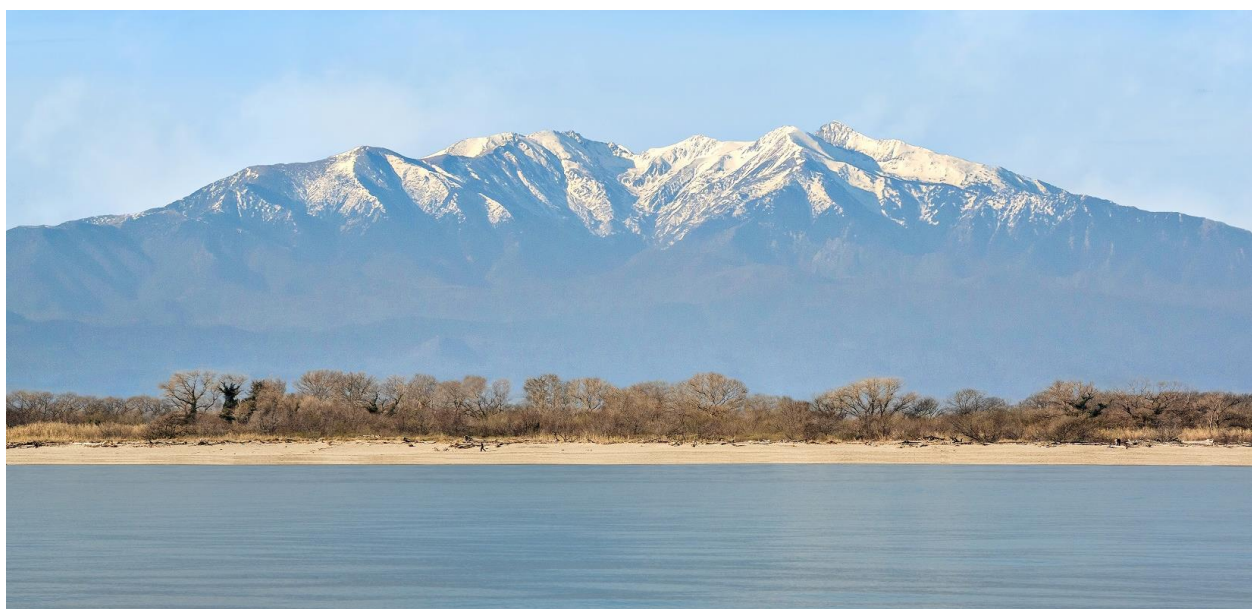


Emblematic Mediterranean Mountains as Coastal destinations of excellence (EMbleMatiC)

Project Ref: 594 | 1MED15_3.1_M12_272

CASE STUDY, LP1 CANIGÓ MOUNTAIN



Deliverable D 3.3.3

WP3 – Studying

Activity A3.3 Conduction of the in-depth study of the criteria composing the emblematic dimension of the EMM

Final version – March 2018

SUMMARY

This case study is drafted in the framework of the WP3 “Studying” of EMbleMatiC project.

This document presents the recording of the elements of the emblematic dimension of the Canigó mountain based on the template produced by PP4’s subcontractor (ETAM), approved and adapted by the project’s Study Scientific Committee (LP1, PP4, PP6, PP8).

This case study document will consist a reference document for **the overall in-depth study of the emblematic dimension of the project’s touristic dimension** whilst it will constitute the emblematic dimension characterization document for the Canigó mountain territory.

The case study is operative in correlation with D.3.3.2-Report on participative workshop, results of which have been incorporated in it.

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Executive Summary

The network of the Emblematic Mediterranean Mountains was launched in 2013 under the initiative of three rural areas in France, Greece and Bulgaria working within the framework of a leader programme.

They met on respective territories and worked together on common challenges:

- Preserving their patrimonial values from endogenous and exogenous threats,
- Sharing positive experiences and good practices,
- Increasing our international recognition.

They wrote a charter summarizing their common values.

They use the word EMbleMatiC to characterize the experience associated to the unique and exceptional nature of their mountains territories.

As an attempt to define their Emblematic dimension, they identified 6 common criteria:

first, the site must have a picturesque landscape, secondly, it has to be an exemplary territory regarding at least one of the following criteria:

- Legend and Myths: as a proof of its importance for local people since a long time
- Local services (handicraft, food, local products)
- Inspiration: i-e famous writers or artists came and still come to get inspired
- Historical places: mean a strong and representative heritage
- Nature and biodiversity: endemism, remarkable protected fauna or flora, emblematic species.

Finally, each territory produced one fact-sheet with a local description of each of the 6 criteria.

This case study document is part of the in-depth study carried out by the contractor ETAM within the framework of the Interreg Med Programme EMbleMatic for which the Canigó Grand Site is the lead partner.

This study aims to analyse the emblematic characteristics of the Canigó mountain in relation to each of the following criteria developed by ETAM as an attempt to deepen the qualification tool previously developed:

- C1 Proud local people
- C2 Institutional recognition
- C3 Reputation
- C4 Legends and myths
- C5 Power of inspiration
- C6 Picturesque landscape
- C7 Particular ecosystem
- C8 Mediterranean cultural identity
- C9 Sustainability and anthropogenic environment
- C10 Historic places.

Moreover, will be analysed the tourism sector of the area with its strengths and weaknesses.

At the end, a SWOT analysis will be inserted to help foreseeing possible options for the implementation of an emblematic slow tourism product called eco-itinerary (detailing locations and possibilities to engage stakeholders).

PART I

1.1 Intro

The Canigó stands in the south of France, it is located on the axis of the Paris meridian, in the heart of the metropolitan triangle Toulouse - Montpellier - Barcelona and of the Euro-region Pyrenees Mediterranean. This mountain massif situated at the eastern end of the Pyrenees, in the French administrative “departement” of Pyrénées-Orientales, dominates the plains of Roussillon and Empordà (province of Girona in Catalonia) and culminates at the summit with the peak of Canigó at 2784 meters above sea level. Visible from the Mediterranean coast, its prominent location and its short distance from the sea (48 km) give it a very remarkable and noticeable position.



If its position as a coastal mountain makes it the compass of the Catalans or the landmark of the sailors, the Canigó federates, beyond the borders, the inhabitants of a whole community, the Catalan people, which considers it as **its sacred mountain**.

By writing this case study, it is proposed to analyze in more detail what constitutes the emblematic dimension of this exceptional massif.

This case study was put together by Mr Florian Chardon, director of the SM Canigó Grand Site, the organisation in charge of the management, preservation and enhancement of this massif heritage.

1.2 Physical and human geography of the mountain

A geomorphological system organized around the Canigó massif

The current silhouette of Canigó is the result of a slow geological and geomorphological process alternating between uplift and erosion phases initiated almost 10 million years ago. From a vast flat surface, close to sea level, and loosened by the tropical climate of the Miocene, the uplift following the alpine folding brought in altitude the spaces corresponding to the massif and its current borders. During this uplift, ditches were opened, of which the Têt and Tech valleys are the most representative and dome flat surfaces (such as Pla Guillem) were raised at high altitude. The growth of Canigó was slow and relatively regular until the end of the Tertiary before accelerating at the beginning of the Quaternary to form in places gorges such as those of La Fou. Whilst raising in height, the Canigó massif also became impacted by the effects of cold and snow (Canigó Glacier or Parcigola, etc.), which combined with the erosive action of water gradually carved the current landscape. At this scale, the geological heritage is extremely rich encompassing

all the objects and sites symbolizing the memory of the Earth, from the sample to the geological phenomena: altitude plane areas, gorges, canyons, caves, cavities, chaos, fairies' chimneys, mines, minerals, warm waters, ...

A mountain and Mediterranean climate

Under the influence of the thermal and rainfall rhythms of the Roussillon plain and the Pyrenees, the climate on Canigó is contrasted.

The northern slopes and ridges are exposed to a strong wind called "the Tramontane". Together with the valley bottoms, they undergo frequent frost periods, even at low altitude and mid-season. Very cold in winter, this wind has the particularity of being desiccating in summer. This part of the massif is therefore relatively dry.

By contrast, the southern slope is subject to heavy annual rainfall. This phenomenon is due in large part to maritime inputs, commonly called "the Marin": they are loaded with moisture, previously heated in the plain of Roussillon before reaching saturation in mountain when they go up the valley of Tech. By moving away from the sea, towards the west of the massif, the precipitations become rarer. Snow cover usually lasts from December to April above 1,500 meters above sea level. The thermal amplitude is more pronounced in the west of the massif; spring and summer are warmer and winters colder than in the east. The southern face, better exposed, benefits from a significant radiation. Periods of late frosts can take place until May.

A demographic dynamic supported by the contribution of new populations

Nearly 32,000 inhabitants live in this rural area of nearly 1156 km², that is to say 27 inhabitants per km² (a constant increase since the post-war period). Even so the territory can be associated with the average situation of the French rural areas, its reality is more contrasted since it combines low density mountain areas with less than 20 inhabitants / km² and peri-urban areas or valleys with near to 75 inhabitants / km². Urbanization and clusters of activities and services are concentrated around the two valleys circulation axes represented by the national road RN116 on the northern slope and the more local road D115 on the southern slope. On both sides of these modest town-centers, many small villages gravitate, some of which appear particularly isolated.

Main sectors of activity:

- **Tourism and hydrotherapy**

Very courted from the end of the 19th century and during the "belle époque" period, the Canigó massif is a holiday resort appreciated by European high society for its waters (spas and climatic resorts) and participating in the rise of the "Pyrénéisme" (climbing activities). Despite this very early development, the Canigó massif did not subsequently experience in the second half of the 20th century, any integrated development of ski or bathing resorts. At the same time, the Conflent and the Vallespir went through, at the end of the Second World War and after the Aiguat (flooding) of 1940, a very strong exodus at the origin of a strong agricultural abandonment and a collapse of the industrial fabric (mining and draperies). The lack of infrastructure and tourism ambition, long experienced as a handicap is now considered the main wealth of this territory of hinterland, located between sea and mountains. Heart of nature and heritage in the metropolitan triangle of Toulouse / Barcelona / Montpellier, the territory has an abundant tourist offer and quality based on 3 main sectors:

- well-being and hydrotherapy: spas and thermo-play areas
- tourism in nature: outdoor activities and remarkable natural sites
- heritage and cultural tourism: historical monuments, artistic and cultural events ...

- **Agriculture, forestry and crafts**

These activities guarantee the balance between closed forest environments and open environments. This balance is endangered with the decline of the activities that have been strongly marking the landscapes of the Grand Site of France and that are subject to environmental, societal and politico-economic changes. If the dynamics of development tend towards a qualification of the productions (AOC Côtes of Roussillon for wine, IGP Rosée of the Pyrenees for bovine meat, Organic Agriculture, ...) and a valorisation within short distances, the encountered difficulties threaten the attractiveness of the territory.

