

2016 Milan cooperation Charter

“Ecomuseums and cultural landscape”

Our common vision

We, Ecomuseums and Community Museums recognized that:

- ◆ New Museology and Ecomuseology are constantly evolving concepts, whose practice differs from one project to the other. It is not possible to adopt a unique standard definition, adapted to all contexts. We note with considerable interest the strategic "manifesto" adopted by Italian Ecomuseums, which is itself being revised and deepened.¹
- ◆ Ecomuseums consider themselves as participatory processes that recognize, manage and protect the local heritage in order to facilitate a sustainable social, environmental and economic development.
- ◆ They are specific projects through which to reconnect techniques, cultures, productions and resources of a homogeneous territory so as to relate to the cultural heritage of the area.
- ◆ They develop creative and inclusive practices aimed at the cultural growth of the local communities, based on the active participation of people and the cooperation of organizations and associations.

Our challenges and responsibilities

During the work of the Forum of Ecomuseums and Community Museums on July 6-8, 2016, within the 24th ICOM General Conference of the International of Museums, dedicated to "Museums and Cultural Landscapes" we discussed and shared our challenges and responsibilities².

We have selected from the communications and debates of the conference some elements which reflect the experience of the participants and which should be made known to Ecomuseums and Community Museums, and to their partners and associates throughout the world.

1. Ecomuseums or Community Museums

They are a project and a process of local development combining human and heritage resources of a given area. They participate in the worlds of both museums, and of monuments and sites.

The Ecomuseum accompanies the world as it is and prepares the world to come, using the common living

¹ http://www.ecomusei.eu/?page_id=1591

² http://www.ecomusei.eu/?page_id=987

heritage of the place, which it manages and enriches through material and intangible components.

The Ecomuseum is a network of local actors and collaborates with other public and private institutions, which work for the social, cultural and economic development, and for the wellbeing of the community.

Ecomuseology is a movement which encompasses all dimensions of society and development : geography, culture, sociology, education, ecology, planning, economy. It should be recognized as such, and it functions at all levels of political and administrative decision-making.

In many countries, unions, federations or networks of Ecomuseums or Community Museums exist, they work for the recognition of the movement, solidarity between members, the training of volunteers and professionals, and exchanges with other countries.

It has been found essential to undertake efforts, at regional, national and international levels, to establish training facilities, for professionals, volunteers and public authorities, aimed at a better management of the common heritage and cultural landscape, according to the values and principles of Ecomuseology.

It is also considered as particularly important for the recognition of the Ecomuseum movement, that efforts be made to develop an Ecomuseological literature, easily accessible internationally, based not only on academic research, but on reports, evaluations, histories realized by professionals and practitioners from the field. Practitioners themselves should document Ecomuseum and Community Museum practices. Comparative and critical surveys and studies should be made of the organizational (governance) structures adopted by Ecomuseums or Community Museums, and also of the actual impact made by these institutions on the wellbeing of the respective societies and their sustainable development.

2. Cultural landscape

The territory and the heritage it contains form the landscape. This landscape, according to the definition of Article 1 of the European Convention of Landscape (Florence, 2000), is a cultural construction.

"Landscape" means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors;

According to this definition, the community of the inhabitants and its members, old and new, are collectively and mutually responsible for the landscape, its protection, its transformation and its knowledge. The Ecomuseum is the best instrument for the mobilization and education of the population, and for a heritage/landscape watch/observation and the mediation with the visitors of the area, because it has the capacity to master all landscape components, whether natural or cultural, tangible or intangible.

In its area, the Ecomuseum cooperates with museums, monuments and sites, as well as with other actors of heritage protection. It brings to them its experience and know-how in the field of managing the living heritage and landscape of the territories. It may also take responsibility for a landscape observatory or a Local Agenda 21.

Our answer: the cooperation Charter

From this common vision we take up these challenges and accept our responsibilities. We adopt this cooperation Charter as a significant step forward, from one programmatic stage to another pragmatic one, in order to direct actions of each of us toward shared objectives and to foster cooperation between the World of Ecomuseums and Community Museums.

