

# Cultural landscapes in Natura 2000 sites: towards an integrated management of cultural and natural heritage

Recommendations of the International Meeting of  
Athens/Stymfalia (10-11/10/2014)

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# The International Meeting

- ▶ In Athens and Stymfalia\* (145 kms to the SW).
- ▶ With the participation of the European Commission, the European Environment Agency, Council of Europe, UNEP, UNESCO, ICOMOS, ICOM, IFLA, ICCROM, ERBD, WWF, International Centre for Mediterranean Cultural Landscapes , European Council of Spatial Planners, etc.



*\* A cultural landscape linked to mythology. Hercules' sixth labour was to defeat the Stymphalian birds. Actually a water management issue...*

# Landscapes

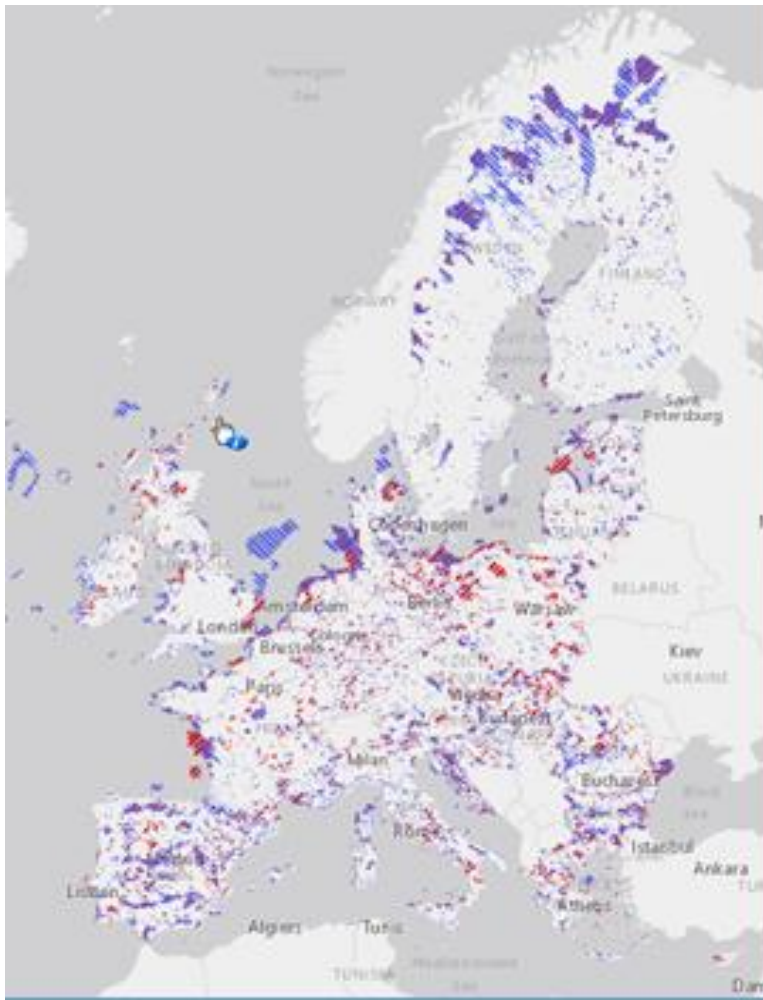
- ▶ Landscapes can be seen as the outcome of the interplay between socio-economic and biophysical forces.
- ▶ In recent years there is increasing recognition, both internationally and nationally, of the need to manage landscapes as composites of both natural and cultural heritage.

# Cultural landscapes

- ▶ ***Cultural landscapes*** have come to be recognized as ***the interface between nature and culture, tangible and intangible heritage, biological and cultural diversity.***
- ▶ For example, the management of a natural environment may be difficult unless a clear understanding is reached in terms of the human culture that shaped it. At the same time, understanding the natural environment is critical to comprehend how it reshapes this culture through feedback processes.


# Natura 2000

- ▶ **Natura 2000 is the centrepiece of the policy of the European Union (EU) for nature and biodiversity.**
- ▶ Presently, the Natura 2000 network accounts for over 26,400 sites with a total surface area of about 986 000 km<sup>2</sup>, comprising nearly 768,000 km<sup>2</sup> of land, and approximately to 218,000 km<sup>2</sup> of sea.
- ▶ The terrestrial component of the Natura 2000 network represents 17.9 % of the EU-27 land.




**Natura 2000 sites**

Scale under 1:10,000,000

 Habitats Directive Sites (SC1)

Scale under 1:10,000,000

 Birds Directive Sites (SPA)

# Cultural Landscapes in Natura 2000 sites

**Cultural landscapes in Natura 2000 sites** (in resemblance to the **bio-cultural landscapes** of the UNESCO SCBD Programme; see Florence Declaration on the links between biological and cultural diversity, 2014), reflect the dynamic interplay between cultural and natural heritage at the landscape level.