Local productions consist of the following forms:

- **Livestock farming:** small production units, mainly bovine or ovine
- **Intensive arboriculture** of peaches, apricots, cherries but mainly apples, and **viticulture (vine-growing)**, on the outskirts of the Grand Site of France
- **Farm productions:** vegetables, beekeeping, dairy products, aromatic plants, saffron, ...
- **Logging:** chestnut, fir, pine, beech, ... mainly on the southern slope
- **Craftsmanship and know-how:** ironwork, weaving, jewellery, painting, pottery

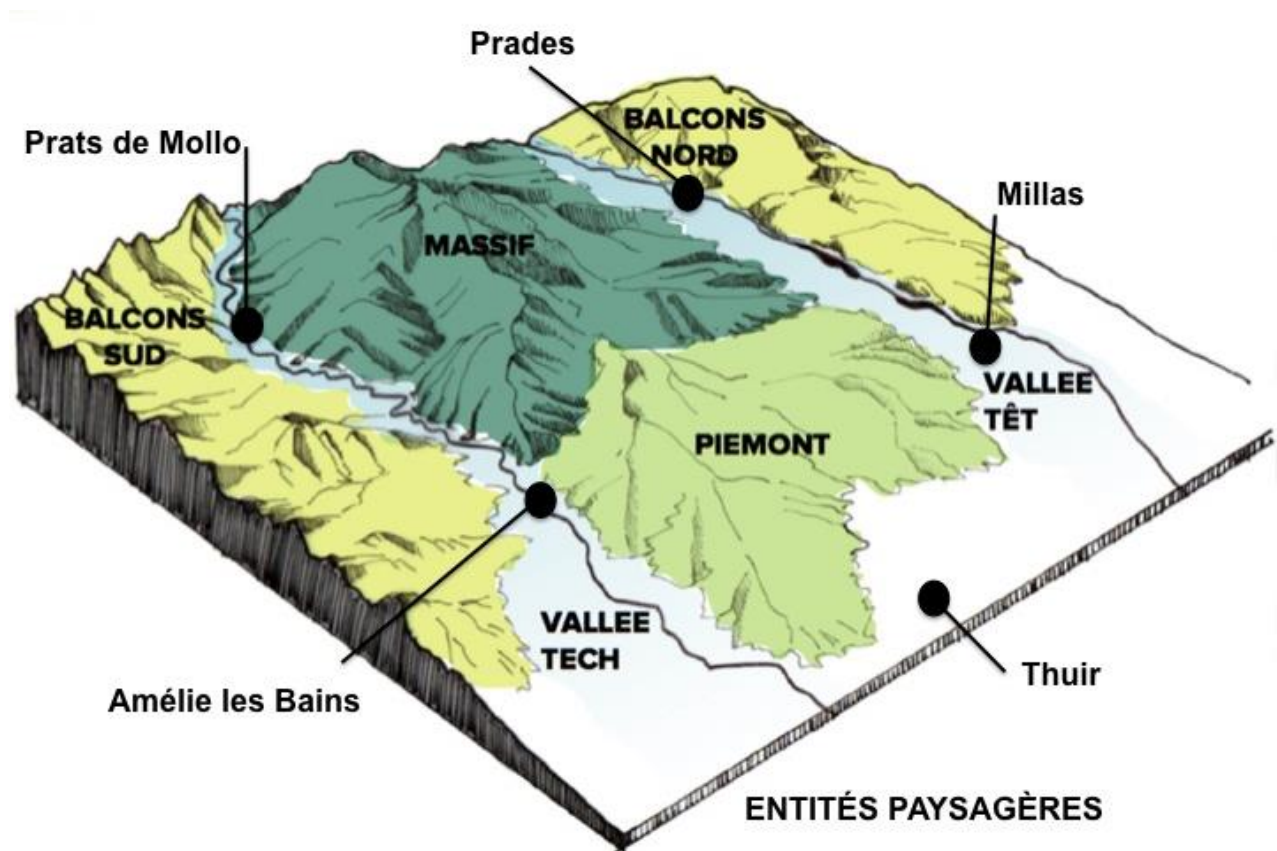


1.3 Spatial cohesion

A geomorphological system composed of 4 main landscape entities:

The geomorphological system organized around the Canigó massif is composed of 4 main landscape entities:

- the **Canigó massif** with summit ridges that distinguish the northern and southern slopes of the massif, at more than 2500 meters above sea level,
- the **two valleys** (Vallee) of Tet in the northwest and Tech in the south-east, are also home of the two main rivers of the department,
- **northern and southern balconies/terraces** (Balcons) located on each side of these two valleys, echo the massif with villages offering remarkable panoramic viewpoints at lower elevations (<1500 m),
- the **foothills of the mountain** (Piemont) of the Aspres (also called piedmont plateau) , to the north-east, consist in a Mediterranean massif of transition between the plain and the mountain forming a set of wooded, sparsely populated and isolated hills.

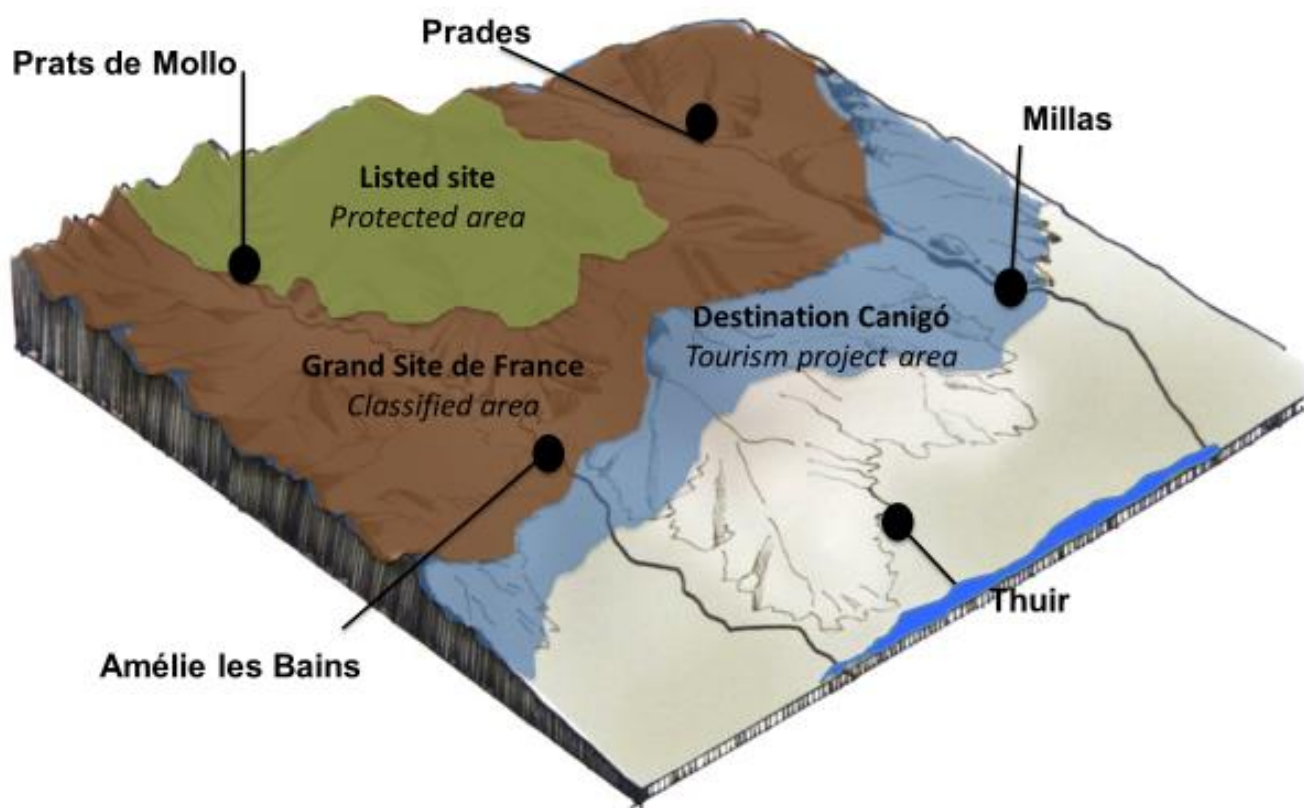


Canigó Grand Site: a territory project!

By adapting to this geomorphological system and taking inspiration from its landscape features, the Canigó Grand Site has become over time **a territory project that straddles and federates the two valleys of Tech and Tet, and all or part of the communities of municipalities**: Conflent-Canigó (31 municipalities), Haut-Vallespir (14 municipalities), Roussillon-Conflent (16 municipalities), Aspres (2 municipalities) and Vallespir (1 municipality).

This project is articulated around 3 complementary scales:

- **the listed protected site**, perimeter of protection for its landscape and heritage value,
- **the territory under Grand Site de France classification**,
- **the Canigó destination** (80 municipalities), a tourism area at the scale of the 3 communities of municipalities applying tourism competence (CC Canigó Conflent, CC Roussillon Conflent and CC Haut Vallespir) and the Syndicat Mixte of Canigó Grand Site.



PART II

C1 Proud local people

The coastal situation makes Canigó the compass of Catalans and historically of seafarers. The Canigó federates, beyond the borders, the inhabitants of a whole people, the Catalan people, which considers it as its sacred mountain.

According to Joseph Ribas (local writer), "Canigó lives in people". The Catalans venerate it as a privileged place of their identity.

This pride that the Catalans carry towards their sacred mountain is reflected in multiple manifestations:

- The traditional song "Muntanyes regalades", hymn in honor of this emblematic summit, has become popular to the most remote regions of Catalonia. Thus, it reflects the radiance of the spirit of this place in the singular temperament of people whose culture goes back to very distant sources. When considering the foundations of Catalonia, Canigó is still one of the poles of Catalanity.
- At the time of the "Trobada and the Regeneration of the flame of Canigó", which illuminates the fires of many villages of the Catalan Countries the night of the summer solstice of Saint Joan, the fervour that inhabits the massif appears intact.

This pride is also expressed in the many mobilizations experienced by the massif (during the last century in particular), in reaction against projects that were likely to affect the sacred mountain of Catalans. Among these striking "fights", we can mention:

- events bringing together several hundred people to prevent the prospect of installing a ski resort on the highland dishes of the massif,
- the mobilization in the aftermath of the Pla Guillem affair (1994) in response to the opening of a trench nearly one kilometer long to contain the scavenging of vehicles on one of the most sensitive areas of the massif,
- the massive opposition expressed in the streets and on the massive in reaction to the project of installation of a very high voltage line that had to cross the massif from one side to the other, which gave rise to the Montferrer Oath (manifesto signed by the all elected officials of Haut Vallespir).

