



**COUNCIL OF EUROPE LANDSCAPE CONVENTION**  
**LANDSCAPE AWARD OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE**

*8th Session – 2022-2023*

**APPLICATION FORM**

## **Presentation**

*The Council of Europe Landscape Convention is the first international treaty to be exclusively concerned with all aspects of landscape: natural, rural, urban and peri-urban. It represents an important contribution to the implementation of the Council of Europe's objectives. By taking into account the value of landscapes, with their natural and human components, the Council of Europe acknowledges that the landscape is an important part of the quality of life for people everywhere: in degraded areas as well as in areas of high quality, in areas recognised as being of outstanding beauty as well as everyday areas.*

*Article 11 of the Convention establishes the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe. The Resolution [CM/Res\(2008\)3](#) 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 Award and that it is in keeping with the work carried out by the Council of Europe concerning human rights, democracy and sustainable development.*

*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.*

***Each State Party to the Convention is thus invited to send by post to the Secretariat General of the Council of Europe (Council of Europe Landscape Convention), before 31 January 2023, via its Permanent Representation to the Council of Europe, a completed application form in paper format, together with a digital copy on a USB key of the form and additional material.***

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*Please note that:*

- 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 authors' 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:*

[Convention du Conseil de l'Europe sur le paysage / Site web officiel \(coe.int\)](#)  
[Council of Europe Landscape Convention / Official website \(coe.int\)](#)

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## I. STATE CONCERNED AND APPLICANT

<b>1. State</b>	Poland
<b>Represented by</b>	Andrzej Szweda-Lewandowski
<i>Address:</i>	General Directorate for Environmental Protection Wawelska 52/54, 00-922 Warsaw, Poland
<i>Telephone:</i>	+ 48 22 579 21 00
<i>E-mail:</i>	kancelaria@gdos.gov.pl
<b>2. Applicant</b>	The Silesian Voivodeship – the Silesia Landscape Park Complex
<i>Name of the local, regional authority(ies) or NGO(s)</i>	
<b>Represented by</b>	Hanna Pompa – Obońska (Director of ZPKWŚ)
<i>Address:</i>	Ignacego Krasickiego 25 42-500 Będzin www.zpk.com.pl
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## II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJET

3. **Name of the Project** Project no. LIFE12  
NAT/PL/000081 "Protection of the non-forest habitats in the area of Beskid's Landscape Parks" within the framework of Component I of the LIFE+ Nature and Biodiversity
4. **Location of the Project** Beskid Żywiecki and Beskid Śląski, Silesian voivodeship

5. **Summary of the Project** (10-12 lines)

Gazing upon the expansive landscape of the Beskids we should bear in mind that its beauty is in a large part the result of work of the Wallachian shepherds who through their farming economy practices and flock tending infrastructure as well as the introduction of the flock tending traditions provided modern residents of the region with the conditions for developing a unique culture and a peculiar natural environment and who are an excellent example of the existence of a unique natural environment and human activity. However, it must be emphasized that the currently appearing semi-natural greenswards and mountain meadows require human attention and engaging in active preservation through appropriate use of these areas. The decline of the pastoral, flock tending culture largely resulting from the decrease in the demand for the products of ovine origin contributed to transformation and erosion of the natural non-forest communities. Increasing the awareness and knowledge of the local populace regarding active nature preservation and providing local residents with financial assistance present the opportunity for slowing down the process of this decline as evidenced by the already concluded LIFE+ project no. LIFE12 NAT/PL/000081 titled: "Protection of the non-forest habitats in the area of Beskid's Landscape Parks".

6. **Photo representing the Project** (high definition – JPEG 350 dpi) and name of the author of the photo please



Pic. Arch. ZPKWŚ

7. **Website of the Project** (if exists)

<http://www.lifebeskidy.com.pl>

### III. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

8. **Start of the Project** month  year   
*The project must have been completed at least three years previously*

9. **Partners**
- |   |
|---|
| Fundacja „Pasterstwo Transhumancyjne”, Stowarzyszenie Ekologiczno-Kulturalne, Klub Gaja, Śląski Ośrodek Doradztwa Rolniczego w Częstochowie, PGL LP Nadleśnictwo Ujsoły, Nadleśnictwo Ustroń, Nadleśnictwo Wisła, Gmina Brenna, Gmina Istebna, Gmina Ujsoły, Gmina Węgierska Górką, Gmina Radziechowy-Wieprz, Związek Podhalań Oddział Górali Śląskich, Regionalna Dyrekcja Ochrony Środowiska w Katowicach |
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#### 10. **Financing bodies**

