

# RAMSAR CULTURE NETWORK

UPDATE 2

April 2014

## Ramsar Standing Committee SC47 on culture - outcome:

The 47th meeting of the Ramsar Standing Committee took place on 24-28 March 2014 in Gland. Among the issues discussed was the Ramsar Culture Network's Report on Activities (link: <http://www.ramsar.org/pdf/sc/47/SC47-20-culture-network.pdf>).

The decisions taken on RCN matters by the Committee at its previous meeting were discussed, as well as the Network's work plan for 2014, which covers the following:

- Strengthened international policy;
- Better documented values;
- More widely shared and applied good practices;
- Enhanced partnerships; and
- Effective coordination.

The Standing Committee took note of the report on activities by the Ramsar Culture Network and its cooperation with UNESCO's World Heritage Centre, and instructed the Secretariat to coordinate its work with the Steering Group of the Network. Particularly, the SC urged the Secretariat to clarify the role of the Steering Group in developing specific partnerships, such as with the World Heritage Centre and others, and regarding the Ramsar commune/city accreditation scheme, and encouraged the Network to provide substantive input to the work of the Subgroup on the preparation of the Ramsar Strategic Plan and to the Ramsar CEPA oversight panel. Further, the SC requested all Parties to identify donor institutions able to provide the needed 50% co-funding for the work of the Network to complement the expected specific grant by the MAVA Foundation.

The Ramsar Culture Network commits to the following mission:

*"To bring together and create synergy among organisations and individuals that can contribute to an approach to the conservation and wise use of wetlands, which integrates cultural and natural aspects, and thereby achieves greater effectiveness in the implementation of the Ramsar Convention."*



Fish traps, Niger River - Photo: Th. Papayannis

### In this issue

- Ramsar Standing Committee SC47 on culture, p.1
- International Workshop on Tourism, Culture and Wetlands Tunisia, p. 2
- National Trust - Natural England workshop: Culturally natural or naturally cultural?, p.3.
- Workshop on Guidelines for Wetland City Accreditation, p. 4
- Lake Karla Walking Guide published by Med-INA, p. 5
- Other events



Fort Santiago on the Island of Chikly, Tunis, Tunisia - Photo: I. Lyrtzaki

## International Workshop on Tourism, Culture and Wetlands, Tunis, 12-13 February 2014

Med-INA, in cooperation with MedWet and a number of local partners, (among them WWF Tunisia, Direction Générale des Forêts, Société de Promotion de Lac de Tunis and Les Amis des Oiseaux) organised an international workshop on 'Tourism, Culture and Wetlands' in Tunis, Tunisia on 12-13 February.

More than 30 participants, both international and local, took part in the event. The workshop was organised in the framework of the project 'Culture and wetlands in the Mediterranean: using cultural values for wetland restoration', which addresses three diverse pilot sites: Larnaka Salt Lakes in Cyprus, in Lake Karla in Greece and in Lake Tunis in Tunisia.

During the workshop, the project's activities were analysed, followed by presentations from local stakeholders from each pilot site. The role of tourism as a cultural agent was studied. The three sites each have different relationships with visitors, ranging from difficulties in the management of large numbers of tourists to efforts for attracting more visitors.

For the Tunisian site, Med-INA funded a Recreational Carrying Capacity Study of the Island of Chikly and the Santiago Fortress, undertaken by Prof. Maria-Jose Viñals and the Polytechnic University of Valencia, and was presented in the workshop. The meeting concluded with lively interventions by many participants, on the role of the cultural services in wetland restoration.

## 7th Conference of the Ecosystem Services Partnership (ESP)

The 7th Conference of the Ecosystem Services Partnership (ESP): "Local action for the common good", will be held in Costa Rica 8 -12 September 2014. ESP runs several thematic groups, among which the Working Group on Cultural Services and Values.

Special attention of the 7<sup>th</sup> ESP conference will be given to the use of the ecosystem services concept at the local level, focusing on Latin America and especially on Costa Rica. Several EU-funded projects will present their results on Community Based Ecosystem Management: CiVi.Net, COBRA, EcoADAPT and COMETLA.

In line with the previous ESP conferences, the programme consists of a mix of plenary sessions (keynotes, panels), workshops, open topic sessions, special sessions and field trips. More information can be found in the dedicated website

([http://www.espconference.org/ESP\\_Conference](http://www.espconference.org/ESP_Conference)).



Inside view of Lake Karla Walking Guide Studley Royal Park, Ripon: Fountains Abbey is shown in the background. - Photo: I. Gilmour, Wikimedia Commons

*The meeting brought together a number of representatives from across UK WH sites and experts in cultural and natural heritage conservation, to examine the ways in which these sites and their values are understood by the public and experts, and to study the practical benefits of linking cultural and natural heritage more completely.*

*Among the participants were Kerstin Manz and Dave Pritchard, members of the RCN Steering Group.*

## National Trust - Natural England workshop: Culturally natural or naturally cultural?

A workshop on linkages between cultural and natural heritage through World Heritage sites was hosted on 2-3 April 2014 in Fountains Abbey near Ripon, North Yorkshire. Although the categorisation of WH sites into 'cultural', 'natural' and 'mixed' categories tends to emphasise these differences, the benefits of integrated approaches has been identified in the past but not always fully realised where it needs to be. The cultural importance of connecting with nature is evident in two of the WH cultural criteria:

- landscapes representing key stages in human history (criterion [iv])
- human interaction with the environment (criterion [v]).

