

MANAGEMENT CONSERVATION PLAN FOR A SMALL TOWN: THE CASE OF PIRANHAS (BRAZIL)*

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Abstract

This paper sets out a vision of the process of urban planning in which the main object of intervention is the city conceived as expressing itself culturally; in other words, the city putting forward values and life experiences. The materializing of these values and experiences occurs through material and abstract expressions within a context of diversity, change and conflicts.

Urban planning, when it adopts this understanding assumes the form of a management process that draws on the friction between keeping the character of an area imbued with values and experiences, and the changes demanded by economical and social dynamics. In this sense, the management concept is the main element due to its capacity to mediate and channel this friction.

To give support to this process the Center for Advanced Studies of Integrated Conservation (CECI) has created a planning model for the management of urban conservation that is put into effect through four integrated and simultaneous tasks. Besides, it indicates the principal components of a plan which provides guidance for public and private agents. All those points are explicit and the empirical reference used is the historic site of the town of Piranhas.

Keywords: Urban conservation, integrated conservation, conservation management

1. The planning model for the management of the conservation of the urban cultural heritage

The recent practices of city management have frequently made use of the foundations of strategic planning interrelated with the theory of sustainable development and of the conservation of cultural heritage. Sometimes these practices seek to guide interventions in the cities aimed at minimizing losses in the social area and to historical remains. Where historical sites are specifically concerned, another challenge is to adapt the city to contemporary needs in addition to the routine issues of city management. This challenge is closely related to the objective of prolonging the useful life of a cultural asset and of valuing its historical and artistic characteristics, without loss of its significance and authenticity. Therefore, the management of cultural heritage conservation, under the perspective of sustainability and strategic actions, seeks to observe the following prerequisites for planning:

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- to promote society's awareness of the importance of the cultural assets;
- to guarantee the maintenance and conservation of the qualities and values of urban and architectural configuration;
- to ensure the maintenance of what exists of specific, irreproducible, non-renewable objects, incorporating new economic and social objectives;
- to promote the continuous monitoring of the conservation state and sustainable strategies.

Besides these, other cultural prerequisites are recommended by the international organizations concerned with the management of cultural heritage conservation as follows: the elaboration of a physical-architectural inventory and historical documentation; the establishment of administrative acts regulating the site as cultural heritage; creation of a commission for the site represented by the various social groups within the site and city. (Jokilehto and Fielden, 1995)

To do this, a model of planning has been indicated which follows four simultaneous and integrated phases, although each phase uses its own techniques and methods. The phases for the planning of cultural heritage conservation are: *analysis and evaluation*, *negotiation*, *propositions* and *monitoring and control*. (Pontual, 2002: 114; Zancheti, 2007)

The task of analysis and evaluation consists of systematizing data and information on the cultural heritage in focus, mainly those related to the complete set of material assets (natural and man-made movable assets and real estate) and immaterial (knowledge, celebrations, expression forms and places), that allow evaluation of the historical formation, the current situation, the meaning and the state of the physical and functional structure of all those assets, besides identifying the restrictions and future limits. This evaluation highlights specific features expressed in the diversity of functions and forms of the urban configuration and also considers the values based on the cultural tradition of the people who live in the city and share its memories and expectations. Throughout the planning process, this information must be organized, adjusted and complemented, starting from the demands that arise from the other phases, by data and information. (Zancheti, 2007)

Negotiation consists of the capacity of the public manager to mediate conflicts, interests and objectives of the social or planning agents involved with the conservation of the cultural heritage of a city or historic site. Thus, techniques of construction of consensus and politic coalitions are used in order to seek the formation of associations and partnerships between governments, entities, companies and institutions, to make the proposed interventions financially viable and the conservation planning effective. Such activity is indicated as being of a continuous and permanent character throughout the planning process, and takes place at meetings, reunions and other forums in which the decisions are made. Therefore, logistic and technological readiness together with fully training social agents for decision making and ensuring they have technical qualification are indispensable conditions. The success of negotiation depends on the training of the social agents and therefore its dependence on the other phases, on logistic and technological readiness and on training.

