

Montenegro has ratified the Convention on the areas of the Council of Europe in 2008, when we started the implementation of the Convention at the national level. Significant steps have been made in identifying landscapes in legislation relating to the development of space, then the implementation of the study and plan for landscapes within the planning documents, as well as training the necessary personnel.

Montenegro declared itself an ecological state, and this obliges us always when dealing with spatial planning. We are one of the few states that the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism encompasses the planning, environmental protection and tourism development, and we believe we have an advantage, because we provide an integrated approach in spatial development, and that obliges us valuable landscapes which are a part of our identity and our culture.

Landscapes is exactly our resources and that is why we, as a small country, with a large landscape variety, very interested for investors of large tourist projects, and therefore, the responsibilities for the preservation of that identity and achieve economic benefits of Montenegrin citizens, something that is a major challenge in our work.

Therefore, we are particularly committed to the implementation of the Landscape Convention of the Council of Europe, both at the state and local level through networking of relevant institutions and their activities.

We find it especially important for public participation in the planning landscapes, on which we are working through a joint project with the World Bank, where we received the best grades as an example of good practice in the region.

Reform of Urban Planning policy, that we presented earlier this year as one of the key postulates, includes preservation of the identity of space and recognition of Montenegrin landscape.

All of these activities that we will see today in presentations of experts from Montenegro, are recognized by our European colleagues in the Council of Europe, and recommended us to organize this workshop.

I am, as a landscaped architect, today especially proud that during yesterday's tour through the part of our unique landscapes we shared emotion and experience of visiting Montenegro landscapes which is a part of our identity and existence in this area.

I wish you all that during our work continue to share the same emotions and exchange of experiences, conclusions and lessons, which we would all draw from our work, translate into a new energy to the implementation of the Landscape Convention of the Council of Europe.