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**EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION  
– Florence Convention –**

***FIRST CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING AND  
SIGNATORY STATES TO THE EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION***

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**Theme 4**

**Innovative tools for the protection, management and planning of landscape**

*by*

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## **1. Introduction and framework of the theme as defined by the convention**

The purpose of this presentation is to encourage the conference participants to reflect on their own approaches to landscape policy, which are geared to the characteristics and conditions specific to their countries. The development of innovative approaches to landscape policies and their practical implementation in Europe should take account of the diversity of Europe's landscapes and cultures. The convention cannot provide ready-made tools: its role consists in raising awareness of landscape and launching policies and processes with a view to increasing understanding of landscapes and capitalising on them.

Article 5, paragraphs b, c and d, and Article 6 (E) concern the implementation of the convention through tools for the protection, management and planning of landscape. Implementation through the integration of landscape considerations into all sectoral policies with a direct or indirect impact on landscapes is a priority (Article 5, paragraph d).

## **2. Towards an integrated landscape policy as the first innovative tool**

In complete harmony with the concept of landscape established under the convention, an integrated policy, which is central to present theme, demands a multidisciplinary or, indeed, holistic approach to landscape and hence also to each national landscape policy. It should also be noted that every innovative tool necessarily depends on other approaches to landscape, in particular landscape research, information and training, the latter two of which involve emotional understanding of landscape. The goal that seems most important to me and is already innovative in itself is therefore to achieve an integrated landscape policy.

This integrated policy would have to take account of three aspects:

- The horizontal aspect, involving all sectoral policies that have a direct or indirect impact on landscape.
- The vertical aspect, which derives from the principle of subsidiarity. It incorporates and combines the landscape policies of all tiers of government in a genuine policy strategy stretching from central or federal government through any constituent states to regions and local authorities.
- The “cross-sectional” aspect, which takes account of the fact that the problems of an increasingly complex world involve new players such as private, non-governmental or semi-governmental organisations and bodies, as well as more spontaneous groupings. This growing number of players and types of players is beginning to have an increasing impact on the development of modern civil society. At the same time, the ideas and activities of these new groups offer huge innovative and creative potential.

## **3. Some examples of the innovative implementation of landscape policies (already implemented or in progress)**

- **The integration of landscape policy in sectoral policies - the example of the Swiss Landscape Concept** (see description in the magazine “*Naturoipa*” No 86)

The basic principle of the Swiss Landscape Concept is illustrated by its slogan “Partners for Landscape”. The aim is to foster dialogue between landscape users and nature and landscape conservationists in the context of implementation of public policies by the relevant authorities. A Swiss government order issued in 1997 requires the federal authorities responsible for 13 policy areas that have an impact on spatial planning and hence on the landscape to take account of objectives and landscape measures specific to each policy area. These objectives and measures were negotiated in close co-operation between the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape and the federal government departments and agencies responsible for the various policies. They are based on a

system of strategic objectives for the management of nature and landscape, which takes account of the three pillars of sustainable development.

– **The participatory approach - the example of Landscape Development Plans**

Landscape development plans outline the desired development objectives for given landscapes on the basis of scenarios worked out in close co-operation by all interested parties. They therefore involve a comprehensive approach to landscape. The central element of landscape development plans is the bottom-up process involved in devising them. The aim here is to bring together all the players that actively influence the area concerned along with the people who live there and other representatives of public and private interests. The discussions are chaired by professionals with no personal ties in the area, which guarantees the quality and success of the process. Having a landscape development plan can be most useful when it comes to defining criteria or, indeed, priorities for implementing specific policies at local level, for instance with regard to how limited public funding can be allocated (in particular, direct payments under the legislation on agriculture).

Similar approaches are found in the “future workshops” and local and regional Agenda 21 processes.

– **Financial tools - funding policies and the Swiss Landscape Fund model**

Funding grants are among the most important tools at the government’s disposal. In Switzerland, they account for over 60% of the expenditure budgeted for by the Confederation, broken down into hundreds of widely varying fields and interacting closely with a host of other policy instruments. Maintaining the coherence of the system is therefore a very ambitious undertaking: it requires tools for checking consistency between policies in the various sectors and the arrangements for implementing them. This objective can be achieved more easily if the relevant authority takes account of the know-how of specialist environment agencies in each specific case. However, the instruments available must be supplemented with new financial incentive tools for active management geared towards sustainable landscape development.

The **Swiss Landscape Fund** ([www.fl-sfp.ch](http://www.fl-sfp.ch)) is involved in conserving, maintaining and restoring traditional rural landscapes and their natural habitats. It can make financial contributions to information and training activities. It only becomes involved when no other body can help, for instance because of a lack of funds or because of legal hurdles. The funding provided can take the form of non-repayable grants or interest-free loans. The beneficiaries can be private individuals, associations or foundations, as well as municipalities and regions. The Fund provides financial incentives for individual and voluntary initiatives to enhance the landscape. This increases local and regional bodies’ willingness to take initiatives themselves. At the same time, it fosters synergy between farming, tourism, the construction sector and traditional crafts and trades. Through its financial assistance, the Landscape Fund provides welcome regional economic aid that helps create employment in disadvantaged areas. The funding often has a snowball effect and encourages investors to put much larger sums of money into the regions concerned.