

# Declaration of Stymfalia

## **CULTURAL LANDSCAPES IN NATURA 2000 SITES: TOWARDS A NEW POLICY FOR THE INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

The participants of the International Meeting "**Cultural Landscapes in Natura 2000 sites: towards a new policy for the integrated management of cultural and natural heritage**" held from 10 to 11 October 2014 in Athens and Stymfalia, Greece and organized by the Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation with the collaboration of the Ministry of Culture and Sports and the Ministry for the Environment, Energy and Climate Change of the Hellenic Republic:

**Acknowledging** that landscape protection may be enhanced if a clear understanding of how human culture shapes the environment is realized and if, at the same time, nature's feedback processes that reshape culture are fully comprehended,

**Acknowledging** also that 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,

### **1. Agree that:**

#### ***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.*

*Trans-disciplinary and interdisciplinary research focusing on the links between cultural and natural heritage at the landscape level should be prioritized.*

*Local knowledge and experience should be used to fill knowledge gaps and to develop site-specific management measures, so as diversity to be respected and local development to be sustainable.*

#### ***Education***

*Training programmes on assessment methods, management and communication practices for the integrated management of cultural and natural heritage are valuable for raising the capacities of local people.*

*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 increase the opportunities for learning mobility and 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 approaches to cultural and natural heritage.*

### **Management**

*Sustaining landscapes while allowing both continuing use by local communities that are dependent on them and conserving cultural and natural heritage, is considered a key management objective to be followed.*

*Integrated planning should engage all stakeholders (public, environmental and cultural associations, NGOs, central/regional/local administrations, scientific community) for the preservation and restoration of the linkages between natural and cultural heritage.*

*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.*

### **Communication**

*Best practices for the integrated management of cultural and natural heritage need to be exchanged between local administrations, site users, interested public, social and economic stakeholders and policy makers.*

*National and European communication and information campaigns regarding the importance of the integrated management of cultural and natural heritage are needed for raising awareness.*

### **Policy**

*Increased weight should be given to the integration of cultural heritage in the management plans of the Natura 2000 sites, with a respective enrichment of the related guidelines for the preparation of these plans.*

*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.*

*The development, on a pilot basis, of a network of "Cultural Landscapes in Natura 2000 Sites" throughout Europe will significantly facilitate the improvement of our knowledge in terms of linking natural and cultural heritage within the framework of an organized network of protected areas.*

*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.*

*The development of a new budget line linking existing EU funding programmes (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.) in the fields of environment, culture, education 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.*

*In particular, assessment studies, management plans and communication programmes regarding "Cultural Landscapes in Natura 2000 Sites" may be considered as a potential area for pilot projects in the context of the Horizon 2020 and LIFE programmes.*

## **2. We agree also to:**

*a) initiate cooperation for the development of a network of entities interested in the integrated management of cultural and natural heritage, which inter alia will examine the prospect for a new culture/environment route termed as "Cultural landscapes in Natura 2000 sites",*

*b) establish an international Working Group to promote the above cooperation, with the Piraeus Bank Cultural Foundation undertaking the support and promotion of the cooperation and the coordination of the Working Group,*

*c) communicate these concluding points, through the Piraeus Bank Cultural Foundation, to competent European and International bodies for consideration.*