
ICOMOS International Committee on Vernacular Architecture

Since its foundation in 1976 the International Committee on Vernacular Architecture CIAV of ICOMOS achieved important results in the field of study and conservation of vernacular architecture, like the definition of "what is vernacular", the preparation of a charter for the conservation of vernacular", the preparation of a charter for the conservation of vernacular architecture, several studies and publications and a certain amount advice. Starting from the traditional preservation strategies of conservation in situ or in open air museums, faced by the rapid ongoing changes within the contemporary life and society over the 16 years of work the committee learned to enlarge its understanding of what is vernacular - from the farmsteads and villages to urban settlements, regions and cultural landscape -, to recognize and improve its work, studying new methods and conservation strategies and policies, trying to establish an international multi-disciplinary network, to sensitize and involve the communities in the recognition, maintenance and continuance of their cultural values, to co-ordinate regional and local initiatives, to participate in development projects like new vernacular architecture and to organize educational and training programmes.

As even a short survey on the activities of the international committee would need several volumes, the selection of papers presented here, try to reflect both the traditions in the conservation of the vernacular heritage and the new tasks, the new working methods and strategies.

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