

The European Landscape Convention

Maguelonne Déjeant-Pons

"The landscape...

... has an important public interest role in the cultural, ecological, environmental and social fields, and constitutes a resource favourable to economic activity and whose protection, management and planning can contribute to job creation;

... contributes to the formation of local cultures and ... is a basic component of the European natural and cultural heritage, contributing to human well-being and consolidation of the European identity;

... is an important part of the quality of life for people everywhere: in urban areas and in the countryside, in degraded areas as well as in areas of high quality, in areas recognised as being of outstanding beauty as well as everyday areas;

... is a key element of individual and social well-being and ... its protection, management and planning entail rights and responsibilities for everyone."

Preamble to the European Landscape Convention

1 Why a landscape convention?

Even if recent developments in the social, economic and planning sphere have in many cases led to the destruction of landscapes, or rendered them featureless, landscape plays an important public interest role in the cultural, ecological, environmental and social fields and is gaining – or regaining – prominence. People and authorities are increasingly aware that it contributes to human development, to people's quality of life and to regional and European identity. In addition, landscape is beginning to be perceived not only as a major asset in environmental policies but also as a key factor for economic and regional activities, notably in terms of tourism. So landscape is a valuable resource conducive to regional development, too.

For all these reasons public authorities have a duty to preserve the quality of the landscape and to define the general framework for ensuring this quality.

The European Landscape Convention, adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and opened for signature in October 2000 in Florence, requires us to recognize the important value of landscapes and to reconcile commercial considerations with the right to well-being, health, aesthetics and beauty. The convention establishes the general legal principles which should serve as a basis for adopting national landscape policies and establishing international co-operation in such matters. It defines a general framework for preserving and ensuring the quality of the landscape. The aim is to preserve the quality of life and well-being of Europeans with due regard for their natural and cultural heritage¹.

2 Origins of the convention

Besides its main objectives – to promote democracy, human rights and the rule of law and to find joint solutions to the major problems facing European society today – the Council of Europe is committed to environmental protection and sustainable spatial development in keeping with the "Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent" adopted in Hanover on 8 September 2000 by the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning of the Member States of the Council of Europe (CEMAT).

On the basis of a first draft elaborated by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE), the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe decided to create a restricted group of experts mandated to draw up a European Landscape Convention, under the aegis of the Cultural Heritage Committee (CC-PAT) and of the Committee for the activities of the Council of Europe in the field of Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (CO-DBP). As a result of the work of this Group of experts, in which the main international, governmental and non-governmental organizations were involved, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted the final text of the Convention on 19 July 2000.

The European Landscape Convention was opened for signature in Florence, Italy, on 20 October 2000 in the framework of the Council of Europe Campaign "Europe, a common heritage" – at a ministerial conference held specially for the occasion.² As at 6 September 2002, 24 states had signed it and three of them, Norway, Moldova and Ireland approved or ratified it.³

Maguelonne Déjeant-Pons
Council of Europe
Head of the Spatial Planning
and Landscape Division
Directorate-General IV
67075 Strasbourg Cedex
France
E-Mail: maguelonne.dejeant-
pons@coe.int.

3 Purpose, structure and purport of the convention

The general purpose of the convention is to encourage public authorities to adopt policies and measures at local, regional, national and international level for protecting, managing and planning landscapes throughout Europe so as to maintain and improve landscape quality and bring the public, institutions and local and regional authorities to recognize the value and importance of landscape and to take part in related public decisions. The convention demands a forward-looking attitude on the part of all those whose decisions affect the protection, management or planning of landscapes. It has implications for many areas of official policy and official or private action, from the local to the European level.

The convention comprises a preamble and four main sections:

- Chapter I, setting out the objectives and scope of the convention, plus key definitions;
- Chapter II, stating the measures to be taken at national level;
- Chapter III, stating the basis for European co-operation, the measures to be taken at international level and the role of the Committees responsible for monitoring the implementation of the convention;
- Chapter IV, dealing with procedures for adopting the convention and related matters.

