

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION

SEVENTEENTH COUNCIL OF EUROPE MEETING OF THE WORKSHOPS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION

Council of Europe Landscape Award Forum of National Selections

4th Session 2014-2015

**Budapest, Hungary
9-10 June 2016**

Closing speech

Mrs Maguelonne DEJEANT-PONS, Executive Secretary of the European Landscape Convention, Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape, Council of Europe

Now that we have reached the end of this national selection forum for the Council of Europe Landscape Award, with the focus on the 4th Session 2014-2015, I would like to express, on behalf of the Council of Europe Secretariat and the participants, my sincere gratitude to the Government of Hungary, the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture and its Landscape Department. Many thanks for your help in organising this event and your wonderful hospitality. The Award Ceremony on 9 June in the Vigado Concert Hall was a fantastic experience that we will never forget.

Our thanks go to Mr Sándor FAZEKAS, Minister of Agriculture, Mr János FÓNAGY, Minister of State, Ministry of National Development, and Mr Zsolt FÜLEKY, Deputy State Secretary, Prime Minister's Office, for their opening speeches, and to Mr Zsolt V. NÉMETH, Minister of State, Ministry of Agriculture, for participating in this closing session.

We would also like to say a special thank you to Mrs Krisztina KINCSES, National Representative for the European Landscape Convention, Ministry of Agriculture, and to all the officials at the Ministry of Agriculture who helped make this gathering a success.

We would like to thank Mrs Katalin CSILLAG, Head of Unit of International Affairs, Cultural Heritage Department, Prime Minister's Office, member of the Steering Committee for Culture Heritage and Landscape of the Council of Europe, and also Mrs Viktória PÁLÓCZI-HORVÁTH, Head of Unit, European Union and International Affairs for Education, Culture and Sport, Department for European Union Affairs and International Organisations, Ministry of Human Capacities, for their involvement. It was much appreciated.

We were highly honoured to welcome Mr Mihály MÖCSÉNYI, *Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe Awardee* Landscape Architect, former Rector of the University of Horticulture and Food Industry, Budapest, Hungary, former President of the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA).

Our thanks go to the Mayors of Bödeháza, Gáborjánháza, Szigártóháza and Zalasombatfa in Hungary, to the mayors of Genterovci, Kamovci, Radmožanci, Žitkovci, Mostje and Banuta in Slovenia, to the Greenways Methodology Association and the Iron Curtain Trail Association and to the residents of the Hungarian and Slovenian villages for their superb welcome, on 8 June, when participants had the chance to visit various sites and the project which won the Landscape Award in 2015: *“Borderless co-operation of local communities for the landscape heritage of “Fabulous” Hetés”*. We greatly appreciated the traditions, dancing, music, culinary specialities and architecture, which really bring the landscape alive. We wish to extend our congratulations and to say a special thank you to Andrea BEDŐ, who represents the project.

We were also enchanted by the panoramic views from the Lendava watchtower, and wish to thank the mayor for his hospitality. Our thanks also go to the Herman Ottó Institute and to Gabor KISS and his staff for their hard work.

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On behalf of the Council of Europe Secretariat, I also wish to express my sincere appreciation to the government representatives – members of the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP), the Council of Europe Conference on the European Landscape Convention – and the originators of the projects:

– Belgium: Mrs Isabelle LEROY, Senior Officer, Ministry of the Region of Brussels-Capital, Representative of the Ministry, and Mr Michel MOREELS, Commission of the Environment of Brussels and its environs asbl, Representative of the Project;

– Croatia: Mr Radoslav BUŽANČIĆ, Head of the Conservation Department of Split, Ministry of Culture, Representative of the Ministry, and Mrs Jasna DAMJANOVIC, Responsible of the Cultural Center of Brač, Representative of the Project;

– Cyprus: Mr Phaedon ENOTIADES, Ministry of the Interior, Department of Town Planning and Housing, Representative of the Ministry, and Mrs Marianna CHRISTOU, Municipal Officer, Agios Athanasios Municipality, Representative of the Project;

