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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*

RESULTS OF THE 14TH COUNCIL OF EUROPE MEETING OF THE WORKSHOPS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION

**“Council of Europe Landscape Award Forum - Sessions 2012-2013”
Wroclaw, Poland, 4-5 June 2014**

Council of Europe
Palais de l'Europe, Strasbourg
18-20 March 2015

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

Summary

The European Landscape Convention provides for a ‘Landscape Award of the Council of Europe’ that recognises policies or measures which local or regional authorities or non-governmental organisations have adopted to protect, manage and plan their landscape, which have proven to be lastingly effective and which can thus serve as an example to other territorial authorities in Europe.

On 20 February 2008 the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted Resolution CM/(2008)3 on the rules governing the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe. The Award is given every two years by the Committee of Ministers, further to proposals from the Committee of Experts of the Council of Europe in charge of monitoring the implementation of the Convention.

The 14th Council of Europe Meeting of the Workshops for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention on “Council of Europe Landscape Award Forum of National Selections - 3rd Session 2012-2013” was organised by the Council of Europe – Secretariat of the European Landscape Convention, Democratic Governance, Directorate – in co-operation with the General Directorate for Environmental Protection of Poland, within the context of the Work Programme of the European Landscape Convention.

The great experiences achieved in the Member States of the Organisation on the occasion of the third session of the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe were presented in this meeting showing that it is possible to promote the territorial dimension of human rights and democracy improving the landscape features of people’s surroundings.

Three Workshops analysed the following themes:

- ‘Landscape to be protected: actions to conserve and maintain the significant or characteristic features of a landscape’;*
- ‘Landscape to be managed: actions, from a perspective of sustainable development to guide and harmonise changes’;*
- ‘Landscapes to be planned: strong-forward looking actions to enhance, restore or create landscapes’.*

The Meeting was addressed to government officials, representatives of local and regional authorities, universities, professionals, public and private governmental and non-governmental organisations working on landscape, heritage, culture and sustainable territorial development. Nearly 120 participants attended it.

The Celebration of the 3rd Session 2012-2013 of the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe was organised on this occasion.

*At its 5th Meeting (Paris, 24-25 June 2014 - CDCPP-Bu(2014)10), the Bureau of the Steering Committee for Culture, GHeritage and Landscape welcomed the holding of the 14th Council of Europe Meeting for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention “Forum of the national selections for the Council of Europe Landscape Award” in Wroclaw, Poland, on 11-12 June 2014 and thanked the authorities of Poland for their hospitality and cooperation with the Council of Europe in the organisation of the event:
(http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/landscape/reunionateliers/wroclaw2014_EN.asp?).*

The Conference is invited to:

- warmly thank the General Directorate for Environmental Protection of Poland, for its co-operation with the Council of Europe in the organisation of the 15th Council of Europe Meeting of the Workshop for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention on “*Sustainable landscapes and economy: on the inestimable natural and human value of the landscape*”, in Wrocław (Poland) on 11-12 June 2014;
- take note of the interventions and presentations made at the Meeting, as they appear on the website of the European Landscape Convention (the proceedings are being published in the Council of Europe’s “*Spatial Planning and Landscape*” Series):

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/ReunionAteliers/wroclaw2014_en.asp
- congratulate the authors of the Projects of the 3rd Session of the Landscape Award as mentioned in the Appendix to this document;
- take note that the new version of the publication on the Landscape Award
http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/Publications/LandscapeAwards_en.pdf will be available soon.

Appendix



**COUNCIL OF EUROPE LANDSCAPE AWARD
EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION**

*FOURTEEN COUNCIL OF EUROPE MEETING
OF THE WORKSHOPS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION*

*Council of Europe Landscape Award Forum
of National Selections
3rd Session 2012-2013*

Wrocław, Poland, 11 June 2014

***CEREMONY OF THE LANDSCAPE AWARD
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE***

3rd Session

The Council of Europe Landscape Award Alliance

*Document prepared by the Directorate of Democratic Governance
Secretariat of the European Landscape Convention, Council of Europe*

The European Landscape Convention is the first international treaty on sustainable development based on a balanced and harmonious relationship between social needs, economic activity, the environment and culture, to be exclusively concerned with the valorisation of landscapes. Its purpose is to promote landscape protection, management and planning of European landscapes and to organise international co-operation on landscape issues.

