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GreenHeritage. The impact of Climate Change on the Intangible Cultural Heritage

Green Heritage

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Ravello

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Preserving the Past, Protecting the Future: The Green Heritage Interactive Map

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Introduction

This article details the development and outcomes of the Green Heritage interactive map, which was developed on the grounds of the project "The Impact of Climate Change on the Intangible Cultural Heritage-Green Heritage" which is co funded by the Erasmus+ Programme.
Green Heritage is a European project that aims to address the impact of climate change on intangible cultural heritage. One of the key results of the project, is an interactive map of endangered areas and regions in Europe, where cultural heritage has started to impact negatively on different types of intangible cultural heritage.

What is a map?

A map[1] is a visual representation of an area, typically drawn to scale and on a flat surface. It displays geographical features like boundaries, bodies of water, roads, and other points of interest. Maps help us understand spatial relationships and navigate the world around us.

What is an interactive map?

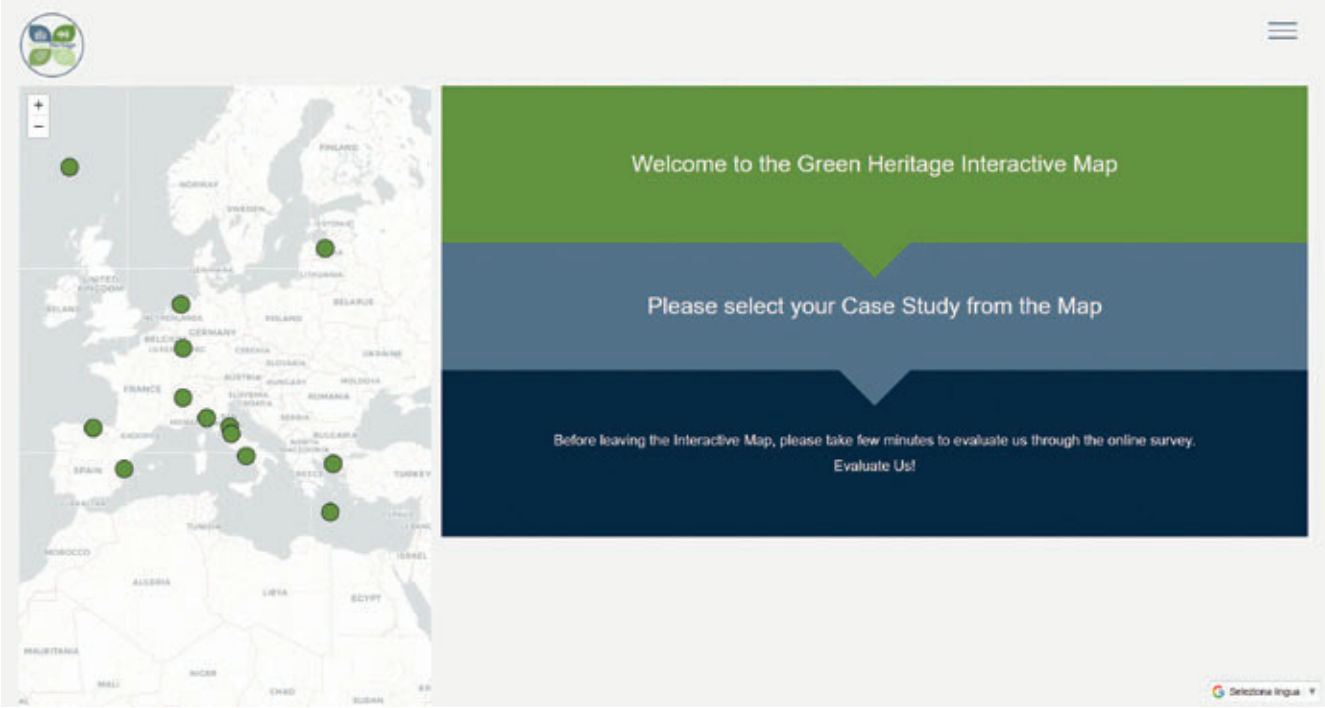
An interactive map is a digital map that allows users to actively engage with its content and features[2]. Unlike traditional static maps, interactive maps offer a dynamic experience, enabling us-

