

ECOVAST AUSTRIA

European Council of the
Village and Small Town



**13th Council of Europe, workshop for the implementation of
the European Landscape Convention**

CETINJE, Montenegro

02-03 October 2013

A stylized, monochromatic illustration of a landscape. It features rolling hills, a winding road, a cow in a field, and a cluster of buildings including a church with a tall spire. The style is graphic and minimalist, using various shades of gray and black on a white background.

ECOVAST Landscape Identification

**A guide
to good practice**

March 2009



EUROPEAN COUNCIL
for the
VILLAGE AND SMALL TOWN



Matrix for landscape identification

List of determining character elements

- 10 Feelings and associations
- 9 Historic features (e.g. castles, monasteries, archaeological sites)
- 8 Other man-made features (e.g. industry, tourism, infrastructure)
- 7 Characteristic features of houses and settlements
- 6 Characteristic features and patterns of agriculture and forestry
- 5 Land cover (vegetation, wildlife, habitats)
- 4 Soil
- 3 Land form (geomorphology)
- 2 Climate (hydrology, rivers, lakes, glaciers)
- 1 Rocks (surface geology)

Name of the Landscape unit: Weinviertel (the Wine Quarter, Austria)			
Relative strength of the features (gradation 1-4):			
dominating	strong	moderate	low
10			"Gouache Landscape" harmonious, well maintained
9			
8	Avenues of cherry trees		
	Settlement structure "Villages in line" ("Straßendörfer")		
7	Rows of wine cellars ("Kellergassen")		
6	Windbreaks Vineyards		
5	"Field edge vegetation" (Ackrandvegetation)	Pseudo Acacia (Robinia)	
4		Bare soil on Loess	
3	Gentle curved landscape (Dellentäler)		
2		Pannonian climate	
1		Loess	
(outstanding characteristics written bold)			

Short description (characteristics, total impression, spirituality of landscape):

Gentle, curved landscape of low hills. "Gouache Landscape", harmonious, well maintained, ubiquitous farmland. Rare windbreakers, rare forests. Characteristic features and structures of houses and settlements; one storied farmhouses, "Street villages" in compact arrangement; wooden "backside-barns". "Kellergassen" (lanes of wine cellars), vineyards, though not ubiquitous. The characteristic loess is perceptible throughout the whole Weinviertel and causes the impression of a "gouache landscape".

Assessment (your first evaluation of the importance of the landscape):

The Weinviertel is one of the western most landscapes characteristic for the "pannonian climate" (hot and dry summers, cold, dry and windy winters). The central part is occupied by a line of a little higher hills, so called "Cliff Zone" (Lime stone cliffs), some carrying castles or ruins (like Staatz and Falkenstein). Landscape of national value.

Additional comments (e.g. reference to regulations due to conservation orders or requirements):

Recent changes of the landscape due to the cultivation of "alternative plants" and crops.

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Weinviertel



Cherry tree avenues still exist in the Wine Quarter, indeed are being replanted along main and side roads. When main roads are widened, one line of trees is often cut down, leaving semi-avenues.

Cherries are a regional speciality. People may pick up the fruit by permission of the local authorities. Many families from Vienna take the opportunity to gather their rural fruit in this way.

Lines of wine cellars are a lively tradition in this region and form a strong characteristic of the landscape, though not as ubiquitous as the vineyards. They can be found in four main regions around the rim of the Wine Quarter. But every village has at least one lane or line of cellars, sometimes separate from the main settlement in a cellar hamlet ("Kellerdorf"). Almost every group of wine cellars has its own wine festival. Throughout the year everyone is welcome to taste and buy the wine at the cellar.



Participants in the Stupava workshop, particularly those from outside Austria, saw this as a "landscape of gentle curves". This impression comes not only from the form of land, with flowing hills and shallow valleys ("Dellentäler" – a fossil landform from the last iceage), but also from the swinging border lines of the farmer's fields. Some also described it as a "gouache" landscape, with the underlying whiteness showing through all the colours.

The line of the blue hills at the horizon are the Small Carpathians



Vineyards do not need protection against the wind. Where the vines are planted in rows running up the slopes, they expose the soil to erosion by summer thunderstorms. The rich eroded soil is collected in "retention basins" and then carried back up the vineyards by tractors, rather than in backpacks as in former times.

The colourful wild vegetation on the edge of fields is not only an aesthetic delight but also of high ecological value.