The Convention is extremely wide in its scope: it applies to the parties' entire territory and covers natural, rural, urban and peri-urban areas, including land, inland water and marine areas, and deals with degraded landscapes as well as those that can be considered outstanding. In other words, it recognises the importance of all landscapes, not just those of exceptional beauty, as having a crucial bearing on quality of life and as deserving attention in landscape policies. Many rural and peri-urban areas in particular are undergoing drastic change and deserve greater care from the authorities and the public.

The Convention provides for a 'Landscape Award of the Council of Europe', which recognises policy or measures that local or regional authorities or non-governmental organisations have adopted to protect, manage and plan their landscapes, and that have proven to be lastingly effective and can thus serve as an example to other territorial authorities in Europe.

On 20 February 2008, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted Resolution CM/Res(2008)3 on the rules governing the Landscape Award. Every two years the Committee of Ministers makes the award further to proposals from the committee of experts of the Council of Europe in charge of monitoring the implementation of the Convention.

The significant achievements in the Member States on the occasion of the 3rd Session of the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe, show that it is possible to promote the territorial dimension of human rights and democracy by improving the features of the landscapes that surround us and thus people's living conditions.

* * *

Eighteen projects were presented by the States Parties to the European Landscape Convention to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe on the occasion of the 3rd Session 2012-2013 of the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe.

On 12 December 2013, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe decided, in accordance with the Resolution of the Committee of Ministers CM/Res(2008)3 on the rules governing the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe and on the recommendations of the International Jury¹ and of the Committee of experts responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Convention, to:

1. confer the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe's European Landscape Convention for the 3rd Session of the Award 2012-2013 to the achievement:

Preserving ecological value in the landscape of the Szprotawa river valley, Lower Silesian Association of Landscape Parks, Poland

2. confer identical special mentions of the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe's European Landscape Convention for the 3rd Session of the Award 2012-2013 to the three following achievements:

The rebirth of the Alto Belice Corleonese region through the recovery of lands confiscated from the mafia organisations, LIBERA, Associations, names and numbers against mafias, Italy
Special Mention for "Strengthening democracy"

U-parks. U-turn we love, Utena district Municipality, Lithuania
Special Mention for "Giving attention to the urban landscape as a common good"

The Gate of Gornje Podunavlje, NGO Podunav, Backi Monostor, Serbia
Special Mention for "Contributing to Europeans ideals"

3. acknowledges the great value of each project presented for the 3rd Session 2012-2013 of the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe's European Landscape Convention and make them well known to the general public as a source of inspiration:

Hoge Kempen National Park, Regionaal Landschap Kempen en Maasland vzw, Belgium

Environmental education in the town of Strakonice year by year or "Pilgrimage through the Contemplative Landscape", Municipality of Strakonice, Czech Republic

The Landscape Projects of Hyypä Valley, City of Kauhajoki, Hyypä village Association, Finnish Forestry Centre/Public Services, Unit of South and Central Ostrobothnia, Finland

¹ International Jury of the 3rd Session of the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe:

Mr Jean-François SEGUIN, Chair of the Jury of the 3rd Session of the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe, Former Chair of the Council of Europe Conference of the European Landscape Convention,

Mrs Mireille DECONINCK, Representative of the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP) of the Council of Europe,

Mrs Jasminka CVEJIĆ, Professor, University of Belgrade, Faculty of Forestry,

Mrs Ingrid SARLÖV-HERLIN, Professor, Department of Landscape Architecture, Planning and Management, Sweden,

Mrs Anne-Marie CHAVANON, Chair of the Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges Committee of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe.

Secretariat General of the Council of Europe:

Mrs Maguelonne DEJEANT-PONS, Executive Secretary of the European Landscape Convention,

Ms Charlotte KOK, Expert, Cultural Heritage, Secretariat of the 3rd Session of the Council of Europe Landscape Award.

