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## **EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION**

***CEP-CDCPP***

### **8th COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONFERENCE ON THE EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION**

*Conference organised under the auspices of the Belgian Chairmanship of  
the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe*

#### **IMPLEMENTATION OF LANDSCAPE POLICIES:**

**Introduction of instruments aimed at protecting,  
managing and/or planning the landscape**

Council of Europe  
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*Document of the Secretariat General of the Council of Europe  
Directorate of Democratic Governance*

*Summary*

*The European Landscape Convention and the Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)3 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the guidelines for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention state:*

***European Landscape Convention***

***E. Implementation***

*To put landscape policies into effect, each Party undertakes to introduce instruments aimed at protecting, managing and/or planning the landscape”. (Article 6 – Specific measures).*

***Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)3 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the guidelines for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention***

***“... II.3. Methods of implementation***

*... The means of implementing landscape policies or introducing the landscape dimension into sectoral policies may be either regulatory or voluntary. New methods of implementation could also be used. The choice of method can depend on the local situation, which will vary even within the same country.*

*Implementation of landscape policies or of policies to introduce the landscape dimension into sectoral policies may combine these different means according to the ends in view, the specific characteristics of the territory, the population and administrative organisation concerned, and so on. This applies to all landscape situations and all activities that shape them. Implementation may be included in general and sectoral instruments at the different administrative, programming and spatial-planning levels; it may provide for land acquisition by the competent authorities.*

***II.3.1. Regulatory implementation***

*...*

***II.3.2. Voluntary implementation***

*...*

***II.3.3. Instruments for landscape policies***

*To implement landscape policies, a general planning and development process should be introduced: this should use specific instruments and provide for the landscape dimension to be included in sectoral instruments. It should be based both on general principles at national level, even if decentralisation is anticipated, and on the linkage of competences at several levels and several types of implementation instruments.*

*Instruments are already being put to use in several countries and each of them can be a model for either the creation of new instruments or the improvement of existing ones.*

*The main categories of instruments are:*

- landscape planning: landscape study plans included in spatial planning;*
- inclusion of the landscape in sectoral policies and instruments;*
- shared charters, contracts, strategic plans;*
- impact and landscape studies;*
- evaluations of the effects of operations on landscape not subject to an impact study;*
- protected sites and landscapes;*
- relationship between landscape and regulations concerning the cultural and historic heritage;*
- resources and financing;*
- landscape awards;*
- landscape observatories, centres and institutes;*
- reports on the state of the landscape and landscape policies;*
- transfrontier landscapes.*

...  
**Examples of instruments used to implement  
 the European Landscape Convention**

**... 8. Resources and financing**

*The resources needed to draw up and implement a landscape policy may be both financial and human. Specific resources can be earmarked, with a landscape fund being set up at different administrative levels, through public and private financing (bodies, associations, foundations, etc.). The inclusion of landscape aspects in sectoral policies (environment, tourism, agriculture, public works, culture, etc.) will allow use to be made of the resources earmarked for these sectors simultaneously for landscape protection, management and planning.*

*In order to encourage the landscape dimension to be taken into account in all public and private decisions, special measures involving tax rebates and grants may be adopted. These measures should be adapted to the different types of landscape, their constituent elements and implementation instruments and to the needs of the local communities concerned (direct incentives).*

*Other types of incentive may be added, for example technical assistance in drawing up private plans and projects, exploitation of the sites concerned through tourism policies, support for high-quality agricultural products, etc. (indirect incentives).*

*Specific initiatives can be taken to encourage the involvement of associations (non-governmental organisations) in the definition and implementation of landscape policies at the different administrative levels in connection with the various types of implementation instruments (plans, charters, etc.) and the different operational phases (protection, management and planning, etc.).*

*Major public works, projects and public infrastructures should devote a minimum percentage of their budget to landscape dimensions. This course is already being followed in certain states... ”*

Considering the provisions of the European Landscape Convention and of the Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)3 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the guidelines for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention relating to landscape policies and in particular landscape funds, the Conference is invited:

- to take note in particular of the experience of the Swiss Landscape Fund, presented on the occasion of the 15th Council of Europe Meeting of the Workshops for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention « *Sustainable landscapes and economy* », Urgup, Turkey, 1-2 October 2014 by Mr Enrico Buergi, Chair of the Council of Europe Conference on the European Landscape Convention (2000-2008) (Appendix to this document);
- to decide on the possibility to prepare a draft text on landscape funds to be used by the Parties to the Convention wishing to establish a National Landscape Fund.

## Appendix

### **The Swiss Landscape Fund**

*presented on the occasion of the 15th Council of Europe Meeting of the Workshops for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention  
« Sustainable landscapes and economy »,  
Urgup, Turkey, 1-2 October 2014*

#### **Mr Enrico BUERGI**

*Former Chair of the Swiss Landscape Fund's project committee and former Chair of the Council of Europe Conference of the Contracting and Signatory States to the European Landscape Convention*

#### **The creation of the Swiss Landscape Fund**

The Swiss Landscape Fund (SLF) was established in 1991, on the occasion of the 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Swiss Confederation, by the Federal Assembly at the initiative of the Bureaux of the two Chambers. It was set up for a ten-year period and allocated CHF 50 million.

In setting up the SLF, parliament sought to put in place a financial support instrument to be used wherever there was a desire to safeguard and manage a landscape and its natural and cultural values, and where such a local or regional initiative required direct financial aid which involved the least possible bureaucracy.