Aims of the convention

The aims of the convention are to promote European landscape protection, management and planning, and to organize European co-operation on landscape issues (Art. 3). This means ensuring the protection, management and planning of European landscapes through the adoption of national measures and the establishment of European co-operation between the Parties.

The preamble outlines the issues underlying the convention, emphasizing the following points:

- The convention is part of the Council of Europe's work on natural and cultural heritage, spatial planning, environment and local self-government.

It is the aim of the Council of Europe to achieve a greater unity between its members for the purpose of safe-guarding and realizing the ideals and principles which are their common heritage, and this aim is pursued in particular through agreements in the economic and social fields.

- The concern for sustainable development based on a balanced and harmonious relationship between social needs, economic activity and the environment, as expressed at the Rio de Janeiro conference and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, makes landscape an essential consideration in striking a balance between preserving the natural and cultural heritage as a reflection of European identity and diversity, and using it as an economic resource capable of generating employment in the context of the boom in sustainable tourism.

- The landscape is important as a component of the environment and of people's surroundings in both town and country, whether the landscape in question is ordinary or of outstanding beauty. The public is accordingly encouraged to take an active part in landscape management and planning, and to feel it has responsibility for what happens to the landscape.

The explanatory report on the convention considers that official landscape activities can no longer be allowed to be an exclusive field of study or action monopolized by specialist scientific and technical bodies. Landscape must become a mainstream political concern, since it plays an important role in the well-being of Europeans who are no longer prepared to tolerate the alteration of their surroundings by technical and economic developments in which they have had no say. Landscape is the concern of all and lends itself to democratic treatment, particularly at local and regional level. If people are given an active role in decision-making on landscape, they are more likely to identify with the areas and towns where they spend their working and leisure time. This in turn may help to promote the sustainable development of the area concerned, as the quality of landscape has an important bearing on the success of economic and social initiatives, whether public or private.

- i The Council of Europe member states, anxious to promote through international

(1) On the subject of natural and cultural heritage, see the other Council of Europe conventions: Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern, 19 September 1979), European Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Grenada, 3 October 1985) and the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (revised) (Valetta, 16 January 1992).

(2) The convention is to come into force on the first day of the month following the expiry of a period of three months after the date on which ten Council of Europe member states have consented to be bound by it with the deposit of instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval.

(3) See appendix

agreements the ideals which are their common heritage, possess a precious asset in the landscapes, and one which needs to be maintained and managed by means of effective international co-operation based on a legal instrument exclusively devoted to landscape.

Relationship with other existing texts

The signatory states declare in their preamble that they "wish to provide a new instrument devoted exclusively to the protection, management and planning of all landscapes in Europe". Today, the convention is in fact the foremost international treaty dealing exclusively with the protection, management and enhancement of the European landscape. A few international legal instruments are concerned with the subject of landscape, either directly or indirectly. None of them, however, deals directly, specifically and fully with European landscapes and their preservation, in spite of their invaluable contribution to our natural and cultural heritage and the numerous threats facing them.

The convention aims to fill this gap: it is thus distinct from the UNESCO Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of 16 November 1972, both formally and substantively. The two conventions have different purposes, as do the organizations under whose auspices they were drawn up. One is regional in scope, the other worldwide. The Council of Europe convention can be regarded as complementary to the UNESCO one.

As regards substantive scope, the Council of Europe convention covers all landscapes, even those that are not of outstanding universal value, but does not deal with historic monuments, unlike the UNESCO convention. Similarly, its main objective is not to draw up a list of assets of exceptional universal value, but to introduce protection, management and planning rules for all landscape based on a set of principles. Thus each convention has its distinctive features.⁴

The convention has regard to the existing conventions, regulations and instruments at national, European and international level in the field of protection and management of the natural and cultural heritage, regional and spatial planning,

local self-government and trans-frontier co-operation. These include in particular the UNESCO Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (Paris 1972), the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Grenada 1985), the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern 1979), the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (revisited, Valetta 1992), the Convention on Biological Diversity (Rio 1992), the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus 1998) as well as the European Outline Convention on Trans-frontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities (Madrid 1980), the European Charter of Local Self-government (Strasbourg 1985) and all the European Community regulations which matter this fields.

