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IALE-Europe: the position and plans of the European chapter for 2012-2013

To be published in IALE Bulletin January 2012

The European chapter of IALE (IALE-Europe), the first supra-national chapter within IALE, was founded in 2009 during the European Congress of Salzburg. The Executive Committee (EC), elected by the General Assembly, had the task to get the European chapter on track for the first two years. As agreed at that conference, elections for a new EC and representative for the Council of IALE took place in the autumn of 2011. More than 40% of the eligible members of IALE-Europe took part in the election, which is the highest number who cast ballots in any international IALE election up to now, and we would like to thank all of you who participated the elections. The new elected EC is now in charge since November 2011 until September 2013.

As Chair of the new elected EC and on behalf of its members, I would like to inform you first about the goals and role of the European chapter, and second about the activities we will pursue in the coming period.

The activities of IALE-Europe will be framed by the "Setting the Scene" document, prepared and widely discussed at Salzburg, when the chapter was established. As stated in this document and in the Status (www.iale-europe.eu), the European Association of Landscape Ecology "exists to foster and develop scholarship within landscape ecology throughout Europe by strengthening contacts and enriching the dialogue between members of Europe's landscape academic community, by representing the interests of this community within the wider European social and institutional context and by making the collective expertise of IALE-Europe available, where appropriate, in furthering the discussion of landscape ecological issues at European level."

Acknowledging the specific character of European landscapes and the consequent multiple research dimensions integrating the landscape ecology community in this overarching region, IALE-Europe has been created to represent consistently the common landscape ecology approach at the European scale. What do we see as our most relevant roles in this initial phase ?

- To harbour all the individual members from regions or countries in Europe where there is no active national chapter, allowing their approaches and the landscapes they are working with, to be represented at a relevant scale.
- To collaborate actively with the existing and active national chapters to join efforts for the promotion of activities particularly relevant for European landscapes;
- To collaborate actively with the IALE-International in order to strengthen the impact of the landscape ecology research, education and practice, partially by supporting the recognition of the existing differentiation of landscapes and perspectives worldwide.

- To contribute actively to the knowledge in society, about the complex natural and cultural interactions of European landscapes and thus of the added value of the landscape ecology integrative perspective. And to push the recognition of the need for a much more systemic research approach. We aim do this through the permanent and open dialogue with European institutions and decision-makers. Acting jointly as representative of the European landscape ecology community we expect to gain more influence with these partners than can be obtained by single members or even by national chapters.

In consequence, the main activities planned for the coming period include

- actively linking with the existing initiatives and networks involved in the recognition and management of European landscapes;
- support of initiatives and proposal of joint activities; and
- actively contacting and promoting the recognition of the landscape ecology approach in Europe, among institutional and social stakeholders with a role in landscape education and management, at the European level.

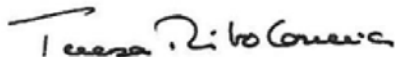
Further, recognizing the important role of creating a collaborative culture of European landscape research, education and management, we will

- promote the organization of seminars and workshops;
- organize intensive PhD courses, on particularly relevant subjects in the European context; and
- in partnership with ialeUK, organise the next European congress, to take place in Manchester (UK, 9-12 September 2013).

All these activities will be developed and coordinated by the EC and by dedicated Working Groups. More information of the Working Groups can be found on the website soon (www.iale-europe.eu).

We hope by this to contribute to the strengthening of the European landscape ecology, and to support national chapters, individual members, and IALE. You are all welcome to contact us and to make suggestions. To conclude, I would like to thank the IALE-Europe Executive Committee in charge the two first years, which established and organized the Chapter, and created the conditions for the present EC to now deal with external activities and contacts.

Teresa Pinto Correia (President)



The IALE-Europe Executive Committee is composed as follows: Teresa Pinto-Correia (President, mtpc@uevora.pt); Veerle Van Eetvelde (Secretary General, veerle.vaneetvelde@UGent.be); Emilio Padoa-Schioppa (Treasurer, emilio.padoaschioppa@unimib.it); Jurgen Breuste; Janez Pirnat; Isabel Loupa Ramos; Jonathan Porter. The Representative to the IALE Council is Hubert Wiggering.