



The usefulness and limits of a conservation plan integrated into an establishment's policy document

the example of the technical control of the buildings of ChalonsurSaône's public library

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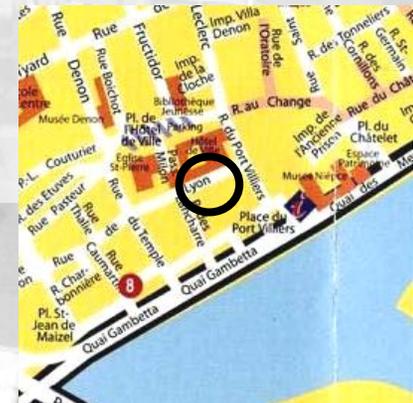
The context

IAQ2010, Chalon-sur-Saône, 21 April 2010



Short history in a few dates:

- 1792** : revolutionary confiscations (books, 18th- century wood panels from the La Ferté Abbey, two globes from the Capuchin Convent),
- 1824** : creation of a Public Library at Chalon-sur-Saône,
- 1845** : installation of the library in the former Carmelite Convent,
- 1972** : the library is listed as a historic monument



How the collection was created :

- Revolutionary confiscations** (La Ferté and Maizières Abbeys and other religious communities),
- 19th century**: acquisitions and donations (State and individuals),
- 20th century**: donations (local scholars) and policy of acquisition.

In figures:

The heritage collections (26% of the collection):

- 265** manuscripts (50% before 1810),
- 48 000** books, brochures and periodicals (80% before 1950),
- Graphic documents** (drawings, prints, cards, plans, post cards),
- 2** 18th-century globes.

→ varied materials requiring particular conservation conditions which are difficult to respect in old and dispersed locations.

Premises :

- storage area for heritage collection : 266 m²** (446m² with the reading room): 33% in the reading room, 58% in storage shelving and 9% in the Réserve (rarest and most precious documents),
- premises equipped with **thermo-hygrographs**,
- compromises by **lack of space** :
 - direct access by the public to the collections prohibited in the reading room but in fact possible (configuration of the space)
 - no separation between the room for consultation of heritage documents and general reading room,
 - presence of non-heritage documents in the storage shelving.
- storage not adapted** (T and RH too high and strong fluctuations),
- collections **dispersed between several locations**,
- 7 areas to be protected and 5 levels of priority**

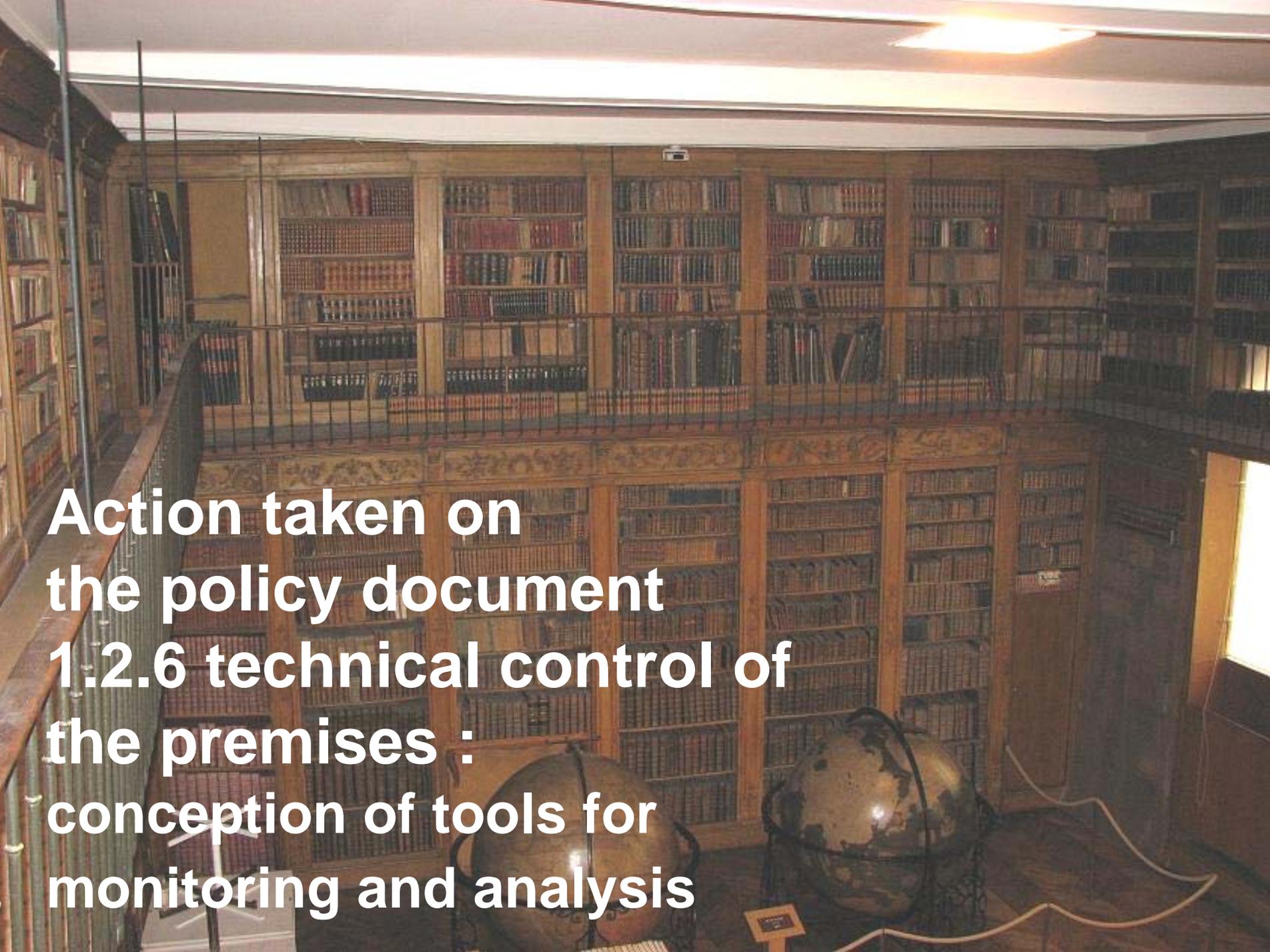
A photograph of a library interior, likely a historic building. The scene is viewed from an elevated position, possibly a mezzanine or balcony, looking down into a reading area. A large, ornate Gothic window with intricate tracery is the central focus, allowing bright light into the space. Below the window, several rows of bookshelves are visible, filled with books. In the foreground, a wooden railing with dark metal balusters is prominent. The ceiling is high and features exposed wooden beams and a large, dark, conical pendant light fixture. The overall atmosphere is one of a well-preserved, historic library.