In order to avoid any difficulties with other international legal instruments, the convention states that it shall not prejudice stricter provisions concerning landscape protection, management and planning contained in other existing or future binding national or international instruments.⁵

3 Scope of the convention

Substantive scope

The convention provides that subject to the provisions contained in Article 15⁶, it applies to the entire territory of the Parties and covers natural, rural, urban and peri-urban areas. It includes land, inland water and marine areas. It concerns landscapes that might be considered outstanding as well as everyday or degraded landscapes.

It is worth noting that the policies and measures mentioned in the convention must cover all the forms of landscape which countries possess. The convention applies to all parts of Europe and covers natural, rural, urban and peri-urban areas, whether terrestrial, aquatic (lakes and areas of brackish water) or marine (coastal waters and the territorial sea). It therefore applies not only to outstanding landscapes but also to everyday and damaged landscapes. The landscape is now recognized irrespective of its exceptional value, since all

(4) The explanatory report states that in order to co-ordinate action under the two conventions, consideration could be given to scientific co-operation between the Unesco World Heritage Committee and the Committees of Experts mentioned under Article 10 of the European Landscape Convention, under Article 13.7 of the Unesco Convention of 16 November 1972, and as suggested in Article 7 of the convention.

(5) Article 12 of the convention (Relationship with other instruments). The wording of this article is based on model provisions already used in other international conventions in order to deal with the problem of linking up conventions concerned with similar fields.

(6) Article 2 of the convention (Scope). See territorial scope, below.

kinds of landscapes influence people's surroundings and deserve to be taken into account in landscape policies. Many rural and peri-urban areas in particular are undergoing profound changes and should receive more attention from the authorities and the public at large.

An original feature of this convention is that it applies to ordinary landscapes no less than to outstanding ones. This comprehensive coverage is justified for the following reasons: every landscape forms the setting for the lives of the population concerned; urban and rural landscapes interlock in complex ways; most Europeans live in towns and cities (large or small), the quality of whose landscapes greatly affects their lives; and finally, rural landscapes occupy an important place in the European consciousness.

Extending the scope of local authorities' official landscape action to cover the whole of national territory does not mean, however, that the same measures and policies must be applied to all landscapes. These measures and policies should be adaptable to particular types of landscape, which, depending on their specific characteristics, will need various forms of treatment at local level, ranging from the strictest conservation via protection, management and planning to actual creation. These various treatments may pave the way for major socio-economic development of the area concerned.

The convention is not confined, either, to the cultural or man-made components of landscape: it is concerned with all of these and how they interconnect.

Geographical scope

The convention is open for signature by the member states of the Council of Europe. It is provided that after its entry into force, the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers may invite the European Community and any European state which is not a member of the Council of Europe, to accede to the convention by a majority decision as provided in Article 20 d of the Council of Europe Statute, and by the unanimous vote of the States parties entitled to hold seats in the Committee of Ministers.⁷

Territorial scope

The convention states in an article entitled "Territorial application" that any state or the European Community may, at the time of signature or when depositing its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, specify the territory or territories to which the convention is to apply. In addition, any party may, at any later date, by declaration addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, extend the application of this convention to any other territory specified in the declaration. It is also provided that any declaration made under the foregoing provisions may, in respect of any territory mentioned in such declaration, be withdrawn by notification addressed to the Secretary General.

These provisions refer to the facility whereby some countries are allowed, on constitutional grounds, not to apply a ratified international treaty automatically to some territories, in particular overseas. Only territories which have a special status are covered, such as overseas territories or the Faroe Islands or Greenland in the case of Denmark, or Gibraltar, the Isle of Man, Jersey or Guernsey in the case of the United Kingdom. It is well understood, however, that it would be contrary to the object and purpose of the convention for any Party to exclude parts of its main territory from the convention's scope and that it was unnecessary to make this point explicit in the convention.

Temporal scope

The convention has the advantage of applying indefinitely, and of being implemented under the auspices of an international organization, the Council of Europe.