– Spain: Mrs Carmen CARO, Senior Officer, National Representative for the European Landscape Convention, Institute of Historical Heritage, Representatives of the Ministry, and Mr Rhamses RIPOLLÉS PUIG, President of the Taula del Sénia Mancomunidad, Mr Jaume ANTICH BALADA, Director of the Taula del Sénia Mancomunidad, and Mrs Maria Teresa ADELL PONS, Responsible of the Taula del Sénia Mancomunidad, Representatives of the Project

– Finland: Mr Tapio HEIKKILÄ, Ministry of the Environment, Department of the Natural Environment, Representative of the Ministry, and Mrs Kaisa RAATIKAINEN, Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for Central Finland, Representative of the Project;

– Italy: Mrs Maria Maddalena ALESSANDRO, Senior Officer, Landscape and Quality Management Department, Ministry for Heritage, Cultural Activities and Tourism, M. Giovanni MANIERI ELIA, Senior Officer, Landscape and Quality Management Department, Ministry for Heritage, Cultural Activities and Tourism, Mrs Marina GENTILI, Senior Officer, Landscape and Quality Management Department, Ministry for Heritage, Cultural Activities and Tourism, and Mr Rocco TRAMUTOLA, Senior Officer, Landscape and Quality Management Department, Ministry for Heritage, Cultural Activities and Tourism, Representative of the Ministry, and Mr Mauro LAZZARI, Open Urban Laboratory (LUA) and M. Giorgio ANDREA RUGGERI, Open Urban Laboratory (LUA), Representatives of the Project;

- Latvia: Mrs Dace GRANTA Senior Officer, Representative of Latvia for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention, Regional Planning Division, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, Representative of the Ministry, and Mr Kaspars RASA, Director of Kuldīga Development Agency, Kuldīga Municipality, Representative of the Project;
- the Netherlands: Mrs Patricia BRAAKSMA, Senior Advisor for Sustainability, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Mr Peter ROS, Project Manager Landscape, Ministry of Economic Affairs, the Netherlands, Representatives of the Ministry, and Mrs Josan MEIJERS, Deputy of the Province of Gelderland, the Board of National Project for the New Dutch Waterline and Mrs Inge VAN HECK, Project Manager of the Dutch Waterline, Province of Gelderland, Representatives of the Project;
- Slovak Republic: Mrs Lucia VAČOKOVÁ, Senior Officer, Environment Agency, Mrs Eva MIHOVÁ, Senior Officer, Environment Agency, Representatives of the Ministry, and Mr Slavomir KOPAC, Representative of the Liptovská Teplička Municipality, Representative of the Project;
- Slovenia: Mr Rok TOMSIC, Secretary, Embassy of Slovenia in Hungary and Mrs Jelena HLADNIK, Secretary, National Head of the implementation of the European Landscape Convention, Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment, Representatives of the Ministry;
- Czech Republic: Mrs Julia TOBIKOVA, National Representative of the European Landscape Convention, Ministry of the Environment, Representatives of the Ministry, and Mr Vít HRDOUŠEK, Project Manager, Representative of the Municipality of Tvarožná Lhota and NGO International Exchanges (INEX) - Voluntary Service of the White Carpathians, and Mr Vitak JIFI, Representative of the Municipality of Tvarožná Lhota, Representatives of the Project;
- Turkey: Mr Erdogan ERTÜRK, Forest Engineer, Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs, General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks, Representative of the Ministry, and Mr Orhan YAVUZ, Camili Village, Borcka, Artvin Province, Representative of the Project.

