



EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION
LANDSCAPE AWARD OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

5th Session – 2016-2017

APPLICATION FORM

Presentation

The European Landscape Convention aims to promote the protection, management and planning of landscapes and to bring together European co-operation in this field. It is the first international treaty exclusively devoted to all dimensions of European landscape. Taking into account the landscape, natural and cultural values of the territory, it contributes to promoting the quality of life and well-being of Europeans.

The Resolution on the Rules governing the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 20 February 2008 at the 1018th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies, draws attention to the fact that Article 11 of the Convention institutes the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe and that it is in keeping with the work carried out by the Council of Europe concerning human rights, democracy and sustainable development. It effectively promotes the territorial dimension of human rights and democracy by acknowledging the importance of measures taken to improve the landscape for people's living conditions.

Opened to the Parties to the Convention, the Award is intended to raise civil society's awareness of the value of landscapes, of their role and of changes to them. Its objective is to reward exemplary practical initiatives aimed at successful landscape quality objectives on the territories of the Parties to the Convention. The Award is conferred every two years and the files presenting applications must reach the Secretariat General of the Council of Europe.

At its meeting held in Strasbourg on 28-29 April 2008, the Steering Committee for Cultural Heritage and Landscape (CDPATEP) decided that applications should be submitted to the Council of Europe Secretariat through the Permanent Representations of the Parties to the Convention.

*I would be very grateful if you could send no later than **30 January 2017** the following elements of the candidature file (10 pages maximum) established for your country on the basis of the proposals forwarded to you by the Ministries:*

- 1) *by E-mail, the Application form completed to: maguelonne.dejeant-pons@coe.int ;*
- 2) *by post, a copy of the Application form completed together with a CD-Rom or DVD containing the all the additional material to: Maguelonne Déjeant-Pons, Executive Secretary of the European Landscape Convention, Council of Europe, Agora (A3-32C), F- 67075 STRASBOURG Cedex.*

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- *Participation to the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe is only open to local and regional authorities and their groupings and non-governmental organisations, as stated in the Resolution CM/Res (2008)3, Appendix, Article 2.*
- *The application form must be completed in all its parts, in one of the two official languages of the Council of Europe (English or French).*
- *The materials submitted must be copyright-free, for use by the Council of Europe in communications aimed at promoting the award or any other publications or activities relating to the Convention. The Council of Europe undertakes to cite the author's names.*
- *Files that are incomplete or fail to comply with the rules will not be taken into consideration.*

For further information please visit the Landscape Award section of the Council of Europe website: <http://www.coe.int/EuropeanLandscapeConvention>

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I. STATE CONCERNED AND APPLICANT

1. State

Norway

Represented by

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2. Applicant

*Name of the local,
regional authority (ies)
or NGO(s)*

Municipality of Oslo
Agency for Urban Environment

Represented by

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II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJET

3. Name of the Project

Alna Environmental Park – a blue green corridor of biodiversity, recreational opportunities and sustainable urban water management.

4. Location of the Project

The Alna River in the Grorud Valley, Municipality of Oslo

5. Summary of the Project (10 lines)

In 2002 a report presented a vision on how Alna could be strengthened and used in the revitalization of living environment in Groruddalen. Alna is the defining topographical line through the Grorud Valley and the idea was to reinforce the Valley's blue-green structure by reopening most of Alna watercourse. The underpinning idea was landscape ecological; an open watercourse with value as a recipient with self-cleaning ability maintaining ecological diversity at the same time as being a recreational resource for the local population locally and the city in general. The project has transformed near residential nature to an accessible park and recreation area, and has become an important social and health project in an area that was lacking good meeting places. The water has become a "natural magnet" and Alna River emerges as a living and vibrant waterway where people congregate and meet. With the adoption of the Municipal Master Plan for the Alna Environmental Park in May 2013 the project was granted political recognition by the city council.