Grand Pré Park, City of Langueux, France

Complex landscape rehabilitation and development programme in the Gerecse Mountains and the Által Creek Valley, Association for the Restoration and Development of the Által Creek Valley (Tata), Hungary

Bere Island Conservation Plan, The Heritage Council and the Bere Island Project Group, Ireland

Dzintari Forest Park, Jurmala City Council, Latvia

Planning policy for conservation and sustainable development of 20 national landscapes in the Netherlands, Stichting Nationale Landschappen (NGO), Netherlands

Furnas Landscape Laboratory (Furnas LandLab), Azores Regional Directorate of the Environment, Portugal

Agricultural Development and Environmental Protection in Transylvania, ADEPT Foundation, NGO, Romania

Salvage, Revival and Operation of the Forest Railway in the Landscape of Cierny Balog, Ciernohronska zeleznica NGO, Slovak Republic

Landscape and water-management restoration of Škocjanski Zatok nature reserve, DOPPS, BirdLife Slovenia, Slovenia

The sustainable revitalisation of the protected landscape of Geria, Consortium for the defence and promotion of the landscape of Geria, Spain

South Pennines Watershed Landscape Project, Pennine Prospects, United Kingdom

Presentation of the Projects

POLAND

Preserving ecological value in the landscape of the Szprotawa river valley, Lower Silesian Association of Landscape Parks

The project allowed the promotion of the following: conservation of plant communities classified as *Molinion* and *Arrhenatherion elatioris*; conversion of a former Soviet airbase into wetland meadows covering 500 hectares; implementation of measures to raise and maintain groundwater level at the protected site; preservation of traditional land management practices on the protected site (polders); re-establishment of nesting grounds for aquatic and wetland birds; removal of Soviet military earthworks; suspension of the planting of weeping willows; establishment of an eco-agricultural programme and grazing by cattle, sheep and horses; re-establishment of the use of meadows for pasture to preserve low peat bogs; long-term vocational activity among the Rom population to counter poverty and exclusion; preservation of bird sanctuaries for species listed in Appendix I of the Birds Directive and in the Polish Red Book; conversion of the heating system from traditional coal-based to eco-friendly biomass-based in the headquarters of the Lower Silesian Association of Landscape Parks and in the village of Wysoka.

On 12 December 2013, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe decided, in accordance with the Resolution of the Committee of Ministers CM/Res(2008)3 on the rules governing the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe and on the recommendations of the jury and of the Committee of experts responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Convention, that the project on preserving ecological value in the landscape of the Szprotawa river valley was the winner of the 3rd Session of the Council of Europe Landscape Award 2012-2013, considering that it meets the four criteria of the rules on the Landscape Award. The integrated approach goes beyond the single dimension of biodiversity and associates nature with culture and population. Thus the project offers a model that others might follow. It shows a good level of participation by the parties concerned in both decision-making and land management. The farmers and beekeepers are stakeholders; the project has also enabled apparently conflicting economic interests to be reconciled. The aesthetic dimension is present and enables the awareness of different generations to be raised effectively. The environment is also taken into consideration: the project relates to the rehabilitation of a former Soviet military base, as well as to increased use of biomass as a source of energy. The involvement of Roma in the decision-making process and, in future, in the management of the restored land is particularly favourable. In dealing with the issue of minority populations and their involvement in land management, this project represents progress in “living together” at European level which should be applauded.

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/Prix/Session2013_en.asp

ITALY**The rebirth of the Alto Belice Corleonese region through the recovery of lands confiscated from the mafia organisations,**

LIBERA, Associations, names and numbers against mafias

Libera's mission is to recover the lands liberated from mafia organisations, which were illegally seized by them, starting with the creation and empowerment of social, independent and rural co-operatives, located in these lands, who are able to sustainably manage their business activities thus also contributing to the creation of induced employment as well as spreading a virtuous economic system. This project determines the enhancement of landscape, culture, local identity, material and immaterial heritage based on legality, social justice and responsible and sustainable tourism. The "Placido Rizzotto-Libera Terra Co-operative" was the first experience of this kind in the region of Alto Belice Corleonese. This project concerned the recovery of an area of more than 500 hectares confiscated by mafia organisations which was illegally seized by them and abandoned for many years, as well as rural buildings and historically relevant manor farms. Libera has promoted a recovery and requalification action on the aforesaid assets, focusing particularly on the enhancement in terms of nature maintenance and protection and rural and landscape recovery.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe conferred a special mention of the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe's European Landscape Convention for the 3rd Session 2012-2013 for "Strengthening democracy" to the project of the revival of Alto Belice Corleonese that relates to the recovery of land from mafia organisations, which was illegally seized by them. This project of great interest encompasses a combination of the Council of Europe's principles: human rights, rule of law and democracy. Landscape is both the instrument and the result. The project is as much political as economic, and produces a landscape which highlights the local identity and culture. It restores the cultural dimension of the landscape and the quality of the natural environment. Organic production and local processing of farm products, the development of renewable energies and the restoration of the heritage all provide job opportunities for vulnerable populations. The outstanding level of volunteer mobilisation is one of the project's strong points.

