

THE NATIONAL PLAN OF CULTURAL LANDSCAPE: 100 CULTURAL LANDSCAPES IN SPAIN

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Administrative structure of Spain and other stakeholders in the cultural landscape panorama

The Kingdom of Spain has a rather complex organization with many stakeholders when talking about culture and landscape, which is the topic of this meeting. There is the State, with a number of Ministries varying according to political decisions, but in what is cultural landscape, two Ministries are responsible: the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment. Apart from the State, there are 17 Autonomous Communities which have an important degree of independence and 2 Autonomous Cities: Ceuta and Melilla. For rural areas, there are intermediate administrations with responsibilities providing different services to small villages: those are the Provincial councils. Finally and for the islands, there are two additional administrations: the Balearic Council and the Canary Islands Council. In addition in Spain there are 8.122 municipalities ranging from more than 3 million inhabitants to less than one hundred but most of them with historical heritage and landscape to preserve, and then there are other private stakeholders that can be very influential with large budgets or properties like foundations, associations, enterprises, banks, owners and individuals. A coordination council was considered necessary to develop projects in different areas of cultural heritage, and in year 1990 the first National Plan of Cathedrals was established, and since then 13 other national plans on different areas were createdⁱ.

The legal basis for the existence of the national plans is enshrined in Act 16/1985 of Spanish Historical Heritage, which states in Article 2 that “the State Administration shall adopt the necessary measures to facilitate collaboration with the remainder of the public authorities and of such authorities amongst themselves, and shall collect and provide as much information as may be necessary”. It also states that “the Heritage Council shall foster communication and the exchange of action and information programmes relative to Spanish Historical Heritage”.

The National Conservation Plans are a synthesis of two items: The National Information Plans provided for by the Spanish Historical Heritage Act, competence of the Heritage Council, and the Conservation and Restoration Plans provided for in the Decree that created what is today the Instituto de Patrimonio Cultural de España (Spanish Cultural Heritage Institute).

Thus, National Plans are coordination instruments between the different Administrations on a national scale and define commonly-agreed criteria and establish action protocols, with unified methodologies.

Information on the 14 National Plans can be checked in:

<http://www.mecd.gob.es/planes-nacionales/planes.html>

Where the basic strategic documents are also available in English.

The Cultural Landscape National Plan

Given that the Cultural Landscape involves and interests a diversity of thematic fields and different spheres of the Administration, the regulations in force in subjects most closely relating to landscape should be taken into account, among others environment, agriculture, mountains and rural development, urban and territorial planning, infrastructures and water, energy and tourism.

The Cultural Landscape National Plan takes as the basis the definitions and agreements established in the following international conventions subscribed by the Spanish State:

- UNESCO World Heritage Convention, Paris 1972. Ratified by Spain, Official State Bulletin of 01/07/1982.
- The European Landscape Convention of the Council of Europe, Florence 2000. It was signed by Spain on 20 October 2000. Ratified in November 2007, it entered into force on 1 March 2008 (Official State Bulletin No. 31 of 5 February 2008).

In this international context, Spanish institutions related with Landscape, that is the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Agriculture and Autonomous Communities, established a strategy to implement the Florence Convention. Consequently, a meeting of experts was held with two initial tasks, the first one to ratify the Convention and second, to promote the necessary actions to implement it correctly.

The National Plan has the overall objective of safeguarding landscapes of cultural interest, understanding by *safeguarding* any measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the cultural landscape and encompassing the actions of identification and characterisation, documentation, research, protection, improvement, revitalisation, covering the necessary aspects of definition, delimitation, analysis of components and management, through the perspective of sustainable development.

Information on the Cultural Landscape National Plan can be checked at:

<http://www.mecd.gob.es/planes-nacionales/planes/paisaje-cultural.html>

Given the particular characteristics of cultural landscape as a heritage asset derived from its complexity, the high vulnerability of its values and the scant and unfocused legal support for its safeguarding, the Plan establishes the following specific objectives:

1. Identification, characterisation and safeguarding.
2. Social awareness and political recognition.
3. International, national and autonomous community cooperation.

100 Paisajes Culturales en España (100 Cultural Landscapes in Spain)

Consequently, and as a first step of point 1, a definition and categories of landscape was agreed among a group of experts, which has a formal structure and composition.

This previous work includes the standard form in which the description of the different landscapes must be drawn, so afterwards it is possible to have them classified and compared. In the form there is a special section for the most important characteristic defining the landscape. Bibliography is of special importance as it reveals the degree of knowledge and perception of a particular landscape.

Due to the particular characteristics of the Spanish administration already explained, a call for proposals was opened to the Autonomous Communities, which had to send proposals to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport to be included in the collection of landscapes, and finally a selection was made, being a 100 a symbolic figure, being Spain a country with very different landscapes and cultures, and not being easy to reduce the number of landscapes to a hundred.

As a result the book: *100 Paisajes Culturales en España (100 Cultural Landscapes in Spain)* has been published in year 2016.ⁱⁱ

It adopts the methodology previously established and consequently, the landscapes have been grouped in four headings according to the main activity: 1.- Agricultural, livestock and forestry; 2.- Industrial, infrastructures and commercial activities; 3.- Urban, historical and defensive; 4.- Symbolic.

The 4 activities are represented in a balanced number among them and also there is an equilibrium in the representation among the Autonomous Communities according to diversity of landscapes and surface, which has complicated the final selection. Also the landscapes selected represent the concept of landscape as defined in the National Plan.

The initially 100 cultural landscapes selected will be part of the National Plan of Cultural Landscape. It must be underlined that it is not exhaustive, but representative of a diverse and complex reality.

The structure of the book is as follows:

A general introduction or explanation with an article on landscape as the scenario of our lives; an article on the National Plan of Cultural Landscape and the European Landscape Council, and another article on cultural landscape. Finally four pages on a hundred cultural landscapes: why and how?

Then each type of landscape includes a definition and a description of its main characteristics and shows a panorama of its diversity, and then each landscape includes the Autonomous community or autonomous communities in which it spreads, its main villages, when it is first mentioned in history as a defined landscape, a description, bibliography and its author.

At the end there are indexes and the list with the photographers that have participated in the project, as the book includes more than 500 photographs.

ⁱ The National Plans are fourteen till now: 1.- Cathedrals, 2.- Abbeys Monasteries and Convents; 3.- Defensive Architecture; 4.- Industrial Heritage; 5.- Cultural Landscape; 6.- XX Century Heritage; 7.- Traditional Architecture; 8.- Intangible Heritage; 9.- Research in Conservation; 10.- Preservation, 11.- Education on Heritage; 12.- Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage; 13.- Photographic Heritage; 14.-Emergencies and Risks. There are three types: traditional heritage, some of them (9, 10 and 11) are horizontal and the other we could call them more modern concept of cultural heritage. Obviously some other plans would also be necessary and this is not a fixed figure.

ⁱⁱ *100 Paisajes culturales en España.*- Madrid: Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2016.