The total value of the Project was estimated at EUR 2 033 768 European Commission funds - up to 50% of the value The National Fund of Environmental Protection and Water Management - up to 45% of value ZPKWŚ own resources - up to 5% of value (in: WFOŚiGW in Katowice)
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#### 11. **Central aims of the Project**

<p>The primary goals of the project consist of preservation and complex protection of the habitats naturally valuable for the European Union through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- active protection of the mountainous Natura 2000 areas on the basis of the flock tending and pastoral economy, removing self-sown trees and bushes along with removal of biomass, mowing meadows' and greenswards' vegetation along with removal of biomass;</li><li>- regeneration of two types of natural habitats listed in the Attachment I to the Council Directive 92/43/EEG: 6230-2 West Carpathian matgrass swards and 6520 extensively used oatgrass and bentgrass mountain meadows Polygono-Trisetion and Arrhenatherion;</li><li>- covering habitats of the plants listed in Attachment II to the Council Directive 92/43/EEG with active protection: 4070* <i>Campanula serrata</i> and 4109 <i>Aconitum firmum</i>, <i>moravicum</i> subspecies;</li><li>- preservation and protection of the species of animals listed in Attachment II to the Council Directive 92/43/EEG related to the non-forest habitats: grey wolf <i>Canis lupus</i>, brown bear <i>Ursus arctos</i>, Tatra pine vole <i>Microtus tatricus</i>, capercaillie <i>Tetrao urogallus</i>, lesser spotted eagle <i>Clanga pomarina</i>, golden eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>, horned owl <i>Bubo Bubo</i> and <i>Carabus variolosus</i>;</li><li>- implementing the agricultural and environmental programmes supported by the European Union in the Natura 2000 areas;</li><li>- environmental education and increasing social awareness as well as implementation of the good practices in the field of management of the Natura 2000 natural resources;</li><li>- surveillance of the natural habitats and vegetation species covered by the Project and monitoring the selected groups of animals.</li></ul>
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## 12. Outcome

Owing to taking a number of well coordinated actions in the long-term perspective implementation of the LIFE Project no. LIFE12 NAT/PL/000081 enabled restricting the succession processes and thus it significantly contributed to improving the conditions of habitats and landscape. Owing to the Project we can once again observe sheep grazing on the mountain meadows; the grazing sheep act as "natural lawnmowers" and thus contribute to improving condition of non-forest habitats and simultaneously support preservation of the traditional landscape which apart from the scenic properties such as expansive mountain skylines contains elements of the flock tending pastoral culture of the region such as the traditional regional architecture including shepherds' huts, wooden casernes and watering holes which fit in with the semi-natural character of the environmentally valuable habitats. All major actions within the Project were implemented and recognized by the European Commission as the eligible actions and the results of these actions are visible in the field. To maintain this state in the years following conclusion of the Project it was necessary to take a number of well-coordinated actions requiring involving not only the employees implementing the Project but also the local communities which made realizing all the actions possible and which were essential for reaching the environmental goals. Furthermore, the Project resulted in a number of positive changes related to biodiversity: during implementation of the Project and after its conclusion a gradual improvement of the preservation condition of the West Carpathian matgrass swards was discovered; this improvement was largely a result of the active natural environment protection actions taken under the Project. In the majority of the research areas the share of habitats in proper condition increased whereas the number of habitats in improper condition decreased. Proportionally the greatest change in the preservation state of the habitats occurred only in the second year of the Project. This indicates that implementing protection actions results in improvement of the preservation state only in the long-term perspective. In the case of the extensively used habitats of oatgrass and bentgrass mountain meadows the significant improvement in the preservation state was recorded as a result of implementation of active nature protection actions. Also in the case of these habitats the greatest change in the preservation state was discovered between the second and the third year of the Project. Presence of *Campanula Serrata* was recorded in 8 areas.