Bearing in mind the fact that the measures taken in the course of the first ten years of the Fund's activities had proven their worth and that there was ongoing pressure on all traditional rural landscapes, in 2001 and 2011, further to new parliamentary initiatives, the SLF was extended for a second and then third ten-year period, on each occasions being reallocated CHF 50 million.

The total amount of CHF 150 million allocated to the SLF roughly equates to EUR 120 million at the current exchange rate and has had spin-off economic effects, primarily for the local and regional economy, of at least three times the total amount allocated.

#### **Why a Swiss Landscape Fund?**

The protection and management of the natural and cultural environment are based, at national level, on two pillars. Legislation is the first pillar providing a legal framework and regulating human intervention. This sets out the provisions relating to regional/spatial and landscape planning, the protection of forests, water, nature, sites and natural resources, and the incorporation of landscape issues, in particular traditional rural landscapes, in all sectoral policies.

There has been increasing recognition of a second pillar, of equal importance, namely the economic incentives to promote sound landscape management, supporting the commitment of others to accept responsibilities in this field.

The beneficiaries of the financial assistance granted by the SLF are first and foremost natural or legal persons and public-law entities or associations (municipalities, corporations) willing to take responsibility for the future of their landscape.

The SLF helps finance projects in all regions of the country, in particular in peripheral regions where, moreover, its contribution to the maintenance and creation of employment is especially significant for

the regional economy, particularly for land use geared towards the sound management of resources and the quality of landscape in order to improve the quality of life.

### **The specific features and effectiveness of the Swiss Landscape Fund**

In the course of these 22 years of activity, the SLF has assisted some 2,000 projects to the tune of some CHF 110 million. This funding has made it possible to carry out numerous projects which would otherwise not have been possible because:

- The SLF can grant seed funds. The project leaders can use these funds to take the necessary action to raise the money required to carry out their project, as the granting of SLF funding to a project gives it a special cachet;
- The SLF can provide initial assistance, for example to initiate green market projects;
- The SLF can cover 50-80% of the essential costs not covered by public-sector grants, thereby filling the financial gaps which are often the reason why projects have to be dropped;
- The SLF can help find alternative solutions more in keeping with the landscape, for example, underground cabling of all the planned overhead lines in a particularly sensitive landscape;
- The SLF can finance solutions which would not qualify for any grant, for example the establishment of a creamery which is too small to qualify for a grant from the public authorities.

One of the SLF's specific features is that it can reimburse the expenses incurred in submitting applications for financial assistance, when such expenses are not taken into consideration.

The SLF attaches considerable importance to the fact that the supported projects should become economically independent of all public financial support, with the exception of operating subsidies, and that in this way the medium and long-term management of rural landscapes will generally be ensured.

The safeguarding and enhancement of rural landscapes also involves providing information on the importance of this task and awareness-raising at all levels. The SLF plays its part in this as in every decision on granting financial assistance it includes a section on the provision of targeted information, in particular in the media of the region in question. In addition, it often contributes to the costs incurred by the provision of this information, especially for press conferences presenting the projects. Lastly, the SLF's administrative procedures are particularly brief. The Secretariat (5 people, responsible for information plus finance administration and management) submits the projects to the Project Sub-Committee for assessment and proposed decision to the Plenary Committee (13 members, elected by the government). The latter's decisions take immediate effect.

Administrative costs are reduced to a minimum and financed out of the interest paid on the SLF's allocated capital.

### **The categories of projects supported by the Swiss Landscape Fund**

The SLF helps finance projects to upgrade traditional rural landscapes, regardless of their legal protection status, and action taken in the following sectors: land use, water courses, communication channels, farms, land improvement, ecological networks, sanitation in rural villages, etc. For more specific examples, please see [www.fls-fsp.ch](http://www.fls-fsp.ch).

The SLF has launched a campaign to promote tree-lined pathways, the success of which surpassed all expectations: the sum of CHF 1 million originally set aside for three years was used up after just one

year. This is why the SLF Committee decided to allocate new resources to promote the installation of tree-lined pathways and lanes (see [www.allee.ch](http://www.allee.ch)).

The SLF is also involved with urban landscapes (miniature gardens in Geneva, redevelopment of olive growing in Lugano-Gandria, Nature in the City, in Neuchâtel, for example).

The SLF will come to an end in 2020, unless parliament decides to extend it a third time. Key players in bringing about this third renewal will once again be the many project leaders who take on the task of informing members of the federal parliament about the effectiveness and non-bureaucratic nature of the SLF, and – most importantly – the high quality of the projects dedicated to the recovery and appropriate management of traditional rural landscapes in Switzerland.

### **The consistency of the Swiss Landscape Fund's activity with the objectives of the European Landscape Convention with regard to rural landscapes**

The SLF's activity is extremely consistent with the objectives of the European Landscape Convention with regard to rural landscapes, as:

- The SLF is involved in the maintenance and improvement of the quality of life of the local inhabitants of these rural landscapes, placing an emphasis on a refocusing of their activities in line with sustainable development criteria, and
- The SLF is involved in and supports projects designed to maintain or indeed improve either the diversity or biodiversity of rural landscapes. Many plant and animal species appearing today on the “Red Lists” will become extinct if we do not manage the traditional rural landscape appropriately.

I would once again like to stress that the SLF was set up on the occasion of the 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Swiss Confederation, with the aim of establishing something lasting for the benefit of a large part of the population and especially future generations.

Link to the presentation (in French only):

[http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/ReunionAteliers/turkey/atelier5/Buergi-ppt\\_fr.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/ReunionAteliers/turkey/atelier5/Buergi-ppt_fr.pdf)

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