



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

9th Session – 2025-2026

APPLICATION FORM

State party: **CYPRUS**

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.

The 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government, held in Reykjavík on 16 – 17 May 2023, recognised “the urgency of additional efforts to protect the environment, as well as to counter the impact of the triple planetary crisis of pollution, climate change and loss of biodiversity on human rights, democracy and the rule of law.” It committed the Council of Europe to strengthening work on the human rights aspects of the environment and initiate the Reykjavik process of focusing and strengthening the work of the Council of Europe in this field, as laid down in Appendix V of the Reykjavik Declaration on “The Council of Europe and the environment”.

Appendix V of the Reykjavik Declaration references the Landscape Convention to highlight that “landscape has an important public interest role in the cultural, ecological, environmental and social fields and is a key element of individual and social well-being, and that landscape protection, management and planning entail rights and responsibilities for everyone.”

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), no later than 31 December 2025, 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

1. State

Republic of Cyprus

Represented by

~~Ms / Mr~~

Neophytos Lazarou, Paphos District Administration

Address:

Ministry of ...

Ministry of Interior, Paphos District Administration
5 Nicodemou Mylona Str., 8046 Paphos

Telephone:

+357 26801101

E-mail:

paphos.dao@pafda.moi.gov.cy

2. Applicant

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

Paphos District Administration

~~Local~~ / regional authority project

~~NGO Project~~

**Website of the Applicant (if
exists)**

Represented by

~~Ms / Mr~~

District Officer

Address:

Ministry of Interior, Paphos District Administration
5 Nicodemou Mylona Str., 8046 Paphos

Telephone:

+357 26801101

E-mail:

paphos.dao@pafda.moi.gov.cy

II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJET

3. Name of the Project

"Aphrodite" Thematic (Environmental & Cultural) Route

4. Location of the Project

Ineia Village, Paphos District, Cyprus

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

The Employer's wish was to upgrade the road leading from the village of Ineia to Akamas National Park (an area within the "European Ecological Network Natura 2000"), while simultaneously connecting existing points of archaeological, cultural, and environmental interest (springs, chapels, geomorphological formations, etc.).

The design and the entire permit process took approximately 8 years (2013–2021). The project had to be approved not only by the Department of Town Planning and Housing, but also by other Departments and Services such as the Department of Antiquities, the Department of Environment, the Game and Fauna Service, etc.

One of the biggest challenges of the design was to ensure that the road/trail would serve both vehicles and hikers, while preserving the existing relations of the route with the topography and the landscape.

The project, combined with the previously completed "Turtle Museum," has significantly increased the number of visitors to the settlement.

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



7. Website of the Project (if exists)

III. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

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

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

10. **Partners**

11. **Financing bodies**

Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRF) 2021-2027

12. **Central aims of the Project**

*What are the main objectives of the project regarding landscape?
How does the project contribute to the implementation of the Convention at the national level or transnational level?*

• **What are the main objectives of the project in relation to the landscape?**
– To highlight, utilize, and promote the cultural and environmental richness of the area, while simultaneously providing infrastructure and opportunities to attract both local and foreign international visitors.
– To ensure the protection and effective management of the landscape through the systematic recording and assessment of its constituent elements.
– To implement a modest and unobtrusive design approach that respects the landscape and harmonizes with the unique character and scale of the locality.
– To achieve a balanced relationship between built and natural elements, following authentic traditional models. This includes minimizing the extent of impermeable and artificial surfaces, and enhancing green spaces through appropriate management and enrichment, with the aim of showcasing the area's genuine rural identity.
– To promote active participation of the local community in the decision-making process.
– To relocate existing overhead power grid underground, thereby reducing visual and environmental impact.

• **How does the project contribute to the implementation of the Convention at national or transnational level?**
The project translates the principles of the European Landscape Convention into concrete actions.
It ensures the protection and management of the landscape focusing on sustainability, the preservation of cultural heritage, and the active involvement of the public.
It contributes to the improvement of citizens' quality of life by respecting and enhancing their living environment.
It aligns human intervention with the natural context of the area.
It functions as a tool for environmental education.
It raises awareness regarding the intrinsic value of the landscape.

13. **Type of the Project**

Describe the nature/type of the project:

Does it focus on landscape protection and management, or does it involve landscape planning, or both?

Is the project related to specific measures or to a landscape public policy?

Is it implemented at a national level or a transnational level?

