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Faculty of Geography and Regional Studies of the University of Warsaw

Monitoring indicators as an important tool to assess the quality of heritage landscape along the time

Sofia Capelo¹, José Manuel de Mascarenhas², Filipe Themudo Barata³

¹Department of Landscape, Environment and Planning, University of Évora, Rua Romão Ramalho, 59
7000-671 Évora, Portugal, e-mail: scapelo@uevora.pt

²CIDEHUS-University of Évora, Palácio do Vimioso, Apartado 94, 7002-554 Évora, Portugal,
e-mail: mascarenhas_jm@sapo.pt

³CIDEHUS-University of Évora, Palácio do Vimioso, Apartado 94, 7002-554 Évora, Portugal
e-mail: ftthbarata@netcabo.pt

Abstract: Monitoring indicators permit to follow the state of the landscape heritage quality with the time, being an important tool for the implementation of corrective measures if necessary. The authors have chosen to analyse a concrete case at two different scales of detail and along the time. The case-study concerns an area in Évora surroundings that was object, same years ago, of a detailed analysis. This fact make possible to compare the heritage landscape condition between 2002 and 2010 through the application of monitoring indicators. This work is integrated in a research line that since same years ago are being developed by the authors related with heritage landscape management tools.

For the realization of the detailed study it was chosen a conventual kitchen garden including the related hydraulic systems. A broader area surrounding this site was also object of analysis supported mainly by the interpretation of aerial photographs and satellite images, the analysis of maps and land surveying.

The main results concern particularly the built heritage values and landscape ecological values. In the first case several degradation situations were detected as consequence mainly of land use pressures and lack of maintenance activity. In the second case the statement of many habitats and corridors were improved as due to a lower human pressure related in part with the extensification or changing of agrarian and forestry systems.

This study have showed that monitoring indicators can be a very interesting management tool if applied at different scales according to specific situations and using adequate methods.

Key words: landscape, heritage, global indicator value, monitoring indicators