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/Prix/Session2013_en.asp

LITHUANIA

“U-parks. U-turn we love”,
Utena district Municipality

Utena is the tenth-largest town in Lithuania with a population of 34 000 (2012). Between 1960 and 1990 this industrial town was endowed with a living landscape preserving nature (a system of rivers, lakes and valleys) over an area of 140 hectares. Continued systems of natural areas preserved are ecologically important, but their aesthetic and recreational functions were not recognised. Between 1990 and 1998 the country embarked on a process of private property restoration and land privatisation. The municipality made great efforts to save these areas as public spaces. Combining the protection and management of the unique landscape to gain the recreational potential of the area, Utena District Municipality developed city gardens in the town centre (2005), the banks of the Krašuona River in a densely built-up residential area (2009), and the Dauniškis (2005) and the Vyžuona (2010) parks which are now large central recreational areas (total area 50 hectares).

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe conferred a special mention Special Mention of the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe’s European Landscape Convention for the 3rd Session 2012-2013 for “Giving attention to the urban landscape as a common good” to the authors of the project its great value in favour of democracy. This project is of great interest because it counterbalances the wave of land privatisation that followed the end of the Soviet era. Here, public land regains its importance and can be enjoyed by everyone on a daily basis since its reclamation of a public park network in urban areas. This system of urban parks is a fine exercise in landscape planning as applied to individual and collective well-being. The landscape is regarded as a common good, enabling participatory practice to be developed. This achievement undeniably has a sustainable development dimension. The involvement of the landscape architects’ association and the use of parks as “teaching areas” for future professionals is particularly interesting.

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/Prix/Session2013_en.asp

SERBIA**The Gate of Gornje Podunavlje,**
NGO Podunav, Backi Monostor

The main goal of the project is the sustainable development of the entire region through ecotourism and rural tourism development, which includes the engagement of the whole local community, bringing social and economic well-being through nature and landscape preservation. The connection of local culture and historic heritage in harmony with nature and its promotion as an ecotourist and rural tourist destination provides a social, cultural and aesthetic sustainability. That also provides a chance for a new quality development through new ways of preserving nature and traditions and new jobs for local people. The project is a partnership between local and regional institutions, including the non-governmental and civil sector – that is, the local community.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe conferred a special mention of the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe's European Landscape Convention for the 3rd Session 2012-2013 for "Contributing to Europeans ideals" to the authors of the project for bringing attention to the urban landscape as a common good. The location of the "Gate of Gornje Podunavlje" project on the banks of the Danube in the historic region of Backi Monostor has enabled some particularly interesting cross-border and multi-ethnic objectives to be pursued. The attention given to the Serb, Croat, Hungarian, Roma and Šokci heritages with a view to a shared European identity was particularly appreciated. This project reflects a public commitment to better economic and social well-being and, at the same time, to the preservation of the character of the landscapes. Within a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, this project takes a well-adapted integrated approach. The development of cross-border ecotourism, in conjunction with a return to agricultural production geared to traditional diets, is helping to reduce the numbers of young people leaving the countryside.

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/Prix/Session2013_en.asp

Hoge Kempen National Park,

Regionaal Landschap Kempen en Maasland vzw

In the early 1990s, the situation in the Hoge Kempen region was as follows: its four coalmines were on the point of closing and the landscape was intersected by roads and fragmented due to poor spatial planning. Several smaller nature reserves existed in the area but were separated from each other. The creation of the Hoge Kempen National Park (started in 1998, opened in 2006) turned this trend around. It is the framework that brings together every stakeholder or involved party. It is the tool for spatial and visual unification of the several nature reserves into a combined heathland and forest area of 5,700 hectares. It is also a means of combining local economic activities and the chance of employment for socially vulnerable people, the blossoming of biodiversity, integrated landscape quality and sustainable tourism. It is a supported bottom-up approach.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recognised the great value of the project. Hoge Kempen National Park uses an integrated approach which enables greater coherence and defragmentation in an area from which the mining industry has departed and gives it new impetus. The park, adjacent to a garden city, remains faithful to the principles of such cities, fostering co-operation and stimulating the parties concerned. This project is intended to increase public interest in the protection and enhancement of this landscape.