The propositions refer to the formulation of varying forms of technical, institutional and financial interventions related to cultural heritage conservation that are necessary for forecasting and sketching out the future. To do so, the production of information and the

processes occurring in other phases are taken into account so they may be used in the construction of indicative scenarios for the interventions to be proposed and prioritized and in the impact analysis of those same interventions. (Zancheti, 2007)

Among the proposals for the planning of cultural heritage conservation, those that must be considered are the ones concerned with the prevention of risks and the limit or loading capacity of the natural environment and with urban infrastructures, and with strategic development options. These are all interrelated with state, private, institutional and tertiary sector agents, and monetary resources.

The task of “monitoring and control” is an activity that is part of the management and administration of cities or historic sites and planning for the future. This means that the environmental conditions must be observed and that tendencies, risks and impacts on the physical structure of those areas resulting from interventions or unexpected and natural occurrences such as fires and floods together with human, financial and technological resources must be measured. It also means that internal and external corrective actions out of the public institution must be proposed and guided. Therefore, the information and evaluations drawn up should be made appropriate for the other phases and incorporated in the analysis, propositions and decisions. (Zancheti, 2007)

The structure of the conservation management plan

The management plan consists of a group of actions and technical, institutional and financial resources logically ordered aiming at a change in the political, institutional and administrative procedures concerning a social group according to a time-scale and a territorial unit.

The structure of the Management Plan for Conservation (MPC) is made up of three substantive parts detailed as follows:

- The *current problem* of management that encompasses the context of conservation, the process of development of the historic site including its potential and restrictions, development indicators, planning system, the legal instruments of control and the institutional mechanisms of management;
- The *future problem* of management that embraces basically the scenarios of the conservation management of the historic site and the risks and possibilities of the integrated conservation of the site for sustainable development.
- The *management plan* itself consists of the formulation of objectives, guidelines and the management model to be implemented. The model encompasses tasks of management, institutions, agents and the institutional arrangement. In an operational way the plan is also explicit about the general instruments of management, routines and their complements, the strategy for implementation and the system for re-evaluation of the process, including management performance indicators. (Zancheti, 2007)

2. The conservation management system of the town of Piranhas

The management model was tested for the first time in the town of Piranhas where a pioneer proposal for the national protection of a cultural and environmental estate of a wide territory is in course. This protection proposal demands the modernization of the

municipal management in order to broaden the work space based on sustainable development as a local responsibility (Furtado & Zancheti, 2003: 62).



IMAGES -1 and 2 The City of Piranhas

The protection embraced a part of the interior territory of the San Francis river valley, in the State of Alagoas consisting of an anthropological configuration on nature, where different marks of human occupation of the interior of the Northeast Region are found dating from prehistoric times to the very end of the twenty-century. These landmarks within the territory - archaeological sites, towns, group of buildings, cattle farms, monuments, public spaces - consolidate, on one hand, the material heritage assets which are authentic and also denote the different phases of the complex development process of bringing civilization to the interior, which itself has strong cultural, historical, landscape and artistic values. On the other hand, this territory conserves a rich collection of traditions, festivities, popular knowledge, arts and crafts and the abstract heritage that characterizes the peculiarities of the national culture throughout the process of populating the interior of the Northeast. (Furtado & Zancheti, 2003: 23-29)

The proposal brought together three simultaneous protection laws for the material heritage assets as follows: the historical cultural landscape of the interior of the valley of the San Francis River; the historical town of Piranhas; the village of Entremontes. It is necessary to make clear that the historical cultural landscape includes the geographical areas of the town of Piranhas and the village of Entremontes. These authentic assets of historical, landscape, urban, architectural and artistic values enshrine the identity of the national culture. Therefore, its protection can guarantee for current and future generations the understanding of two cultural processes of the national territory especially those that occurred in the interior of the Northeast Region: human settlement and the modernization of the countryside. Both processes have little representation in the heritage lists of Brazil and therefore this can be corrected through the protection of the foundation processes of our culture and nationality (Furtado & Zancheti, 2003: 29).