Like any international convention, this convention is a dynamic legal instrument, which evolves together with the subject matter of its provisions. The way in which landscape values and interests are addressed should thus be able to keep pace with changes in those values and interests. It is therefore provided that any Party or the committees of experts mentioned in the convention may propose amendments to the convention. Amendments can adapt or improve a convention. The committees of experts mentioned in Article 10 of the convention may prepare amendments and consider those suggested by Parties.⁸

(7) In respect of any acceding State, or the European Community in the event of its accession, the convention shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the expiry of a period of three months after the date of deposit of the instrument of accession with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe (Article 14 of the convention – Accession).

(8) See below the body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the convention.

Any proposal for amendment shall be notified to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe who shall communicate it to the member states of the Council of Europe, to the other Parties, and to any European non-member state which has been invited to accede to the convention. Any proposal for amendment shall be examined by the body supervising the implementation of the convention which shall submit the text adopted by a majority of three-quarters of the Parties' representatives to the Committee of Ministers for adoption. Following its adoption by the Committee of Ministers by the majority provided for in Article 20.d of the Statute of the Council of Europe and by the unanimous vote of the States parties entitled to hold seats in the Committee of Ministers, the text shall be forwarded to the Parties for acceptance.

4 Content of the convention

Definitions

The terms used in the convention are defined in Article 1 in order to ensure that they are interpreted uniformly by everyone concerned with the well-being of Europe's landscapes:

- Landscape

"Landscape" means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors. The term "landscape" is thus defined as a zone or area as perceived by local people or visitors, whose visual features and character are the result of the action of natural and/or cultural (that is, human) factors. This definition reflects the idea that landscapes evolve through time, as a result of being acted upon by natural forces and human beings. It also underlines that a landscape forms a whole, whose natural and cultural components are taken together, not separately.

- Landscape policy

"Landscape policy" means an expression by the competent public authorities of general principles, strategies and guidelines that permit the taking of specific measures aimed at the protection, management and planning of landscapes.

- Landscape quality objective

"Landscape quality objective" means, for a specific landscape, the formulation by the competent public authorities of the aspirations of the public with regard to the landscape features of their surroundings. The terms "landscape policy" and "landscape quality objective" relate to the phases of the strategy which states have to devise in two stages:

- "Landscape policy" reflects the public authorities' awareness of the need to frame an official policy on landscape. It lays down the basic emphases, general principles and strategic choices by which decisions on landscape protection, management and planning are to be guided;
- "Landscape quality objective", once a particular landscape has been identified and described, is a detailed statement of the characteristics which local people want recognized in their surroundings.

- Landscape protection

"Landscape protection" means actions to conserve and maintain the significant or characteristic features of a landscape, justified by its heritage value derived from its natural configuration and/or from human activity.

- Landscape management

"Landscape management" means action, from a perspective of sustainable development, to ensure the regular upkeep of a landscape, so as to guide and harmonize changes which are brought about by social, economic and environmental processes.

- Landscape planning

"Landscape planning" means strong forward-looking action to enhance, restore or create landscapes. Article 1 of the convention contains definitions of three terms frequently used in the convention: "protection", "management" and "planning" of landscapes, principles of landscape action which are treated in a dynamic and forward-looking manner:

- landscape protection consists of measures to preserve the present character and quality of a landscape which is greatly valued on account of its distinctive natural or cultural configuration. Such protection must be active and involve upkeep measures to preserve significant features of a landscape;

- landscape management is any measures introduced, in accordance with the principle of sustainable development, to steer changes brought about by economic, social or environmental necessity. Such measures may be concerned with the organization of the landscape or its components. They will ensure a regular upkeep of the landscape and that the landscape evolves harmoniously and in a way that meets economic and social needs. The management approach must be a dynamic one and seek to improve landscape quality on the basis of the population's expectations;
- landscape planning is the formal process of study, design and construction by which new landscapes are created to meet the aspirations of the people concerned. It involves framing proper planning projects, more particularly in those most affected by change and badly damaged areas (for example suburbs, peri-urban and industrial areas, coastal areas). The purpose of such planning projects is to radically reshape the damaged landscapes.

