

## SPRECOMAH 2008 Update: In the Val de Loire

In the last week of May 2008, the second edition of the **Seminar on preventive conservation and monitoring of the architectural heritage** (SPRECOMAH) took place in the Val de Loire region, as a result of a joint collaboration between RLICC and Mission Val de Loire.



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Group photograph showing the local organizers of the *Institut international des fleuves et patrimoine*, Tours, at left: Vincent Rotgé and Remi Delaplanque

This year's seminar focused on the **relation between heritage and its environment**, thus it was structured in four topics: interaction between the environment and the architectural heritage, floods and heritage, preventing deterioration of materials in heritage structures, comparative study of preventive architectural conservation systems. Forty participants, mainly young researchers, from Italy, Greece, Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Slovenia, and Portugal, contributed with presentations of their experiences and researches, so as to offer new insights in the different disciplines of preventive conservation. This year, three external participants from Israel, Jordan and Argentina were invited to provide the international perspective in the discussion. The contributions mirrored the diversity of the preventive conservation field, ranging from preventive interventions in sea-flood areas (case study of the church of St. Mary of Health in Piran, Slovenia) to monitoring the structural changes of masonry with remote sensors, and from virtual reconstruction to territorial management systems and newly developed software (software SiRCOP developed at the department BEST of the Politecnico di Milano).



Lectures and on-site demonstrations alternated daily. All the presentations took place in the abbey of Fontevraud, while the site visits offered real sightseeing: the Monument Damage Diagnostic System was tested in the castle of Chinon (see photo at left), the radar techniques presented by BAM institute of Berlin (see top of next page, right) were shown in both the castle of Chinon as well as in the castle of Saumur, while the "Monument Watchers" from the Netherlands gave a demonstration in the Fontevraud abbey itself (see top of next page, left).

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The participants had also the chance to meet the *architecte-en-chef des monuments historiques* in charge of the restoration of the Saumur castle (see photo at left).

Two days of SWOT analysis and group discussion enabled the participants to reflect critically on the presented methods and techniques, so to derive from it a state of art and guidelines for further actions and research. These will be forwarded to the European Commission with the hope that preventive conservation gains recognition and dissemination, so to raise awareness among the widest public that “a stitch in time saves nine”.

For detailed conclusions please follow [www.sprecomah.eu](http://www.sprecomah.eu) > Seminars

(Reported by Neža Čebtron Lipovec, Staff)



Photos in last row and in second row, right – © Mario Santana