Location and characteristics of the territory

The geographical area corresponding to the territory to be protected is located in the municipality of Piranhas. This territory with approximately 14 km² is more precisely located in the extreme Southwest of the State of Alagoas in the interior of the Northeast Region and in the area of the canyon on the left bank of the São Francisco river. It is a Caatinga area (*a Brazilian semi-arid scrub area*) with rocky soils and many granite outcrops. On this portion of the interior of Caatinga, the São Francisco River is confined in a great canyon. After the Xingó dam was built, two ecosystems emerged: an artificial one made

up of Caatinga and the hydroelectric plant and its lake; and a natural one made up of Caatinga and the canyon of the river.



IMAGE - 3 The village of Entremontes

The municipality of Piranhas is made up of several urban settlements. Besides Piranhas itself and Entremontes there are two other urban settlements: the neighbourhoods of Xingó (282 ha) and Nossa Senhora da Saúde (71 ha), which developed from the camps for the construction of the Hydroelectric Plant of Xingó. These two neighborhoods constitute, in fact, the main urban area of the municipality because they bring together more than eighty percent of the total population and represent around twenty five times the urban area of the town of Piranhas. The first of these settlements was projected and built to be a permanent village that temporarily housed the employees of the *The Hydroelectric Company of São Francisco River* (CHESF) whereas the second one developed spontaneously, its basic infrastructure being laid by CHESF. Located on the summit of a hill, in an area of smooth topography, both neighborhoods are approximately 4 km away from the town of Piranhas.

Current situation of the cultural and environmental conservation assets

Piranhas has a set of environmental and cultural heritage assets that is worth conserving. In other words, each element of the set only acquires value when related to the other elements. In general, individual elements of exceptional value do not exist. The value of the group of assets lies within the structure of the set. What predominates is the value of the relationship between them and not the value of the isolated assets.

The municipality of Piranhas was formed recently, basically in the second half of the XIX Century, and its surroundings of historic value were built less than a hundred years ago. In this period, the urban and landscape estate was conceived and built according to a single process or practice of urbanization and this has remained unaffected in its composition and constructive foundations. This practice has encompassed basically three composition and construction systems. (Furtado & Zancheti, 2003)

The system of the formation of the urban morphology in relation to the natural landscape dealt with the insertion of the urban structure into the landscape (hills and river); with the organization and expansion of the road network and parceling out the land; with the formation of public spaces and the sitting of landmark buildings in the urban structure and landscape.

The typology system of residential construction took into account the sitting of buildings on the lots; the organization of the internal spaces and the use of technical systems and building material.

The appropriation and social representation system of the urban structure identified the parts of the urban structure with families and with religious or cultural associations besides the organization of the festivities routes.

Those systems throw down a great challenge with regard to the management process and structure because its conservation does not limit itself to the maintenance of the physical characteristics of assets. On the contrary, management must consist of a system for the conservation of processes that allows the continuity over time of the three identified systems, without abdicating the changes that the process of local development will, necessarily, impose on the whole set of heritage and environmental assets.

Even facing that challenge, the conservation of processes, the authenticity of the assets and therefore their conservation remain as the purpose of the management system. The number and variety of individual elements of the estate is what will shape the challenges for the process of conservation of the heritage, environmental and cultural assets.

The characteristics of the municipal system of management for conservation

In Piranhas, conservation practice does not constitute a component of the municipal management system yet. The existing structure limits itself to the usual administrative tasks of a municipality of the interior of the Northeast Region. The presence of CHESF and other environmental protection institutions, with their respective systems of environmental conservation for the area of the river and the reservoir of the hydroelectric plant have been impelling new conservation concerns on the municipal authority.