The nature of these events acted in favour of the recognition of the massif as Grand Site of France, another pride that Catalans have since 2012. To conclude on this criterion, we can cite the excerpt from the guide Petit Futé made in 2014: " One must respect the Canigó. We do not just go through it. We come, we stay there, we come back. A time for some, a life for others, for those who were not born there, but who over time became "those of here".

C2 Institutional recognition

The Canigó massif benefits from numerous international and national institutional recognition in two main areas:

- **Natural and landscape heritage** (Grand Site of France, Regional Natural Park, Nature Reserves, ...)
- **Cultural Heritage** (UNESCO, Listed / classified Historical Monuments, Countries of Art and History (Pays d'Art et d'Histoire, ...), Most Beautiful Villages of France (Plus Beaux Villages de France), "Art and Crafts cities" (Villes et métiers d'Art).



Institutional Recognition for Natural and Landscape Heritage:

- **The Grand Site of France certification:**

The Grand Site of France certification may be awarded by the minister in charge of the sites to a classified site benefiting from both a great attractiveness and a very high level of visitors.

The certification is subordinated to the implementation of a project on preservation, management and development of the site, in compliance with the principles of sustainable development. This certification is a selective and demanding one. It is awarded for a period of 6 years, following the opinion of the Superior Commission of sites, perspectives and landscapes and the Network of Grand Sites of France. It is the recognition of a management conducted in accordance with the principles of sustainable development: one that combines preservation of the landscape, the "spirit of places", the quality of the reception of the public and the participation of the inhabitants and partners in the life of the Great Site. The Canigó massif has been certified Grand Site de France on the 13th of July 2012 and became one of the 17 Grands Sites de France.

GRAND SITE



DE FRANCE



- **The Regional Natural Park of the Pyrénées Catalanes :**

The Regional Natural Parks are created to protect and enhance large inhabited rural areas. Can be classified "Regional Natural Park" a predominantly rural territory whose landscapes, natural environments and cultural heritage are of high quality, but whose balance is fragile. This national certification brings together 51 parks in France, among which, the PNR of « Pyrénées Catalanes », partly located on the Canigó massif (17 municipalities)

- **The National Nature Reserves:**

A national nature reserve is a tool for the long-term protection of rare or characteristic spaces, species and geological objects, as well as natural and functional environments representative of biological diversity in France. The sites are managed by a local organization in consultation with the actors of the territory. They are exempt from any artificial intervention likely to degrade them but may be subject to ecological rehabilitation or management measures depending on the conservation objectives. The Canigó massif includes 3 (Py, Mantet and Prats de Mollo) of the 167 nature reserves in France.



Institutional Recognition for Cultural Heritage:

- **The Unesco certification:**

The world heritage list includes now the network of 12 fortified major sites that the architect Vauban designed and built. The latter constitute a serial good, which means that each component (that is, each of the twelve sites that belong to it) has qualities that contribute to the value of the whole and that only this set as a whole justifies an inscription on the World Heritage List. On the 7th July 2008, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee welcomed within the World Heritage of Humanity list the fortified ensemble of Villefranche-de-Conflent, including the enclosure, the citadel of Fort Liberia and all the caves of Cova Bastera, created thanks to the genius of Marshal Vauban in the second half of the 17th century. It should be noted that the Bear festivals are currently candidates for registration on the list of intangible heritage of humanity.



- **The certification « Plus beaux villages de France »
(Most beautiful villages of France):**

This national certification is awarded to rural villages of less than 2000 inhabitants possessing, on their territory, at least 2 sites or protected monuments (classified or listed) presenting an exceptional character by its shape, its location, its architecture, ... Canigó massif is home to 2 of the 3 villages with the most beautiful Villages of France in the Eastern Pyrenees, Eus and Evol.

- **The certification « Villes et Pays d'Art et d'Histoire »
(Cities and land of Art and History):**

This certification is awarded by the Minister of Culture and Communication for territories developing a cultural policy around architecture and heritage based on mediation through animation services, education, interpretation and communication for diversified audiences. The Canigó massif is home to 2 of the 188 Cities and land of Art and History of France: the Land of Art and History of the Tet Valley and the Land of Art and Cross-border Catalan History of the Valleys of Tech and Ter.



- **The certification « Ville et Métiers d'Art »
(City and Crafts):**

This certification brings together 70 municipalities at national level including Arles-sur-Tech located on the Canigó massif. It certifies the diversity of the crafts present in their city, and consists in carrying out various actions in the fields of the welcoming of companies, the information and promotion of the crafts, the conservation of the know-how, the tourism promotion, school awareness and training (initial and ongoing).



The massif holds a multitude of other labels or recognitions among which 9 Natura 2000 sites, 1 Directed Biological Reserve, 1 Twentieth century Heritage site, 1 Star for Town and Village, 99 Listed or registered historical monuments, 2 Parks and gardens of France, ...

C3 Reputation

Heritage value

The Canigó massif is a natural, cultural and landscape monument. It has become a must-see heritage area that the state has repeatedly distinguished for its picturesque, scientific, legendary and artistic characteristics.

Here are some distinctive features that give the Canigó massif its exceptional heritage value:

- **Its silhouette:**

The Canigó massif stands out from the mountainous mass of the Pyrenees at the plateau of Pla Guillem (2,300 m); it also stands on the Roussillon plain, occupying the position of an "island" in direct contact with the Mediterranean coast.

As a result, the Canigó naturally imposes its silhouette, summoning the glances and the imaginations of men over the centuries and from very distant points: spreading from the confines of Barcelona to Marseilles (the Canigó massif is visible by atmospheric refraction phenomenon from Marseille - nearly 300 km, several times a year). The place that it occupies in the imagination of people is so great that it has long been considered the highest mountain in the Pyrenees.

This particular geographical location explains the symbolic power and fascination it still exerts today.

Thus, the massif is discovered first in the distance.

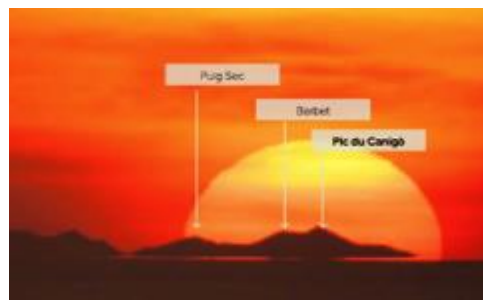


Image of Canigó seen from Marseille because of atmospheric refraction



- **A symbol in scientific research:**

Frequented since the eighteenth century by geographers, geologists or botanists, it is a true emblem of the eastern Pyrenees chain of which it offers a geomorphological, geological and bioclimatic synthesis. The massif presents an **exceptional variety of landscape units** made of contrasting geological units (very steep, steep or smooth reliefs), shaped by the tireless work of erosion and by a particular climate, marking the limit between the oceanic and Mediterranean influences. These climatic conditions have made the Canigó a **world-famous example of altitudinal distribution of plant species** in a Mediterranean mountain as per explained by H. Gaussen. **All floors of vegetation follow one another:** holm oaks and downy oaks, Salzmann pines, Scots pines, beeches, fir and hooked pines; highland heathland and lawns occupy the highest areas, with wetlands, peat bogs and small altitude lakes. Its positioning on the border between the Alps and the Mediterranean underlines the diversity of natural elements that compose it and enriches its heritage and landscape value. It offers an undeniable interest on the floristic level, including 11 protected species, many rare species and 30 endemic species, as well as a great fauna richness with, in the case of bird life, 125 species and 17 species of protected mammals. The massif is recognized as a world reference by botanists Charles Flahault and Henri Gaussen.

- **Prestigious traces left by men's activities and beliefs:**

The most prestigious traces are undoubtedly the great Romanesque abbeys and priory of Saint-Michel de Cuxa, St. Martin du Canigó, St. Mary of Arles, Serrabone or Marcevol: they have strongly influenced the other religious constructions of the massif.

The military heritage is a true testimony of the successive lines of the borders. Among them, the fortified city and the Fort Liberia in Villefranche de Conflent are registered with the world heritage of UNESCO under the group of fortified works carried out by the architect Vauban in this area.



Abbey Saint Martin du Canigó



Capital from the priory of Serrabone

The intangible heritage is also remarkable (St Joan celebrations, Bear festivals, ...) and testify to the strong identity of this mountain space.

Reputation: promotion effort and visibility

The Canigó massif concentrates a large number of tourism structures and sites. Each of them, big or small, promote their activities whether through conventional channels (press, radio, TV) or digital (websites, blogs, social networks...).

The most important structures devote significant budgets to the promotion (> 50K € / year). The communities of municipalities take part, directly or through their tourist offices, in this promotional and communication effort. Some, have added, in an effort of collective intelligence, the word "Canigó" to their structure name, for example the communities of communes Canigó Conflent or South Canigó (CC Haut Vallespir).



But, as underlined in the study carried out by Atout France:

- The visibility of Canigó is generally low on generalist websites despite the presence of an offer supported by organisations awarded with Qualifying Certification (Land and City of Art and History, UNESCO, Most Beautiful Villages of France, Grand Site of France ..)
- High visibility for specialized tour operators (La Balaguère, Allibert Trekking, Terdav ...).

However, if the media presence (all Media considered) of the elements and tourist sites constituting the Destination Canigó is considerable, it remains logically diffuse, dispersed because mostly-centered on the heart of activity of each communicating organisation.

C4 Legends and myths

As a natural, cultural and historical monument, the Canigó has inspired many myths that have covered the massif with legendary characters that are enjoyed today. Passed down by word of mouth over the centuries, all stories, tales and legends are a collective heritage of great value, which is why they have been scattered in the literature compilations of various ethnologists and folklorists: Horace Chauvet (1873-1962), Joan Amades (1890-1959), Didier Payré (1959) ...

Indeed, where the arguments of science weaken, popular culture has always shown an amazing ability to support explanations for the necessary clarification of context and their daily lives.

Myths and stories related to emblematic massif places

Some stories relate to emblematic massif places linked to the action of biblical figures, local saints or great historical or mythological figures.