At the same time, for natural heritage the consideration of aesthetic quality and natural beauty (criterion [vii]) are intrinsically related. These linkages are also evident in the 'cultural landscapes' category, which recognises places where it is the very interactions between people and the natural environment that are of outstanding universal value.

The venue of the meeting acted as an appropriate backdrop, being a WH site inscribed under criteria [i] and [iv], reflecting 'masterpieces of human genius' and 'outstanding designed landscape qualities', including world-renowned water gardens.



Local women from Seon-hul pilot village (Dongbaekdongsan Ramsar Site), preparing to welcome the participants - Photo: L. Young, Ramsar

## Workshop on Guidelines for Wetland City Accreditation, Jeju, Republic of Korea, 24-25 February

During Ramsar COP11 in 2012, Resolution XI.11 was adopted, encouraging Parties to explore a possible wetland city accreditation scheme. The goal of this action is to reward settlements that demonstrate a strong and positive relationship with wetlands by providing branding opportunities.

The Republic of Korea, kindly hosted a workshop on the Island of Jeju from 24 to 25 February 2014, where first discussions on the topic were initiated. Participants included representatives from the government and from villages near Ramsar sites, as well as overseas participants from Japan, WWF Tunisia, the Ramsar STRP and the Ramsar Secretariat.

Case studies from Japan and Tunisia were presented, demonstrating the active involvement of local communities supporting the wise use of the site and its resources. They were followed by discussions to identify objectives for the accreditation scheme, criteria for selecting settlements and related processes. The need for an independent body was identified by all participants, as well as the need to raise funds allowing the body to operate efficiently, and to develop a monitoring scheme.

Further discussions will be held, to allow for inputs from Contracting Parties that were unable to attend the meeting.

## Heritage and Landscape as Human Values - ICOMOS

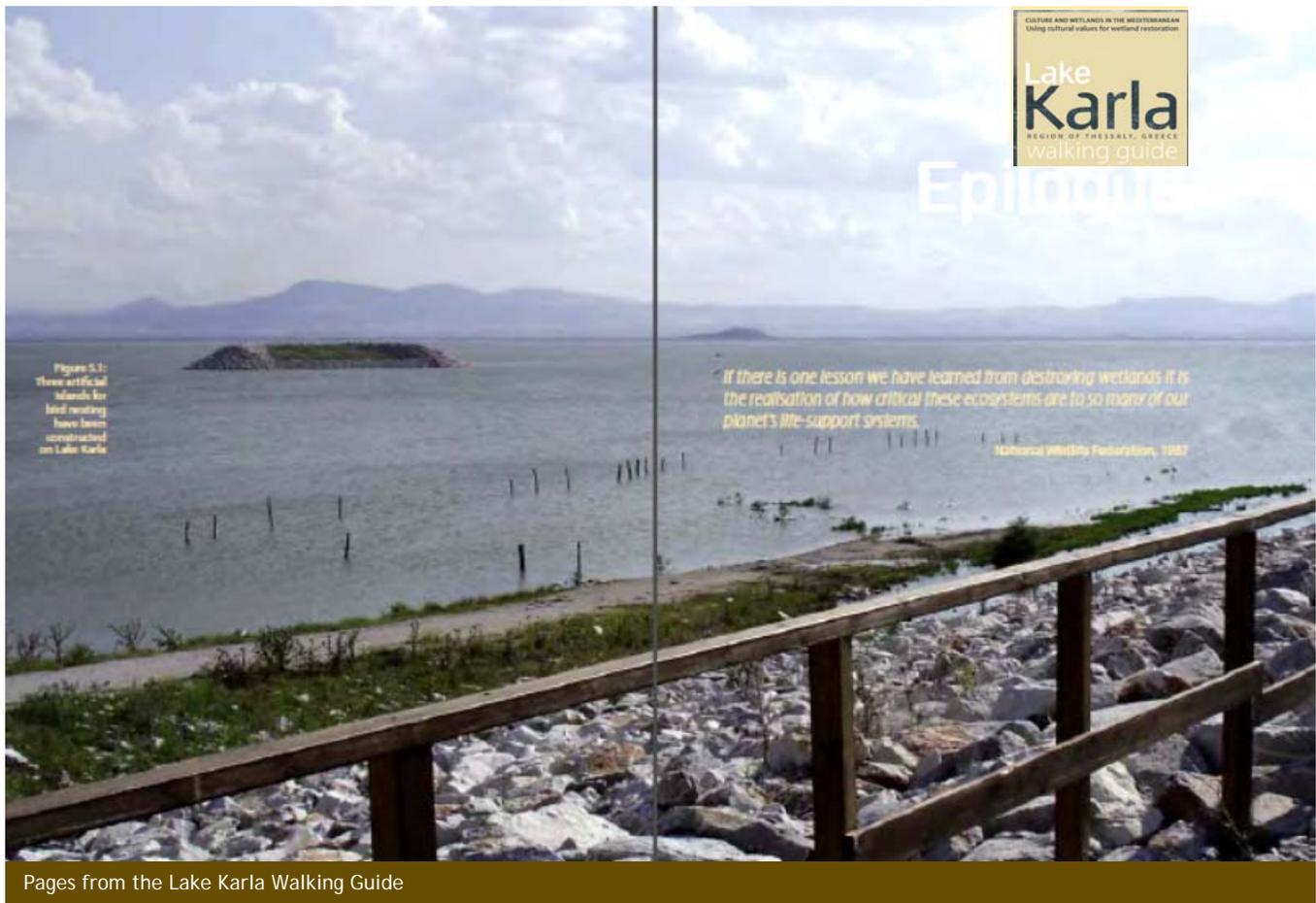
The ICOMOS Symposium "Heritage and Landscape as Human Values" will be organised in Florence, Italy, on the occasion of the 18th ICOMOS General Assembly, from 10 to 14 November 2014. The main theme of the Symposium is "Heritage and Landscape as Human Values"