# Important issues

- ▶ *How can the dynamic interplay between cultural and natural heritage be described?*
- ▶ *Which modifications are needed in existing EU policies and funding mechanisms so as to support the joint management of natural and cultural heritage in cultural landscapes in Natura 2000 sites?*



# Important issues

- ▶ *Is there a need for separate management plans for the cultural landscape and for the natural and semi-natural habitats and landscapes of a Natura 2000 site?*
- or*
- ▶ *Should we consider the cultural landscape as a critical and indispensable element of the Natura 2000 site, and thus orient our efforts to a common, integrated, management plan, with potential differentiations per zone?*

# Declaration of Stymfalia

## Recommendations - 1

### Knowledge

**Sufficient and reliable site information** is needed on the state of landscapes, their cultural and natural values, the transformation processes, the driving forces, the risks and pressures, the feedback processes, as well as the links between cultural and natural heritage.

### Education

Existing educational programmes (such as Erasmus+ and others) can support tailor made projects regarding the integrated management of cultural and natural heritage in order **to address skills gaps through transnational and trans-disciplinary partnerships.**

**A reorientation of University curricula** to link natural sciences with culture is required in order to build capacity that will underpin the integrated management of cultural and natural heritage.

# Recommendations - 2

## Management

- ▶ Management plans of landscapes with important cultural and natural heritage, especially those located within Natura 2000 sites, need to be supported **by an integrated set of (natural and cultural) heritage criteria rather than separate ones.**

# Recommendations -3

- ▶ International and EU (environmental, cultural, economic, regional development, agricultural, maritime and research) policies need to be reconsidered so as to prioritize the integration of cultural and natural heritage into local, regional and sectoral policies
- ▶ *(recent communication COM (2014) 477 on the integrated approach to cultural heritage in Europe, a solid step).*

## Recommendations -4

- ▶ The development, at a pilot basis, of a network of cultural landscapes in Natura 2000 sites throughout Europe.
- ▶ The development of sustainable and high quality tourism should also include products linked to cultural and natural heritage. To this end “Cultural landscapes in Natura 2000 sites” may be considered as a potential culture route crossing several countries and connecting them in a common, cultural and environmental, narrative.

# Recommendations -5

- ▶ The development of a budget line linking existing EU funding programmes\* in the fields of environment, culture, education, research and regional development, will facilitate synergies and allow for the best possible exploitation of funds for projects aiming **at the integrated management of cultural and natural heritage at the landscape level.**

*\* (e.g. Horizon 2020, LIFE, Structural and Investment Funds - ESIF, European Regional Development Fund, European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, etc.)*

