COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS
COMITÉ DES MINISTRES

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

MINISTERS' DEPUTIES | Recommendations | CM/Rec(2017)7 | 27 September 2017

Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)7 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the contribution of the European Landscape Convention to the exercise of human rights and democracy with a view to sustainable development

(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 27 September 2017 at the 1295th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.*b* of the Statute of the Council of Europe (ETS No. 1),

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve a greater unity between its members, for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage;

Having regard to the European Landscape Convention (ETS No. 176, hereinafter "the Convention"), adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 19 July 2000, opened for signature by member States of the Council of Europe on 20 October 2000, and which entered into force on 1 March 2004;

Taking into consideration the Protocol amending the European Landscape Convention (CETS No. 219), adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 15 June 2016 and opened for ratification, acceptance or approval on 1 August 2016;

Bearing in mind that, in accordance with the preamble to the Convention, the signatory States expressed their concern to "achieve sustainable development based on a balanced and harmonious relationship between social needs, economic activity and the environment", and their desire to "respond to the public's wish to enjoy high quality landscapes and to play an active part in the development of landscapes";

Considering that the preamble to the Convention also states that the landscape "is an important part of the quality of life for people everywhere", "is a key element of individual and social well-being", and that "its protection, management and planning entail rights and responsibilities for everyone";

Considering that each Party to the Convention undertakes to adopt general and specific measures, and in particular "to recognise landscapes in law as an essential component of people's surroundings, an expression of the diversity of their shared cultural and natural heritage, and a foundation of their identity" (Article 5.*a.* of the convention);

Recalling that "'Landscape' means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors" (Article 1.*a.* of the Convention);

Reaffirming the principles and provisions set out in Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)3 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to member States on the guidelines for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention;

Recalling the Nafplio Declaration "Promoting territorial democracy in spatial planning" (Resolution No. 1, adopted at the 16th session of the Council of Europe Conference of Ministers Responsible for Spatial/Regional Planning (CEMAT), 17 June 2014);

Recognising that active public participation in the definition, implementation and monitoring of landscape policy is conducive to ensuring respect for human rights and democracy, with a view to sustainable development;

Recalling the commitment of the Parties to the Convention “to integrate landscape … in … policies with possible direct or indirect impact on landscape”, and in particular into regional and town planning policies (Article 5.*d*. of the Convention);

Referring to the Council of Europe’s report entitled “The European Landscape Convention’s contribution to human rights, democracy and sustainable development”, of which the 9th Conference of the Council of Europe on the European Landscape Convention took note on 24 March 2017,

Recommends that the governments of States Parties to the European Landscape Convention:

a. consider the importance that quality and diversity of landscapes has for the minds and bodies of human beings, as well as for societies, in the reflections and work devoted to human rights and democracy, with a view to sustainable development;

b. frame landscape policies in the long term, so that they take into account the common surroundings for present and future generations;

c. develop landscape policies throughout the entire territory, so that people can enjoy their surroundings in dignity and without discrimination;

d. ensure that landscape policies respond to the ideal of living together, especially in culturally diverse societies;

e. take into account the landscape issue in the actions taken to promote good governance and democratic citizenship, notably through awareness-raising, training and education;

f. apply the principles of human rights and democracy in landscape policies;

g. guarantee the right to participation by the general public, local and regional authorities, and other relevant parties including non-governmental organisations, with an interest in the definition, implementation and monitoring of landscape policies;

h. include the “landscape”, as defined by the Convention, in indicators of sustainable development relating to environmental, social, cultural and economic issues;

i. implement the principle of non-regression in order to ensure that landscape policies can only be subject to continuous improvement.