

To Unesco World Heritage Centre
7, Place de Fontenoy, 75352 – Paris 07 SP France

All'UNESCO - Commissione Nazionale Italiana (CNI)
Piazza Firenze n. 27, 00186 – Roma

Associazione Città e Siti Italiani
Patrimonio Mondiale UNESCO
Via Boccalone 19, 44100 – Ferrara

Presidente dell'Associazione Sud Italia UNESCO
On. Nicola Bono
Via Roma, 31, 96100 – Siracusa

Alla Regione siciliana,
Assessorato ai Beni Culturali,
Ambientali e della Pubblica Istruzione
Via delle Croci 8, 90139 – Palermo

Alla Soprintendenza ai BB. CC. AA. di Siracusa
Piazza Duomo, 14, 96100 – Siracusa

Subject :

- 1. Serious risk to the cultural and natural heritage of the town of Siracusa on account of the recent General Town Planning Scheme.**
- 2. Appeal on behalf of the sportsman Enzo Maiorca and many other Italian personalities to avoid Siracusa landscape suffering irreparable damage.**

1. Serious risk to the cultural and natural heritage of the town of Siracusa on account of the recent General Town Planning Scheme.

The inclusion of Siracusa and the Rocky Necropolis of Pantalica on the World Heritage List of July 2005, was supposed to be the start of a new season of awareness, support and involvement leading to new laws and provisions for the conservation and protection of the XL Unesco site in Italy.

Unfortunately things have gone differently and the lack of any form of cultural effect and development can be proved by new the Town Planning Scheme of Siracusa.

The Town Planning Scheme has never been accepted by Siracusa's society because it actually causes unjustified overbuilding, devastating every part of the territory. This is happening in a period of recovery of values (e.g. the functional and structural restoration of entire urban areas, already well-served, in many parts of Europe) and of delicate transition towards a sustainable development, including tourism.

Unfortunately, this distorted view of tourism development has led to the approval of new projects which could have a negative impact on the natural and cultural environment. The filling in with concrete of the Great Harbour, the rise of unjustified dormitory suburbs — due to the senseless policy of the sixties — the destruction of the coastlines, whose delicate geomorphologic balance had already been compromised, are all evident signs of the deterioration and lack of awareness of the Unesco recognition.

The inclusion of the XL site on the World Heritage List, makes reference to the unique accumulation of remarkable testimonies, to the development of civilization over some three millennia and to an exceptional archaeological and even literary testimony.

Now, at the present moment, Virgil's sites of the wavy Plemmyrion, Enzo Maiorca's uncontaminated sea, Elio Vittorini's earth endowed with strong and sweet perfumes, the sites visited by Marcus Tullius Cicero, the territories so dear to Archimedes and Euripides, Theocritus and Plato, Saint Paul and Saint Lucy, Antonello from Messina and Caravaggio, are broken

up, losing their own identity, under the blows of uncontrolled levelling and aggressive bulldozers.

If this situation keeps going on, Siracusa will disappear along with its history and it will be the end of an essential and irreplaceable part of the world heritage.

In order to stop the devastation of the protected natural, artistic and archaeological sites, as well as to respect the delicate balance in the arethusean territory (as everybody knows, Syracuse is the site of the myth of Arethusa, Alpheus, Anapo and Ciane as well as of Pillirina and of Saracinedda) we ask the World Heritage Committee to take immediate action by supporting the battle that our society has been carrying out for some time, through free associations, for some time.

2. The appeal by citizens, Italian personalities and cultural associations.

*In the last two years many citizen associations have tried to find solutions to safeguard the environment. **The associations and the personalities who have signed Enzo Maiorca's appeal against the destruction of the most beautiful landscapes in Siracusa, are listed below.***

We suggest some variations to the General Town Planning Scheme. The variations are minimal and not extreme at all : we wish the coasts, the Epipoli area (i. e. the Greek Castle and Dionigi's Walls) and the Pantanelli area (the Ciane river) were safeguarded.

- These proposals had already been put forward by Legambiente (an Environmental Association) before the approval of the General Town- Planning Scheme (18 July 2005)
- The same solutions were put forward in the mandatory request of the CRU (Regional Town-planning Committee) but they were turned down by the authorities at the moment of its approval. This issue has been subject of an appeal to the TAR (Regional Administrative Court).
- Maddalena Peninsula is a marine protected area in the Unesco World Heritage List . This event implies new considerations that the General Town- Planning Scheme has disregarded. Therefore it has to be changed.

