

INCULTUM Innovation factsheet

Pilot #1 Altiplano de Granada



**UNIVERSIDAD
DE GRANADA**

**MEMOLab. Laboratorio de
Arqueología Biocultural**

INCULTUM

Visiting the margins
INnovative CULTural ToUrisM in European peripheries

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Following the established guidelines, in the Altiplano we are working in (developed below):

1. The constitution of a heritage resource as a **common** (good).
2. The **involvement of the community**
3. creating **new visitor itineraries**
4. The design of **attractive narratives**
5. The **participatory heritage inventory**

INNOVATION IN INCULTUM PROJECT:

The main innovation elements explored by INCULTUM and directly implemented in #1 Altiplano de Granada are:

1. The constitution of a heritage resource as a **common** (good).

In the social context of the municipalities of the Altiplano of Granada (and in general of the Southeast of the Iberian Peninsula) the historical and traditional irrigation systems are elements assumed by all as something intrinsic in our collective thinking and landscapes. Historical irrigated land is a rural commons. They are managed by an irrigation community, which has a communal governance system. Beyond the irrigators community, historical irrigation systems are at the local level a very strong identity element, firstly because normally all the families are part of the irrigation community or have a direct relationship with it and with irrigation; secondly because they have been the main productive spaces for generations; thirdly because they have indelibly marked the landscapes and the villages; thirdly because they have been the main productive spaces for generations; thirdly because they have indelibly marked the landscapes and the villages.

Everybody knows what is an irrigation channel but maybe not everybody knows what it really means and how it works. For this, they are not valued with all the potential they represent. The irrigation channels, the waterwheels, the mills, the subway galleries are elements created in the Middle Ages by the Islamic culture that brought this way of managing the water. In recent years, last research has led to a better understanding of how these systems work. We have (re)discovered that the functionality of these systems goes beyond local agricultural production or the creation of beautiful landscapes. Historical and traditional irrigation systems generate an enormous amount of [ecosystem services](#): protection and generation of fertile soils, aquifer recharge, ecological corridors, among others. These benefits are a common good that must be recognised and protected by all society.

Within the activities that are being carried out within INCULTUM, the cultural trails will have an educational complement (through the website regadiohistorico.es) where you can access information on all these ecosystem services generated by historical irrigation systems. In this way, raising awareness of the common good they represent in order to promote their protection.

2. The **involvement of the community** in the management of the heritage resource is a priority action over all others.

At MEMOLab, we believe it is essential to involve local communities. In the case of the Altiplano and INCULTUM, we have direct and almost permanent contact with the irrigation communities that manage the traditional irrigation systems. Collaboration between research entities and local communities also serves as an incentive and a boost for the empowerment of these communities. The main achievement we are working on are the payment for services agreements. These agreements are based on a payment for services in which both institutions (irrigation communities and town councils) undertake, on the one hand, to maintain the traditional irrigation systems and the paths created within the INCULTUM project; and the town councils, on the other hand, to collaborate in this maintenance through a "payment" (not always economic) that implies collaboration between both institutions. This payment can also be in the form of the transfer of material for the repair or conservation of the irrigation ditches or the paths themselves, or in the provision of labour to carry out the necessary work.

All this work involves a participatory approach, giving them a leading role in the proposal, design and management of the routes, so that they maintain control and autonomy, and the benefits revert directly to the local communities, generating positive impacts. This is why these routes, which will run alongside the historic irrigation channels, will also cover part of the cultural, historical and gastronomic heritage of each locality.

At the moment (March 2023) we have an agreement signed between the irrigation community of Cádiz and in the next few weeks the second agreement will be signed between the Castril Town Council and the Castril Irrigation Community.

This collaboration with the local communities is also reflected in participatory activities, such as the cleaning of irrigation ditches, a school of balates or guided visits to particular heritage sites. We also work with the educational community of the municipalities in which we work, trying to bring the hydraulic heritage and the associated ecosystem services to the youngest children.



1. Educational activity about the traditional irrigation systems

3. Most of the pilot projects have in common the objective of creating **new visitor itineraries** that make it possible to discover the resources of a territory along a route (most of the time using soft means of transport).



In the Altiplano we are carrying out the creation and homologation of several cultural trails based on the paths of the Acequeros (irrigators). The homologation of the first of these will take place this spring. This is the path of the Acequia de Tubos (Castril). The homologation will mean the inclusion of this trail in the routes of the Andalusian Mountain Federation and it will be signposted according to the rules of the Federation.

