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*National Workshop on the implementation
of the European Landscape Convention
in Bosnia and Herzegovina*

Drawing landscape policies for the future

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SESSION 1

Methodologies for the establishment and implementation of landscape policies

Experience of the Serbian Republic in the establishment and implementation of landscape policy

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Introduction

The aim of the National Workshop on the implementation of the European Landscape Convention in Bosnia and Herzegovina was to present the European Landscape Convention and discuss the experiences of neighbouring countries on its application, with emphasis on the establishment and implementation of landscape policies. The following text gave a brief overview of the general steps for the establishment and implementation of landscape policy. In the second section, the experiences of the Republic of Serbia in the establishment and implementation of landscape policy were presented.

Action steps for the establishment of landscape policy

According to Dower and Phillips (2008) the focus of the convention is to promote the protection, management and planning of Europe's landscape, and to organise European co-operation on landscape issues. The convention relates to all landscapes — urban, peri-urban and rural; the ordinary and even the despoiled, as well as the exceptional. Landscapes are perceived as the setting for people's lives and crucial to the quality of those lives: so, the general public should be encouraged to take an active interest in caring for them. Moreover, Europe's landscapes are of value to all Europeans, being cherished outside the locality and beyond national borders: therefore, public authorities at all levels should take action to protect, manage and plan landscapes in order to maintain and improve landscape quality, as part of the process of sustainable development. Each member State is expected to implement the convention according to its own legal system and division of powers, respecting the principle of subsidiarity. Thus, much of the action may lie with regional or local authorities, who are the prime guardians of the planning system.

According to European Landscape Convention: 'Landscape policy' means an expression by the competent public authorities of general principles, strategies and guidelines that permit the taking of specific measures aimed at the protection, management and planning of landscapes". The implementation of the landscape policy is conditioned by the realisation of several steps.

As stated by Dower and Phillips (2008) these steps are:

- to recognise landscapes in law;
- to integrate landscape into all relevant policies;
- to identify landscapes, that is to describe their character and the key elements in that character;
- to assess the landscapes, that is to analyse what contributes to, and what detracts from, their quality and distinctiveness;
- to define objectives for landscape quality, after public consultation. These objectives should form the frame for the main process of physical action, embodied in the next three steps – protection, management and planning;
- to protect what should be protected;
- to manage what needs management, in order for it to be sustained;
- to plan, namely to take strong forward-looking action to enhance, restore and create landscapes;
- to monitor what is happening to the landscapes, in terms of change and the impact of that change upon the character of the landscapes, and upon the achievement or not of the stated objectives;
- to promote education and training;
- to raise public awareness and participation; and
- to co-operate at European level, through exchange of experience, information and specialists.

According to Council of Europe publication "Landscape and sustainable development: challenges of the European Landscape Convention" (2006) ...the steps which are clearly essential for framing and implementing landscape policies are, first, institutional instruments closely bound up with the exercise of power and, secondly, participation and information arrangements which meet the requirements of the Aarhus Convention.

It is for governments to integrate landscape into all relevant policies. The challenge is to get landscapes into the policies for such fields as transport, water supply, energy, and (crucially) spatial planning (Dower and Phillips, 2008).

The next challenging step is the identification and assessment of the landscape. The first task to be addressed thus consists in defining the contours and specifying the internal features of the different types of landscapes, and characterising them both in the present state of their identification and in their dynamics. That is, by specifying the evolutionary processes affecting them. Landscape identification and assessment methods take ecological processes into account, as well as the social, cultural and economic processes which are part and parcel of their production and development, and are part of the way they are perceived (Landscape and sustainable development: challenges of the European Landscape Convention, 2006).

Once it has been identified and assessed for a specific landscape, the landscape quality objective consists in precisely listing the features which the local people wish to see recognised for their living environment. It specifies, furthermore, that the parties are required to set quality objectives for the landscapes which have been identified and evaluated, and, in doing so, to consult the population concerned. Before any measure is taken for the protection, management and planning of a landscape, it is essential to make clear to the public what objectives are being pursued. (Landscape and sustainable development: challenges of the European Landscape Convention, 2006).

The realisation of these steps requires the engagement of governments, institutions, universities, NGOs, associations, individuals etc.

Experiences of the Republic of Serbia

The Republic of Serbia has ratified the European Landscape Convention (ELC) in 2011. (Law on Ratification of the European Landscape Convention, RS Official Gazette, No. 4/2011). The Ministry of Environmental Protection has the leading role for the implementation of the landscape policy. Following the ratification of the convention, the first activities were numerous promotions of the convention in urban municipalities, national parks, local communities, regional economic development agencies and others.