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

### 13. 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?*

Flock tending was and still remains one of the more significant factors influencing the landscape and natural environment of Beskid Śląski and Beskid Żywiecki. Along with arrival of the Wallachian shepherds in this part of Beskids mountains in the XV century the existing manner of farming and the landscape in the upper regions of mountains changed significantly. The alpine tundras and the glades appearing in place of the cleared or burned forests added variety to the mountain ridges covered in forests whereas the methodical grazing of sheep contributed to enriching the species composition of the natural non-forest habitats and ensured their resilience.

The dense forest complexes of the Beskid Śląski Landscape Park and the Żywiecki Landscape Park are interspersed with the characteristic component of the local landscape - picturesque alpine tundras and glades located along mountain ridges. These alpine tundras and glades are still being used in the flock tending economy but, admittedly, not to such extent as in the past centuries; these alpine tundras and glades are not only a valuable element of the landscape appreciated by tourists due to their scenic properties but also serve as a stronghold of valuable natural habitats of numerous rare and protected species of plants. Protecting alpine tundras and glades against the decline resulting from discontinuation of flock tending operations is one of the more important tasks realized within the framework of the active protection of natural non-forest habitats and the biodiversity protection.

Mountain glades in the Beskids are an important component of the regional landscape and simultaneously serve as a backbone of biodiversity. The glades are a place where numerous rare species of plants and animals appear and their proper and efficient protection requires researching the plant habitats where these species appear and the mutual relations between them. Despite a rather uniform character of the extensive flock tending economy in the Beskids a number of diverse and interesting plant communities have developed in the glades. Numerous such communities are the so called semi-natural communities requiring constant human interference. The phrase "semi-natural" designates systems dominated by native species which, nevertheless, require a specific form of human activity such as grazing or mowing for their continued existence. Owing to this manner of economy the landscape of the Beskids enjoys unique character which constitutes the cultural heritage of the region.

#### 14. Exemplary value

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

Within the framework of its actions the Project utilized adequate, cost-effective and proven techniques and methods with the characteristics of good practices. The primary actions related to active protection of habitats and species as well as to landscape protection covered the techniques until now utilized and widely recognized as proper; furthermore, these techniques were previously tested by the Beneficiaries within the framework of other projects, including other LIFE projects. As a result of work of numerous experts the actions carried out simultaneously met the individual environment-related needs of specific mountain habitats which developed in individual areas. Use of non-forest habitats proceeded consistently with the principles of traditional farming: the vegetation was mowed once in order to prepare the area for grazing, the mowed biomass was collected and moved to lawfully allowable location. The extensive sheep grazing proceeded under supervision of a scientific consultant, consistently with the grazing schedule determining the date of grazing, the approximate duration of herd's presence in the area and the maximum allowable number of animals; furthermore, the grazing schedule was adjusted to the current conditions in the field. The statements of the Beneficiaries indicate that mowing the leftover vegetation, in practice approx. 30% of the grazing areas, was necessary at the end of the grazing season in order to protect the areas against expansion of certain plant species, e.g. *Urtica dioica*. Such actions were also carried out. The self-sown trees and bushes were cleared at a date outside of the determined breeding season and under supervision of experts. Furthermore, due to the need for restricting the expansion of *Rumex alpinus* the Beneficiary indicated certain alpine tundras and glades where keeping sheep was impermissible due to sheep's influence on the process of soil fecundation. In order to minimize the damage caused by the grazing animals in the areas constituting a mosaic of habitats and wetlands the actions aimed at limiting animals' capacity for entering the restricted areas were carried out and the specially designated watering holes for sheep were established in the grazing centres. Furthermore, on the basis of the past experience and due to the recurrent periods of drought herds were provided with water in case of water shortage



## 15. Public participation

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

*Is the project in line with the wider policies implemented by national, regional or local authorities?*