The sub-themes are:

- Sharing and experiencing the identity of communities through tourism and interpretation
- Landscape as cultural habitat
- Sustainability through traditional knowledge
- Community-driven conservation and local empowerment
- Emerging tools for conservation practice

All above themes address issues that directly relate to sustainable nature conservation tools, and are particularly pertinent to wetlands and local communities. More information about the 18<sup>th</sup> ICOMOS General Assembly and the Symposium can be found on the [home page](#) of the ICOMOS website.





## Lake Karla Walking Guide

### Remarks on the book

*Many thanks for the Lake Karla book, it's really beautiful. I can add Lake Karla to the long list of places that I want to visit, one day.*

**Sandy Kerr**  
Heriot-Watt University  
Orkney, UK

*Thanks a lot for sending your new book. It looks great! I find it really interesting and I think it would be a good travel destination for me, next time I am in Greece. Particularly, with regard to the plurality of bird species that one can*

**Alex Poloczek**  
Civilscares, Bon, Germany

Med-INA (the Mediterranean Institute for Nature and Anthropos) recently launched the book 'Lake Karla Walking Guide', in the framework of the project 'Culture and Wetlands in the Mediterranean: using cultural values for wetland restoration'. The book has already received positive reviews.

This innovative walking guide is a result of close collaboration with local and regional authorities, civil society, academia and other key stakeholders. It aims to record, celebrate and publicise knowledge of the area's natural and cultural heritage, assist in the development of alternative types of tourism and, ultimately, to promote sustainability.

The reader will study the history of Lake Karla, and will be led on foot through a number of characteristic routes in the surroundings of the lake. These trails, related to the local flora and fauna, archaeology, history, religious sites, traditional activities, and cultural and aesthetic landscapes, have been carefully chosen and described to best reflect the area as a whole.

In the long term, such a guide can --indirectly-- contribute to developments that act in harmony with the culture and nature of the area, including opportunities for leisure and recreation, enhancement of the area's biodiversity, and the promotion of environmental education programmes designed to encourage visits from schools, social groups and other concerned individuals, such as eco-tourists who can greatly support the economy of the area.



Fishing in Po Delta, Italy

## Conservation of Built Heritage Special Module: Nature-Culture Interlinkages in World Heritage

A course on the interlinkages of Nature-Culture in World Heritage Sites organised by ICCROM on 22-29 April 2014 in Herculaneum (/Pompeii/Vesuvius) part of the International Course on Conservation of Built Heritage (CBH 14) which started on 28 February and will run until 30 April 2014. The course's objectives are:

- To expose participants to selected modules of a potential course on addressing nature-culture inter-linkages
- To test the (potential) reciprocal benefits to both cultural and natural heritage practitioners in working together.
- To expose/ sensitize participants to understand the interdependency of culture and nature at conceptual and practical levels.
- To enable participants to revisit and start exploring nature culture interlinkages at their own sites

The course consists of several units: Introduction, Managing World Heritage sites, Understanding concepts of nature and culture, Values / assessments/ values led approach to management, Group work (including presentations by participants) and field visits. It is. For more information on the International course, please visit [www.iccrom.org/course-on-conservation-of-built-heritage-begins/](http://www.iccrom.org/course-on-conservation-of-built-heritage-begins/).

### Communication

Ramsar Culture Network  
Secretariat:  
ilyratzaki@med-ina.org

Visit our website at  
[www.ramsarculture.org](http://www.ramsarculture.org)