6. Photo representing the Project



The Alna trail passing along the river in Svartdalen, Røhne

Photo: Eivind

III. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

7. Start of the Project month year
The project must have been completed three years previously

8. Partners

- The city of Oslo (incl. 4 city districts, and many of the agencies in the city administration)
- National authorities
- “Oslo Elveforum” (NGO) by «The friends of Alna”

9. Financing bodies

- The city of Oslo
- National authorities

10. Central aims of the Project

The main aims of the project are sustainable urban development, water management and visible improvements to the environment. This is sought to be achieved by bringing the river landscape back to life by prioritizing and making it an obvious and intertwined part of urban spatial planning and management.

Higher standard of living and overall improved living conditions has also been central aims. Making the Alna river more visible, accessible and ecologically sound has the potential to positively affect people`s sense of well-being – although difficult to measure.

The river has been used as a framework for

- Integrating and enhancing existing cultural and individual objects along the waterway so that their attraction value comes into play.
- Creating small and large meeting places and experience points along the waterway from the processing of available grades and supply of new ones. The aim is to offer a variety of experiences and opportunities for users, across age and cultural background.
- Creating a sense of closeness to nature and promoting its circulation and features.

Improve the health by giving the people of Oslo a continuous flow and experience range from Lillomarka via Grorud Park to Leirfossen and Hølaløkka.

Landscape Ecological improvements by:

- Contributing to increase water self-cleaning ability and facilitate purification of water seeping into the river from the surrounding road and industrial area.
- Contributing to the ecological diversity, open rivers creates essential habitats for animals and plants.
- Facilitating local purification of contaminated soil.
- Handling of flooding; Open storm water solutions reduce flood risk and reduced congestion in the wiring with respect to climate change and heavy rains that are expected to come.

11. Outcome

Through holistic planning based on a long-term strategy with high quality around the river Alna, Oslo has managed to unify a variety of disciplines and authorities to cooperate with tangible physical results of very high quality.

Municipal sector plan for Alna environmental park facilitate the reopening and environmental upgrading of Alna and important tributaries from Alna River to the bay, and provides the basis for diversified development of the watercourse with side spaces. This has improved public accessibility to natural recreational areas as well as ecological restoration and preservation of one of the main city rivers and biological corridors.

Various recreational opportunities and parks have been established along Alna, while other areas have been restored as natural areas of high value. A marked hiking trail, "The Alna trail" along the river and places with value as cultural heritage have been restored and made accessible. The environment along the tributaries of Alna has been upgraded and each of the four districts involved in the project has got its own neighborhood park. The first of them "Grorud park" is an integral part of the Alna trail.

Alna River has become a landscape which residents are proud of. It has become an annual tradition that each fall hosts a "light walking" along the river with art installations and many activities organized by various interest groups.

Alna River and the various recreational areas along the river, especially Grorud Park, is widely used and user groups are varied. From a health perspective, this is very important. In a social perspective Alna river and the parks is used to facilitate meetings between people regardless of cultural backgrounds. For children's development these experiences with nature is essential for the development of basic skills.

IV. RESPECT OF THE CRITERIA OF THE ATTRIBUTION OF THE AWARD

12. Sustainable territorial development

Is the project part of a sustainable development policy?

Does it contribute to the enhancement of environmental, social, economic, cultural or aesthetic values of the landscape? How?

Has it successfully countered or posed a remedy to any pre-existing environmental damage or urban blight? How?

The city of Oslo has over the last two decades had a particular focus on the importance of how the city's waterways can be preserved and restored as a means for more sustainable development of the urban environment.

The Municipal Master Plan of Oslo states the vision: «To safeguard and strengthen the blue-green character of the city».

The reopening of Alna is the result of long term efforts. Environmental upgrading through sustainable urban development has been an overriding driving force and a goal of the project. Landscape ecological values was a starting point and the project's basic aim has been to promote nature's ability to clean, maintain biodiversity and managing floods.