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/Prix/Session2013_en.asp

CZECH REPUBLIC**Environmental education in the town of Strakonice year by year or “Pilgrimage through the Contemplative Landscape”,
Municipality of Strakonice**

The nominated educational project of the town of Strakonice is a set of interrelated one-year thematic cycles focusing on the landscapes of the Strakonice, Blatná and Vodňany districts. Each sub-project demonstrates the uniqueness of the landscape in a natural, cultural and historical context and the way to read and understand the history of the region. In the complex approach of sustainable development it explains the need for protection and functional management of landscapes as a mutually interlinked and influenced setting. Through its comprehensive nature, the project increases general awareness about the South Bohemia region and helps people to gain a healthy self-confidence and respect for the place where they were born and where they live. Every thematic cycle is accompanied by a quotation from the book “The Contemplative Landscape” (Země zamyšlená), written by a local artist Ladislav Stehlík (1st edition, 1947). Comparisons between this text, which is over 50 years old, and the situation today provide an inspirational view of the development of the landscapes of South Bohemia.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recognised the great value of the project. The environmental education project of the town of Strakonice, a national pilot project, is an on-going process of an enduring nature, one which takes account of previous management. It brings all generations together through a series of “thematic cycles” referring to the intangible values of the places concerned (history and legend, poetry, painting, folk arts...) so as to give a better description of the landscape and “give it a soul”. The growing awareness of the sense of belonging to a “European” landscape is interesting. Active public participation in the restoration and maintenance of “small” heritage was appreciated.

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/Prix/Session2013_en.asp

FINLAND

**The Landscape Projects of Hyypä Valley, City of Kauhajoki, Hyypä village association,
Finnish Forestry Centre/Public Services, Unit of South and Central Ostrobothnia**

The authors of the projects have implemented major and long-term landscape maintenance. The base project entitled “The Establishment of the Hyypä Valley Landscape Conservation Area”, led to the following achievement: a Preservation Plan, including definitions of the special landscape features and values, and numerous illustrated instructions for preservation actions. Co-operation and several confidence building measures were developed among the 1 200 landowners and villagers, the local municipality, regional and state authorities, specialist organisations, enterprises, international volunteers and local associations. 41.5 hectares of landscape maintenance operations have also been implemented and permanent action groups for landscape maintenance and a discussion forum for villagers, associations and authorities have been established. Finally, a Landscape Conservation Area in Hyypä, founded by the Ministry of Environment in the autumn of 2009, has been given juridical status.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recognised the great value of the project. The actions developed in the Hyypä Valley for landscape involve a wide variety of players. The public is viewed on the same level as the public authorities and is involved in the definition of objectives, implementation of activities and monitoring of the results achieved. The strong point of this achievement is the deep involvement of both volunteers and the national forestry department in the activities. The projects carried out have helped to highlight the value of landscapes and to promote the social and aesthetic values of the communities concerned.

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/Prix/Session2013_en.asp

FRANCE**Grand Pré Park,**
City of Langueux

A contemporary park in the small town of Langueux, Grand Pré links the town centre with Saint Briec and the wide horizons of the Yffignac Bay. The project creates a strong, friendly place that features elegant views in a new urbanity. The town, fragmented by suburban housing, has a new urban quality. This is expressed on the one hand through a social project, which gives importance to a public space that generates diversity and exchanges between people and, on the other, through composed views and materials that recreate the visual relationship with the surrounding landscape and landmarks. Grand Pré Park became the new centre of attraction of a town in the making.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recognised the great value of the project. The Grand Pré Park occupies 12 hectares between an urban and a natural landscape. It is therefore a convivial place restoring its coherence to a fragmented area of land. It opens up links with the surrounding villages and spaces. This park is suitable for many recreational uses and offers an opportunity to engage in educational activity to promote sustainable development. The aim of the project is to express a new urban quality, and it has altered the “workers’ dormitory” image of Langueux. It strives to offer areas where it is easy for people to meet, irrespective of their social background.