The municipal management system is also being questioned by public opinion and other local and state institutions due to the proposal for protecting Piranhas as a national monument. The debate about that process is encouraging reflection on the current capacity of the municipality to deal with conservation management tasks for a heritage town.

The conservation of the cultural and environmental assets of Piranhas is, no doubt, a task for collective responsibility, whose main actor is the Municipal Administration. The conservation process depends on the structure of the cultural and environmental real estate, which does not exempt the responsibility of the public entities in the warranty of the process. Therefore, conservation requires the involvement of several agents and institutions.

The main agents who are responsible for the conservation of the cultural and environmental assets of Piranhas are the following ones: The Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (IBAMA), The Hydroelectric Company of the Saint Francis River (CHESF), The Federal Rail Network, The Port Authority, The State Government, the Municipal Government and institutions and private agents.

The actions regarding the conservation of the assets are accomplished by agents on an individual basis, with some exceptions worthy of prominence, as is the case with CHESF. That means that each agent takes responsibility for conservation action according to its own strategy and not by the joint action of those in the social or public authority. Therefore, the strategies vary according to the perception of each agent regarding the

problems of conservation and expectations and interests and by their different time-scales. Thus, the conservation process takes place in an unequal way. This produces some positive results only in the short-term but it does not establish a sustainable process in the long-term and leads to a wasteful use of public and private resources. In summary, there is a clear need for the involvement of institutions with regard to the negotiation and coordination between the agents responsible for the conservation process.

In this context, the tasks for the management of the cultural and environmental conservation, according to the model of CECI as explained above are set out below.

Analysis and evaluation

In Piranhas, the tasks of analysis and evaluation for conservation have been undertaken in a non-systematic way and without defined institutional responsibility. Especially with regard to the Municipal Administration, there is no organized system with the specific remit of analyzing the cultural and environmental assets. Those tasks are done on an *ad hoc* basis and only when some problem or a fact that requires prior analysis and evaluation arise, such as the soliciting of resources from the Federal or State Government, for urban projects.

In this respect, the commitment of the CHESF to the maintenance of a permanent system of evaluation of the environmental conditions of the ecosystem of Saint Francis River in the surrounding area of the hydroelectric plant of Xingó is worth mentioning. However, this system, although very important, has contributed little to the undertaking of the analysis and evaluation of cultural and environmental conservation in Piranhas, especially in the urban area.

Monitoring and control

The administrative municipal tradition, in most small towns of the interior of the Northeast Region, sees monitoring and control tasks as secondary activities and subordinate to the negotiation processes between the Municipality, real estate owners and the owners of businesses. Piranhas is not an exception to the general rule. The monitoring task is practically ignored by the Municipality, and the one of control is quite incipient. The lack of legal instruments for the control of the urban land use and construction, for instance, has caused the non-execution of monitoring and control activities.

Negotiation

Negotiation is the most developed management activity in Piranhas and is centralized on two fundamental agents: the Mayor and the Municipal Council. There is a perceptible strong interaction between citizens and Mayor, citizens and town councilors and Mayor and town councilors. In practice all other management tasks are subordinated to negotiation. It is through negotiation that the Mayor 'monitors' and 'evaluates' the urban situation. Even although the Municipality of Piranhas possesses a complete organizational structure, little effectiveness is verified in management, especially in tasks concerning negotiation. The Secretariats do not have administrative autonomy and as far as decisions on the allocation of resources and the carrying out of urban control are concerned, they are subordinated to the Mayor. Thus, the Mayor is the central agent of the political-institutional process as negotiation initiatives emanate from and return to him. This centralizing attitude, which is found in most towns of the interior of Brazil, is

explained by the tradition of fiefdoms and exchange of favors that are characteristic of local politics.