[1] Encyclopædia Britannica. (2024). Map. Retrieved from https://www.britannica.com/science/map

ers to explore different levels of detail, from a broad overview to a close-up view, to move across the map to view different areas, to access additional information, such as pop-ups with text images, or videos to filter information based on specific criteria such as population density and/or income level and to generate reports and visualizations that help analyses and deeper understanding.
Interactive maps can be used for a variety of purposes, including:
navigation: finding directions or exploring new places.
data visualization: communicating complex information in a visually engaging way.
education: teaching geography, history, or other subjects.
marketing: promoting businesses or destinations.
Interactive maps are a powerful tool for understanding and interacting with the world and they become increasingly more popular since they enable the creator of such maps, to offer its users a better understanding for the world.

The purpose of the Green Heritage Interactive Map

The Green Heritage Interactive map operates as a tool to showcase examples of the most endangered areas and regions in Europe where climate change continues to impact various types of intangible cultural heritage.



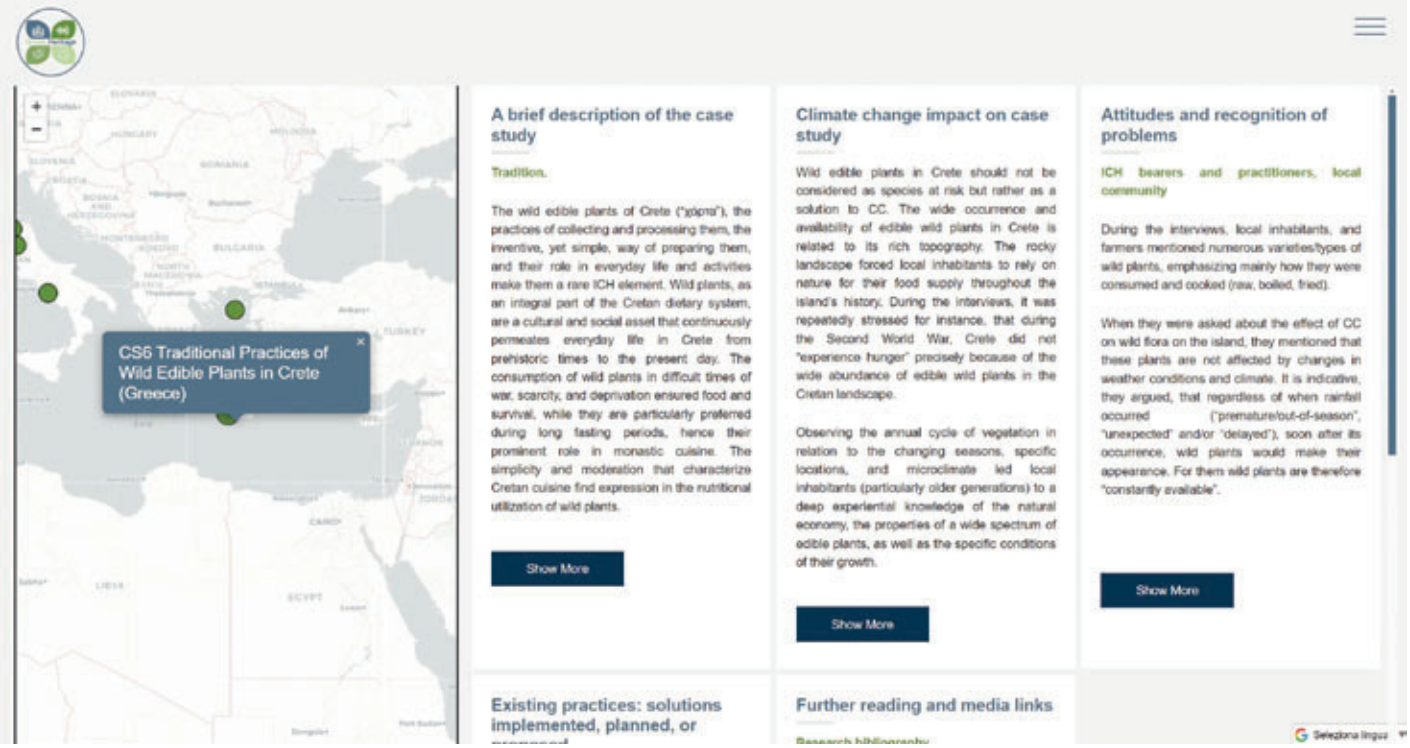
The path towards developing the Green Heritage Interactive Map