Groruddalen has approximately 130.0000 residents from about 150 different nationalities. The valley contains several large residential areas built in the decades after World War II to meet the housing shortage. In the beginnings of 2000's environmental impacts and challenges in local communities came on the political agenda, and state and municipal started to work together against the negative trends in this part of the city. Oslo municipality therefore decided to upgrade Groruddalen through an action plan with a combination of environmental, physical, cultural and social initiatives and efforts. In 2007, cooperation around Groruddalen formalized through an agreement between Oslo and state governments in "Grorudalssatsingen". An important aspect here has been to equalize differences in living conditions, including through a major commitment to physical activity and the physical environment (landscape).

The Municipal Master Plan for the Alna Environmental Park (adopted in May 2013) is in many ways, the summary and the final product of decades of work with Alna and river landscape. The aim was multifunctional. The plan is a politically adopted pursuant to the Planning and Building Act and gives the project a long-term legal framework for a law whose preamble is that it should promote sustainable development for the benefit of the individual, society and future generations.

Municipal sector plan is simultaneously a part of Oslo's overall green infrastructure plan and vice versa. The Green Structure Plan for Oslo, 2009, states that Oslo's unique character as "the green city between the hills" is to be preserved. The rivers and streams that run through the built-up zone are important to the blue-green structure, and the plan includes general provisions for construction-free zones along the river banks.

The last enclosing of a river stretch was done in the 1980s. Since then, focus has been on reopening. In the past decade, six river stretches in the built-up zone has been reopened (1530 m in total). Another nine reopening projects are in progress (3920 m) in Oslo.

For years, Oslo has worked to improve the water quality and environmental conditions in the city's waterways. Efforts have been enhanced by the measures implemented in line with the EU Water Framework Directive. Crayfish, salmon and trout thrive in the built-up zone. To increase fish stocks, 130,000 fry are released annually

13. Exemplary value

Can the project be considered of exemplary value? Why? Which are the good practices that it implemented?

The work on Alna and river landscape as part of Oslo's blue-green structure and "Grorudalssatsningen" can serve as a model project on many levels.

Oslo has with its long-term strategy for the areas around the river Alna managed to unite a variety of disciplines and authorities to cooperate with tangible physical results of very high quality. The project has succeeded in creating community involvement, and to involve many inhabitants and voluntarily groups.

Municipal sector plan for Alna environmental park facilitate the reopening and environmental upgrading of Alna and important side rivers from Alna river to the bay by 2020. It also provides the basis for diversified development of waterways to increase the attractiveness and give a stronger identity to the entire Groruddalen.

It has a strategy where necessary climate and environmental measures used to promote health and quality of life, sustainable urban development, visible landscape and environmental upgrading and better living conditions in Groruddalen.

The Planning and Building Act has been used strategically and through the adoption of Alna environmental park, anchored all the work that has been around the river Alna since the millennium in an overall plan.

Oslo's more general efforts to preserve and enhance the city's blue-green structures through active use of political strategies and legally binding area planning, use plans with the active participation of citizens also have great value.

14. Public participation

*Does the project actively encourage the public's participation in the decision-making process?
How?*

Oslo cooperates with a wide range of voluntary- and community groups, and individuals who contribute substantially to the mapping, maintenance and protection of important natural areas. The City contributes financially too many of the voluntary groups and community groups. Annually, EUR 120,000 is allocated for projects initiated by these organizations.

In relation to the rivers of Oslo an organization called Oslo Elveforum was established in 2000, and it has proved to be an important partner to the administration in municipality of Oslo by raising awareness about the importance of the rivers of Oslo. To promote local involvement Oslo Elveforum established subgroups associated with each river in Oslo. Alna rivers friends has been an active participant and initiator for decades. The organization has among many other things worked actively to make primary schools "adopt" a nearby river and commit to help maintain it.

