivation it creates, it can marshal energy and finance, particularly at community level through the collection of local funding, making it possible to undertake connected activities.

–   The forms and level of development of the social economy vary from one country and one situation to another. There is an unequal involvement of public structures. But this approach to development deserves particular attention. Certain enhancement programmes have been built on this basis.

3.2.   Direct support for heritage initiatives

This can be:

–   through *special financing* for certain types of initiatives (protection, conservation, rehabilitation, etc). It generally takes the form of subsidised loans at special rates or tax concessions for the heritage owner. It is to be found in particular for initiatives in the housing sector.

–   through *programmes* (preservation, enhancement, etc), as part of development and planning policies.

It then takes the form of public participation in the funding of a programme. Alternatively, special funding conditions might be made available (these may also include grants) to offset any difficulties specific to rural environment. These are examples of structural aid.

In the European Union, the majority of these facilities are Community in nature. One of them (the LEADER Plus programme) is more specifically aimed at enhancing natural and cultural heritage in rural environment, in view of its field of application.

–   Direct support may concern various levels of heritage initiatives: pre-implementation studies, the initiatives themselves, the functioning of a heritage facility, and the related investment. Only national guides can give more detailed information on this aspect.

–   Virtually all heritage-related initiatives have one thing in common; they are more often than not undertaken by several partners. The approach adopted in the heritage sector has clearly demonstrated this plural dimension. This both facilitates the theoretical aspects of funding and complicates the practical aspects of implementation.

–   Seeking out possible funding often requires some imagination. Depending on traditions, interest-free funding may be a possibility. Sponsorship and foundations play a role which varies considerably from one country to another. Here again, national guides should be able to provide useful information.

–   Whatever the nature of the partners, it is essential that the conditions for collaboration are clearly worked out.

It is essential that contracts are drawn up.

–   These should apply:

- in the relationship between the various levels of public funding, between the various authorities or entities which in theory have an interest in having a contract to reconcile their objectives and policies,
- in the relationship between all the players within the same programme or project.

One of the key features of the contracting process is negotiation (the consultation-based management approach referred to above), the drawing up of a timetable of implementation, the definition of each player's joint contribution and the formalisation of a binding text on the subject matter itself.

– The contracting process can play a key role in the whole heritage process, ranging from protection to enhancement.

It makes it possible to reconcile the rigidity of principles and the constraints of protection intervention plans with the flexibility of implementation of action, and in particular enhancement.

It introduces into this flexibility an aspect of regulation which encourages:

- adaptation to the actual situation in regions, and in that it fits in entirely into European territorial strategies,
- co-ordination of action,
- the broad involvement of players, particularly those seeking a guarantee, such as sponsors or private investors, who often show some hesitation with regard to an initiative which is difficult to define in clear-cut terms.

However, as with any process, its worth – like heritage itself – lies solely in the use made of it and it makes for open dialogue only if it is acknowledged that:

– heritage has a value in itself,

– society has an interest in preserving and enhancing it for its own benefit and for the benefit of people living in the countryside.