On the process of developing the Green Heritage Interactive Map, a series of objectives were to be met.
These objectives included designing an interactive map with rich graphic elements that will allow, among other, zooming in and out, panning around, identifying specific features and querying underlying data such as by topic or a specific indicator.
The primary focus was on creating a pleasant User Experience Design (UX) and on the an equally pleasant User Interface Design (UI)[3].
A successful interactive map should be informative, intuitive, and engaging for users with varying levels of technical expertise. To accomplish this, a user-centered design approach was employed, incorporating feedback from both consortium members and the project's target groups and stakeholders of the project. This feedback proved invaluable in shaping the map's features and functionality.

User Experience Design (UX)/ User Interface Design (UI) Design Considerations

The design of the Green Heritage interactive mpa emphasized simplicity and user-friendliness. A clear and uncluttered interface ensures that users could easily navigate the map and access information. The zoom and pan contribute to the smooth, responsive and seamless exploration.
The Green Heritage design follows a visually engaging and informative approach. An aesthetically pleasing and intuitive color palette, harmonizing with the project logo's colors ensure a user-friendly navigation experience. The accessibility of the interactive map and the user experience are further improved by the use of symbols of universal understanding.
The outcome is an interactive map that not only visualizes endangered areas and intangible cultural heritage elements but also functions as an educational and awareness-raising tool. The map encourages users to explore, discover, and understand the connection between climate change and cultural heritage, empowering them to champion preservation efforts in the face of environmental challenges.

[3] Smartvel. (2023). Exploring the potential interactive route maps and exceptional UX. Retrieved from https://www.smartvel.com/resources/blog/exploring-the-potential-interactive-route-maps-and-exceptional-ux#:~:text=Interactive%20maps%20are%20typically%20used,live%20map%2C%20which%20makes%20it



The content

The map features eight layers of data of existing practice to mitigating the effects of climate change on intangible cultural heritage altogether:
(1) adaptation
(2) intangible cultural heritage inventories
(3) public awareness
(4) community involvement
(5) research and monitoring
(6) sustainable resource management
(7) national legislation
(8) international cooperation.
The cases showcased in the interactive map are from:

- the Lamprey Fishing and Preparation Skills in Carnikava of Latvia
- the Puffin Harvesting and Hunting of Denmark
- the Skating on Natural Ice, from the Netherlands
- the Wine Culture of Germany
- the Transhumance in the Cantabrian or Northern Third of Spain and the Valencian Paella "The Art of Uniting and Sharing" of Spain
- alpinism, which is shared also with France and Switzerland of Italy
- the Art of Dry-stone Walling, Knowledge and Techniques in

Cinque Terre National Park of italy
- the Festival of the Ceri. Race of the Ceri-Gubbio of Italy
- the Network of Big Shoulder-borne Processional Structures of Italy
- the Madonna Avvocata Festival of Italy
- the Mandras (Paddocks) of Lemnos of Greece
- traditional Practices of Wild Edible Plants in Crete of Greece

A brief description of the case study

Tradition.