• Describe the nature/type of the project:

The project is part of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan, which provides for the implementation of infrastructure initiatives aimed at improving the quality of life in rural communities. This is considered a key prerequisite for retaining the local population, particularly young people, in these areas.

• Does the project focus on landscape protection and management, or does it involve landscape planning, or both?

The project focuses on the protection and enhancement of the environment through carefully integrated design interventions and effective landscape management. It also seeks to highlight the cultural heritage of this rural area, thereby supporting the attraction of contemporary businesses and increasing the area's visibility as a destination. These objectives contribute to the promotion of tourism as one of the most important sources of alternative income for the local community.

• Is the project related to specific measures or to a landscape public policy?

The project is aligned with policies and measures that promote sustainability, cultural continuity, and social cohesion. It aims to showcase the island's rich cultural heritage and diverse natural landscapes, while also leveraging opportunities for European funding and responding to the growing interest in sustainable development and improved quality of life.

• Is it implemented at a national or a transnational level?

The project is implemented at the national level.

14. Outcome

What are the effective and measurable results of the project on the landscape?

A. Environmental Results

1. Increase in biodiversity: The number of plant and reptile species increased, with several species finding refuge in restored dry-stone walls.
2. Restoration of natural ecosystems: A significant area was rehabilitated from environmental degradation.
3. Reduction in soil erosion: Achieved primarily through the restoration and reconstruction of traditional dry-stone terraces (dry-stone walls).
4. Increase in green cover: Substantial increase in tree planting and vegetation cover through the introduction of native shrubs and greenery.

B. Economic Results

1. Increase in visitor numbers: The area experienced a measurable rise in visitation following the completion of the project.
2. Job creation: A considerable number of individuals, primarily locals, were employed either directly during the implementation phase or benefited indirectly through related activities.
3. Growth in local revenue: Revenue increased due to the influx of visitors, outdoor activities, and the development of ecotourism.
4. Increase in property values: Notable rise in the market value of nearby properties.

C. Social and Cultural Results

1. Increased use of public space: The area is now more frequently used by both residents and visitors.
2. Improved quality of life for residents: Through enhanced access to nature and recreational infrastructure.
3. Promotion of cultural heritage: Historical landmarks such as rural chapels (small churches) were preserved and highlighted. The settlement and the route are promoted via the Information Centre located at the starting point of the trail. Visitors are informed about points of interest, local history, myths and traditions through maps, photographs, concise texts, and interactive displays - all accessible without the need for permanent on-site staff.
4. Educational initiatives: Environmental education programmes and guided tours were carried out, with measurable participation levels.

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

15. 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?

Does it respond to the triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss? How?¹

• Is the project part of a sustainable development policy?

The project is part of a sustainable development policy for rural areas.

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

The project contributes to strengthening all key values of the landscape: environmental, social, economic, cultural, and aesthetic, by raising public awareness on environmental issues and promoting active engagement with the landscape.

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

The abandonment of rural areas, farming activities, and especially land cultivation had led to the gradual degradation of both the natural and man-made elements of the landscape. In the past, when people were engaged with the land and agriculture, the landscape was actively cared for.

Through this project, key anthropogenic elements of the landscape—such as traditional pathways, dry-stone walls, and trails—were restored. The natural environment was simultaneously enriched and upgraded.

As a model project that departs from standardized, ready-made design solutions imposed by rigid norms and regulations, it offers an alternative, site-specific design approach. This enables both visitors and local residents to rediscover and revalue the landscape through its enhancement and, through the project itself, to gain a deeper understanding of what "sustainable development" truly means.

• Does it respond to the triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss? How?

The environmental footprint of the intervention is minimal. Materials used were either sourced on-site (soil, stones, rocks) or were environmentally friendly (metal, wood). These materials age naturally, require minimal maintenance, integrate harmoniously into the landscape, and can easily return to nature at the end of their life cycle.

Furthermore, the restoration of dry-stone walls—built entirely without binders—encourages the development of local fauna and flora, and contributes directly to biodiversity conservation in the area. The dry-stone structures support native vegetation and provide habitats for insects, reptiles, and even birds.

16. Exemplary value

Can the project be considered of exemplary value? Why?

Which are the good practices that it implemented? Which of these practices are considered of exemplary value at the national or transnational level?

