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Town planning and upland areas

Mariella Zoppi

Protecting the landscape is an arduous task. A balance must be sought in the dynamics between its evolution and the conservation of its historic and aesthetic traits. A territory that identifies conservation with the absence of development is doomed to a more or less rapid decline, just as a territory that does not consider the ethical aspects of development is destined to swallow itself up and run out of its wealth and resources in a very short time. The issue of development is essentially linked to ethics in town planning and behaviour in which responsibility in use and maintenance of resources is a fundamental and necessary factor. The whole philosophy of sustainable development derives from this - we have known it for many years despite the state of the territory sometimes raising doubts as to our actual awareness of it. Seeking this equilibrium is essential for Tuscany - the areas to be protected are many and the environmental and historic and aesthetic values are still very much to the fore - but there is also a need to review the many areas compromised by excessive and incoherent urban development. This is particularly evident in hilly areas where the region's morphology is even more fragile and prestigious and which evoke everyone's image of the Tuscan landscape. Today, the Tuscan hills are being continually eroded by widespread construction all throughout the Region which is seen as a vast tourist area able to offer (not inexpensive) hospitality to people from all over the world seeking fantastic views, good wine and excellent food and works of

art. For this reason, some consideration is necessary and pressing on how to proceed in these delicate areas. From the year 2000 onwards, every Coordination provincial plan for Tuscany has tackled the issue of the landscape and, in part, the hilly areas. Their respective approaches were all interesting but they were very different one from the other in terms of the objectives aimed at, and few had planning indications that could give municipal planners more than very broad indications as to whether the vocation should be agricultural or agriculture, and tourist-oriented. Despite concern for the landscape, control leans mainly on constraints which are the simplest way of exercising safeguards. Constraints make sense and are effective when they are applied to something specific and historicised; if they are applied to vast areas including nature, culture, human activity and residency, constraints are reduced to a system of notices to monitor, recommendations to manage and a complexity of orientations to apply correctly, where 'correctly' means a series of concepts: protection (for passing on), policies for guaranteeing quality (history of places and prospects for the population which are never separated), management (harmonizing the transformations implemented) and enhancement (restoration, renovation and replanning the territory). All this does not mean doing without constraints but making good use of them, verifying them and making them active. The Tuscany Region has implemented georeferencing the constraints of the Regional Technical Map, which enables an instantaneous control on the state of protection (area, entity and

extent) of the territory and to monitor reality and its transformation. The studies we have available, and the Ptc paint a reassuring picture that the issue is being taken seriously. But what is still lacking are the operative indications for actually implementing rules and tools. This is where the Pit must make a clear innovative contribution, shifting the relationship between landscape and town planning, seeking to combine conservation with development by means of initiatives in the territory which are positive and integrated.