



2nd International Symposium on Dark-sky Parks & 2nd International Dark-sky Camp

Lastovo, 14-19 September 2009

Background

The quality of the night sky has been a concern for a number of years. Growth of light pollution globally has strengthened the worldwide movement to protect natural dark skies. In 2007 a consortium of international organisations (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization – UNESCO, World Tourism Organization - UNWTO, International Astronomical Union – IAU and others), Secretariats of conventions relevant to biodiversity (Convention on the Biological Diversity, Convention on Migratory Species, Ramsar Convention) and representatives of the academic community met in La Palma, Canary Islands, Spain, at the **International Conference in Defence of the Quality of Night Sky**. The resulting Declaration in Defence of the Night Sky and the Right to Starlight is a lynchpin document for protection of the natural sky. It recognises the importance and multi-faced value of the night sky and provides a plan for action.

The Initiative for an International Association of Dark-sky Parks aims to implement the principles of the Declaration, in particular through its 10th principle: “[a]ll those protected areas which combine exceptional landscape and natural values relying on the quality of their night sky, are called to include protection of clear night skies as a key factor strengthening their mission in conserving nature.”

The initiative builds a strong network of people who will in their respective countries work to reduce light pollution. Their role may be in establishing effective regulatory framework for protection from growing light pollution and its reduction, in providing scientific input to the efforts and raising awareness. The initiative brings together all those that have knowledge, experience, responsibilities or motivation to contribute to a positive change.

The 2009 symposium

The aim of the *2009 Symposium on Dark-sky Parks* is to establish an effective long-term framework for reducing light pollution internationally. It will do so by bringing together key players that will come up with the appropriate course of action. The symposium not only provides a setting for individuals to present their knowledge or attend presentations by leading experts in the light-pollution field. It also creates an opportunity for networking, collaboration, sharing of information and the building of trust relationships. Dark-sky movement continues to enjoy a steady increase in membership internationally

and is represented by individuals from tourism, research, educational, management, government, student and other communities.

Symposium participants are site managers, representatives of international and national (non-governmental) organisations, experts in biology, (eco)tourism, natural and cultural heritage, lighting industry, etc.

The symposium is a five-day event, comprising of quality lectures, field-trips and night observations.

The symposium language is English.

The venue

The island of Lastovo is located in the central Dalmatia, Croatia. The Lastovo archipelago contains a total of 46 islands, of which Lastovo is the largest but still one of the most remotely inhabited in the Adriatic. The island has more than the characteristics of the Mediterranean climate. It may pride itself in one of the richest marine ecosystems and extremely dynamic landscape including forests, karstic fields and caves. The Lastovo archipelago was proclaimed a **Nature park** in 2006.

Contrary to the most sites in Europe Lastovo still retains a relatively natural night sky, where stars of up to the 7th magnitude may be seen with a naked eye. Here also a reflection of the Milky way in the sea may be visible.

Organisers

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