In each area of landscape, the balance between these three types of activity depends on the character of the area and the objectives agreed. Some areas may merit the strictest protection. At the other extreme, there may be areas whose landscapes are severely damaged and need entirely reshaping. Most landscapes need a combination of the three modes of action, and some of them need some degree of intervention.

In seeking the right balance between protection, management and planning of a landscape, the convention does not aim to preserve or "freeze" the landscape at a particular point in its lengthy evolution. Landscapes have always changed and will continue to change, both through natural processes and through human action. In fact, the aim should be to manage future changes in a way which recognizes the great diversity and the quality of the landscapes that we inherit and which seeks to preserve, or even enhance, that diversity and quality instead of allowing them to decline.

Obligations at national level

The Contracting Parties undertake to protect, manage and/or plan their landscapes by means of a whole series of general and specific measures at national level, with due regard for the principle of subsidiarity. Each Party implements the convention, in particular the articles concerning the measures to be taken at national level, according to its own division of powers, in conformity with its constitutional principles and administrative arrangements, taking into account the European Charter of Local Self-government. The convention must therefore be implemented at the most appropriate level of government for landscape action and if necessary, local and regional authorities, and groupings of such authorities, are guaranteed formal involvement in the implementation process.

Where local and regional authorities have the necessary competence, protection, management and planning of landscapes will be more effective if responsibility for their implementation is entrusted – within the constitutional framework laid down in law at national level – to the authorities closest to the communities concerned. Each country should set out in detail the tasks and measures for which each level – national, regional or local – is responsible and should lay down rules for inter-level co-ordination of such measures, in particular where town planning and regional planning instruments are concerned.

The convention leaves Parties the choice of means to be used within their internal legal arrangements to fulfil their obligations. The legal, administrative, fiscal and financial arrangements made in each country to serve the convention's implementation should fit in as comfortably as possible with that country's traditions. Also, on the basis of the principle of subsidiarity, responsibility for action relating to landscape lies with public authorities not only at national and international levels, but also at local and regional levels.

The Contracting Parties undertake to implement four general measures (Article 5):

- to recognize landscapes in law as an essential component of people's surroundings, an expression of the diversity of their shared cultural and

natural heritage, and a foundation of their identity;

- to establish and implement landscape policies aimed at landscape protection, management and planning;
- to establish procedures for the participation of the general public, local and regional authorities, and other parties with an interest in the definition and implementation of landscape policies;
- to integrate landscape into its regional and town planning policies and in its cultural, environmental, agricultural, social and economic policies, as well as in any other policies with possible direct or indirect impact on landscape.

The Contracting Parties further undertake to implement, in a consecutive manner, five specific measures:

- Awareness-raising: this involves increasing awareness among civil society, private organizations and public authorities of the value of landscapes, their role and changes to them.
- Training and education: this involves promoting: training for specialists in landscape appraisal and operations; multidisciplinary training programmes in landscape policy, protection, management and planning, for professionals in the private and public sectors and for the relevant associations; school and university courses which, in the relevant subject areas, address the values attaching to landscapes and the issues raised by their protection, management and planning.
- Identification and assessment: this involves mobilizing the interested parties with a view to improving knowledge of the landscapes and guiding the landscape identification and assessment procedures through exchanges of experience and methodology, organized between the Parties at European level.

Each Party accordingly undertakes: to identify its own landscapes throughout its territory; to analyse their characteristics and the forces and pressures transforming them; to take note of changes; and to assess the landscapes thus identified, taking into account the particular values assigned to them by the interested parties and the population concerned (Article 6 of the convention – Specific measures).

- Landscape quality objectives: this involves framing landscape quality objectives for the landscapes identified and assessed, after public consultation.
- Implementation: this involves introducing instruments aimed at protecting, managing and/or planning the landscape, such as e.g. awareness-raising, training and education, identification and evaluation so as implementation (Article 6, Specific measures).