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/Prix/Session2013_en.asp

HUNGARY

Complex landscape rehabilitation and development programme in the Gerecse Mountains and the Által Creek Valley,

Association for the Restoration and Development of the Által Creek Valley (Tata)

The Association for the Restoration and Development of the Által Creek Valley was established in 1995 in order to promote the preservation and sustainable utilisation of the environment and rich natural/cultural heritage of the Által Creek Valley, a former industrial site struggling with numerous environmental challenges. Following its initial efforts aimed at protecting water quality, the association made its activities more complex in 2002 when it decided to embark on the complex rehabilitation and development of the Gerecse Mountains and the Által Creek Valley on the basis of ecological considerations. An outstanding achievement is the creation of the Gerecse Nature Park based on the sustainable use of natural/cultural heritage and born out of the joint action of 29 communities in the region and other affected organisations. The association, whose members are local, performed all operations from planning to implementation in a systematic manner and with the involvement of other stakeholders.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recognised the great value of the project. The long-term complex landscape rehabilitation and development programme in the Gerecse Mountains and the Által Creek Valley, carried out by a non-governmental organisation, combines protection of the environment with responsible tourism. Through a comprehensive approach, a former mining site has been rehabilitated and damaged ecosystems restored. The involvement of numerous – public and private – partners has made an everyday landscape extraordinary, conducive to the development of ecotourism. The landscape has been planned in line with the European Landscape Convention. This simultaneously environmental and social project has enabled the public to return to former practices. The high level of participation and quality of governance were appreciated.

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/Prix/Session2013_en.asp

IRELAND**Bere Island Conservation Plan,**

The Heritage Council and the Bere Island Project Group

The aim of the Bere Island Conservation Plan is to shape the sustainable future of the island. It demonstrates the value of a landscape approach to island management. In line with the European Landscape Convention, the conservation plan was developed with the full involvement of the Bere Islanders, who were proactive in developing strategies to protect and manage their landscape. It has resulted in a series of projects inspired by its vision, informing and shaping policy at the regional, national and European levels. The Conservation Plan has also become a model of best practice for other European islands.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recognised the great value of the project. The Bere Island Conservation Plan is a sound plan representing an exemplary approach and fulfilling all the criteria for the Council of Europe Landscape Award, particularly where public participation and awareness-raising are concerned. It involves various participants (local people, universities in the framework of the Erasmus programme, the army, etc.). The project brings nature and the economy together and offers waste management solutions. It is subject to integrated management using the resources available, and is linked to every sector of island life. It has resulted in stabilisation of the island's population. The depopulation of rural areas is a problem on a European scale. This project has the right dimension and sets a useful example.

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/Prix/Session2013_en.asp

Dzintari Forest Park,
Jurmala City Council

Jurmala's Dzintari Forest Park is unique due to its location, because its 13-hectare natural enclave is located in the centre of the city of Jurmala. The park's greatest assets are 200-year-old pine tree groves and habitats, which are preserved intact to the present day, notwithstanding the rapid development of surrounding areas. The construction of public structures around this area of nature significantly increased the number of visitors before the construction of the park. This increase in traffic might have degraded the park landscape in the city centre. For that reason the idea was to arrange the natural landscape according to the new situation and incorporate nature into a city infrastructure and preserve natural and different aspects of the territory. The wild look which the Forest Park preserves makes it a place for recreation and holidays to be enjoyed by all. The infrastructure objects in the park are evenly distributed along all park territory. Its infrastructure elements allow people to move around above ground by means of an elevated wood-plank walkway. The most important active recreation element is a roller-blade path, which is located in centre of the park. Skaters and pedestrians are separated by a pedestrian bridge. Within the park there are also skateboard parks, street-ball courts, a sightseeing tower and playgrounds.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recognised the great value of the project. Dzintari Forest Park aims to preserve a natural enclave of 13 hectares in the city centre. This planning of the urban landscape for recreational and leisure purposes has successfully made room at this site to accommodate pedestrians and skateboarders. The development of democratic processes to satisfy public aspirations in terms of quality of the environment is greatly appreciated.