**A conservation
plan integrated into
the establishment's
policy document**

4 aspects:

- the premises** : safety, technical control of the storage areas and other buildings
- the collections** : state, statistics, acquisitions, intellectual treatment, conservation, restoration, reproduction...
- the personnel** working on heritage collection;
- public access and display** : communication, borrowing, publications, promotion.

Plan integrated into the establishment's policy document (2006)



**Action taken on
the policy document
1.2.6 technical control of
the premises :
conception of tools for
monitoring and analysis**

Action taken since 2007: on the basis of good knowledge of environmental conditions (ECs)

Why?

- conducting a better **dialogue** with the professionals involved,
- better **evaluation** of the building's reaction to ECs,
- selecting** the conservation areas according to the documents and how fragile they are,
- correcting** the conditions if needed.

Putting in place an appropriate working group (curator, technical staff from Heritage sector, manager of building works at the Library).



How?

Definition of objectives

- budgeting** of equipment to monitor environmental conditions (ECs),
- updating** the way equipment is used and making recommendations for the improvement of ECs,
- interpretation** of data and **technical description** of the premises,
- listing** heating and air-conditioning systems and the staff in charge of them

Ways and means

Internal, institutional tools (Direction du Livre et de la Lecture, BNF) & reference works.

Updating of procedures and of who does what?

New measures, new means....

Aspects to cover

- quality of monitoring** in the work carried out,
- material resources** (purchase of materials, furniture, equipment or packaging and measuring apparatus),
- human resources** (trained personnel).

Application

- analysis of current data** (assessment of the situation),
- critical review and optimisation** (work organisation),
- discussion with specialists** (Energy Section of the Architecture Service).

Presentation of 2008 budget

- for **feasibility study** (modification of the air conditioning system),
- for **purchase** of a recording system and computer management of data.

Outcomes



Objectives met

- dialogue** between professionals,
- improvement works,**
- sharing responsibilities,**
- understanding of **how the building reacts,**
- choice of **adequate conservation spaces and small corrections of ECs,**
- purchase of equipment** ensuring the improvement of storage conditions (dehumidifier) and of exposure (luxmeter),
- ➔ putting in place a **coherent preventive conservation policy**: better awareness and discussion with partners, improvement of the quality of monitoring, training plan.

Limits

- personnel changing or moving** :
weakening the team needed,
- old buildings** : daily tasks more difficult and
adaptations limited,
- budgetary constraints.**

The Future

Carrying out Action 1.2.6 allows :

- us, with the other proposals of the establishment policy document, **to move towards a policy of preventive conservation,**
- discussions which will allow **advice for the future to emerge,** in the framework of a new library.

The image shows two large, ornate globes in a library or museum. The globes are mounted on decorative metal stands and are surrounded by a white rope barrier. In the background, there are tall wooden bookshelves filled with books. A central text overlay reads "I thank you for your attention".

I thank you for your attention

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