Obligations at international level

The Contracting Parties undertake to co-operate in the consideration of the landscape dimension of international policies and programmes, and to recommend, where relevant, the inclusion in them of landscape considerations (Article 7, International policies and programmes). The convention should allow international bodies and programmes to take more account of landscape. To that end the Parties most aware of the landscape problem should play an active part by co-ordinating their ideas and proposals in the body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the convention. It is further provided that the Council of Europe should engage in particular landscape co-operation with other governmental international organizations, in particular UNESCO, the European Union and IUCN, as well as with other non-governmental organizations.

They further undertake to co-operate in order to enhance the effectiveness of measures taken under the provisions of the convention, and in particular: to render each other technical and scientific assistance in landscape matters through the pooling and exchange of experience, and the results of research projects; to promote the exchange of landscape specialists in particular for training and information purposes; and to exchange information on all matters covered by the provisions of the convention (Article 8, Mutual assistance and exchange of information). Recent years have seen a burgeoning of political, professional and academic interest in the subject of landscapes, hence the development of a growing body of experience and expertise on which member states, local and regional authorities and others can draw as they seek to implement the convention. At the same time, the growth of electronic

communication and the arrival of the Internet have provided radically improved tools for exchanging ideas and, indeed, for the technical study of landscapes. These developments create a much wider basis for the exchange of ideas and mutual support than was possible even a decade ago, allowing local actors throughout Europe to take part and thus creating a true “landscape democracy”.

Trans-frontier landscapes are covered by a specific provision: the Parties undertake to encourage trans-frontier co-operation at local and regional level and, wherever necessary, prepare and implement joint landscape programmes (Article 9, Trans-frontier landscapes). Article 9 of the convention requires the parties to set up trans-frontier programmes for the identification, evaluation, protection, management and planning of landscapes which straddle borders. In doing so, they are asked to rely as far as possible, in accordance with the subsidiarity principle defined by the European Charter of Local Self-Government, on local and regional authorities, and to use the implementation tools advocated in the European Outline Convention on Trans-frontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities in Europe of 21 May 1980 and its additional protocols.

Council of Europe Landscape Award

The convention provides for a Council of Europe Landscape Award (Article 11, landscape award of the Council of Europe). This is a way of recognizing local or regional authorities or non-governmental organizations which have introduced policies or measures for the protection, management and/or planning of landscapes which have been of lasting worth and can serve as an example to other authorities throughout Europe.

The award is intended as an incentive for local operators, so as to encourage and recognize quality stewardship of landscapes. It is conferred by the Committee of Ministers, on a proposal from the body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the convention.

The award may be conferred on local and regional authorities, or groupings thereof, that have instituted, as part of the landscape policy of a Party to the convention, a policy or measures to protect, manage and/

or plan their landscape, which have proved lastingly effective and can thus serve as an example to other territorial authorities in Europe. The distinction may be also conferred on non-governmental organizations which have made particularly remarkable contributions to landscape protection, management or planning.

Applications for the Landscape Award are to be submitted by the Parties to the body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the convention. Trans-frontier local and regional authorities and groupings of local and regional authorities concerned (within a single country or on a trans-frontier basis) may apply provided that they jointly manage the landscape in question. On proposals from the body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the convention, the Committees of Ministers defines and publishes the criteria for conferring the award, adopts the relevant rules and makes the award.

The landscape award is meant to encourage those receiving it to ensure the sustainable protection, management and/or planning of the landscape areas concerned. The award is accordingly intended as a stimulus to a process, which countries throughout Europe could set in motion, of encouraging and recognizing quality stewardship of landscapes. It could thus “crown” national level action, which might include national competitions and perhaps financial support to the local and regional authorities concerned. The explanatory report states that local and regional authorities, groups of them, or non-governmental organizations can apply for the award through their member state. The Contracting Party can thus appraise the applications, possibly in a national competition carrying national prizes or awards, and put forward to the body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the convention, the national winner or a small number of candidates for consideration for the award.

5 Institutional apparatus

The Council of Europe acts as secretariat for the convention and has structures in which all the Parties to the convention can be represented.