In Groruddalen it has been worked to ensure the participation of local communities. Not all groups have been equally easy to reach through traditional participation methods, startup conferences and various workshops. Districts have therefore combined a wide variety of methods to create interest in the topic. As a supplement to formal and structured participation processes the Districts have worked actively on getting an understanding of what concerns citizens of the area. There has been a process with developing new and informal interaction venues with a low threshold for participation. Here the citizens have been able to come with whatever they have at heart. Districts have experienced this work as resource-intensive and a useful way to get in reach with residents which have been difficult to reach previously. Citizen involvement has both enabled citizens to have an influence in planning processes and to ensure an active and safe local environment.

15. Awareness-raising

Is the project effectively increasing the public's awareness of the importance of landscape in terms of human development, consolidation of European identity, or individual and collective well-being? How?

The project is based on current topics and political commitment including sustainability and ecology, public health, outdoor activities and integration across ethnicity and age.

Alna represents a vein of life and culture in the landscape in which people of Oslo have been living their everyday lives ever since Oslo became settled. By making Alna more ecological sound and more accessible the river landscape will appear more vibrant and people will be more able to experience the value, beauty and the importance of these natural surroundings. The river helps to explain the fundamental features of the Oslo landscape and it can strengthen our feelings of identity and our sense of belonging in a place. (- the opposite is the unhealthy condition and feelings of discomfort caused by alienation, displacement etc.)

The annual "light walks" along Alna path (for now is 14 pcs held) helps to make people aware of Alna rivers qualities and the possibilities river landscape provides physical activity, play and stay. "Light wanderings" uses art to highlight the landscape qualities in a special way.

V. ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

Together with the printed version of the Application form, additional material in digital format should be included in one CD-Rom or DVD and returned by post or courier to:

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Additional material

1. Text about the history and development of the project presented by Norway (*PDF format*)
2. Photos, 10 sent as separate files according to the list on next page (*JPEG 350 dpi high definition*)
3. Poster: City of Oslo: The Alna Trail (*61x912, PDF format high definition*)
4. Video
 - ✓ Presentation Norway part1 -The Alna trail in Groruddalen by Jan Hausken og Marianne Gjørsv
<https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/dep/kmd/nett-tv/video/Alnastien-i-Groruddalen/id2005689/>
 - ✓ Presentation Norway part2 – Municipality of Oslo's presentation by Kristian Moen

In addition to the two attached there are several videos from the Alna Environmental Park at <https://www.youtube.com/user/Groruddalssatsingen> We will recommend the one from the "light walking" 2014 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9Gz_5y4hkw) and the one presenting the Furuset Parkour park established after a dialog with the young people about what they missed in their neighborhood (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wh99SnaERII>)

List of attached Photos



1. The fountain at Alna's starting point, Photo: Stian Raa



2. Part of the Alna river surrounded by lush deciduous forest, Photo: Espen Bratlie



3. Tokerud creek reopened, Photo: Espen Bratlie



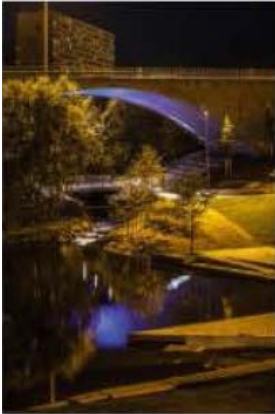
4. Meeting place along the Alna trail overlooking the river, Photo: Eivind Røhne



5. Children playing in the Grorud Park Photo: LINK Landskap; Tomasz Majewski



6. The swimming pond Hølaløkka, Photo: LINK Landskap; Tomasz Majewski



7. The Alna trail passing under the bridge of highway 4, Photo: LINK Landskap; Tomasz Majewski



8. Little girl and heron in the Alna River at the Grorud Park, Photo: Marianne Gjörv



9. Grorud Park, new bridge for the Alna trail across the river, Photo: Eivind Røhne



10. Walking the dog along the Alna trail in Svartdalen, Photo: Marianne Gjörv