The following documents created in the period from 2010 to 2015 in the Republic of Serbia are relevant for establishing the landscape policy. The first is the Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia from 2010 to 2020. Chapter 1.3.4 of the spatial plan is dedicated to landscape protection and management. This chapter provides the establishment of Landscape Study (Landscape characterisation). There are three groups for which the development of Landscape Study is foreseen: areas designated from the point of view of natural values; areas whose landscape quality or present physical structures are significant for future development; areas under special pressure of development.

Further activities during 2014 included the creation of three documents the drafting of which was supported by the Project Fund for Institutional Development (PROFID), financed by the Swedish Agency for International Development.

The first document is a baseline study and review of compliance of the existing regulations with the European Landscape Convention. It represents the first result of the project “Development of the draft Action Plan for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention and the draft Rulebook on categorisation of Serbia’s landscape”.

The baseline study includes:

- introductory remarks;
- the basic framework of the convention;
- harmonisation of the legal and planning basis with the European Landscape Convention (within the European countries and Serbia);
- European experiences in formulating and the content of action plans for the implementation of the convention;
- experience in landscape identification and characterisation (within the European countries and Serbia);
- reasons for, and benefits of, the European Landscape Convention implementation in Serbia;
- proposal for the preliminary content of the action plan and the rulebook;
- and glossary.

The baseline study emphasised that the benefits of the European Landscape Convention implementation in Serbia are the raising and developing of awareness regarding the importance of landscapes, and establishing the conditions for the integration of landscape into all relevant policy areas (cultural, economic, and social). The implementation of the convention will initiate certain activities with an aim to improve the current legal base, it will create conditions for landscape identification, for understanding its dynamics, and the conditions will be established for monitoring changes and trends, for active involvement of the public, the continuous exchange of experiences and results of good practice. Taking into consideration the above, the achieved results of this Study in relation to the harmonisation of the legal and planning base in the European countries and Serbia represent the first result of the implementation of the European Landscape Convention and accounting of the provisions of the convention, and the fundamental framework for the establishment of landscape policy in Serbia.

The Draft Action Plan for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention in Serbia represents the second result of the above project.

The Action Plan includes:

- summary;
- introductory remarks;
- basic framework of the convention;
- overview of the implementation of the convention within EU countries;
- evaluation of the implementation of the convention in Serbia;
- vision, aims and priorities for the implementation of the convention;
- plan of activities for implementation of the convention for the period 2015-2020;
- monitoring and reporting on realisation of the Action Plan.

Integral parts of the Action Plan are:

- Appendix I (Definitions) and Appendix II Baseline Study.
- objectives and initial actions for the implementation of the convention are formulated for six subject areas, taking into consideration the actual situation and problems in the Republic of Serbia, and the established frameworks of the convention, suggested vision and time scope.

Those are:

- recognition of landscapes in law;

- identification and assessment of landscapes in the territory of Serbia;
- promotion of a comprehensive landscape policy and integration in the planning;
- management (control) measures within landscape policy;
- participation and awareness-raising;
- education and research;
- international co-operation.

Taking into account the fact there is no method in Serbia for identification and analysis of landscapes which adequately suits the needs stated in the convention, it is concluded that a combination of different methods and approaches should be identified which provide the right conditions for the development and practical application of knowledge in the field of landscape. The goal of establishing an appropriate system for the provision of knowledge, data, and information for planning, protection and management of landscapes at the national, regional and local level is a long-term goal (by 2025). Appropriate actions will be formulated as a result, ensuring the provision of knowledge and information, developing discussion about the format, focus and content analysis of landscapes, design, development and maintenance of spatial databases of Serbian landscapes, etc. It is stressed that the establishment of landscape monitoring should be combined with studies of socio-economic conditions which act as drivers of change in the region. Unfortunately, the Action Plan has not yet been adopted.

The Draft Rulebook on the categorisation of Serbia's landscape represents the third result of the above Project. The legal grounds for drafting and adoption of the Rulebook draw on: a). the Law on Nature Protection, Article 26, paragraph 5., stating that the criteria for landscape identification and the conditions for evaluation of their significant and characteristic features is stipulated by the Minister; b). the Law on Ratification of the European Landscape Convention; and c). the Law on the Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia (SPRS), specifying that the strategic priority is characterisation of Serbia's landscape. The Rulebook was adopted in 2017. The title of the rulebook is *Rulebook on the criteria for identifying the landscapes and the method of assessing their significant and characteristic features* ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", No. 119/17 of 29.12.2017).