This approval will also enable it to be published in various hiking-related media. The route will also be included on the websites regadiohistorico.es and wikiloc.com. It will also be complemented by heritage information on the points of interest it passes through, by means of QR codes and online downloads

2.Route of Acequia de Tubos (Castril)

This point is directly linked with 4. The design of **attractive narratives** of the itineraries is essential. These interest points are: Fuente de Tubos (with all the hydraulic infrastructures related: traditional laundry, pond and channels of irrigation), water mills, environmental information of Vega de Tubos, etc.



3. Two interest points: water mill and irrigation channel in Fuente de Tubos (Image: Celia López)

5. The participatory heritage inventory and the participatory design of itineraries also seem to be vectors considered relevant by all the partners. It would therefore be useful to better **share tools/methods** to facilitate this mode of participation: importance of field surveys, availability of digital tools for collecting and sharing information.

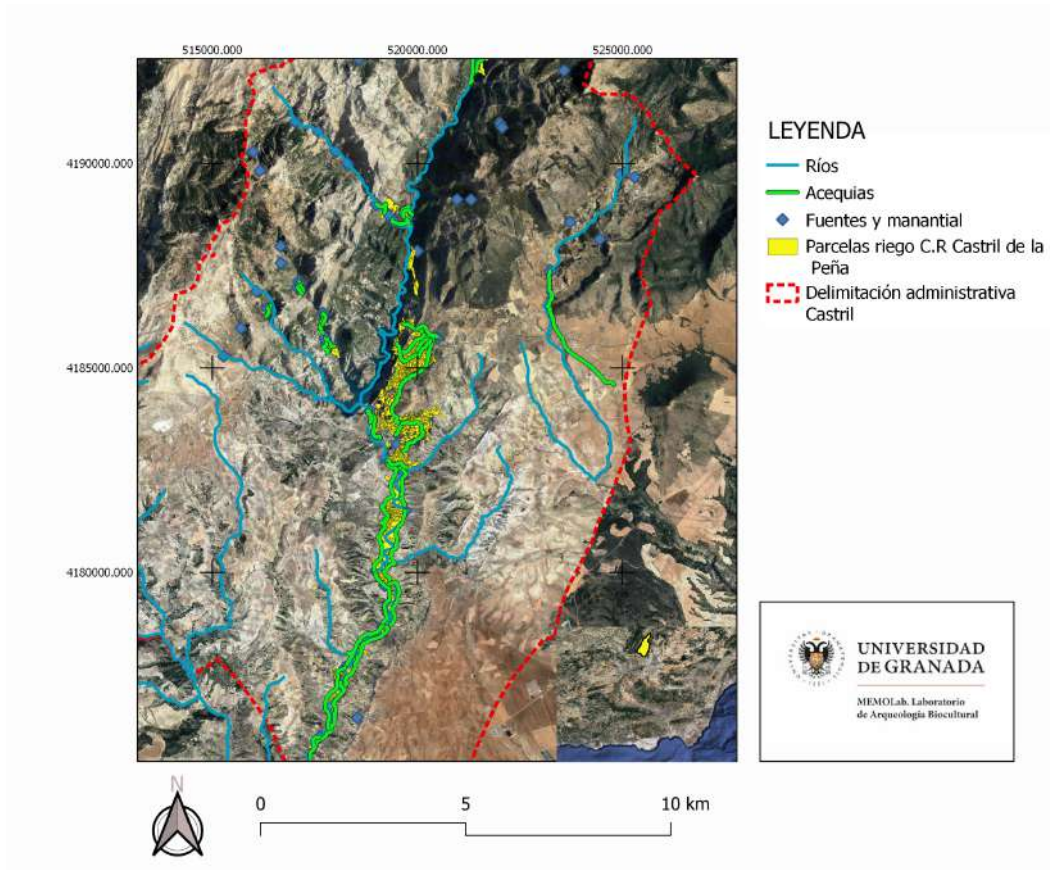
In our case, the digitalisation of the traditional irrigation system of Castril has been fundamental in order to have a general knowledge of the hydraulic heritage. With this information it has been possible to establish a first layout of the path that is going to be homologated. The work process has been as follows:

1. Contact with the irrigation community of Castril to obtain the necessary information: main irrigation channels, irrigation shifts and characteristics of the functioning of the irrigation system.
2. Field work: using QField, two archaeological technicians (Celia López and Elena Correa) were in charge of the complete digitalisation of the network of irrigation ditches and the location of the points of interest.



4. Field work in Castril (Image: Celia López)

3. Once all the field information had been obtained, and after several meetings with the Irrigation Community and the Town Council, a first layout of the path to be approved was established. At the same time, talks began to establish the points of the payment for services agreement, which will include the maintenance of the trail.
4. Contact with a company for the creation and homologation of footpaths which, with the field information obtained previously, is proceeding to homologate the footpath.



5. Final cartography of the irrigation system of Castril