¹ Appendix V to the Reykjavík Declaration

• **Can the project be considered of exemplary value? Why?**

The project can be considered exemplary—at least in the context of Cyprus—because, in prevailing public perception and common practice, the term “development” is often equated with construction, while the upgrading or design of a road typically implies the creation of infrastructure prioritizing motor vehicles, based on standardized models and geometric specifications (e.g., lane widths for vehicles and pedestrians, etc.).

This project challenges and redefines that prevailing notion by introducing alternative design approaches tailored to sensitive environments, with a focus on shared use between pedestrians and vehicles, and a reconsideration of typical geometric parameters. In this case, the design of the route was adapted to the existing topography and environmental characteristics of the landscape, rather than imposed upon it.

Modern tools and technical equipment often lead engineers to carry out extensive, irreversible, and destructive interventions in the landscape—simply because such interventions have become technically easy to implement.

The challenge here was to meet modern needs without intrusive impact on the landscape, while at the same time enhancing and restoring it.

• **Which are the good practices that it implemented? Which of these practices are considered exemplary at the national or transnational level?**

Several good landscape-related practices were implemented, including:

- Respect for local identity and character
- Minimal and reversible intervention
- Harmonisation with the natural environment
- Participation of and consultation with the local community
- Protection and enhancement of biodiversity
- A holistic and interdisciplinary approach to design
- Evidence-based planning and scientific support from external consulting engineers and relevant state authorities

These practices serve as a model for sustainable, context-sensitive landscape development and are considered exemplary at both national and potentially transnational level.

17. Public participation

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

Which stakeholders were involved, and how and when were they engaged? When did the active public consultation and dialogue take place, and in what form?

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

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

The project actively promoted public involvement from the early stages of planning. Detailed presentations of the project’s intentions were made to the local community, fostering an open dialogue. The design team provided explanations, received feedback, and incorporated several suggestions into the final study.

• **Which stakeholders were involved, and how and when were they engaged?**

The local authorities, the broader community, and representatives of the District Administration—responsible for the coordination and implementation of the project—were involved from the outset.

In addition, relevant governmental departments were consulted continuously during both the study and permitting phases. These included:

- Department of Environment
- Game and Fauna Service
- Department of Antiquities
- Geological Survey Department
- Department of Water Development
- Central Authority for Traffic Studies

• **When did the active public consultation and dialogue take place, and in what form?**

Public consultation began during the initial design phase. It included community meetings and presentations in which the local population, municipal representatives, and government officials participated. The process ensured transparency and facilitated two-way communication, allowing the integration of local knowledge and values into the project.

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

The project is in line with national, regional, and local development and environmental policies. It was developed in coordination with the competent authorities and fits within the broader strategic goals for sustainable rural development and landscape protection.

It is also worth noting that, during construction, the discovery of rock formations and archaeological remains within the grounds of two small rural chapels led to the revision of the original design at that location. This was done in consultation with, and under the guidance of, the Department of Antiquities.

A similar approach was taken regarding the “Mega Pigadi” (large well/lake), where adaptations were made to appropriately manage the flow of water from the nearby natural spring, in accordance with environmental considerations.

18. Awareness-raising

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

The project effectively contributes to public awareness by fostering a deeper, experiential relationship between individuals and the landscape. In alignment with the Council of Europe's Landscape Convention—which recognizes the landscape as a key component of quality of life and urges states to raise public awareness of its importance—the project strengthens environmental consciousness and promotes active citizen engagement.

It offers an alternative design approach that redefines the way we perceive and intervene in the landscape. This fosters a broader understanding of landscape as both a cultural and ecological asset.

By promoting this relationship, the project contributes to shaping a shared European identity, reflecting both cultural diversity and common values across Europe. At the same time, it supports individual and collective well-being through mental and physical health benefits (e.g., hiking, recreation, connection with nature), as well as through the development of sustainable economic activities.

The project serves as a vital piece of infrastructure for enhancing the quality of life in surrounding rural communities. It encourages the retention of the local population—particularly young people—by improving living conditions and economic prospects.

From the outset, the project aimed to upgrade the natural environment and highlight the cultural heritage of this rural area. In doing so, it supports the attraction of modern enterprises and promotes the area as a destination, reinforcing tourism as one of the most important alternative sources of income for the local community.

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
Directorate General Human Rights and Rule of Law (DG I)
Directorate of Social Rights, Health and Environment
Department for the Reykjavík Process and Environment
Council of Europe Landscape Convention
9th 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 (5 min max.): *mpeg 2 format - It is recommended to present a video (even of amateur quality).*

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