I also extend my thanks to:

- Mrs Liv Kirstine MORTENSEN, Chair of the Council of Europe Conference on the European Landscape Convention, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, Department of Planning, Norway, and to Mrs Sanja LJESKOVIC MITROVIC, Deputy Minister for Spatial Planning, Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism, Montenegro, Vice-Chair of the Council of Europe Conference on the European Landscape Convention, Member of the Bureau of the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape of the Council of Europe;
- the Members of the Jury of the 4th Session of the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe: Mrs Maria José FESTAS, Chair of the Jury; Mr Phaedon ENOTIADES, Senior Officer, Department of Town Planning and Housing, Cyprus; M. Mihály MÓCSÉNYI, Honorary President of the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA); Mrs Anne-Marie CHAVANON, Chair of the Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges Committee of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe;
- the Honorary Chairs of the Council of Europe Conference on the European Landscape Convention: Mr Enrico BUERGI (Switzerland) and Mr Jean-François SEGUIN (France). Many thanks to Mr Yves LUGINBÜHL, Expert of the Council of Europe for the European Landscape Convention, for his participation.

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The twelve projects featured, each one more exquisite than the last, took us on an extraordinary journey into the realms of diversity, dialogue, creativity and harmony.

A journey into diversity

The projects are extremely diverse in terms of their geography and the organisations behind them.

Geographical diversity. In the course of our journey, we discovered: *rural landscapes* – Brač Island (Croatia), the Slovácko region (Czech Republic), the regions of Central Finland, Southern Savo, Pirkanmaa, Ostrobothnia and Central Ostrobothnia (Finland), the landscape of Hetés (Hungary and Slovenia), the Agricultural Park of Paduli (Italy), the New Dutch Waterline (Netherlands), the village of Liptovská Teplička (Slovak Republic), the Sénia Territory (Spain), the Camili Basin (Turkey) –; *urban landscapes* – the towns of Agios Athanasios (Cyprus) and Kuldīga in the Venta valley (Latvia) –; *peri-urban landscapes* – the natural site and landscape of Hof ter Musschen (Belgium) –; *mountain landscapes* – the village of Liptovská Teplička (Slovak Republic) –, *plains, etc.*

Diversity in terms of the organisations behind the projects. Depending on the circumstances, the projects have been carried out by *local or regional authorities in association with NGOs*: Municipality of Tvarožná Lhota and NGO International Exchanges (INEX) – Voluntary Service of the White Carpathians (Czech Republic), villages of Bödeháza, Gáborjánháza, Szijártóháza and Zalaszombatfa (Hungary), villages of Genterovci, Kamovci, Radmožanci, Žitkovci, Mostje and Banuta (Slovenia) and the Greenways Methodology Association and the Iron Curtain Trail Association (Hungary); by *local or regional authorities*: Municipality of Agios Athanasios (Cyprus), Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for Central Finland (Finland), Kuldīga Municipality (Latvia), the village of Liptovská Teplička (Slovak Republic), Taula del Sénia Mancomunidad, Spain; or by non-governmental organisations: Commission of the Environment of Brussels and its environs ASBL (Belgium), Cultural Centre of Brač (Croatia), Open Urban Laboratory (Italy), Board of the New Dutch Waterline (Netherlands), Camili Environmental Protection and Development Association (Turkey).

A journey into dialogue

The projects show how landscape is shaped by dialogue between peoples and between landscape stakeholders.

Borderless co-operation of local communities for the landscape heritage of “Fabulous” Hetés (Hungary and Slovenia) shows how landscape can help heal old wounds and contribute to cross-border co-operation. The decision to award this project the prize sends a message of hope. It is an invitation to areas, towns and villages riven by conflict to overcome their divisions and differences. Landscape gives its inhabitants something to smile about and a stake in the future because, quite simply, it is the place where they live, and the centre of life itself. It becomes a meeting point for different communities, and the basis, rather than simply a pretext, for co-operation and living together in harmony. The “borderless bird” fashioned by the artist Árvay László out of barbed wire taken from the former Iron Curtain and installed in the Friendship Park on the border is a potent symbol, therefore.

All the projects show how landscape is shaped by dialogue between national, regional and local authorities, with local residents and NGOs. They are effectively experiments in governance. The *Service Tree – Tree of the Slovácko Region* (Czech Republic), the *New Dutch Waterline* (Netherlands) and the *“The Bull by the horns”: grazing in nature and landscape management* (Finland) are particularly impressive in terms of the number of players involved and the level of active support. Acknowledging landscape is an inclusive process, it involves regional and local authorities, owners and local stakeholders. As was pointed out in *“The Bull by the horns”: grazing in nature and landscape management* (Finland), it is conducive to social management.