Propositions

The agents responsible for conservation policies lack the ability to draw up proposals for changing the environmental system. This is especially so with regard to the local administration due to the fragile organizational structure, given the challenge of administering a town with two disparate urban situations - old Piranhas and the new neighborhoods of Xingó and Nossa Senhora da Saúde. The causes of that fragility can be identified as follows:

- There is no qualified and acting technical body in the administration of the municipality to consider and to draw up plans and projects and carry out public actions;
- Population needs are not presented to the municipality in a systematic way nor have they been collectively put forward; on the contrary, the actions are carried out to solve the individual problems of the agents;
- The most important proposals in relation to the volume of the available resources are, in general, responses to sectors development programs of the State and Federal Governments. The municipality acts, only, as the organism that formalizes the needs for the sponsor of projects.

In addition, it is worth pointing out that Piranhas does not have legal instruments used to regulate the management of conservation, such as Land Use Legislation and the Building Code of Municipality Procedures that deal with the special features of the different urban settlements of the municipality. In the case of the protection of Piranhas and the process for its conservation, it is fundamental there should be an urban instrument that reflects the historical development of the urban area.

On the other hand, the existing Tax Code is based on the principles of legislation in big cities and deals with complex situations distinct from the one in Piranhas and therefore it requires for its effectiveness an organizational structure that does not exist in Piranhas. Thus, it is not useful for the municipal administration. For instance the municipal taxes (IPTU), which are fundamental for conservation management, are not levied. Even if they were, their impact on municipal finances would be minimal, as collection would occur only in the legal urban area, in Piranhas, with 1,500 inhabitants amounting to less than 10% of the total population.

As in most small municipalities in Brazil with fragile political-administrative structures, the financial resources used by the city halls come from the *Fund for the Participation of Municipalities*. In Piranhas, those resources are complemented as the result of the financial compensation paid by CHESF, due to the flooded area of the reservoir of Xingó. However, as the flooded area of the municipality is reduced, the compensation is small, especially when compared with the resources received by the municipality of Canindé de São Francisco (The State of Sergipe).

3. The plan for conservation management

The group of actions and the technical, institutional and financial resources were established by taking into account not only the current situation of the material and abstract assets of each territory but also the future scenarios regarding their sustainability being raised. The objectives of the management model to be implemented were formulated. The model took into account the management tasks, the institutions, the agents and the institutional arrangement and was complemented by the implementation strategy and the process evaluation system, including management performance indicators.

The following objectives of the management plan were established:

- To create an efficient and effective system of management for the conservation of cultural heritage in Piranhas;
- To guarantee and to better the state of the conservation of the environment and heritage of the protected areas;
- To link the process of the conservation to the process of local development within the global territorial dimension of the municipality;
- To interweave the conservation of cultural assets with broadening the supply and betterment of urban infra-structural services;
- To contribute to the modernization of the administration of the municipality mainly with regard to the urban and tributary instruments;
- To indicate negotiation and participation mechanisms between the various agents and institutions involved in the management of the conservation;
- To promote a new image of the town.

The model adopted for the conservation management

The model for the management of conservation sets out two dimensions in the plan: one is for the protection of the territory and the other for the management tasks. The dimension for the protection of the territory has been defined by the nature of the protected area, that is, by the material and abstract assets. This difference led to a distinct understanding and implementation of conservation policies for each type of asset. Moreover, another subdivision has been applied for the material assets so that the management system dealt with the three limits of the protected areas according to their geographical and physical characteristics.

The management tasks have been foreseen according to the size of the protected areas. Each task should be specified in accordance with one of the components for protection such as the territory, the town of Piranhas, the village of *Entremontes* and the abstract assets. Thus, each task has resulted in a distinct qualitative content that will be decisive in specifying the set of norms, procedures and agents involved in conservation.

On the other hand, each management task, in line with the protected area, should be complemented and its contents, norms and procedures integrated with the same tasks of each of the other protected areas. For instance, the analysis and evaluation of each

protected unit should be time synchronized in order to minimize the use of public and private resources.