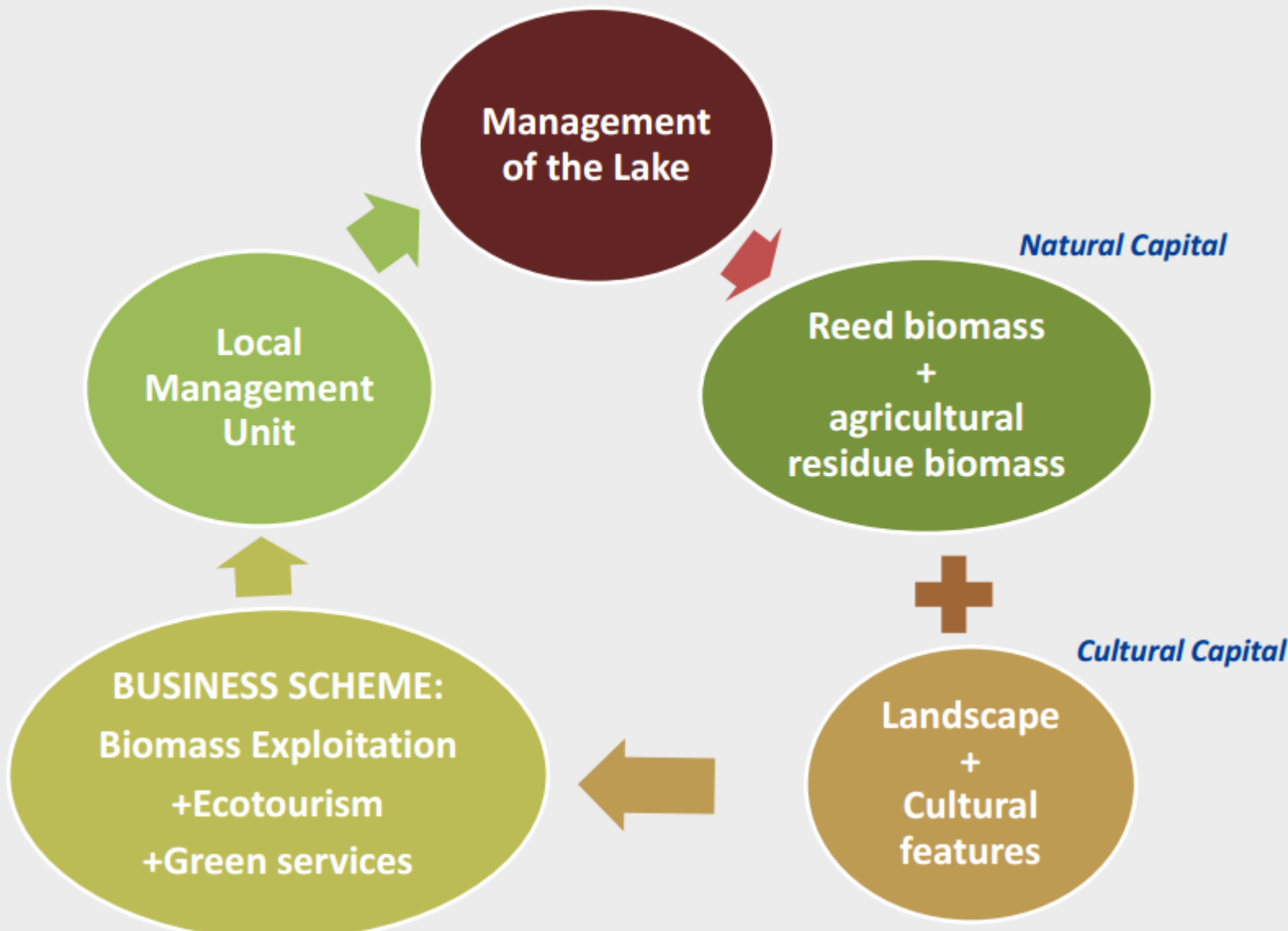
# The Life Stymfalia project

## Project Aim

The aim of the project is the **restoration** of Lake Stymphalia and its **long-term protection and management**, through a **systematic re-financing process**, which will be ensured by the utilization of the area's biomass.

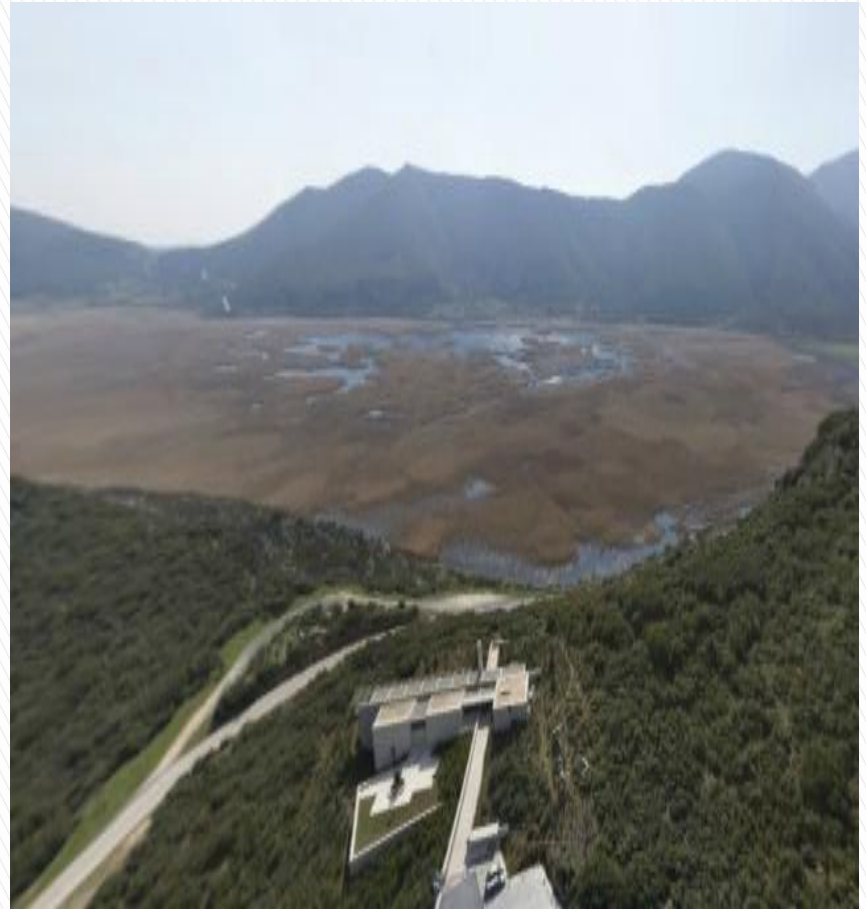








- ▶ All material (programme + profile of participants, presentations, executive summary, working paper, declaration) of the International Meeting may be found at [www.piop.gr](http://www.piop.gr)



# Next steps

- ▶ Support to the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Environment for the preparation of the bid file for the 1<sup>st</sup> UNESCO cultural landscape in Greece.
- ▶ Participation in ICOM's Conference on "Museums and Cultural Landscapes".
- ▶ Inventory of Cultural Landscapes in Natura 2000 sites in Greece.
- ▶ Cultural Landscapes Tourism initiative.
- ▶ Manual on the joint management of cultural and natural heritage.