

Mária Kozová

EUROPEAN IALE CONGRESS 2005 "LANDSCAPE ECOLOGY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN: INSIDE AND OUTSIDE APPROACHES"

The European IALE Congress "Landscape Ecology in the Mediterranean: Inside and Outside Approaches" was taking place on March 29 to April 2, 2005. Main organizers of the Congress was the Portugal Association for Landscape Ecology (Associação Portuguesa de Ecologia da Paisagem, www.apep.pt). The congress was taking place in the sea city Faro, centre of the province Algarve. Faro is located in the south of Portugal in the area that is the tourism target, with rich historical and cultural development. At present the area of the Mediterranean region is under the pressure of intense tourism.

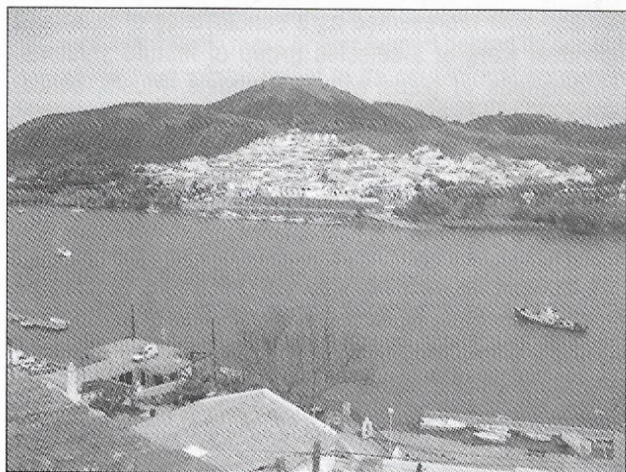


Fig. 1.

The river Guadiana creates the borders between Portugal and Spain. A view from the town Alcoutim on the town Sanlúcar de Guadiana on the Spanish side. (Photo from excursion: M. Kozová)

The congress was opened by the president of IALE Mr. Bob Bunce (The Netherlands) and by the president of the congress organising committee Mr. Francisco Moreira (Portugal). In the introductory lectures Mr Jacques Blondel (France) explained the state of art of prbližil biological diversity of Mediterranean (taking into account time and spatial dimension and the role of man) and Willem Vos (The Netherlands) presented the uniqueness of cultural landscape in the Mediterranean Europe. The other lectures were running in the plenary sessions and plenary symposia that were enriched by poster sections.

The individual symposia were focused on various pressing issues, e.g. "Theoretical approaches to European landscape ecology", "Local management, Policies and Stakeholder involvement", "Land degradation and desertification", "Conservation of Mediterranean landscapes", "The Landscape Ecology of Mediterranean Mountains", "Landscape Ecological monitoring with special

reference to the Mediterranean", "Changes in land use, biodiversity and cultural landscape character", "Landscape Values, Perceptions and Aesthetics". A separate symposium was organised for young landscape ecologists. The Book of Abstracts was published to the conference and selected lectures will be published in the *Journal of Mediterranean Ecology*.

The Congress was accompanied by several events. One of them was the International PhD. course for 24 participants that was taking place at the Algarve University in Faro (Universidade do Algarve, Faro) on March 29 to April 5, 2005. The main organiser was Marion Potschin, executive secretary of IALE. PhD course was focused on the topic "Landscape Ecology: Methods and Their Application" and the lectures were given by top international professionals in landscape ecology. Young participants of the PhD. course obtained the credits according to the ECTS. This kind of the PhD. course was organised already for the second time (first time it was organised during the IALE World Congress in 2002 in Australian city of Darwin).

There were also other significant events, mainly the preparatory meeting related to the foundation of "European regional organisation of IALE" (European Chapter IALE) that was led by Mark Antrop (Ghent University) and Jasper Brandt (Roskilde University). The meeting was focused on the target and procedure of foundation of new organisation, links to the IALE statute in effect and links to other regional IALE in Europe. All participants of the congress could apply for two of five offered excursion to the areas of south Portugal, to its bordering area with Spain or to inland. The other accompanying activities were: plenary session of Portugal Association for Landscape Ecology, meeting of the working group IALE ECOLAND and working sessions of the researchers involved in the EU projects of the Framework Programme.

During the congress the meeting of scientific committee to prepare the IALE World Congress (July 2007, Wageningen, The Netherlands) that will be focused on: "25 Years of Landscape Ecology: Scientific Principles in Practice" (more info on the prepared world congress can be found on IALE web site: www.landscape-ecology.org).

The European IALE Congress in Faro that was attended by more than 200 participants fulfilled its objective: to contribute to better understanding of landscape-ecological characteristics of exceptional Mediterranean region and initiate the discussion towards future opportunities to preserve its values and search for the ways of sustainable management. The next European IALE congress should take place in 2009.