As the management system for conservation in Piranhas hardly exists in practice, conservation takes place according to ad hoc principles and without any systematizing. Therefore it was considered that the proposed model would not meet strong adverse reactions as a result of change in management practice for cultural affairs. Its success would depend on the strategy for implementation and especially on the involvement of the agents concerned with the conservation of cultural assets and of the public sector authorities.

For the new model to work, the following have been proposed: new legislation, the creation of institutions, the involvement of social agents, the creation of new instruments, and the allocation of public and private resources to its related activities. The method and sequence of change for each of them will also be needed.

The tasks for conservation management

The four tasks for conservation management and the analysis model were set out according to the size of the protected area as follows:

Analysis and evaluation

- Installation of technical team and technological support to maintain up-to-date information arising from the work undertaken, such as the inventory of the material and abstract heritage and the geographically referenced heritage system;
- Construction of the indicators of sustainability for periodic follow-up of conservation;
- Construction of a follow-up system for the state of conservation of the protected assets;
- Establishing patterns for the evaluation of the effectiveness of conservation;
- Endowing the administrative units of the municipality which are directly responsible for the evaluation and monitoring of the conservation of the material and abstract heritage assets with technological and human resources.
- Compiling an inventory of the natural and man-built heritage assets which are not included in the current geographical reference system; that is, for the territory of the valley of *São Francisco* and the *Entremontes* village.
- Compiling an inventory of the cultural references.

Monitoring and control

- To develop a monitoring and control system for the conservation of material and abstracts heritage assets together with the technicians of the Town hall, State Government, *The National Institute of Historical and Artistic Heritage* (IPHAN), IBAMA, the Project of Xingó regarding the protected areas boundaries;
- Establishing and implementing a practice for the collection of information on the state of conservation of the protected assets;

- To develop a financial and tributary control system including efficiency indicators of the use of financial resources which takes into account the social and political factors.

Negotiation

- Creation of a legal Commission for Conservation made up of the agents involved in the process;
- Creation of the Conservation Office of Piranhas made up of the Town Hall, State Government and the National Institute of Historical and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN);
- Establishment of the Annual Forum for Conservation preceded by preparatory encounters within each locality and institution;
- Establishment of negotiation mechanisms and integrating institutions and territorial and urban conservation agents.

Propositions

- Drawing up a local development plan including for promotion and visualization, and which indicates sources of funding;
- Drawing up a project for administrative and managerial modernization;
- Drawing up an operative plan for heritage education in the municipal schools and for the volunteer corps;
- Drawing up projects for housing and small scale businesses in order to seek funding from federal programs of the *Savings Bank (CAIXA)*, *Fund for Workers Support (FAT)* and the *The Brazilian Service for Supporting Micro and Small-Scale Enterprises (SEBRAE)*;
- Drawing up a project for supporting the cultural groups;
- Drawing up projects for the urban renovation of public spaces with a view to participating in the program for allocation of Resources - Monumenta of the *The Interamerican Bank for Development (IDB)*, giving priority to the following areas: Prainhas de Piranhas and Entremontes, Largo do Pontilhão, Largo do Comércio, Estação Ferroviária and Largo da Igreja da Nossa Senhora da Saúde in Piranhas and Largo da Igreja de Nossa Senhora da Conceição em Entremontes;
- Revision of the municipal law of protected areas adjusting it to the proposals for and boundaries of the conservation area;
- Drawing up the specific land use legislation, municipal orders and building regulations for the municipality of Piranhas de Baixo and the district of Entremontes;
- Drawing up environmental infrastructure sector plans giving priority to sanitation and urban cleansing;

The organizational-institutional arrangement

In order to make the tasks presented realizable, a new institutional arrangement which reflects the importance that conservation will have for the development of the municipality was necessary.

The proposal was to create a Conservation Office that will, in the long term, incorporate the functions of a municipal development agency. Initially the Conservation Office will be directly linked to the Mayor's Office and Conservation Commission. The Conservation Commission will be an advisory and deliberative organ made up of representatives from the institutions and social agents who will supervise the creation of the heritage area.