The next prominent project, which was realised at the end of 2015, is a pilot project: Increasing capacities of Šumadija and Pomoravlje districts for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention. The first phase is the classification and description of the character of Sumadija and Pomoravlje regions, supported by the Ministry of Environmental Protection. The project holder was the Regional Economic Development Agency for Šumadija and Pomoravlje.

This project strongly supports efficient implementation of the European Landscape Convention.

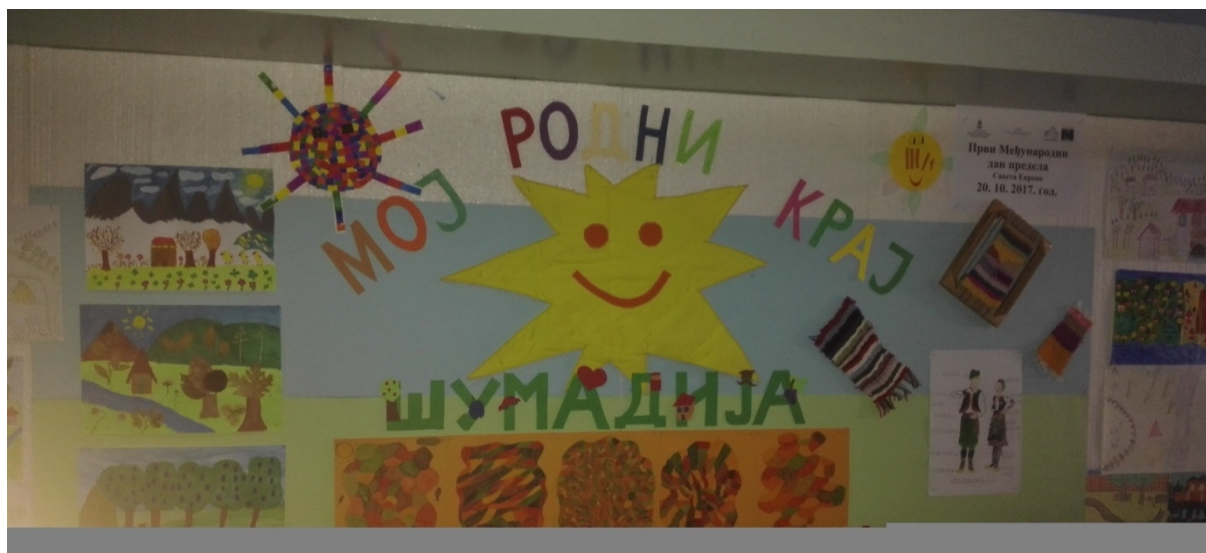
The objectives of the project are:

- identification, classification and description of landscape character types of Sumadija and Pomoravlje regions, and creating a mechanism for strategic management and preservation of landscape quality, in accordance with the European Landscape Convention;
- recognition of Sumadija and Podunavlje landscapes as development resources which contribute to the establishment of local and regional identity;
- recognition the value and attractiveness of Sumadija and Podunavlje landscapes for investments in tourism, agriculture and rural development, as well as for preservation of nature and biodiversity, environmental protection, cultural landscape protection etc.;
- creating the landscape spatial database;

- creating the website;
- contributing to the proper understanding European Landscape Convention by local authorities, institutions, organisations, public and private sector, and civil society organisations in order to identify natural and created cultural resources and their sustainable development.

In 2018, the Ministry of Environmental Protection continued to give financial support to the landscape character assessment on the territory of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina in two regions, the South Backa and Srem regions. The project is foreseen for realisation in the next three years. The current data base for Sumadija and Pomoravlje regions, will be expanded with new spatial data for the territory of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina.

The First International *Landscape Day* of the Council of Europe on 20 October 2017 was celebrated in the main town and suburban schools of Kragujevac, with the support of the Regional Agency for Economic Development of Sumadija and Pomoravlje (Picture 1).



Picture 1: The exhibition of children's drawings under the slogan “The landscape I love and dream” on the occasion of Landscape Day 2017

The project of the NGO from Sremska Mitrovica “The Protection and management of the Special Nature Reserve Zasavica as a model for sustainable rural development”, was submitted for the 2016/2017 cycle of the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe and was one of the projects that received the recognition of the Council of Ministers.

Literature

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