

**13th COUNCIL OF EUROPE MEETING OF THE WORKSHOPS
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION**

*“Territories of the future,
landscape identification and assessment:
an exercise in democracy”*

Cetinje, Montenegro, 2-3 October 2013

Opening Speech

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Executive Secretary of the European Landscape Convention*

Dear Minister,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am particularly pleased that this Meeting could take place so favourably in Montenegro, in this historic city of Cetinje, and I would like to thank the Minister of Sustainable Development and Tourism for your warm hospitality and for your confidence.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Ms Sanja Ljeskovic Mitrovic, General Director for Spatial Planning of the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism for her constant co-operation in the implementation of the European Landscape Convention.

I would also like to thank Mr Vuk Markovic, Landscape Architect, Mr Nikola Jovovic and their colleagues in the Directorate for Spatial Planning of the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism, for their much appreciated work in the organisation of this event.

Many thanks also to all the participants for having shared their knowledge, their knowledge and their experience.

A few introductory words for these two days of work.

According to the European Landscape Convention, with a view to improving knowledge of its landscapes, Parties undertake:

- to identify their own landscapes throughout their territory;
- to analyse their characteristics and the forces and pressures transforming them, and to take note of changes;
- to assess the landscapes thus identified, taking into account the particular values assigned to them by the interested parties and the population concerned.

The work is necessary to give a solid base for long term action in favour of landscape quality. The definition of quality objectives should be based on knowledge of the specific characteristics and qualities of the places concerned, and identification of their dynamics and potential as well as of how landscape is perceived by the public.

The Convention provides that the work must be carried out with the active participation of the interested parties and with the participation of the local population, the public and different concerned stake-holders.

An exercise in democracy is thus put into place, the Convention underlines that each State undertakes “to establish procedures for the participation of the general public, local and regional authorities, and other parties with an interest in the definition and implementation of the landscape policies”.

It is necessary in this effect to recall the provisions of Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)3 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the Guidelines for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention which in order to give the indications on the fundamental articles of the Convention, specify the following general principles:

- *‘Recognise the fundamental role of knowledge’*: the identification, description and assessment of landscapes constitute the preliminary phase of any landscape policy. This involves an analysis of morphological, archaeological, historical, cultural and natural characteristics and their interrelations, as well as an analysis of changes. The perception of landscape by the public should also be analysed from the viewpoint of both its historical development and its recent significance.
- *‘Make use of public participation’*: all action taken to define, implement and monitor landscape policies should be preceded and accompanied by procedures for participation by members of the public and other relevant stakeholders, with the aim of enabling them to play an active role in formulating, implementing and monitoring landscape quality objectives.

The European Landscape Convention provides that these identification and assessment procedures shall be guided by the exchanges of experience and methodology, organised between the Parties at European level.

This is the subject of the meeting of the Workshops, which aim to promote between the Parties and at a European scale, an exchange of experiences, methods and work. The results will continue in the framework of the European Landscape Convention Information System of the Council of Europe Convention’s Observatory.

I would also like to thank the representatives of Montenegro for presenting us within the framework of an introductory session to better know and understand the values and the evolution of the landscapes of outstanding beauty of Montenegro. During the study visit, we were able to experience the extraordinary twisting road leading from Cetinje, to the splendid Bay of Kotor, the road which one could rename the ‘Route of Landscape’.

Three Workshops will be thus dedicated to the following topics:

- ‘Identify, analyse, characterise the landscape: to act, improve the knowledge’;
- ‘An exercise in democracy: the knowledge, the feeling, the will of populations’;
- ‘Promoting collective intelligence to react, exchange experiences, methods, technologies and research’.

I would also like to once extend my gratitude to the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism of Montenegro for its co-operation, as well as to all the participants at this Meeting to contribute through their knowledge in imagining the future territories, hoping that we will go forward towards new forms of ‘landscape democratic governance’.

This 13th Meeting of the Workshops of the Convention is important because it will allow us to better understand and compare the methodologies developed through the Council of Europe member States at different levels and by different actors, for identification and assessment of landscapes.

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