- Thus, the Puig Barbet is the place where Noah tied his Ark;
- The Pic des Sept Hommes (Peak of the Seven Men) represents seven giant rocks changed by God for trying to reach heaven;
- Peter the Great would have found a dragon out of the waters of the Estanyol lake in the first known ascent of Canigó in the Middle Ages;



Legend of Noah's ark



Legend of the 7 giants



Legend of the dragon

- Roland tomb would be in the dolmen of La Caixa Roland, on the borders of Arles-sur-Tech and Montbolo;
- The Esquerdes the Rotja (Rotja ridges) have been formed by the cries of Pyr, priestess of the fire, when her father violently struck with the sword; etc.
- Text from the biblical genesis: "God stretched out his right hand and touched the ground with only three fingers apart: his thumb, his index and his middle finger. As soon as he withdrew his hand, from the mark raised by the index was born Mount Olympus, from the trace of the major emerged Mount Sinai and the impulse left to the thumb rose Mount Canigó. The Mediterranean Sea could then be formed".

Irrational interpretations of scientifically explained manifestations

- Aiguat: disastrous flooding from 1940 accentuated by deforestation gave way to explanation relate to mysterious network of underground lakes linking the summit to Perpignan city...
- Magnetic quality of massif: the strong Iron concentration is deemed to be responsible for confusing the navigation tools of planes in the 50's.

Pagan tradition and symbols

- Witches: present all around the massif 7
- Water: with the women of "aiguas" symbolising springs

- Bears: with the bear festival in Prats De Mollo each year



- Fire: with the “Trobadà” manifestation reuniting Catalans from all villages to light the flame on top of Canigó for the summer solstice before disseminating it through the territory (see C8).
- Semiotés: strange mythical creatures present in Roman art
- Blood and gold/ Catalan Flag: the origin of our trippy flag is said to come from the 4 fingers of king drawing lines on

C5 Power of inspiration

The Canigó has been through time inspiring artists from various disciplines:

- **Literature:**

Enchanted mountain, mythical mountain, diamond mountain ..., the Canigó has become a radiant emblem under the pen of many authors.

Thus, it has continued to inspire all those who have seen it. This inspiration can draw on very ancient literary fame, being the essential reference in the epic poem Canigó (1886) during the Catalan cultural renaissance (Renaixença). This work from the most accomplished Jacint Verdaguer, placed this mountain as a privileged place embodying the identity of an entire people. Inspired by the Canigó landscapes, the author transforms the romantic idealised geographical truth of the location, while rebuilding an imaginary past in the service of the Catalan renaissance.



Front over page Page of the book Canigó from J. Verdaguer – google image

-Alongside Verdaguer, poetic inspiration of this mountain is also expressed in an abundance of texts created by Roussillon poets, including Josep-Sebastià Pons, Albert Saisset, Josep Pla and more recently Alain Taurinyà, or from further afield, the likes of Rudyard Kipling, Robert Frison-Roche, ou encore Thomas Mann.

- **Music**

There are also echoes of this omnipresent mountain in songs: from the popular song “Muntanyes regalades” to the lyrics of Jordi Barre, Joan Pau Giné and Pere Figueres. Pau Cazals came from Spain to live in Prades and wrote “El cant del ocells”

- **The flame from the sacred mountain of the Catalan people**

Every year around the summer solstice, people from all around come near the summit for one night to meet and celebrate La Trobada (The Encounter) and the Regeneration of the Flame of Canigó. The flame light at the peak, is then distributed to all villages for the San Joan celebration. This popular tradition evokes the fraternity between all territories of Catalan culture: Roussillon but also Catalonia, the Valencian Country and the Balearic Islands.

- **Painters and photographers** have also pictured Canigó from all angles and all sides.

See the painted works of Juan Gris or as illustrated below: Herblain (left) and Denoyer (right)



- **Movies**

Film on Pau Cazals (2017)

Appearance in the introduction of the last Samourai.

C6 Picturesque landscape

Geological formation

Canigó was formed at the same time as the rest of the Pyrenean massif. That is to say, under the pressure of the Iberian plate against the European plate. The Pyrenees are actually the result of two folds from the end of the primary era and the beginning of the Tertiary era. The existing relief is the result of sometimes very brutal uplift movements and relentless erosion, symmetrical, particularly representative of the southern massif position.

Contrasting landscapes offering a variety of natural resources exploited through time

The contrasting landscapes are strong under their apparent united landscapes, Canigó presents a rich variety of landscape entities made from contrasting geological units. Gneiss, granite, shale, limestone emerge turn by turn to very cut, chaotic, smooth or abrupt reliefs. This great variety of rocks contains an abundance of minerals, exploited by man since Gallo-Roman times: siderite, barite, iron, quartz and gold. On the massif, others have also been exploited: talc, marble, fluorite, tungsten. Canigó has been a place of resources and wealth exploited very early on by man.

Physical presence

- **Natural monument with subliminal value**

Many locals will compare it with our emblematic monument (like Parisian will boost the Eiffel Tower) since it can be seen from anywhere as a sumptuous backdrop.

- **Beacon of the Mediterranean: point of reference**

The Canigó naturally impose its presence, summoning the eyes and imaginations over the centuries and like a beacon from distant points in the Mediterranean, from the confines of Barcelona to Marseille.

Indeed, with particular atmospheric conditions, the silhouette of Canigó can be seen from Marseille. Located just 50 kilometres (as the crow flies) from the sea shore, almost isolated from the Pyrenees, the massif du Canigó provides biogeographic crossroads that justify its international scientific reputation with its rich landscape, flora and fauna.



- **WHOA factor / strong sense of place**

For many people, the Canigó has a reassuring presence that provides them with a sense of belonging and a sense of place (they see it daily, as a protection)

Although it is not the highest mountain in the eastern Pyrenees its location in the middle of the Roussillon plain, surrounded amidst intense agricultural activity, exerts a power of attraction that grows irresistibly to visitors on its discovery. Marine, arboreal or wine landscapes in the imposing mountain backdrop of snowy Canigó participate in this feeling of exception.

C7 Particular ecosystem

Climatic conditions

The prevailing climate is a mountain climate with snow commonly above 2000m. The geographical position of the massif of Canigó gives it a special atmosphere, marking the boundary between Pyrenean and Mediterranean influences. These climatic conditions determine the distribution of vegetation in altitudinal floors and generate strong contrasts across the landscape, Mediterranean environments with high mountain environments enabling an exceptional plant landscape and identity of the Massif.

Endemism

The classified protection area was a clear recognition from the ministry of the strong endemism value of many species surviving in ecosystems that needed to be protected.



Gypaète barbu



Desman des Pyrénées

A massif with five vegetation floors

Under the combined effect of substrate, altitude, orientation, climate and hydrology, living dynamics are expressed on the Canigó massif through five large floors/level of vegetation that Henri Gaussen described in 1961 as follows :

1/ Alpine floor -> 2300 m

- lawns and highland moors

2/ Sub-alpine level - 1700/2300 m

- forest with almost exclusive presence of hooked pine, rhododendron moors or purgative broom

3/ Mountain floor - 1200/1800 m

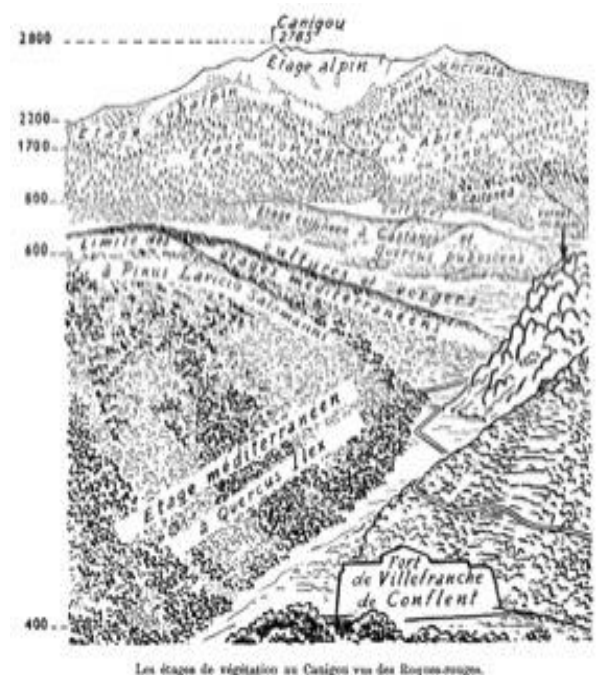
- mixed forest (beech, fir, birch, Scots pine, ...)

4/ Supramediterranean floor - 600m / 1200 m

- forests dominated by pubescent oaks, chestnut trees, native stands of Salzmann pine

5/ Mesomediterranean floor - <600 m

- forests of Holm oaks, scrubland, maquis.



Source : Baruel P. ; Gaussen H. (1961) – Montagne.

In addition, the Canigó has **a remarkably rich natural plant diversity** thanks to its privileged mountain location near the sea. The vast amplitude of altitude and contrasting climates offer a wide range of environments: scrubland, maquis, cork oaks, oak green, hardwoods (beech, chestnut ...), conifers (pine-hooks, Scots pines, fir, etc.), lawns and mountain heaths, peaks and ridges with specific rock vegetation, rypisylve and vegetation of lakes and peat bogs ... This biological diversity explains the **exceptionally high density of protected natural areas** on the Canigó massif (3 national nature reserves, 1 regional nature reserve, 9 Natura 2000 sites, ...) as well as the flora with

11 protected species, many rare species and 30 endemic species et la faune avec 125 bird species and 17 mammal species are protected.

Water

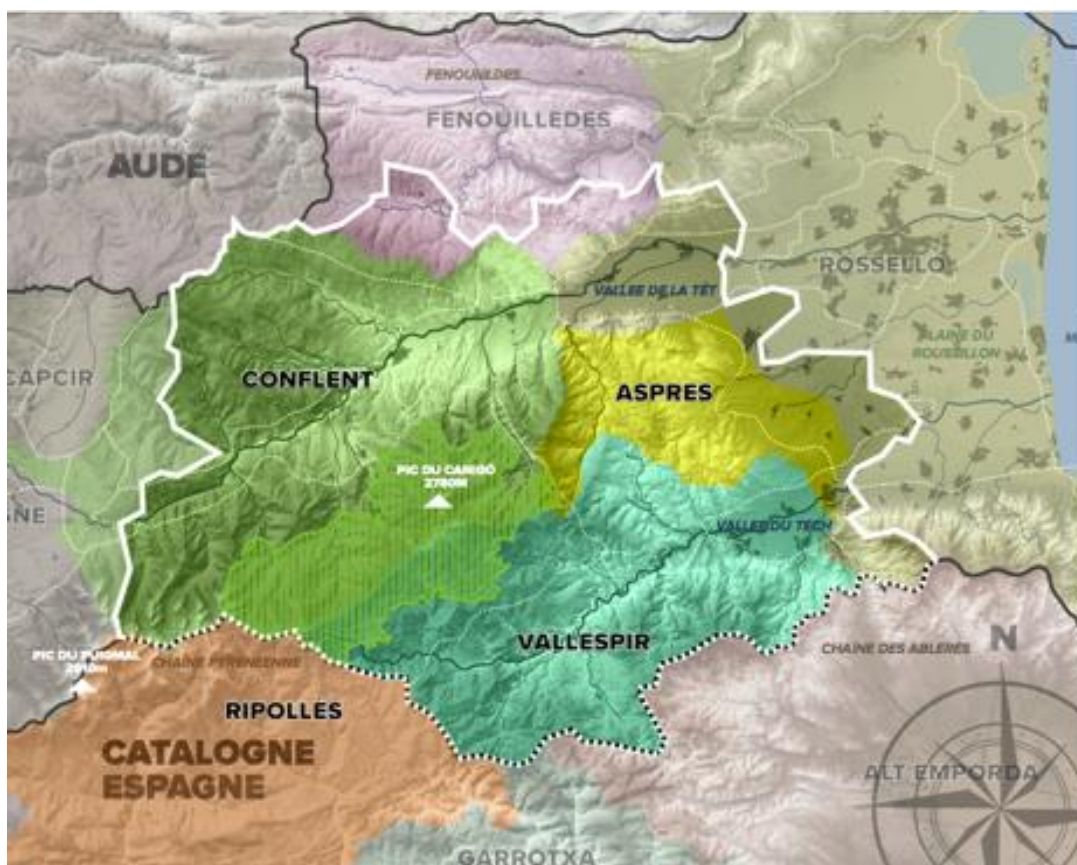
The massif is the Water Castle (water provider) for the full territory, irrigating the valleys and providing for agricultural activities as well as for humans

