

Our distinguished Hungarian Hosts

Dear colleagues and participants

Then we are at the closing of this 17th workshop, and I will congratulate our hosts in the Hungarian Ministries and in the Hetés with this very successful meeting and study visit. You have shown us great hospitality. I would also thank the speakers, chairs and rapporteur for their contributions and all who have participated. Maria Jose have already reported the workshop in an excellent way and I will try not to repeat her or Maguelonne.

The workshops for the Landscape Award are specially interesting because it present projects which can serve as an example to other territorial authorities in Europe. The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe have adopted the rules governing the Landscape Award and the Jury are given the task to follow this rules. An important part is therefore the application form are filled in carefully and that the Jury assesses the projects on the basis of the established criteria and not according to their own preferences or academic visions. I want to congratulate chair of the Jury Mrs Maria Jose Festas with having ensured that this was followed.

In this 4th Session of the Landscape Award several of the projects includes different strategies to deal with the Rural landscapes and the challenges of Modern Agriculture. One group of projects are using the Landscape to see Natural Assets and Cultural Heritage as a whole and are looking at how to improve management in a sustainable manner and ensure the values for future generations.

Each Country have to find its own way to meet the challenges because no Landscape are alike, but yet we see that there are lot of common challenges for large parts of Europe. This shows the necessity, the value of having a common platform in the European Landscape Convention and the Workshops. The Conventions particularly emphasis on the participation of all stakeholders and especially the locale public, and we see that the bottom up approach are one of the success factors in the projects that have been presented. The connection between people and their Landscape is very important to ensure duration of projects and Local involvement is a key factor for success.

Something I noticed are that the majority of the projects are not clear on the connections to the Landscape itself or the European Landscape Convention. They do not have a clear basis in a Landscape strategy. In many cases it appears as the Landscape, the Landscape values and the Landscape Convention are something they have discovered along the way in the project. This will be something to further investigate in our upcoming 18th Workshop on “National policies for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention: challenges and opportunities”, in Yerevan, Armenia, 5-7 October 2016.

I hope to meet you again at coming workshops. There are many important topics related to the landscapes that we have to follow up. If you have ideas and views on the way we may be working or improvement to be done - then send me an e-mail. You find my address in the list of participants.

Then once again I want to thank our excellent hosts and wish you all a pleasant trip home.