The wild edible plants of Crete ("χόρτα"), the practices of collecting and processing them, the inventive, yet simple, way of preparing them, and their role in everyday life and activities make them a rare ICH element. Wild plants, as an integral part of the Cretan dietary system, are a cultural and social asset that continuously permeates everyday life in Crete from prehistoric times to the present day. The consumption of wild plants in difficult times of war, scarcity, and deprivation ensured food and survival, while they are particularly preferred during long fasting periods, hence their prominent role in monastic cuisine. The simplicity and moderation that characterize Cretan cuisine find expression in the nutritional utilization of wild plants. However, wild plants are also present on the festive table in Crete, as the main dish combined with meat (e.g., wild greens with lamb). Gathering of wild plants, which was previously done by women of all ages, without excluding men, served as a learning process for younger generations to find edible wild plants, and even today, it provides opportunities for social expression, as group outings to the countryside for this purpose are not uncommon. Additionally, the practice of "skouteliko", the exchange of small quantities of food among housewives, was also common in the case of wild plants. In general, the resourceful way in which Cretans use wild plants fulfils needs, balances social differences, and expresses collectively.

Species. Crete possesses a rich flora with approximately 1,800 known species and subspecies, of which more than 190 are endemic. This plant diversity is due to its geographical location (isolation resulting in speciation) as well as the presence of different ecosystems, which in turn lead to the creation of various habitats with different microclimates (coastal zone, plains, semi-mountainous and mountainous zones, gorges, wetlands). Another characteristic related to Cretan flora is that many wild plants, both endemic and non-endemic, are edible. The consumption of wild plants as main dishes, side dishes, or salads on a daily basis, is a characteristic key of the Cretan cuisine. Recent studies on the chemical composition and nutritional elements of several wild greens and vegetables consumed in Crete have demonstrated their significant nutritional value. The correlation between the exceptional health and longevity of Cretans and the nutritional components of wild greens and vegetables has been evidenced by numerous studies. In addition to vitamins, minerals, and

carbohydrates, which are important nutrients known for their role in human health, wild greens and vegetables contain omega-3 fatty acids and numerous phytochemicals, products of the secondary metabolism of plants. Researchers have focused on these metabolites in recent years, as there is increasing evidence that these substances also influence human metabolism in a health-promoting manner.

Cretan diet consists predominantly of wild edible plants. More than 150 species of wild plants are included in the Cretan diet. These plants contain vitamins, dietary fibres, proteins, and are rich in antioxidants, trace elements, and components necessary for a balanced and healthy dietary pattern. However, equally important to the quantity, variety, and properties of wild plant species are the practices of recognition, collection, processing, preservation, preparation, and consumption of wild plants in Crete, as well as the social and cultural aspects associated with this process.

When users delve deeper into the map to explore the illustrated cases, a side window appears, presenting five segments organized as follows:
- a brief description of the case study
- climate change impact on case study
- attitudes and recognition of problems
- existing practices: solutions implemented, planned, or proposed
- further reading and media links

Conclusion

The Green Heritage interactive map marks a significant advancement in comprehending and tackling the complex relationship between climate change and intangible cultural heritage. By seamlessly merging user-friendly design with extensive data, the map becomes a tool that not only educates but also motivates action. The map's capacity to visualize the diverse and often nuanced ways climate change affects cultural practices, traditions, and knowledge empowers both experts and the general public to address this crucial issue.

Through the Green Heritage project and the creation of this interactive map, the pressing need to protect intangible cultural heritage against environmental threats has been highlighted. By presenting successful instances of adaptation, mitigation, and community engagement, the map acts as a symbol of hope and a driver of change. It promotes collaboration, raises awareness, and provides individuals and communities with the necessary resources to safeguard their cultural identity and heritage for future generations.

As climate change continues to transform our world, the Green Heritage interactive map serves as a testament to human innovation and the enduring strength of cultural heritage. This tool will continue to evolve, adapt, and inspire others to join us in the vital work of protecting our shared cultural legacy in an ever-changing world.