C8 Mediterranean cultural identity

Three natural regions with strong identity federated around Canigó

The Canigó massif is a living mountain inhabited by four historical micro-regions corresponding to “comarques” and “sub-comarques” (mainly cultural territorial divisions of the Catalan Country) with marked identity, logics and daily practices:

- **The Conflent** (North side): it corresponds geographically to the high and medium valleys of the Tet and its surroundings, between the Coll de Terranera (Rodès) and the Pallat (Fontpédrouse),
- **Vallespir** (Southern slope): this border micro-region corresponds to the high and medium basin of Tech. Only the Upper Vallespir linking Prats de Mollo to Amélie les Bains is part of the Grand Site of France.
- **The Rosselló**: it constitutes the whole plain of Roussillon to the foothills of the Canigó massif. As part of the renewal of the Grand Site of France label, two sub-comarques are particularly concerned:
 - o The Ribéral (North slope): It continues downstream from Conflent to the gates of Perpignan,
- **The Aspres** (piedmont) intermediate space between the Roussillon plain and the Canigó massif.



The Canigó, a living symbol of Catalan identity

How to explain that spontaneously, each Catalan that reaches the top of his mountain, begins to sing, kiss or hang a blood and gold flag to the cross that surmounts it? These behaviors speak volumes about the place of this mountain in the local imagination.

The Canigó is not just a peak and a colossus of stone. Instead It is all together, a soul, a people, an identity, a memory, a mass that acts, gathers, protects, inspires, teaches.

Cradle of Catalanity, the Canigó is the major symbol of this culture and every Catalan must be at the top once in a lifetime. Thus, it is considered that the Catalan identity was born at the foot of Canigó, in the Middle Age, under the reign of Guifré el Pilós considered the first Count of Catalonia in the ninth century.

It is also in Canigó that the **Renaixença**, a cultural movement inscribed in the current of European Romanticism, was born in the Catalan countries during the 19th century under the impetus of **Jacint Verdaguer** and his poem Canigó.

Canigó occupies a central place in Catalanity since 1659 when the signature of the Treaty of the Pyrenees separated Catalonia in two.

The Trobada celebrated for the summer solstice is one of the most contemporary example of strong moment of communion and fraternity where all the Catalan people are found around common values and **the regeneration of the Canigó flame** that will ignite the fires of all the villages of Catalonia north and south the night of St Joan.



Main routes for spreading the flame of Canigó through France and Spain – Omnium Cultural de



Land of spirituality

Over the centuries the mountain has not stopped welcoming all kinds of religious buildings: imposing as large abbeys or more modest such as oratories or chapels mountain (Sant Guillem Combret, Our Lady of Life, ...).

"**The spirit of the place**" is at the origin of the first **architectural audacities** such as the Romanesque vault and the capitals of Cuixà or Serrabona.

"**Earth inhabited by Gods**": **this sentence was used by** Nobel Prize winner Thomas Mann when visiting his friend Pau Casals to qualify what he could find in all Catalan culture, in songs, poems, myths and legends, painting and literature, magnetism and the constant presence of Canigó.

Land of freedom

Like a sanctuary of victims of totalitarianism, Canigó was during the twentieth century, a **refuge for** many **Spanish Republicans** including the famous musician Pau Casals. It also became a **tragic sanctuary** for the resistance fighters of the maquis of Pinosa and its heroes (including Julien Panchot died in Valmanya on August 2, 1944) during the Nazi / German occupation period of world war two.

Land of memory

The Canigó preserves in its flanks the joys and the sorrows of the women and men who live there for centuries.

- Memory of the earth as an open book on the geological history of the massif.
- Memory of the miners, exploiting over the centuries the iron ore since Antiquity and whose traces are still innumerable.
- Memory of the climatic phenomena impacting the massif (terrible flooding of aiguat, avalanche, landslide, ...) and reminding men of their excessive uses (deforestation, pastoral pressure, ...).

The special Mediterranean mix of "Mar i munt"

The expression "Sea and mountain" summarises perfectly the special role that the Canigó plays by uniting the Pyrenean mountain range to the Mediterranean sea. This very rich mix is present on both sides of the border. Its wealth of influences characterises many elements from gastronomy to landscape...

For all these reasons, « One must respect the Canigó ».

We do not just go through it. We come, we stay there, we come back: a while for some, a life for others, for those who were not born there, but who over time became "those of here".

The massif is an open mountain, with strong values of respect and solidarity but also with **a soul** that distills **an inspiring force** out of the ordinary.

All the senses are awakened on the Canigó, one sees, hears, feels the mountain, its immensity, its horizons, the silence, the breath of the wind, the song of the Catalans attending the Trobada, the cowbell of the herds, the neighing of the burros (Catalan donkeys), the smell of brooms in bloom ...

C9 Sustainability and anthropogenic environment

Place to live OR Museum / Open OR Closed territory

Even so the Grand Site De France is distinguishing exceptional site with high attractivity, the innovative policies to better manage visitors flows have for objective to remain an open territory for all those who are prepared to visit it in a more sustainable manner.

The management of the motorized access to the classified site remains central through time

One of the peculiarities of the massif lies in the fact that since the birth of tourism on the Canigó (late 19th century), the problem of access to the site is central. Projects of tracks, roads, train, cable cars, ... aiming to facilitate the access to the Peak of the Canigó and its associated tops mark the XXth century with more or less success.

The result is a dense network of tracks in natural terrain with random viability and very expensive maintenance, on which passenger vehicles run. "The case of Pla Guillem" (at the origin of the commitment to the Grand Site of France approach) is a shift in the way of understanding the accessibility of the massif, more focused on limiting the penetration of vehicles with motor. The two successive Grand Site Operations have provided concrete answers to this issue of motorized access to the heart of the classified site, even if considerable financial resources are invested until the beginning of 2010 to guarantee users comfort and safety on tracks. Even though a traffic plan to regulate access to motor vehicles and an alternative dense network of hiking trails are now in place, the issue of accessibility to the classified site remains central, especially with the extension of the classified site (2013). With the arrival of the territory project on the scale of the Grand Site of France, the question of the management of the flows, adds also that of the diffusion.



Poster from the cable-car project

The landscapes at the heart of territorial future sustainable development strategies

The exceptional landscapes of the Grand Site de France partly contribute to the attractiveness and emblematic dimension of the area. If these have profoundly evolved since the beginning of the last century under the effect of human activities (pastoral, mining, forestry, urban pressure, ...), their preservation and enhancement is a major challenge because at the origin of the amenities of the Grand Site of France. More particularly, the recent landscape plan unanimously adopted at the meeting on July 7 th 2017, put landscaping issues at the heart of the territorial debate.

It will be a question of capitalizing on this dynamic and on the foundations of this reference document to answer the landscape stakes of the territory which are:

- The fight against the banalisation of landscapes
- To maintain balance and natural dynamics
- To organise the discovery of the territory

Strong human presence / influence

This massif territory bears traces of human presence and activities through time:

- Orris: shelters made of cry stones for shepherds staying in high terrace from the summer:
- Mining vestiges on the landscape: mine galleries, roasting ovens, railways, overhead wires, hoppers...

- Feixes many slopes were used for agriculture: are showing the presence of man-made terraces sustained by dry stone low walls
- Water canals: an elaborated network of canals were conceived to distribute water where human activities concentrated
- Roads:

The high terraces of Pla Guillem were the theatre of a disastrous attempt in the 70's to build a motorised vehicles road across the massif to link the two valleys.

Positive landscape restauration initiatives

The outcomes of some mountainous locations restauration projects have benefited from international interest and recognition. See below: location of cross valley road in the 80's and now!



A landscape balance subject to the natural and climatic hazards

Despite innovative intentions and efforts, humans must recognise that in many instances they can only accept their spectator role in relation to the power of nature.

This is particularly obvious with natural disasters.

Thus, one must bear in mind that the aesthetic approach responsible for the attractiveness of the territory is subject to climatic hazards and violent natural hazards whose history is full of references (floods, landslides, avalanches, ...) and that are likely to destabilize balances in place.

For example, all specialists agree on the geological fragility or vulnerability of the Southern slope.

C10 Historic places

Looking at it from far, one can't **imagine the abundance of treasures ABSORBED by the massif.**

The massif of Canigó has been inhabited since prehistoric times.

The tools found in several caves around the massif allow us to date the presence of men in the massif from the Middle and Upper Palaeolithic period. However, it is the many Neolithic and Bronze Age dolmens that provide the most visible traces of human occupation in prehistoric times.

The massif of Canigó has been exploited by the Romans

Archaeological data attest to the Roman stranglehold on the mineral wealth of the massif, since arriving in the second century AD. The many ferriers (or reduction areas) excavated in the massif as well as the flangeways of the Sant Marçal Roman chariots, indicate a production of minerals that exceeded purely local needs and was intended for the Mediterranean trade.

Mountain hideaway since the middle age (Romanesque abbeys...)

Released from the Saracen's at the end of the eighth century, Roussillon was not spared the raids.