The variations suggested are not extreme; they are **Variants to Beauty**. Maddalena Peninsula, Epipoli, Pantanelli are landmarks of our history and identity in the extraordinary variety of our landscapes. They represent some of the most important tourist attractions and they contribute to the building up of an image and a soul both for its citizens and for people coming from different parts of the world.

Many personalities have acknowledged this: Salvatore Settis, Massimo Fini, Vittorio Sgarbi, Ermete Realacci and many others . Among Siracusans : Giuseppe Voza, monsignor Greco, Paolo Giansiracusa and Lucia Acerra.

Overbuilding, nevertheless, goes on relentlessly, and continues to bury Siracusa's landscape.

***Enzo Maiorca's appeal to Stefania Prestigiacomo,
Minister of Environment***

Other addressees

- **The President of the Association "Città e Siti Italiani Patrimonio Mondiale UNESCO" and Major of the Town of Assisi, Claudio Ricci;**
- **The Major of Syracuse, Roberto Visentin;**
- **The Town Council;**
- **The Monuments and Fine Arts Department.**

Appeal

Dear Minister

Siracusa is being threatened by its General Town Planning Scheme. Siracusa defined as "pulcherrima" by Cicero, Siracusa which, despite the damage suffered as a consequence of the high industrial impact and illegal overbuilding, is still rich in beauty and fascination.

It is seriously threatened by a Town Planning Scheme which allows overbuilding in our territory. What about the landscape, the charm of our landscape which has always attracted a large number of tourists from all over the world? Villas, shopping centres, holiday resorts are replacing olive trees, rocky landscapes and Mediterranean maquis!

Siracusa is a town of art, culture and partially still uncontaminated nature. It does not need another holiday resort in one of the last coastlines left for citizens and tourists to freely enjoy: Massa Olivieri and Pillirina.

A coastline with a partially excavated Siculan-Greek necropolis, a coastline which includes one of the pearls of

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Siracusa: Plemmirio Marine Park. The world would be horrified!

Tourists coming to Siracusa do not look for a new Rimini; they want to visit monuments and find uncontaminated nature and unspoiled landscapes; they wish to admire Eurialo Castle and the Great Harbour, hoping to catch sight of Nicia's fleet; they do not want to cry with rage at the ruining of Epipoli or the destruction caused by the construction of two more tourist harbours!

It's time to take action: everyone has to take action and at once!

Both the Minister of the Environment and the Major of Siracusa have to stand up for Siracusa and Pillirina and ask for an immediate convocation of the Town Council members to discuss about the Town Planning Scheme.

Let's save Siracusa, it's worth it!!!

Enzo Maiorca

Our appeal is addressed to everybody who loves Siracusa and is fed up with witnessing the selling of its sea, land and coastline at a low cost. An immense damage to our cultural and environmental heritage is going to be achieved right in front of us : everyone must know what is going to be built!!!

1) Hundreds of new building cooperatives, blocks of flats and villas around the Greek Theatre in the Epipoli area, acknowledged by Unesco as a "red zone". Siracusa has been going through a demographic decrease for a long time and the official statistics of an increase (by CRESME) have been declared false by a judicial examination of the Court of Siracusa.

2) Two more shopping centres in Targia and near Dionigi's Walls close to Eurialo Castle. In this way the area where the only example of a classic Greek fortification can be found, the place where in 397 B.C. the Carthaginians suffered a terrible defeat and where from

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215 to 212 B.C. the Romans tried to conquer Siracusa in vain, will be degraded even more.

3) Two big holiday resorts on the Maddalena Peninsula in the area of Punta del Gigante (above the Pillirina Grotto) and between Punta Tavola and Punta della Mola) in addition to the two already existing resorts. This area represents the last unspoiled segment of coastline, already acknowledged as **a Site of Community Interest and of remarkable archaeological value**, whose studies have to be completed : some quarries, the ancient suburb of Plemmyrion, the Athenian campsite conquered by the Siracusans led by Gylippus in 414 B.C., Gelon' s tomb, just to mention a few. There is a real risk that nobody will be able to enjoy these jewels because they could be buried and made inaccessible by illegal fencing and reinforced concrete.