A journey into creativity

It is fair to say that all the projects are living proof of human intelligence and ingenuity when it comes to finding solutions to difficulties and overcoming problems. Their originators have drawn on in-depth knowledge of the area and its resources. Based on their assessments and discussions, they have come up with a diagnosis, on which they have then proceeded to act with determination, enthusiasm, passion and a remarkable ability to energise others.

For those who know where to look and how to unlock its potential, the landscape contains natural, cultural and human treasures, as the following examples amply demonstrate: *The borderless co-operation of local communities for the landscape heritage of the “Fabulous” Hetés* (Hungary and Slovenia), *The Service Tree, the tree of the Slovácko Region* (Czech Republic), *Liptovská Teplička: protection of unique types of historical landscape* (Slovak Republic), *The Sénia Territory Millennium Olive Tree Landscape* (Spain), *The Enhancement of the natural site and landscape of Hof ter Musschen* (Belgium), *The Ecomuseum Blaca Hermitage* (Croatia), *Development of the historical centre of Agios Athanasios Municipality* (Cyprus), *“The Bull by the horns”: grazing in nature and landscape management* (Finland), *The Agricultural Park of Paduli* (Italy), *The town of Kuldīga in the Venta Valley: preserving a unique landscape for future generations* (Latvia), *The New Dutch Waterline* (the Netherlands), *Biodiversity and natural resources management in the Camili Basin* (Turkey).

These treasures also have historic value, such as the thousand-year-old olive trees of Sénia, which are veritable living monuments.

A journey into harmony

The states which have signed the European Landscape Convention have declared themselves “concerned to achieve sustainable development based on *a balanced and harmonious relationship* between social needs, economic activity and the environment”. The cultural dimension is also very much to the fore. The projects that we have seen are entirely relevant from a sustainable development perspective, with due consideration being given to environmental, social, cultural and economic imperatives.

They show how it is possible, within the meaning of the European Landscape Convention, to: *protect* landscapes through 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; to *manage* them through action, from a perspective of sustainable development, to ensure the regular upkeep of a landscape, so as to guide and harmonise changes which are brought about by social, economic and environmental processes; and, lastly, to *plan* landscapes through strong forward-looking action to enhance, restore or create landscapes.

From an **environmental** standpoint, the landscape must be first and foremost healthy, neither polluted nor contaminated, vibrant and biologically diverse. The fine example set by *The town of Kuldīga in the Venta Valley: preserving a unique landscape for future generations* (Latvia) showed us the importance of having clean streams and rivers, both for the sake of the health of local people, flora and fauna and for recreational purposes: once again, people are able to bathe in and enjoy the Venta, and marvel at the flying fish. The other projects related to the rural world likewise tie in with the notion of sustainable development and environmentally-friendly agriculture: *The Service Tree, the tree of the Slovácko Region* (Czech Republic), *Liptovská Teplička: protection of unique types of historical landscape* (Slovak Republic), *The Sénia Territory Millennium Olive Tree Landscape* (Spain), *“The Bull by the horns”: grazing in nature and landscape management* (Finland), *The Agricultural Park of Paduli* (Italy), *Biodiversity and natural resources management in the Camili Basin* (Turkey). The very important educational role played by *The enhancement of the natural site and landscape of Hof ter Musschen* (Belgium) deserves a special mention in this regard.

Landscape also needs to be rich in **culture**. Cultural heritage occupies a very special place in the landscape. The *Ecomuseum Blaca Hermitage* project (Croatia) shows how this former monastic settlement is once again making its presence felt across the island and beyond. Ancestral know-how is also part of our culture. As Mihály MÖCSÉNYI has already pointed out, *Liptovská Teplička: protection of unique historical landscape types* (Slovak Republic) is a “micro-miracle”. Human intervention across the local area creates landscape that is a work of art, causing it to come alive. The landscape can also be a source of inspiration for artistic endeavour as we saw in the wonderfully poetic film about *The town of Kuldīga in the Venta Valley: preserving a unique landscape for future generations* (Latvia).