The LIFE project significantly contributed to improving awareness of the residents of the region concerning their role in shaping the regional landscape through various means, including involvement in actions related to traditional and extensive use of the land, and in care for the cultural heritage resulting from the pastoral and flock tending traditions; this increased awareness enabled displaying and emphasizing several traditional products related to sheep farming, e.g. regional cheese and dairy products, woollen goods and others. The Project also contributed to bolstering the structure of the community of the senior shepherds and the persons involved in traditional grazing due to establishing new relations between sheep herders from various areas through forming associations; the capabilities and benefits resulting from this manner of farming increased and this fact directly translated into improvement of the natural conditions and conservation of the landscape of the Beskids. Owing to involvement of private land owners and users in implementation of the Project (e.g. through grazing sheep, related promotion of regional products and pastoral/flock tending culture) the Project was realizing the goals of the "Europe 2020" strategy and the "Action Plan for nature, people and the economy" and thus influenced inhibition of the process of loss of biodiversity; the Project also influenced development of the ecosystem-related services, supporting the synergy with the common agricultural policy financing, including efficient use of the funds within the framework of Natura 2000 and the agriculture-environment-climate funds, and increasing awareness of the local community during workshops, training and through promotional materials. Through actions aimed at protection and preservation of the natural and cultural resources of the region the Project realized the premises of e.g. the biodiversity protection strategy, the natural environment protection programme for the Silesian voivodeship, the plans regarding protection of the Natura 2000 areas where the Project was implemented or the premises of the Framework Convention for the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (the Carpathian Convention).

## 16. Awareness-raising

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

The LIFE+ Beskids Project contributed to growth of the social awareness through popularisation of the results of the conducted actions and a number of promotional and educational actions, including:

- Cooperation with various entities in the field of preparing the Project for realization. In the initial stage of the Project 20 meetings with the local community were organized in which more than 600 individuals participated. These meetings enabled presenting the premises, projected actions and results of the commencing Project among the local community;

- Project's promotional activity. A website has been established containing the information related to the Project: [www.lifebeskidy.com.pl](http://www.lifebeskidy.com.pl). Eleven information boards were set up in the areas covered with the Project. Fifteen press pieces on the subject of the Project and environmental issues were published in the local newspapers during realization of the Project.

- Promotional materials. Promotional materials were prepared for the Project. These materials consisted of: pen drives, cotton carrying bags, postcards, ball-pens, pencils, thermal mugs, t-shirts, notebooks, reflective tags, reflective bands and lanyards with engaging graphical designs depicting sheep. All materials bore the name of the Project and logos of the Beneficiaries and financing institutions;

- The information leaflet. Forty thousand copies of the information leaflet containing the information on the premises of the Project, its goals, scope of works and projected results were prepared. Furthermore, 5,000 copies of the information maps concerning actions under the Project were made. These materials were distributed during the partnership events organized within the framework of the Project and in: local bureaus, tourism institutions, mountain hostels, lodging houses, holiday farms etc.;

- Good Flock Tending Practices Manual. A manual of good flock tending practices was published with the volume of 3,000 copies in 2014 and 5,000 copies in 2017. The manual contains information on the characteristics of the Project, description of the features of the natural environment of Beskid Śląski and Beskid Żywiecki as well as the detailed information on the subject of the flock tending in the region.;

- The multimedia album. A multimedia album in the form a CD disc was published in the volume of 1000 copies at the beginning of the Project. The album demonstrates the goals and premises of the Project as well as the first stages of its implementation. In 2018 the second album was published in the form of a flash memory stick containing drone footage demonstrating the results of Project's influence in the field and depicting the folklore of the region and how the regional folklore developed owing to the infrastructure erected within the framework of the Project;

- Workshops for the local stakeholders. A series of 30 workshops in which approximately 900 individuals had participated was carried out within the framework of the Project. The workshops consisted of the stationary unit and the field unit. The workshops were open to anyone interested but children and the school youth were the most frequent recipients of this form of education;

- Actions popularising traditional flock tending. Seven flock tending events were organized within the framework of this task during which numerous exhibitions of the culture related to this traditional branch of economy were organized;

- Layman's report and the scientific report. Layman's report and the scientific report were published at the conclusion of the Project. These documents in the form of an abridged

scientific communication are to serve as a synthetic source of data on the subject of the Project, its implementation and results.

## V. ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

**Together with the printed version of the Application form, additional material in digital format should be included in one USB key, and returned by post to:**

*Secretariat General of the Council of Europe  
Council of Europe Landscape Convention  
8th Session of the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe  
F-67075 STRASBOURG, Cedex*

- Text (20 pages max.): *PDF format*
- Photos (10 max.): *JPEG 350 dpi high definition*
- Posters (2 max.): *PDF format high definition or JPEG 350 dpi high definition*
- Video (15 min max.): *mpeg 2 format - It is recommended to present a video (even of amateur quality).*

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