This uncertainty led people to seek refuge in the mountains, giving rise to a real overcrowding of the massif du Canigó between the ninth and twelfth centuries. We can still admire the masterpieces of Romanesque architecture including Saint-Michel-de-Cuixa, Saint-Martin-du-Canigó and Sainte-Marie d'Arles-sur-Tech. Count Guifré le Pilós, a native of Ria (a small town in the foothills of the Canigó), is the origin of a lineage that remained in power until the fifteenth century, at the House of Barcelona, founder of the historical Catalonia.

A cross border massif to be defended (Fortified cities...)

Forming the natural border between the counties of Cerdanya and Roussillon, the massif du Canigó has been bound to the Catalano-Aragonese Crown since the twelfth century in accordance with the Pyrenees Treaty of 1659, when Roussillon was attached to the Kingdom of France. Wishing to provide Roussillon with a defensive system that would make the province invincible, between 1679 and 1681 Louis XIV sent Marshal Vauban to modernise the network of fortifications. In Canigó, he consolidated the walls of Villefranche-de-Conflent, built the Fort de Bellegarde, strengthened the walls of Prats-de-Mollo and Fort-les-Bains in Amélie.



Remains from 19th century economic development (climbing tourism, mining, hydrotherapy...)

Despite successive conflicts and invasions during the nineteenth century, the massif du Canigó experienced economic development marked by hydrotherapy, a growth in tourism (construction of Cortalets lodges), including the modernisation of the metallurgical industry. Thus, all mining concessions on the massif du Canigó experienced a modernisation of production and transportation systems in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, which have left many vestiges on the landscape: mine galleries, roasting ovens, railways, overhead wires, hoppers ... In the working class city of Pinosa, located at 1,400 metres above sea level, and the mining road (la Ligne Rapaloum-Formentère) connecting the mine to the foothills of the Massif are illustrative examples that help to understand the extent of the industrial development of this time.



Mining settlement of la Pinosa

Ovens to roast the ore and extract the iron

A massif management including the enhancement and preservation of historic remains

Exhausted by centuries of exploitation, Canigó experienced mine closures and with it a marked acceleration in the rural exodus. The forest was regained and mountain land restoration work was undertaken by the Administration of Water and Forests, characterising the current mountain area. The protection and development of Canigó prove the need to secure the future of the massif: it became a listed site of 468 ha in 1951 and the area covers 7,789 ha in 1983 and 23,212 ha in 2013. The award of the Grand Site of France by the Minister of the Environment in 2012 confirms the approach of conservation, management and development of the site launched by the Syndicat mixte Canigó Grand Site.

Synthesis of the extraordinary-emblematic characteristics of the mountain

Ten main emblematic characteristics ranked by order of importance

- Extraordinary silhouette (C6 Picturesque landscape)
- Physical presence (C6 Picturesque landscape)
- Symbol in scientific research (C3 Reputation)
- Endemism (C7 Unique ecosystem)
- Water castle for the full territory (C7 Unique ecosystem)
- Land of spirituality, freedom and memory (C8 Particular cultural identity)
- The sacred mountain of Catalan people
- Local people proud to belong to this mountain (C8 Particular cultural identity)
- Myths and stories related to emblematic massif places (C4 Legends and myths)
- Strong influence of human presence (C9 Sustainability and anthropogenic environment)

Five globally unique characteristics

- Extraordinary silhouette (C6 Picturesque landscape)
- Strong influence of human presence (C9 Sustainability and anthropogenic environment)
- Endemism (C7 Unique ecosystem)
- Local people proud to belong to this mountain (C8 Particular cultural identity)
- Water castle for the full territory (C7 Unique ecosystem)

Ten key words with reference to the mountain

Canigó
 Symbol
 Flame of the Canigó
 Dragon
 Landscape
 Identity

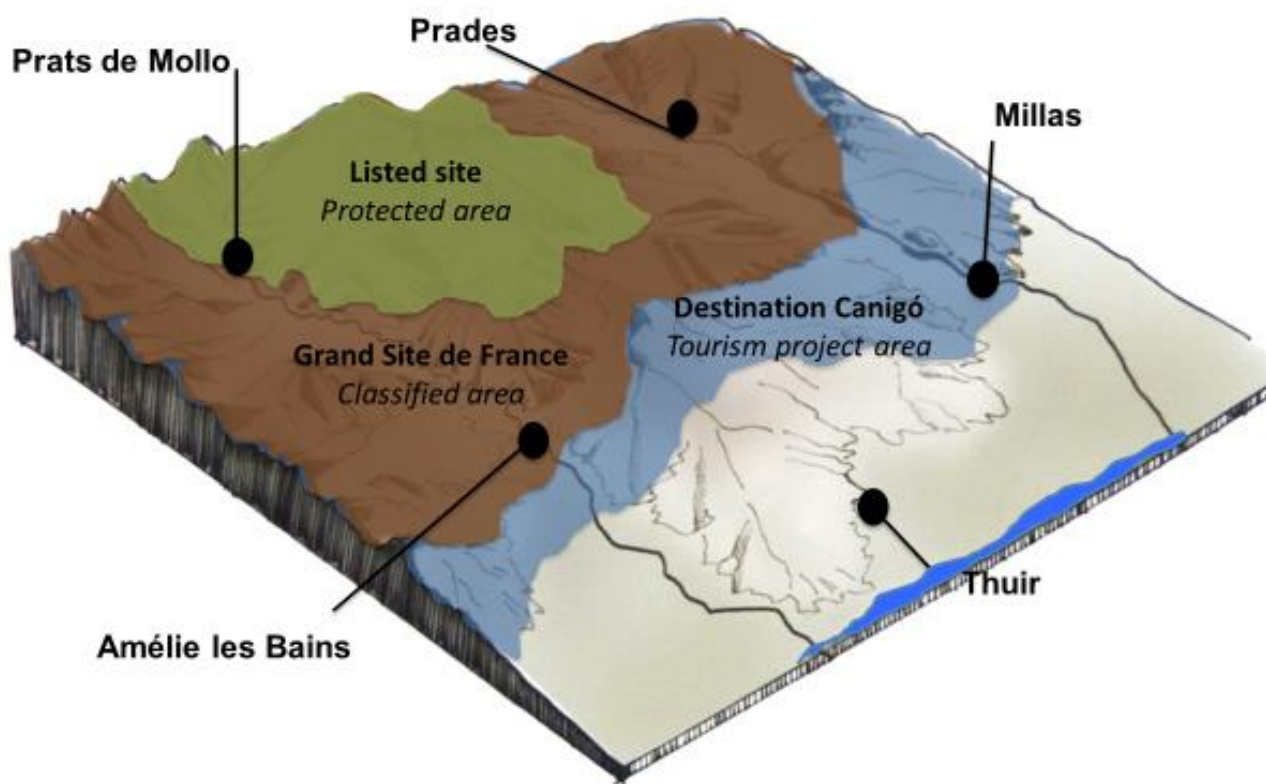
Catalan
 Nature
 Culture
 Human

PART III

III.1 Tourism infrastructure and supply

The territory project carried out by the SM Canigó Grand Site is articulated around three areas/perimeters:

- In green: the protected area
- In brown: the area classified under the Grand Site de France certification
- In blue: the area mobilised under the Canigó Destination territorial project



Accessibility:

The Canigó is located in the heart of the metropolitan triangle Barcelona, Montpellier and Toulouse, representing nearly 7 million inhabitants. If access to the destination is relatively easy by air or land (7 airports within 200 km, 1 high speed train station, 1 highway, ...), moving within the destination is more complex because relief discrepancies and despite a good bus network throughout the destination and a railway line on the north side.

Restoration:

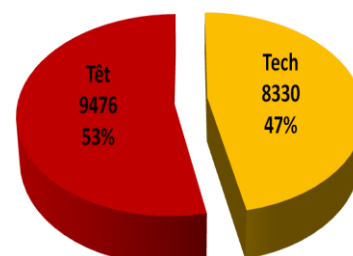
A diversified catering offer (110 establishments) concentrated in the main tourist centers of the

destination (spas resorts, Prades, Villefranche de Conflent) completes the tourist reception system of the territory. There are nearly 8500 seats throughout the destination.

Accommodation

To induce tourist stays, the destination has 17,767 commercial tourist beds, mainly located in and around 4 thermal spas resorts. This piedmont /foot of the mountain offer is complemented by an altitude accommodation network consisting of 5 shelters (260 beds). It is also worth mentioning on the top end of the market the offer of high quality establishments (such as Riberach in Belesta, Riell castle, Falgos in Serralongue, ...). The distribution of beds is relatively balanced between the two sides of the Destination - The Tech Valley and the Tet Valley (as shown on the illustration).

Capacité d'accueil Grand Site Canigó



With more than 10,000 second homes, or nearly 51,000 beds, this type of accommodation represents **three-quarters of the beds available to tourists**. They participate significantly in the local economy. In fact, both residents and tourists, consumption patterns contribute to the tourist economy as well as to the residential economy.

Local Tourism Organization

Just two years ago, nearly 17 tourist offices were present on the territory. Today only 6 of them remain following the transfer of tourism competence and duties to intercommunalities (communities of municipalities).

- Community of municipalities Conflent Canigó: 1 Community OT - Category 1
 - Roussillon Conflent Community of Communes: 1 community OT
 - Community of communes Haut Vallespir South Canigó: 1 station OT (Category 1) and 3 OTSI
- This restructuring is still in progress.

Tourism positioning

"Lighthouse of the Mediterranean sea, announcing the eastern face of the Pyrenees mountains, Canigó is a mountain of legends. This wandering and spiritual landscape invites its visitors to connect with those emotions fostered by vast spaces such as feelings of freedom and escape. Take the time to revitalise yourself by listening to this mythical mountain telling you its story. "

With this invitation to live a memorable experience based on the principles of eco-slow tourism, the territory is focusing its positioning more on a personalized welcome than on the mass welcoming programme purely guided by standard of quality of the stay.

By capitalising on its strong values and its own image attributes (Grand Site of France, Catalunity, Mediterranean Sea, myths and legends, Mar i Munt /Sea and Mountain ...), the Canigó destination declines a tourist strategy based on 3 commitment stances :

- the experience offered to the visitor, in an exceptional natural and human environment,
- wandering, as a preferred means of discovering the destination's offer,
- the emblematic dimension of a mountain with a strong personality that intermingle legends and traditions, profane and sacred.

III.2 Tourism operators

Tourism sectors

An abundant thematic offer of quality mesh the whole of the destination. This offer is declined in sites of visits and sites of practices whose interest (characteristics, quality certifications, ...) contribute to the reputation of the destination and the economy of the territory.

They are organized in **3 main sectors**:

- **tourism in nature:**

The Canigó massif is a national "spot" for outdoor activities (more than 200 referenced practice sites). A study carried out in 2016 (study LR Set) estimated the economic size of this emerging sector to nearly 5 million euros.