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/Prix/Session2013_en.asp

NETHERLANDS

Planning policy for conservation and sustainable development of 20 national landscapes in the Netherlands,

Stichting Nationale Landschappen (NGO)

Since 2006 local and regional organisations have joined forces to protect landscape qualities and stimulate sustainable development in the 20 most valuable cultural landscapes in the Netherlands. Much has been invested in improving recreational facilities and accessibility and in raising public awareness. The project was initiated and financially supported in the first few years by the national government. Recently a new non-governmental organisation has been formed to secure protection and management in the future and improve co-operation of all parties involved, including local and regional authorities and private investors. This organisation (Stichting Nationale Landschappen) is a non-profit foundation with an executive office of its own (Servicenet Nationale Landschappen). New projects were set up and new ways of financing were organised.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recognised the great value of the project. The planning policy for conservation and sustainable development of 20 national landscapes covers a significant expanse of exceptional landscapes considered to be representative of the Netherlands. The identification of such landscapes is certainly within the scope of the European Landscape Convention.

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/Prix/Session2013_en.asp

PORTUGAL

Furnas Landscape Laboratory (Furnas LandLab),
Azores Regional Directorate of the Environment

The intensification of dairy farming in recent decades has led to the eutrophication of Furnas Lake. Therefore, to restore its water quality, a legally binding Furnas Watershed Plan was adopted in order to effect a major change in soil use. It was the turning point in the landscape management and economic activities of the last few decades. Since 2007 about 300 hectares of agricultural land within the watershed were bought by the Government of the Azores, which enabled the management team to implement an ambitious plan. Furnas Landscape Laboratory, a future multifunctional forest landscape, was created to act as a large experimental ground, the first of its type in the Azores, to implement new ecological restoration techniques, economic activities and management practices, promoting a widespread public involvement, to achieve sustainability at all levels (ecologic, economic, social, cultural and aesthetic). There have been many concrete achievements since 2007 and the project is on-going with no conclusion date.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recognised the great value of the project. The Furnas Landscape Laboratory represents an example of good practice which will be useful to other countries. The regaining of water quality, return to a kind of agriculture more respectful of the natural substrate and the eradication of invasive species are the project's strong points. The project, which certainly corresponds to the spirit of the European Landscape Convention, gives off a feeling of high energy. Activities were on a huge scale and required numerous resources, provided by many volunteers and, to some extent, European Structural Funds.

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/Prix/Session2013_en.asp

ROMANIA**Agricultural Development and Environmental Protection in Transylvania,**
ADEPT Foundation, NGO

The Agricultural Development and Environmental Protection (ADEPT) project was implemented by the ADEPT Foundation in the period between May 2006 and March 2009, financed under the Darwin Initiative and co-financed by Orange Romania and the UK Government (Defra). The project was initiated in the Târnava Mare area as a response to the threats to the semi-natural landscapes in Southern Transylvania which stemmed both from land abandonment and agriculture intensification as well as from lack of recognition. The goal was to facilitate the conservation and traditional management of the Târnava Mare semi-natural landscape, while increasing local benefits through the sustainable use of ecosystems. The project met its targets and developed a wider significance, with an impact on national and EU policy towards High Nature Value Farmland (HNVF) areas.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recognised the great value of the project. This project on Agricultural Development and Environmental Protection in Transylvania is of interest as it combines economics and ecology. The aim is to perpetuate an agricultural system which promotes biodiversity. The approach adopted presents a level of integration which would deserve to be increased. The ADEPT Foundation has involved several participants and brought national and European, public and private partners into action. Ultimately, this project should be able to incorporate landscape quality objectives.

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/Prix/Session2013_en.asp

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Salvage, Revival and Operation of the Forest Railway in the Landscape of Cierny Balog, Ciernohronska zeleznica NGO

The project “Salvage, Revival and Operation of the Forest Railway in the Landscape of Cierny Balog” won the Landscape Award of the Slovak Republic 2012 for bringing the people back to their landscape through the revival of a technical monument, for restoring the identity of Cierny Balog Region and for retaining its cultural heritage. The project is an exemplary model of how people can really make a positive change to a decaying landscape through the bottom-up approach. A large number of enthusiasts and volunteers, local citizens, as well as invited experts, by combining their enthusiasm, wisdom, memory, efforts, time, expertise, money, planning abilities, and management skills, have renewed the original vision – the purpose and the operation of the historic forest railway, which was facing destruction because of an arbitrary official decision that was taken last century. The people were able to persuade everybody that the forest railway adds value to their landscape as a main artery of their region. The forest railway, a symbol of sustainable wood-cutting practice of previous generations in the region, today represents the living historic form of the landscape, which has contributed significantly to the characteristic appearance, new life opportunities, prosperity and reputation of the Cierny Hron Valley in Slovakia.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recognised the great value of the project. The salvage, revival and operation of the forest railway in the landscape of Cierny Balog project concerns the highlighting of a technical aspect of the heritage, the forest railway of Cierny Balog. The involvement of 1,500 volunteers was appreciated. The magnificent Carpathian landscape forms the backdrop.