The Conservation Office will assume all the administrative and technical tasks of conservation management as well as the other complementary activities cited above (drawing up plans, projects, official registers, etc). The office will also be a space for co-operation between the municipal, state and federal powers.

It is worth making clear that the protection act will imply the representation of IPHAN and The Secretary of State for Culture so that they may perform the functions assigned to them by that legal instrument.

Thus co-operation between these institutions has almost become a necessity in order to ensure an efficient and effective management process. The partnership with IPHAN has also encompassed the State Government. Therefore, the administrative and technical tasks of the covenant institutions will be shared with regard to the resources utilized (human, material and financial) without their losing their individual autonomy regarding specific institutional duties. This co-operation model has been successfully introduced in various other sectors of national administration (for instance, in health and education). The Office will basically undertake the management tasks cited above. Taking into account the current situation of the municipality, the Analysis/Evaluation and Monitoring/Control tasks will be carried out by the same managerial unit of the Conservation Office whereas another unit will carry out Negotiation and Propositions. As the Office achieves sustainability and experience resulting from better managerial and technical ability it is recommended that independent units carry out the tasks in the future.

After the period of implementation and consolidation of the conservation system and the supporting institutions and legal instruments, the municipality should be better able to draw up a project integrating conservation and local development. For this and in the long run it is important that the Conservation Office be integrated with a Municipal Development Agency.

The implementation strategy

The chosen strategy for the implementation of the management plan was incremental, that is, a strategy gradually built up where the short-term tasks could be identified and evaluated so that other phases could be started. Thus the implementation of the plan was based on the aggregation of resources and procedures which were tested in practice.

The strategy was based on the elaboration and implementation of conservation projects that require the management system together with its related tasks. For each

accomplished project one or more tasks will be inserted into the system. It was also foreseen that partnerships and commitments would be forged through the projects.

The strategy for the implementation of the plan has been organized through time-scales of short (immediate, up to 1 year), medium (from 3 to 7 years) and long (more than 7 years) terms.

Immediate (before protection)

- Revision of the Municipality Law of Protection
- Revision of Tax Legislation
- Drawing up an operative plan for heritage education

This set of projects permits conservation management to begin with a minimum of supplementary resources to those already existing in the municipality starting with the proposition and negotiation tasks.

Up to 1 year

- Creating the Conservation Office;
- Drawing up projects for housing rehabilitation to be sent to the Caixa Econômica bank;
- Drawing up projects for sanitation and urban cleansing;
- Making local state protection effective;
- Compiling an inventory of the natural and built assets which are not already part of the current geographical reference system;
- Establishing and implementing information collection routines on the conservation of the protected assets.

The institutionalization of the Conservation Office should take place together with the solicitation for the state protection (and the federal protection directly afterwards) since, with this proposal, the bases for the co-operation between the three levels of government and the formalization of the relations between the involved agents will be launched.

Thus, the existence of the office will contribute to the taking of initiatives mainly the technical ones which will demand the allocation of more resources, especially technical ones. This is the time for drawing up major impact projects for the development and conservation of the cultural assets of the municipality. It is also the moment for initiating the task routines for analysis/evaluation and monitoring/control and consolidating the proposition task. For this, the inventory of material assets will be utilised.

Up to three years

- Elaboration of the specific land use and occupation legislation, procedures code and building acts for Piranhas de Baixo and Entremontes district;
- Making effective the federal protection;
- Creation of an effective Conservation Commission.

As the proposition task is consolidated and the analysis/evaluation and monitoring/control initiated, the elaboration of new land use legislation is envisaged for providing the rules for linking conservation management with municipal planning. This will be constituted at the moment of the mobilization of the greatest number of local, state and nation agents and arises from the coming into force of federal protection. This will make possible an ample debate and the convergence of actions on conservation issues. As a result, the Conservation Commission should be institutionalized.

