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## The Unesco Intangible Heritage As Input For The Development Of Rural Areas: A Theoretical Model For The Valorization Of The Mediterranean Diet

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### Abstract

The study aims to identify guidelines for defining a model of cultural planning, oriented to the development of the city of Reggio Calabria as a metropolitan centre. It will focus specifically on the rural areas, to provide an integrated plan for the advancement of cultural identity. This study develops a theoretical operating model for the valorization of the Mediterranean diet. The methodology consists of a preliminary fact-finding investigation. The second step involves the selection of municipalities able to apply best practices in the area in order to promote the Mediterranean Diet.

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### 1. Introduction

In recent years the cultural heritage field has been affected by intense management and administrative change, at the same time the cause and effect of the different cultural policies that have been implemented over the last two decades, where particular attention was paid to the relationships between the development of cultural resources and

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local development. What we want to show in this paper is how to operate in the "strategic key" is the best way to give shape to a common vision to all the actors of the territory, building around it consensus and cooperation.

On one hand we think that new forms of programming are able to take practical action on the transformation and promote the area and on the other, develop shared rules and actions that are supported by the majority of citizens, through interactive, concerted and participatory planning. A proactive approach to this new reality and to these new responsibilities is a basic condition for increasing competitiveness, economic capacity and culture of cities. The objective is to find ways to valorization the existing assets in an intelligent and creative way, by investing resources on specific objectives. It is essential to bring together and gather participants of the discussions around tables for each operation, so as to share not only the strategy but also the formation and management.

## 2. The context: Reggio Calabria's metropolitan city

The metropolitan city of Reggio Calabria, because of its geographical location in Calabria, which extends to the Mediterranean Sea and is interposed between the Ionian Sea and the Tyrrhenian Sea, has contributed to the overlap of cultures and identities; this place can be considered as a "big box" of architectural resources and traditional cultural elements, immersed in a unique natural environment that have taken on their own characteristics according to specific settlement dynamics. The province is also characterized by a high incidence of rural municipalities.

The comparison to the other realities of metropolitan cities in the Italian territory, shows that the productive agricultural sector of the Province of Reggio Calabria is almost a driving force for the local economy, showing an incidence of the total farm area of almost fifty percent of province, and an agricultural area among the largest nationwide. It is necessary to point out that the rural land underlies, in its complete meaning, more systems with a complex structure, consisting of a few components: natural resources, landscape and historical-cultural, and their relationships, generating economic phenomena affecting both the primary sector and those secondary and tertiary. In this context, according to some authors, agriculture can ensure the multifunctionality of the territory, acting as the ordering principle in the planning process. This vision means that the area will become the catalyst element, capable of enhancing local human resources, both tangible and intangible, into a common perspective of development and valorization of regional characteristics (Mollica, Sturiale, Calabrò and Della Spina, 2008).

The development of the metropolitan city road should therefore be guided by the search for a balance between the sectoral dimension, in the agricultural and territorial structure, given to land management and the socio-economic development of rural areas.

The first step would be to identify those places that can serve as attractors and activators of cultural development, in which to activate virtuous dynamic catalyst for social and economic development. For identification we choose to use the theme of the Mediterranean Diet, Heritage UNESCO since 2010, as a common thread that binds together the various territories of Reggio Calabria's Province. The choice of Mediterranean Diet is also due to the desire to promote a provincial healthy and sustainable food production system, according to the principles of the Diet itself. This highlights the spirit of conviviality and promotes the use of local and seasonal local produce, in particular by encouraging local networks to support public decisions to protect, promote and advertise the products of the Mediterranean. The recognition of social and economic growth of the Mediterranean diet, is also intended as a safeguard measure to defend against the progressive erosion of the cultural heritage of the Mediterranean people, and it fell within the province takes place against a historical glue of the territories and all cultural system (Cassalia, 2009).

## 3. The Mediterranean Diet and its social and cultural value

*The Mediterranean Diet is much more than just food. It promotes social interaction, since the communal meal is the basis of social customs and festivities shared by a given community, and give rise to a considerable body of knowledge, songs, maxims, stories and legends. The Diet is grounded with respect to the territory and biodiversity, and ensures the conservation and development of traditional activities and crafts linked to fishing and farming in the Mediterranean communities* (Inscription 8.COM 8.10, 2013). It is for these reasons that, in November 2010, the Mediterranean Diet was recognized by UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. A heritage that combines the eating habits of the peoples of the Mediterranean Sea: Italy, Spain, Greece, Morocco, Portugal, Croatia

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