- **Well-being and hydrotherapy:**

The 4 spa resorts welcome nearly 40,000 patients every year, nearly a quarter of spa patients hosted annually in the Occitania region the Canigó belongs to.

This health offer is also complemented by a thermo-ludic offer of quality.

- **Heritage and cultural tourism:**

The destination offers many heritage sites of regional and international interest. About 50 listed or listed historic monuments, 1 UNESCO World Heritage Site, 2 City and land of Art and History, 3 most beautiful villages in France ...

This offer is complemented by artistic and cultural events of national and even world reputation (Pau Casals Chamber Music Festival, Ciné-rencontres Festival, Bear Festival, ...).

Agricultural and artisanal know-how

In connection with the terroirs and agricultural practices (livestock farming, arboriculture, processing, viticulture, olive growing, ...), the territory abounds with agricultural productions under official signs of identification of quality and origin for wine (AOC Côtes du Roussillon, AOC Côte du Roussillon village, AOC Rivesaltes, Muscat de Rivesaltes), for olive oil (AOC Olive Oil), for bovine meat (IGP Rosée des Pyrénées), for fruit (AOP Red Apricot Roussillon), for Organic Agriculture, ...). In the same way, many craftsmen master a know-how, sometimes ancestral quite remarkable (ironwork, weavings, jewelery, painting, pottery ...) that it is possible to see in places such as the Pole of the Crafts of Art in Arles sur Tech, Maison Toiles Du Soleil and Catalan Creation espadrille workshop in Saint-Laurent-de-Cerdans or some villages such as Eus or Villefranche de Conflent.



Socio-professional / Institutional network efforts

A practice of networking has been established in the territory. Several groups bringing together socio-professionals and institutions meet regularly to contribute to a harmonious tourism development of the Destination. Among these, we can mention:

- **The Canigó Tour Refugee Guards Network:** federated around the flagship hiking product “Tour of Canigó”, the 5 staffed refuges of the massif (Batère, Las Conques, Marialles, Les Cortalets and Sant Guillem) regularly cooperate with Canigó Grand Site.
- **Professionals from the sports in nature sector:** two associations bringing together professionals from the sport in nature sector have been formed (R.A.P.S. for the South side and Canigó Sport Nature for the North side). A recent impact study revealed real impact of this sector (more than 100 direct jobs and nearly 5 million annual benefits).
- **Managers of natural or cultural sites represent the main sites visited by the destination.** The top 10 represent nearly 1 million visitors.

III.3 Tourism demand

Observatory organisations have produced the following data:

- **Main sites for tourism in nature:**

NAME OF THE SITE	MUNICIPALITY	2016 VISITORS
SITE DES ORGUES	ILLE-SUR-TET	103 072
LES GORGES DE LA FOU	ARLES-SUR-TECH	68 696
GROTTE DES GRANDES CANALETTES	VILLEFRANCHE-DE-CONFLENT	56 250
PARC ANIMALIER	CASTEIL	42 000
PIC DU CANIGO	DESTINATION	30 000
LA CARENCA GORGES	THUES ENTRE VALLS	20 000
GOUR DES ANELLES CANYON	REYNES	12 000
LLECH CANYON	ESTHOER	10 000
MOLITG CANYON	MOLITG / CAMPOME	8 000
PARC LE BOIS DU MOULIN	PRATS-DE-MOLLO-LA-PRESTE	3 000
MAISON DE LA RESERVE DE NYER / RESERVE DE NYER	NYER	1 521

- **Main sites for well-being and hydrotherapy:**

BAINS DE SAINT THOMAS	112 000	-	112 000
THERMES DE VERNET LES BAINS	6 000	3767	9 767
THERMES D'AMELIE-LES-BAINS	2 663	27341	30 004
THERMES DE MOLITG-LES-BAINS	2 208	4945	7 153
THERMES DE LA PRESTE	1 675	3114	4 789
TOTAL	124 546	39 167	163 713

- **Main sites for cultural tourism:**

SITES NAMES	MUNICIPALITIES	2016 VISITORS
VILLEFRANCHE DE CONFLENT (PBVF)	VILLEFRANCHE-DE-CONFLENT	300 000
FORT LIBERIA DE VILLEFRANCHE DE CONFLENT	VILLEFRANCHE-DE-CONFLENT	103 010
EUS (PBVF)	EUS	70 000
EVOL (PBVF)	OLETTE	40 000
ABBAYE DE SAINT MICHEL DE CUIXA	CODALET	28 026
ABBAYE SAINT MARTIN DU CANIGO	CASTEIL	25 589
PRIEURE DE SERRABONA	BOULE-D'AMONT	23 828
REMPARTS DE VILLEFRANCHE DE CONFLENT	VILLEFRANCHE-DE-CONFLENT	20 407
EGLISE SAINTES JUSTE ET RUFFINE	PRATS-DE-MOLLO-LA-PRESTE	20 205
ABBAYE SAINTE MARIE D'ARLES SUR TECH	ARLES-SUR-TECH	15 170
FORT LAGARDE	PRATS-DE-MOLLO-LA-PRESTE	11 670
MOULIN DES ARTS	ARLES-SUR-TECH	10 000
LA MANUFACTURE DU GRENAT LES JOYAUX CATALANS	PRADES	8 883
SALLE DU TRESOR DE L'EGLISE ST PIERRE DE PRADES	PRADES	7 477
CHATEAU MUSEE DE BELESTA	BELESTA	5 043
HOSPICE D'ILLE	ILLE-SUR-TET	4 302
PRIEURE DE MARCEVOL	ARBOUSSOLS	3 824
PARC LE BOIS DU MOULIN	PRATS-DE-MOLLO-LA-PRESTE	3 000
ESPACE MARTIN VIVES	PRADES	2 998
TOUR DES PARFUMS DE MOSSET	MOSSET	1 956
LE MOULIN SAINT PIERRE -HUILE OLIVE	MILLAS	1 713
MAISON DU PATRIMOINE A. ABET	SAINT-LAURENT-DE-CERDANS	1 515
* LE TRAIN JAUNE (pour rappel : Transport touristique)		159 500

Observations on the various publics:

The destination has a deficit of knowledge of its audiences.

Overall, there are three types of visitors:

- **Nearby visitors, sometimes inhabitants of the destination who practice and visit the tourist offer of the territory,**
- **Seasonal ramblers/hikers**, who usually reside outside the hinterland destination (mostly from coastline), and come to visit the destination and enjoy its offer for a day trip only.
- **Tourists who reside overnight or more** in the destination's territory.

Regarding visitor profiles, we identify 3 main audiences:

- **Families** looking for experience sharing at destination sites,
- **Informed outdoor practitioners**, whether hikers or more interested in Whitewater or mountain sports
- **Spa therapy patients** who spend twenty days in one of the four spas resorts of the destination and seek qualitative services.

III.4 Tourism impact

Economic impact

The tourism economy is the first pillar of the economy of the Pyrenees Orientales (French administrative area/ "departement" the Canigó territory belongs to) and it is ranked 7th tourism department in France in terms of tourist attendance (4 million tourists, 4 million walkers/hikers, 1.4 billion tourism consumption - figures 2014) . Even so destination Canigó offer is less important than the one from coastal and skyng resorts, it remains one of the pillars of the destination Pyrenees Orientales.

However, we do not have any specific assessment of the economic impact of the entire tourism economy of the Canigó destination.

There is only one study carried out in 2015 that makes it possible to apprehend the economic impact of the Outdoor activity sector:

- **Employment:**

- 104 direct jobs
- 219 indirect jobs in accommodation
- 177 indirect jobs in catering

- **Customer base:**

- Nearly 44,000 customers welcomed
- 31% of local customers and 16% of foreign customers

- **Activity:**

- 1.5 million turnover including 678 878 € added value for the natural sector
- 2.5 million accommodation expenses including 1.1 million euros of added value for the accommodation sector
- 2.4 million catering expenses including 1.1 million euros of added value for the catering sector

Environmental impact of the motorized access to the classified site

One of the peculiarities of the massif lies in the fact that since the birth of tourism on the Canigó (late 19th century), the problem of access to the site is central. Projects of tracks, roads, train, cable cars, ... aiming to facilitate the access to the Peak of the Canigó and its associated tops mark the XXth century with more or less success.

The result is a dense network of tracks in natural terrain with random viability and very expensive maintenance, on which passenger vehicles run. "The case of Pla Guillem" (at the origin of the commitment to the Grand Site of France approach) is a shift in the way of understanding the accessibility of the massif, more focused on limiting the penetration of vehicles with motor. The two successive Grand Site Operations have provided concrete answers to this issue of motorized access to the heart of the classified site, even if considerable financial resources are invested until the beginning of 2010 to guarantee users comfort and safety on tracks. Even though a traffic plan to regulate access to motor vehicles and an alternative dense network of hiking trails are now in place, the issue of accessibility to the classified site remains central, especially with the extension of the classified site size (2013). With the arrival of the territory project on the scale of the Grand Site of France, the question of the management of the flows, adds also that of the diffusion.

III.5 Public infrastructure and services

Wifi connection coverage

The Canigó offers us exceptional landscapes, but also some constraints!

The Grand Site wants to ensure that main sites of interest will benefit from the same Wi-Fi coverage as their partners / competitors. Not only because it is part of the minimum services expected by visitors, but also because a growing number of solutions / services require a Wifi coverage. Therefore, there are no satisfactory alternatives if we want to maximize the economic returns for the territory that can be generated by customers visiting these main sites.

In addition, the Canigó Grand Site is currently deploying an online booking solution that will allow mobile Internet users to book online all tourist services (accommodation, catering, leisure, etc ...). The "main sites" will obviously join this service based in particular on the proposal WIFI4EU adopted on September 12 by the European Parliament to finance WIFI connections in open spaces to the general public.