Up to 5 years

- Project for administrative and managerial modernization;
- Construction of a follow-up system, indicators of sustainability and management evaluation standards;
- Carrying out the inventory of cultural references;
- Project for financing small-scale businesses;
- Projecting a good image of Piranhas.

Drawing up a modernization project will lead to adjusting the whole managerial, functional and technical municipality system to the management process. As it will consolidate the institutional and financial mechanisms and structures associated with human resources, it is considered a fundamental phase to be accomplished.

- These projects will make it possible to get feedback from the conservation management; in other words, will develop processes and referential parameters to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of the system. The projects for constructing a follow-up system, indicators of sustainability and evaluation standards lie at the heart of the feed-back process since these are the means by which feedback is carried out. All of them are concerned with the performance of conservation management, development and the institutions and instruments created to make them effective.

Up to 7 years

Drawing up a local development plan

When the management system is established, the minimum conditions for returning to a structural planning process within the municipality are provided. The product arising from this activity is seen as an Integrated Management Plan for Local Development and Conservation.

The revision of the management plan could be followed by proposing a new institutional arrangement which reflects this move towards integrated management. Thus it would be possible to change the Conservation Office into an Agency for Integrated Local Development made up of two lines of actions: conservation and development.

More than 7 years (Long-term)

Once the general conditions for management and development are in place, it may be possible to invest in projects for the urban renovation of public spaces. The following chart shows the necessary resources for each of these phases.

The follow-up of the plan

The implementation of the conservation management should be periodically measured for testing the success or failure of the proposed actions in relation to the objectives of the plan and starting point of the local situation. This activity will consist of observing, registering and analyzing indicators that will make it possible to follow-up the plan while it is being implemented.

The indicators are defined as quantitative and qualitative formal representations to measure the situation changes over time. The quantitative indicators make the comparison between two distinct existing situations over time and space possible. The qualitative ones express a non-quantifiable existing situation.

Fourteen indicators of two kinds have been selected for the follow-up of the implementation of the plan:

- The ones for Conservation which make it possible to follow the situation of the form, function, identity, authenticity and social dynamic of the protected assets;
- The ones for Management which follow the efficiency and effectiveness of the conservation management tasks.

Conservation Indicators

1. Conservation state of the protected assets and public spaces
2. Number of rehabilitated buildings due to dereliction out of the built stock
3. Urban maintenance state
4. The public and private revenue of the site
5. Functional diversity of the site
6. Residential character of the site
7. Level of landscape/urban/architectural/construction authenticity
8. Permanence of calendar of festivities and celebrations
9. Permanence of traditional cultural groups

Management Indicators

10. Updating the inventory of protected assets
11. Effectiveness of the real state and fiscal official registers
12. Operative periodicity and representativeness of the Conservation Commission
13. Plans and projects initiatives
14. Number of public enquiries at the Office

4. Conclusion

The empirical and theoretical pondering upon the conservation planning practice have been referenced not only in the town of Piranhas (state of Alagoas/Brazil) where a comprehensive management plan has been drawn up between the years 2000-2001, but also as a result of the practical exercises carried out in the cities of Olinda (1997 and 2000), Recife (1998) and São Luís (1999) as part of the post-graduate course at CECL.

The challenge for the creation of references for planning practice has not yet been surpassed because the recent practices have frequently been based on the fundamentals of strategic planning inter-related with the theory of the sustainable development. This inter-relation is being built by taking into account the diversity of situations where the procedures and logical structure of these fundamentals are not effective and therefore in need of adjustment.

Also to be considered is that these practices bring with them the dilemma of intervening in cities by adapting them to contemporary needs but thereby losing the vestiges of history.

Even if the objective is to lengthen the useful life of a cultural asset and to value its artistic and historical features without losing its authenticity and meaning, an approach to this challenge has yet to be found.

This paper is a contribution to the debate on the ideas and practices of conservation management of cultural heritage aimed at sustainability and strategic actions.

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