The same is true of some alternative crops which are increasingly grown. The impression of a "gouache" landscape can be gained throughout the year — in summer from the ripening corn and the stubble after harvest, in other seasons from the bare arable soil with the characteristic color of the "Löss" (the oolitic deposition of the iceage).

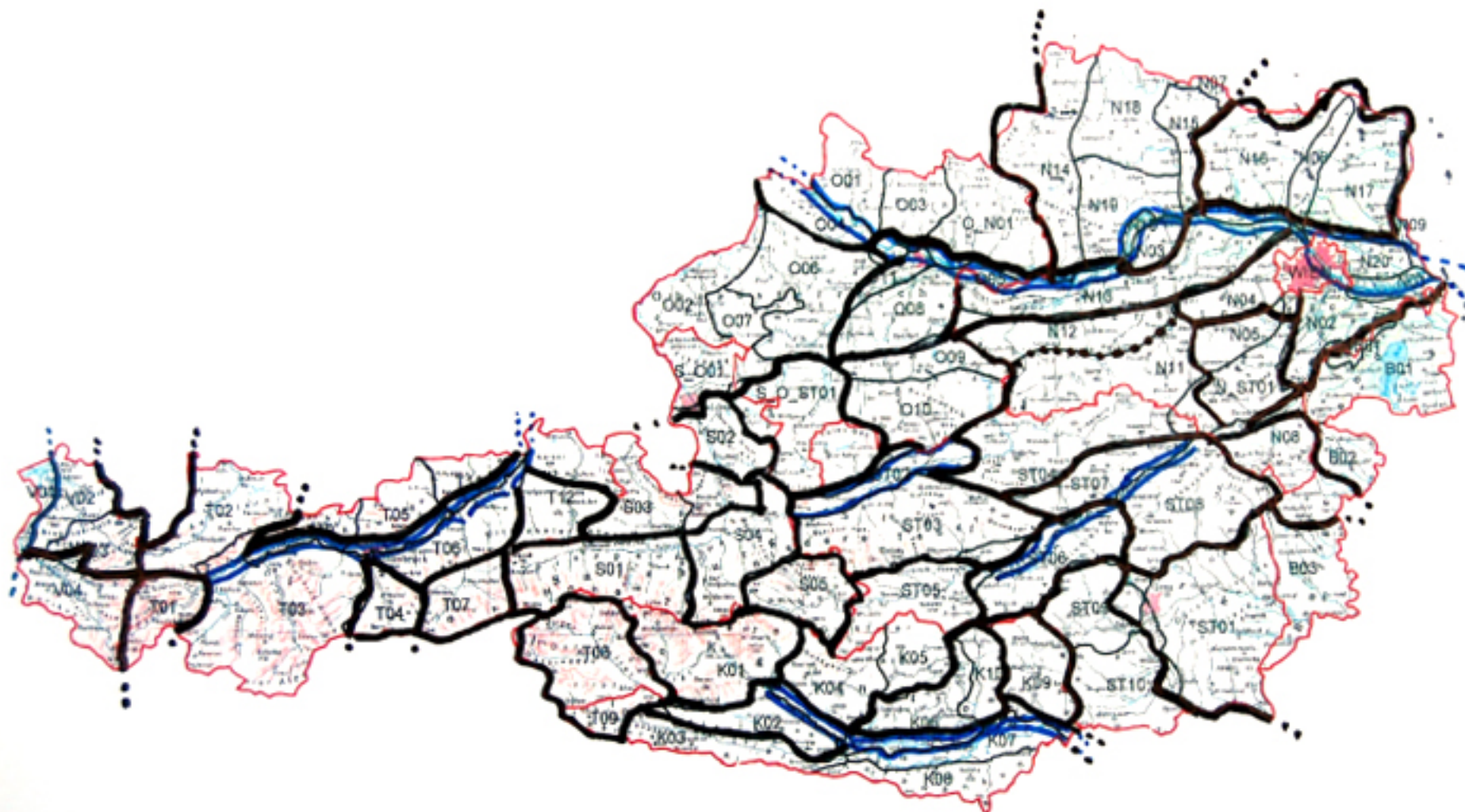






ARBEITSKARTE RÄUME CHARAKTERISTISCHER LANDSCHAFTSBEZOGENER ERLEBBARKEIT

Fachgruppe "Alpine Naturparke" CIPRA Österreich



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Thank you for your interest and audience!