

**Portuguese Cultural Landscapes:
A perspective of governance models
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The classification of cultural landscapes by UNESCO results from the recognition of the Exceptional Value that is inherent to these landscapes. Considering that they present themselves as dynamic systems, changing according to the biophysical and cultural influences that surround them, mechanisms of international scope have been developed to guarantee the safeguarding of the values that characterize cultural landscapes. Reflecting on the state of the cultural landscapes inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List is quite relevant nowadays, due to the great human pressure (essentially within the scope of socio-economic development and political interests) to which they are subjected and that has been increasing over the years. In Portugal, there are 3 landscapes inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List⁸¹, namely: the Cultural Landscape of Sintra (1995), the Alto Douro Wine Region (2001) and the Landscape of the Vine Culture of the Island of Pico (2004). Assuming the essentially artistic character of the first and the agricultural

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⁸¹ The Sanctuary of Bom Jesus do Monte in Braga had not yet been classified as a Cultural Landscape at the time of this research work, therefore, its management system is not addressed in the communication.

character of the following two, it is imperative that the entities responsible for its management react to protect their heritage – both material and immaterial values, reconciling economic and development interests with the preservation of cultural landscapes in a balanced way.

The Portuguese cultural landscapes are very different from each other, both in terms of size and in terms of the criteria that led to its inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List. However, there is still no recognition of the concept of cultural landscape in national legislation and, consequently, no official model that presents the guidelines for the management of these *Sites*. This ends up resulting in the use of heterogeneous management instruments, which are never completely adequate, also translating into the different development of the respective management models, both for their strategic character (in order to achieve the objectives outlined for each landscape), or for its institutional character (in which a variable number of entities manage each landscape in question).

The classification of cultural landscapes by UNESCO is also due to the recognition of their fragility, intending, through this means, to highlight the need to preserve their natural and cultural values, which distinguish them from so many others at international level. Therefore, it is fundamental to incorporate the concept in the national legislative framework and to provide management figures that respond to this need, complementing these changes with the consolidation of the institutional framework and resources that guarantee the correct safeguarding of the Site. Thus, the importance of anticipating a flexible and adaptable management model for the landscape, which is inclusive and foresees the collaboration of all the actors who work on it, is emphasized.

Over the past decade, there has been a greater appreciation of the landscape component, that has been the subject of studies on the influence of the implementation of management models

in safeguarding its values. Despite this, there are still several aspects to improve in the national management system. In this perspective of improvement, there needs to be room for adaptation, and it is essential for this concept to be applied at the national level, since the portuguese context is still very much governed by administrative regulations.

The communication aims to present a comparative and critical reflection on the management models present in this three portuguese cultural landscapes classified by UNESCO, giving orientations and suggestions for the improvement of each one of them.