The **social** dimension matters too. Landscape is a place for togetherness, as epitomised by the “Hetés Friendship Park”. It is where volunteers come together to promote sustainable development, as in the excellent project “*The Bull by the horns: grazing in nature and landscape management* (Finland). The schemes designed to enhance quality of life likewise foster enthusiasm and creativity. They bring about a positive change in thinking and perceptions, give a sense of pride to local communities and can even pave the way for innovation as in the marvellous *Agricultural Park of Paduli* project in Italy. The landscape can be a place of celebration, as demonstrated by the superb projects *The New Dutch Waterline* (the Netherlands), *Biodiversity and natural resources management in the Camili Basin* (Turkey), *The Service Tree, the tree of the Slovácko Region* (Czech Republic), *Liptovská Teplička: protection of unique types of historical landscape* (Slovak Republic). The landscape is also a place where people live, meet and gather in public, as demonstrated by *The town of Kuldīga in the Venta Valley: preserving a unique landscape for future generations* (Latvia) and *The development of the Historical Centre of Agios Athanasios* (Cyprus). We have seen vibrant towns, happy people, inhabitants enjoying their local environment, and eager to learn more about where they live and the local heritage, both tangible and intangible.

The **economic** aspect is crucial: a landscape that is healthy, vibrant and of a high quality, whether it is in an urban or rural setting, becomes attractive and productive as a result, with the capacity to create jobs. It will be observed that, thanks to the inventiveness of their originators, and thanks to efforts to preserve and enhance the local natural and cultural heritage, the projects in question have brought about a genuine improvement in people’s quality of life. In the agricultural sphere, *The Service Tree – Tree of the Slovácko Region* (Czech Republic) has, for example, been a major source of inspiration when it comes to protecting the gene pool diversity of traditional fruit trees. The various farming practices developed in the projects “*The Bull by the horns: grazing in nature and landscape management* (Finland), *The Sénia Territory Millennium Olive Tree Landscape* (Spain), *Liptovská Teplička: protection of unique types of historical landscape* (Slovak Republic), *The Agricultural Park of Paduli* (Italy), *Biodiversity and natural resources management in the Camili Basin* (Turkey), are likewise remarkable in terms of the cultivation and beekeeping methods and techniques employed – grazing, potato, olive oil, lamp oil, honey production, etc. The projects have helped to increase knowledge and awareness and spread good practice.

The numerous visits and artistic events generated by the *New Dutch Waterline* project (Netherlands) likewise act as “pull” factors, generating positive spin-offs for the entire local area. The same is true of the projects *The Ecomuseum Blaca Hermitage* (Croatia), *Development of the historical centre of Agios Athanasios Municipality* (Cyprus), “*The Bull by the horns: grazing in nature and landscape management* (Finland), *The Sénia Territory Millennium Olive Tree Landscape* (Spain), *Liptovská Teplička: protection of unique types of historical landscape* (Slovak Republic), *The Agricultural Park of Paduli* (Italy), *The town of Kuldīga in the Venta Valley: preserving a unique landscape for future generations* (Latvia), *Biodiversity and natural resources management in the Camili Basin* (Turkey), which are now a magnet for visitors and sustainable tourism that respects local communities and their landscape. The landscape effectively becomes a “garden” for people to enjoy and children to play in.

I would like to end by stressing the importance of the positive energy generated by all the projects featured. We are delighted that this 17th Council of Europe Meeting of the Workshops for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention, entitled “Council of Europe Landscape Award National Selection Forum – 4th Session 2014-2015” has helped focus attention on these twelve projects, which are now part of the Landscape Award Alliance of the Council of Europe (<http://www.coe.int/fr/web/landscape/landscape-award-alliance>).

Like the little Hetés heart that appears in the middle of the photograph on the Meeting programme, landscape lies at the nexus between human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

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