The convention provides that existing competent Committees of Experts, set up under Article 17 of the Council of Europe

Statute, are to be designated by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the convention (Article 10, Monitoring of the implementation of the convention). It was felt that it would be easier to achieve the objectives of the convention if the representatives of Contracting Parties were able to meet regularly to devise joint co-ordinated programmes and to jointly monitor the application of the convention.

Given the many aspects of the concept of landscape and landscape-related activities, it was decided that the monitoring of the application of the convention could be entrusted to the Committee for the activities of the Council of Europe in the field of biological and landscape diversity (CO-DBP) and the Cultural Heritage Committee (CC-PAT) which work, within the Council of Europe, in the sphere addressed by the convention and have direct access to the Committee of Ministers. It was also felt that in order to carry out this task, the committees could hold joint meetings – as part of a conference, to be considered as the body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the convention – in order that the convention might benefit from an appropriate forum for discussion. The Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE) are involved in the work of these committees relating to the convention.

Given local and regional authorities' increasing responsibilities with regard to the protection, management and planning of landscape, the CLRAE may convey opinions to the Committee of Ministers on the reports drawn up by the Council of Europe committees responsible for monitoring the application of the convention, on the basis of Article 2, indent 2 of Statutory Resolution (2000) 1.

The convention states that following each meeting of the Committees of Experts, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe will forward a report on the work carried out and on the operation of the convention to the Committee of Ministers and that the body responsible for its implementation will propose to the Committee of Ministers the criteria for conferring and the rules governing the Council of Europe Landscape Award. (Article 10, Monitoring of the implementation of the Convention). The explanatory report on the convention states that the CLRAE is called upon to participate actively in the follow-up activities and to give its opinion on the criteria for the conferral of the Council of Europe Landscape Award.

6 Conclusion

Modern lifestyles mean that people are increasingly keen to live in unspoilt surroundings again and to preserve their heritage, both natural and cultural. Thanks to this growing social pressure, landscape is gaining – or regaining – prominence and beginning to be perceived as a key component of environmental policies. It is also a major asset for regional development in terms of tourism.

The European Landscape Convention holds out great hope, requiring us, as it does, to recognize the importance and value of landscapes and to reconcile commercial considerations with the right to well-being, health, aesthetics and beauty.

Appendix

Signature of the European Landscape Convention (status 6/9/02)

Member States of the Council of Europe:

States	Date of signature	Date of ratification	Date of entry into force	Notes	R. D. A. T. C. O.
Albania					
Andorra					
Armenia					
Austria					
Azerbaijan					
Belgium	20/10/00				
Bosnia and Herzegovina					
Bulgaria	20/10/00				
Croatia	20/10/00				
Cyprus	21/11/01				
Czech Republic					
Denmark	20/10/00				
Estonia					
Finland	20/10/00				
France	20/10/00				
Georgia					
Germany					
Greece	13/12/00				
Hungary					
Iceland					
Ireland	22/03/02				
Italy	20/10/00				
Latvia					
Liechtenstein					
Lithuania	20/10/00				
Luxembourg	20/10/00				
Malta	20/10/00				
Moldova	20/10/00	14/03/02			
Netherlands					
Norway	20/10/00	23/10/01			
Poland	21/12/01				
Portugal	20/10/00				
Romania	20/10/00				
Russia					
San Marino	20/10/00				
Slovakia					
Slovenia	07/03/01				
Spain	20/10/00				
Sweden	22/02/01				
Switzerland	20/10/00				
the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia					
Turkey	20/10/00				
Ukraine					
United Kingdom					

Total number of signatures not followed by ratifications: 21

Total number of ratifications/accessions: 3

The convention is open for signature by the member States of the Council of Europe and for accession by the European Community and the European non-member States, condition for its entry into force are 10 ratifications

Notes :

a: Accession - s: Signature without reservation as to ratification - su: Succession - r: Signature "ad referendum".

R.: Reservations - D.: Declarations - A.: Authorities - T.: Territorial Application - C.: Communication - O.: Objection.

Non-member States of the Council of Europe:

Source: Treaty Office on <http://conventions.coe.int>