

**COUNCIL OF EUROPE / CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE  
EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION /  
CONVENTION EUROPEENNE DU PAYSAGE**

***22<sup>e</sup> REUNION DES ATELIERS DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE POUR LA MISE EN  
ŒUVRE DE LA CONVENTION SUR LE PAYSAGE***

***22nd MEETING OF THE WORKSHOPS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION  
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE LANDSCAPE CONVENTION***

***“Water, landscape and citizenship in the face of global change”  
« Eau, paysage et citoyenneté face aux changements mondiaux »***

***Seville, Spain / Séville, Espagne, 14-15 March / mars 2019  
Study visit./ Visite d'études, 16 March / mars 2019***

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***WORKSHOP 2 – Water landscapes: international experiences***

**The Netherlands – Water heritage for the future**

**Mr Henk van SCHAIK**

*Representative of “Water and Heritage” for the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS-NL), the Netherlands*

Mister Chairman, Mrs Chairlady,

Thank you very much for the invitation to speak at this 22nd Meeting of the Workshops for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention.

Coming from the WATER world, the Landscape Convention was new to me. I learned that in your definition of landscapes, inland waters, territorial waters, wetlands, water courses and even lakes and ponds are included. In our, ICOMOS Water and Heritage vocabulary we address these as waterscapes and waterways. We focus on water. ICOMOS also has an International Scientific Committee on Landscapes. We work closely together with this ISC.

Since 2012 we, ICOMOS Netherlands, have been raising the flag for the recognition of the relevance and significance of water related heritage for present and future planning and policies. At the time, that is in 2012, Mr Diederik Six, the then President of ICOMOS Netherlands, realised that water related cultural heritage was insufficiently recognised by water professionals as an asset, or a source of inspiration for planning and policy development. International water conferences such as the tri annual World Water Fora and international water organisations, such as the International Water Association, the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage, the International Hydropower Association etc. and the International Water History Association rarely if at all addressed the significance of water related cultural heritage for present and future planning. Within those international water organisations

water-related cultural heritage did not go beyond historical research and publications. Cultural heritage experts and researchers in ICOMOS did not specifically study water-related heritage.

When reading the mission statement of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention it struck me that in the Convention there is no mention of linking historical cultural landscapes as a source of inspiration to present and future spatial planning and policy development. I hope that our efforts to connect water related cultural heritage with the present and the future, as a source of inspiration and significance may be useful for the Convention.

As said, our activities in the Water and Heritage ‘project’ are to raise the flag on Water and Heritage both in the water world and the heritage world. In the water world we are in contact with international water organisations such as the International Water Organisation, the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage, the International Hydropower Organisation, the International Water Ways Organisation. In the heritage world we raise the flag for water and heritage in the International Council on Monuments and Sites, in interested National Committees and in relevant International Scientific Committees. the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, IUCN. We are also aiming our advocacy through organising events at water and heritage conferences such as the Ramsar Convention conference, the Stockholm Water Week, the ICOMOS Global Assembly and the World Water For a, and even the World Water Assessment Programme of UNESCO that produces a global Water Assessment publication each year.

Our first product was a film: “Protecting delta’s: heritage helps” that can be downloaded from Internet. It presents material, governance and spiritual connections of water management since the earliest days of civilizations. Next we organised an international conference in 2013 held in Amsterdam “Protecting deltas, heritage helps”. The conference produced the Amsterdam Statement that is still valid today. The presentations at the conference were published in 2015 in the book, “Water&Heritage: material, conceptual and spiritual connections” (Willems & & van Schaik, 2015). In her foreword Mrs Irina Bokova, Director General of UNESCO wrote:

“As a basic element of life, our relationship with water is complex, entailing material and spiritual dimensions, and embodied in heritage that is both tangible and intangible. This relationship has always been a source of well-being and inspiration as well as a source of innovation and creativity, leading us to think not only of the present, but also the future and the security of future generations.”

Since then we are, in close collaboration with the Centre for Global Heritage and Development, a research consortium of the Technical University of Delft, Leiden University and the Erasmus University all in the Netherlands, working on the creation of an International, Interdisciplinary, Interagency Scientific Committee to collect and publish the results of research and practical examples about the significance and uptake of water related heritage into present planning processes and policies.

At the 19th General Assembly and Scientific Symposium of ICOMOS in December 2017 in Delhi, India, the Scientific Board of ICOMOS approved the proposal of ICOMOS Netherlands to create an international Scientific Committee “Water and Heritage”.

We are preparing an International Conference entitled “Water as Heritage” from 27 – 31 May taking place in Taiwan. The members of the Organising Committee include experts from the International Water Organisation, the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage, the Transdisciplinary

Water Institute, and several ICOMOS Scientific Committees, including from the International Committee on Heritage Management, the International Committee on Landscapes, the International Committee on Risk Preparedness and the International Committee on Intangible Cultural Heritage. Members come from Australia, North America, Latin America, Asia and Europe.

The Themes for the International Scientific Committee are: Water for Services; Waterscapes; Waterways; Water for power and; World Water Views. Abstracts have been submitted for each of the themes.

The intention is to develop research clusters of experts and researchers for each of these themes. A few interesting topics of research are emerging:

- The adaptation and use of heritage waterfronts for urban port developments with examples from The Netherlands and Poland.
- The adaptation of heritage watermills from grinding flour to generating power with examples from The Netherlands and Sweden.
- The hydrobiography: a critical historical perspective on ‘waterscapes’ as a tool for planning and design.

These few examples give you a taste of our “camino” to develop Water and Heritage for the Future, not only to protect and conserve waterscapes, but to give significance and a contribution to present and future planning and policy development.

Mr Peter Ros informed you about some of the water-related cultural heritage activities of our Government in The Netherlands. In addition to these activities there are several water scape activities at local level, for example by the municipality of Schiedam, and citizens in Water Guilds in Gouda and Den Bosch, Natural Landscape organisations working on water scapes and the restauration adaptation of water mills and spatial planners developing so-called hydro biographies.

Lastly I would like to invite you all to join our “camino” to raise the flag with us through examples and show cases where water-related material and/or immaterial cultural heritage have given and give significance to water scape planning and policies.

For more information on the initiative please visit our website:

[www.icomos.nl](http://www.icomos.nl) or  
[www.water-as-heritage2019.org.tw](http://www.water-as-heritage2019.org.tw)

Muchas gracias