Emergency rescue services

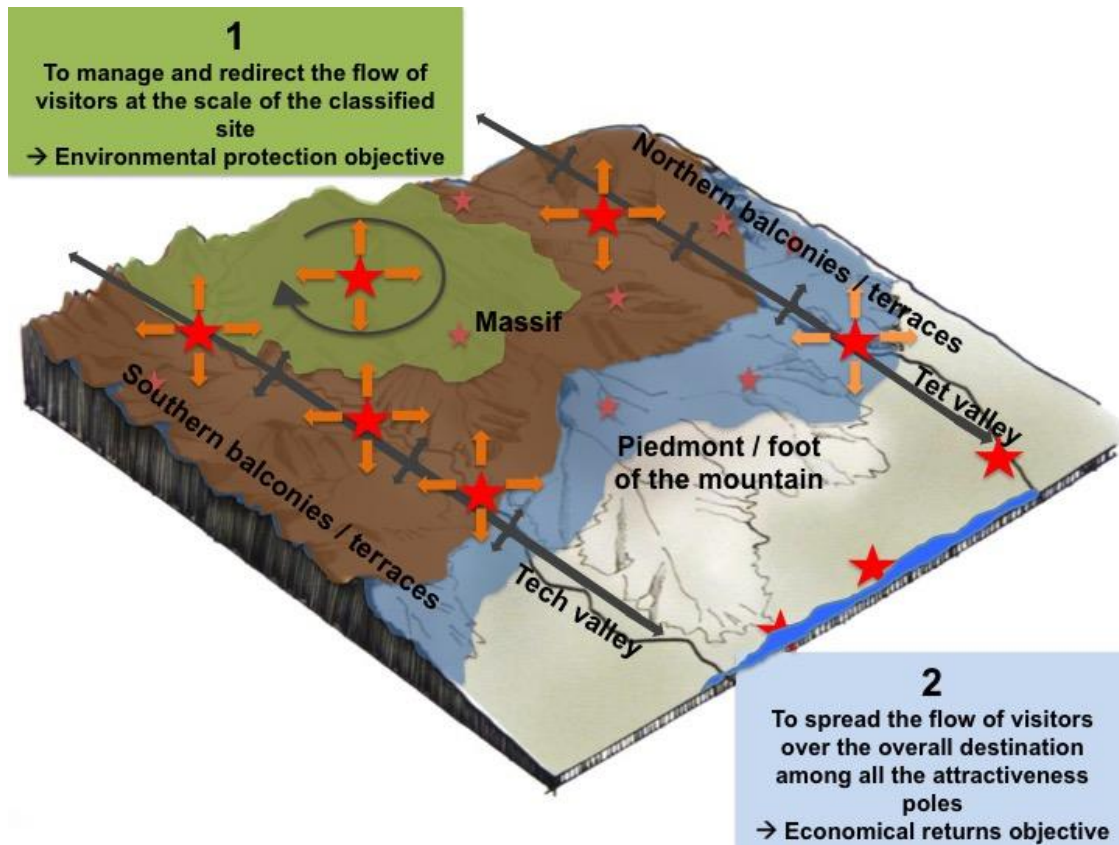
In France, mountain rescue services are mainly provided by three public bodies:

- “gendarmes” from high mountain gendarmerie brigades;
- police officers from the Republican Mountain Safety Companies (CRS);
- firefighters who are members of mountain firefighting groups (GMSP) or belong to surveillance and intervention groups in dangerous environments (GRIMP).

Departmental rescue plans (at the scale of the French administrative area called “departement”) manage combined coverage for these three bodies.

Helicopter rescue facilities with extensive experience in this area, complemented by the network of defibrillators (heart reanimation medical device) installed in each municipality and tourist areas of the Department facilitates the care, without reducing the risk inherent in mountain tourism.

III.6 Partner's perception of the tourism vision of their territory



The territory tourism strategy is articulated around two main objectives and covers three areas.

The tourism strategy is also following mainly two strong directions:

- the first is carry on the conservation project consisting in favouring an eco-friendly approach and restricting the presence of a great number of vehicles on the massif.
- the second is to organise the territory to be a place to stay (not simply of daily excursions) and to offer alternative opportunities to visitors: hence the development of 5 terraces sectors combining panoramic viewpoints to observe the summit with all ingredients for a stay: walks, cultural heritage, services...

PART IV

IV.1 SWOT analysis regarding the implementation of an emblematic slow tourism product (eco-itinerary)

Please find below 6 main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats emerging from the contributions from the local participative meeting/workshop.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
- Quality and diversity of the landscape and panoramic view points	- An heterogenous tourism offer despite its good quality
- Richness of natural and cultural heritage and diversity of resulting tourism offer	- Lack of transport and accessibility solution to reach the destination (out of private vehicles)
- The strategy and governance model of the Canigó destination	- Absence of control of land property
- Inhabitants proud to belong to this site and to contribute to its preservation	- Shortage of accommodation offer
- SM Canigó carries out the destination project with know-how and legitimacy	- Difficulty to convert visitors into tourists
- Authentic and good quality local products	- Seasonality of tourism flows remain

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
- Great tourism dynamic with mixed partnership: public & private	- Windfarm projects threatening the integrity of the landscape
- Surrounded with a living basin representing 7 million inhabitants	- Badly managed urbanisation threatening the quality of the landscape
- Growing demand for sustainable tourism	- Badly managed tourism flows degrading the environment
- A project for the territory putting the landscape at the heart of all issues	- Development of tourism products exhausting some necessary natural resources (water)
- A well-established destination for wanderers	- Growing of fire risk due to global climate change
- European funds to develop and support this kind of innovative project	- Decrease in farming / move away from agriculture

IV.2 Indication of ideal locations for an eco-itinerary and possibilities to engage stakeholders

General considerations from the participative local meeting on our future eco-itinerary:

- **Should link the sea and the mountain** Let's imagine an "initiativ way" of starting from the sea (the feet in the water) to reach the hinterland eco-itinerary.
- **Targeted audiences** Local people as much as visitors.
- **Mobility options** should favour: soft mobility (cyclo-tourism, electrical bicycle for rent, hiking) and public transport (with our 1 euro bus and train networks)
- **Accessibility period** An all around the year itinerary since seasonal attributes will enhance it.
- **Marketing** This eco-itinerary proposal / offer must enrich the traditional beach offer. Therefore, it must be conceived with the tourism offices from the coast which will promote it. The ODYSEA sailors network could also relay it

During the participative meeting, 2 options were considered regarding the eco-itinerary project:

• Option 1 LA PINOSA (remains of an old mining settlement)

The valorisation of mining heritage in connection with the project of enhancement of the remains of old mining settlement of la Pinosa, on the eastern sector of the massif.

This project would particularly value the historical and identity aspects of the massif and would energize a sector to date unattractive.



• Option 2 LANDSCAPE INTERPRETATION ITINERARY

The enhancement effort will guide visitors to experience a landscape interpretation, on one of the Canigó balcony/terrace spatial entity facing the massif. These hinterland areas may seem less mountainous and attractive than the massif.

However their location make them practicable throughout the four seasons of the year.

Their future structuring under the “Canigó destination” development policy, should facilitate the stay of visitors by offering information related to accommodation, panoramic viewpoint, accommodation and catering facilities, historical heritage sites...

Option 2.1: Northern slope terraces



Option 2.2: Southern slope terraces



This eco-itinerary would follow the concept of drawing hikes by providing a path with:

- some landscape interpretations tools (orientation table, explanations, drawing illustrations...)
- some drawing facilities to engage the visitor (drawing table, metal frames/ easels to fix the point of focus)
- some leads to prompt interpretations: crest line, overall silhouette, point of details, etymological clues

Stakeholders:

To carry out this project, the SM Canigó Grand Site will make sure that all the related stakeholders will be invited to be involved, namely:

- the municipalities and landowners involved in the route,
- tourism professionals (hosts, restaurants, guides, heritage guides, ...),
- traders and producers located near the route (grocery store, producers of wine and other local farming products, etc.),
- tourist offices and travel agents for the marketing of the product.

ANNEX

Tables and diagrams

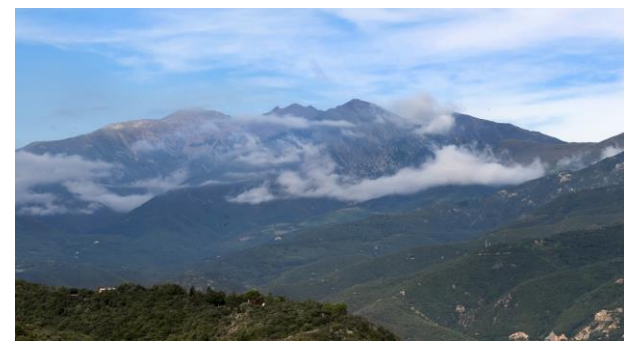
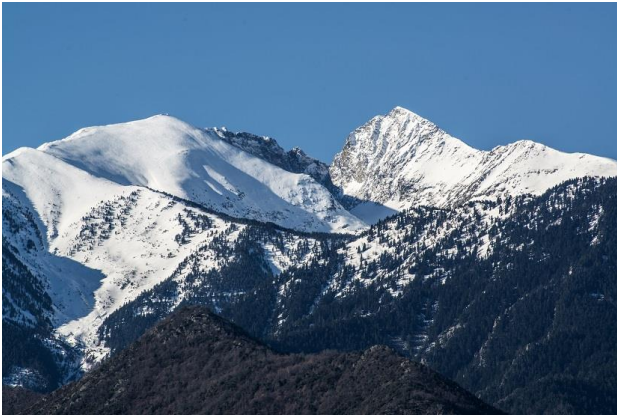
Already inserted into the various chapters of this document.

Photographs

Please find below 8 photographs of our EMbleMatiC mountain, inclusive of different perspectives of view point and of the 4 seasons.

The definition should be at least of 800 kb.





Self-evaluation table

CRITERIA		Score
C1 Proud local people	1-10	8
C2 Institutional recognition	1-10	6.77
C3 Reputation	1-10	7.22
C4 Legends and myths	1-10	8.22
C5 Power of inspiration	1-10	8.11
C6 Picturesque landscape	1-10	8.77
C7 Unique ecosystems	1-10	9.22
C8 Particular cultural identity	1-10	7.55
C9 Sustainability and anthropogenic environment	1-10	6.44
C10 Historic places	1-10	7.88
TOTAL	10-100	78.18

1 very small, 2-3 small, 4-5 medium, 6-7 high, 8-9 very high, 10 paramount

Arguments:

This scoring resulted from the group consultation during our participative local meeting.

We consider it to be representative for various reasons:

- nine independent persons contributed towards it
- their scoring decisions were carefully taken when concluding the group discussion on each of the criteria.
- this evaluation follows more than 4 years working on our EMbleMatiC dimension.
- the discrepancies in criteria contents for C1 and criteria name for C7 and C8 come from the fact that partners finalised them with the contractor during a transnational meeting in December 2017 after the self-evaluation had been arranged.

The Grand Site de France certification has directed our efforts to deepen our understanding of our values and identarian singularities. Some of these were shared and conducted with some of the 16 members of this national network.

The process was so stimulating and the results so valuable, that they prompted us to extend the approach at an international scale.

The following two years' work carried out with new partners under the leader programme initiative and the creation of the network, contributed to deepen our understanding of this EMbleMatiC criteria and to qualify the Canigó as Emblematic Mediterranean Mountain.

Finally the positive and enthusiast interest of stakeholders when we are presenting this approach and the resulting Interreg Project, comfort us of its pertinence.

Bibliography N/A