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SLOVENIA**Landscape and water-management restoration of Škocjanski Zatok nature reserve,
DOPPS, BirdLife Slovenia**

The project aimed to recreate the typical coastal wetland landscape of Škocjanski Zatok Nature Reserve, the largest brackish wetland in Slovenia, after the decay it suffered in the 1980s. This resulted in the restoration of the semi-natural coastal wetland ecosystem, landscape and its natural processes. It thus remedied the environmental problems of the past, and assured the conservation and development of the typical brackish and freshwater habitats supporting fauna and flora of European and national importance with a strong exemplary value, as well as the organisation of the wetland centre – a nature reserve open to the public. Visitors from within Slovenia and elsewhere nowadays enjoy the area for education, recreation and a unique nature experience. Awareness was raised in the local community, which participated in the project with a positive attitude – which also contributed towards a better quality of life and to the sustainable development of the Slovenian coast.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recognised the great value of the project. This landscape and water-management restoration project relating to Škocjanski Zatok nature reserve concerns a coastal wetland. Thanks to the project, urban and industrial sprawl have been successfully halted, something very important in this limited coastal area. Managed by BirdLife Slovenia, the project has benefited from significant national and European Union (LIFE) support, without which it would be impossible to curb urban and industrial pressure. It clearly shows public participation in the planning process and a good level of public awareness. The planning process incorporates nature protection and attention to the landscape.

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The sustainable revitalisation of the protected landscape of Geria,
Consortium for the defence and promotion of the landscape of Geria

Geria is an exceptional volcanic farmland for its outstanding landscape and heritage values. It is exemplary for the combination of human intervention and environmental sustainability. The area went into decline in the late twentieth century due to the expansion of the service economy that has adversely affected agriculture on the island of Lanzarote. To reverse this trend, public and private participants have tried to create a new framework and have implemented actions to achieve a new appreciation of its unique history and its economic opportunities. A campaign to raise awareness of the revitalisation of the area's heritage, innovation in the field of food and wine, active tourism and land rehabilitation are all ways of preserving an agricultural system which is the only one of its kind in the world.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recognised the great value of the project. This project relates to an outstanding landscape with few equivalents in Europe. The landscape can be maintained only through stubborn human effort without mechanical assistance. The revitalisation of this site, which has UNESCO Biosphere Reserve status, is the outcome of a rigorous approach combining environment, aesthetics and economics. Not only is wine-growing viable, it also creates jobs. The decision to engage in sustainable agri-tourism is helping to revitalise the landscape. Public participation is strong at every level of decision making, and awareness is raised of all aspects of landscape and environment.

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UNITED KINGDOM**South Pennines Watershed Landscape Project**

Pennine Prospects

The South Pennines Watershed Landscape Project seeks to tell the story of the landscape in terms of both the historic and the natural environment. More than a million people live in or around the South Pennine uplands, located between Leeds and Manchester, yet the site can still feel remote, wild and exhilarating. Its unique landscape has been an inspiration to artists and writers from the Brontës to Ted Hughes. There are significant pressures – for example, the peat resources are in the front line of the battle to mitigate climate change. Engaging local communities through projects based on science, archaeology and creative arts has improved understanding of the value of the landscape. Pennine Prospects, a rural regeneration non-Government organisation worked with volunteers and provided training to enable more people to be directly involved in caring for this fragile landscape.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recognised the great value of the project. Located close to major cities, the South Pennines Watershed Landscape Project fully meets the Landscape Award criteria and complies with the provisions of the European Landscape Convention. This area is made available to many and varied urban populations. The complex project is representative of the long and sound tradition of integrated work on the landscape in the United Kingdom. It represents a textbook example of public awareness-raising. Landscape planning is a process which necessitates constant efforts and investments. The progress made needs to be consolidated and continued on an on-going basis. The many participants in this project are encouraged to develop it further.

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/Prix/Session2013_en.asp

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