4) Two other tourist harbours, which means filling in ten hectares of sea in the area of the Great Harbour in the anchorage of SR : an area as big as ten times Santa Lucia Square (the biggest square in Siracusa) and which was witness to the battle that in 413 B.C. led Syracusans to defeat the Athenians once and for all.

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Signers

Enzo Maiorca, World record holder of subaqua diving

Cecilia Strada, President of Emergency

Massimo Fini, Writer and journalist for “Il Fatto Quotidiano”

Ermete Realacci, Honorary President of Legambiente

Isabella Pratesi, Director of WWF

Vittorio Sgarbi, Art Critic

Vittorio Cogliati Dezza, National President of Legambiente

Nuccio Romano, President of Plemmirio Marine Protected Area

Enzo Incontro, Director of the Consortium Plemmirio Marine Protected Area

Giuseppe Lo Iacono, Head of Monuments and Fine Arts Department

Giuseppe Voza, Former Head of Monuments and Fine Arts Department

Cettina Voza, Researcher of History and Archaeology

Paolo Giansiracusa, Professor and Historian of Art

Paolo Zappulla, Provincial Secretary of the Cgil

Monsignor Giuseppe Greco, General Vicar of the Diocese of Siracusa

Lucia Acerra, President of Italia Nostra

Gaetano Bordone, Head of the delegation FAI Siracusa

Peppe Qbeta, Singer and songwriter/Qbeta

Roy Paci, Singer/Aretuska

Pierluigi Giorgio, Film Director and writer for the Italian TV programme Geo & Geo

Prof. Teresa Peluso, President of FIDAPA Siracusa

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Gianni Celati, Writer and literary critic

Anna Panico, President of A.N.D.IT Sicily, ANAS Syracuse and "Delle Porte di Ortigia"

Salvatore Settis, Director of "Scuola Normale Superiore" of Pisa

Vincenzo Consolo, Italian writer and essayist

Cochi Ponzoni, Actor, star of the duo "Cochi and Renato"

Vittorio Emiliani, Journalist, writer, essayist - Chairman of the Committee for Beauty

Renato Sarti, Actor, director and playwright

Elio Traina, Director of the Italian Culture Abroad

Basilio Segreto, Secretary Sicilantica of head office in St. Angelo Brolo (Me)

Francesco Attardi Anselmo, Professor at the International Academy of Music in Milan, orchestra director, writer

Elisa De Luigi, Writer

On. Rita Borsellino, Honorary President of "Libera"

Valerio Massimo Manfredi, Archaeologist and writer

Vincenzo Moscuza, NOTRIV Committee "Committee for renewable energy and against drilling for gas oil in Sicily"

Associations

ACQUANUVENA
 AGESCI GRUPPO SCOUT SR 7
 AGIRE SOLIDALE
 ALTROMERCATO
 AMBIENTE E SALUTE
 AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
 ARCHEOCLUB
 ARCI RAGAZZI
 ARCI SIRACUSA
 ARCOLAIO
 ARETUSA PESCA
 ASS ALIMEDE
 ASS MICOLOGICA BRESADOLA
 ASS MINERVA-LA CIVETTA
 ASS PROMOZ SUD ORIENT SICULA
 ASS SICILIANA COLLEZIONISTI
 ASSOCIAZIONE PLEMMYRION
 BANCA ETICA
 CENTRO LA NEREIDE
 CENTRO PIO LA TORRE
 CENTRO STUDI DAVIDE CONTRO GOLIA
 CGIL SIRACUSA
 CITTADINANZA ATTIVA
 CLUB ALPINO ITALIANO
 CLUB DELLE DONNE
 COMITATO 100 DONNE
 DIAPASON STUDIO
 EMERGENCY SIRACUSA
 ENTE FAUNA SICILIANA
 FAI
 GAS
 GIRODIVITE
 GOZZO DI MARIKA
 GRILLI ARETUSEI
 GTUTTI
 ITALIA NOSTRA
 JAMTT ONLUS
 LAMBA DORIA
 LEGAMBIENTE
 LIBERA
 MOVIMENTO DECRESCITA FELICE
 NATURA SICULA
 RIVOLUZIONE DEGLI ONESTI
 SINISTRA IN MOVIMENTO
 SIQILLYAH
 SYRAKOSIA
 SOC ITALIANA PROTEZIONE BB.CC
 STONEWALL GLBT Sr
 WWF