

DRY STONE WALLS TECHNOLOGIES PROMOTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL TERRACED LANDSCAPES ALLIANCE - ITLA

The Newsletter of the International Terraced Landscapes Alliance ITLA (September 2021) is disseminating information received by its members on [initiatives on dry stone walls](#) (projects, events and courses) that are underway in Croatia, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and United Kingdom.

The technologies of the Dry-Stone Walls are not only used to build and maintain terraced landscapes, but also can help prevent and cope with the multiple damages generated by climate change in the territories.



In 2018 UNESCO inscribed the [Art of dry stone walling, knowledge and techniques](#) on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The proposition to UNESCO has been jointly presented by Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland.

The UNESCO website highlights that “The stability of the structures is ensured through the careful selection and placement of the stones, and dry-stone structures have shaped numerous, diverse landscapes, forming various modes of dwelling, farming and husbandry. Such structures testify to the methods and practices used by people from prehistory to today to organize their living and working space by optimizing local natural and human resources. They play a vital role in preventing landslides, floods and avalanches, and in combating erosion and desertification of the land, enhancing biodiversity and creating adequate microclimatic conditions for agriculture. The bearers and practitioners include the rural communities where this element of cultural heritage is deeply rooted, as well as professionals in the construction business. Dry stone structures are always made in perfect harmony with the environment and the technique exemplifies a harmonious relationship between human beings and nature. The practice is passed down primarily through practical application adapted to the particular conditions of each place.”

The International Terraced Landscapes Alliance ITLA is sharing information about events and training courses realized during 2021 in [Konavle](#) (Croatia), [Vercelli](#) (Italy) and [Stuttgart](#) (Germany). The Newsletter also presents the websites of the following ongoing practices allowing all interested actors to learn more about the approach and technologies of the Dry-Stone Walls.

The [Artisans Bâisseurs en Pierres Sèches \(ABPS\)](#) is an association created in 2002 in France as a professional school for dry stone wallers. The Professional Dry Stone School currently brings together 64 building professionals and works on an itinerant basis throughout France and abroad. Each year it provides technical training at different levels for professionals and a wider audience. The trainers are all professional dry-stone practitioners working for the



development of the sector and the transfer of their know-how. The office of the ABPS association is located in the heart of the Cévennes National Park and works as a training, qualification, research and exhibition center, dedicated to the profession of dry-stone builder. On the website, extensive information is published concerning many activities realized by ABPS and in the sections dedicated to their publications, guides and brochures illustrating the technologies adopted, can be found.

The [Dry Stone Walling Association of Great Britain \(DSWA\)](#) based in [United Kingdom](#) and established in 1968, promotes a greater knowledge about the traditional craft of dry-stone walling. The national office is based in Cumbria and there are 18 regional branches spread throughout the country. Dry stone walls have been part of the landscape of the UK for thousands of years and the DSWA is the only organization of the country dedicated to protecting this rich history. It is estimated that there are over 193,000 km of dry-stone field walls in the UK but only 13% of these are in good condition. The DSWA is committed to raising awareness of the importance of dry-stone walls and their heritage to either the general public, land owners and the government. The Association runs numerous [training courses](#), practice days and demonstrations at local shows and events. This ensures the skills required to maintain and build new walls are transferred to the next generation of dry stone wallers. The [DSWA Facebook page](#) shows many aspects of the activities realized and the functions of dry-stone walls for the ecological management of the territories.

The *Cinque Terre National Park* (Italy) and the *Garraf Park* (Spain) implement the project [Stone Wall for Life](#), funded by the European Union LIFE Programme *Climate change adaptation*. The project aims at demonstrating how the ancient technology of drystone walls, can be effectively used to improve the resilience of the territory to climate change. It aims at repairing drystone walls and ensuring their long-term maintenance, and protecting the territory and its inhabitants against the effects of extreme meteorological events. Through demonstration interventions, terraces bounded by drystone walls are recovered and given back to long-term sustainable agricultural use. The project includes activities as vegetation removal in abandoned terraces, restoration of drystone walls and drainage channels and assignment of the plots for long term productive use and maintenance. It also includes training of skilled workers in the laying and maintenance of drystone walls, through courses for migrants and unemployed people, to ensure that this knowledge is preserved and passed on. The project showcases the environmental, social and economic benefits of restoring abandoned drystone terraces, with the aim of extending these methodologies to other territories of the two countries involved.

The International Alliance for Terraced Landscapes ITLA was formed in Mengzi, Yunnan Province, in the Red River (Honghe) Prefecture of China in November 2010 by visionaries who met there for the First World Conference on Terraced Landscapes. Since 2010 ITLA members have organized further conferences in Peru, Italy and Canary Islands. 282 ITLA members bring interdisciplinary expertise to the ITLA's main objective of acting for the benefit of nature and people who still live in terraced landscapes. ITLA is also preparing the next World Conference to be held in 2023 in Bhutan.

Based in Gomaringen (Germany) and coordinated by Timmi Tillmann, ITLA invites all interested parties to sign up the ITLA Newsletter so as to receive information about activities of their members and about next global meetings and conferences. The International Terraced



Landscapes Alliance ITLA is also planning to publish a special issue of its journal on Dry Stone Walling and invites its members to contribute with papers or to become an editor of the journal for this topic.

To know more

[Dry stone walls in ITLA Newsletter](#)

[Registration Form to participate in ITLA activities](#)

[Art of dry stone walling, knowledge and techniques in UNESCO website](#)

[Artisans Bâisseurs en Pierres Sèches \(ABPS\)](#)

[ABPS in Facebook](#)

[Pierreseche-international.org](#)

[Pierreseche.com website](#)

[Dry Stone Walling Association of Great Britain \(DSWA\)](#)

[Dry stone walling association in Facebook](#)

[Stone Wall for Life Project website](#)

[Stone Wall for Life in Facebook](#)