1. The Forum has endorsed the Florence³ and Faro⁴ European conventions, as well as the ICOM Resolution on the Responsibility of Museums Towards Landscape approved by ICOM's General Assembly at the end of the 24th General Conference in Milan⁵, the ICOM Carta di Siena⁶ and the ICOMOS Quebec Declaration⁷.
2. We consider ourselves capable of being an interface between the world of museums (ICOM) and the world of monuments and sites (ICOMOS). We will work to be associated to the activities of these two organizations and their specialized structures, because of our expertise in the field of participatory management of living heritage and landscape at local level.
3. We will work to maintain close relations with the relevant International Committees of ICOM (ICOFOM, ICME), with the International Scientific Committee on Cultural Landscapes (ISCCL) of ICOMOS, and with the international and national NGOs pertaining to the fields of anthropology and Responsible or Sustainable Tourism.
4. We will work to establish an International Platform, virtual and interactive, for exchanges and experience sharing. Such a platform should connect all national Ecomuseum and Community Museum networks, existing or to be established and all the Ecomuseums and should be extended to other heritage and landscape NGOs. It should produce a multilingual documentary and bibliographic pool of resources on ecomuseology and its best practices.
5. We will work to create a permanent international Working Group to keep watch and make proposals on the theme territory-heritage-landscape.
6. We adopt the cooperation Charter as a "work in progress" resource from which we will select priorities appropriate to the time, situations and needs, which also take into account the global impact of our activities in compliance with powers, and one another's role. We will continue the participatory process to identify specific targets, resources and time frames to monitor progress towards achieving them.
7. We think that bilateral, multilateral or regional (regional being understood as covering whole regions of the world) cooperation projects announced or devised during the Ecomuseums and Community Museums Forum are the best medium to strengthen the unity of the Ecomuseum movement, to ensure its visibility and to raise comprehension and collaboration between Ecomuseums and Community Museums.
8. We are committed to energising our projects through increased cooperation.
9. We will follow some projects to be encouraged and to be realized with stakeholders, taking the opportunities of notices and the financial instruments available.

³ <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=0900001680080621>

⁴ <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=0900001680083746>

⁵ <http://icom.museum/the-governance/general-assembly/resolutions-adopted-by-icom-general-assemblies-1946-to-date/milan-2016/>

⁶ http://icom.museum/uploads/media/Carta_di_Siena_EN_final.pdf

⁷ <http://whc.unesco.org/uploads/activities/documents/activity-646-2.pdf>

ANNEXES

1. PROJECTS LISTED AT THE END OF THE FORUM

- EU-LAC-MUSEUMS programme (www.eulacmuseums.net)
- Local heritage participatory inventories (e.g. parish/landscape maps)
- Indigenous museology in aboriginal communities
- Evaluation programmes at national or regional levels
- Collecting best practices
- Ecomuseums for a culture of sustainability
- Exchanges and cooperation with ICOM, ICOMOS and NGOs on cultural landscapes
- Landscape day (Landscape European Convention day)
- Education, training and new generations cooperation

2. CONTRIBUTION TO THE 24th GENERAL CONFERENCE OF ICOM, FROM THE FORUM OF ECOMUSEUMS AND COMMUNITY MUSEUMS - Milan, 7th July 2016

- a) The Ecomuseums and Community Museums are the landscape. They have always been the landscape, since they were born, because they deal with the tangible and intangible diffused and living heritage.
- b) Since they were born, they chose a trans-disciplinary approach, experimented and tested in real life. This innovative approach has inspired more traditional museums and institutions at every level.
- c) In a world that is more and more aware of the importance of responsibility, participation, inclusiveness in the sustainable management of heritage, Ecomuseums can play a key role because of their experience gained from practice.
- d) Ecomuseums exist all over the world. They are willing to cooperate with museums at local, national and global levels to engage with the new challenges emerging from the debates of the 24th General Conference, on Museums and Cultural Landscapes.