

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

**22^e 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**

**ATELIER 2 – Paysage de l'eau : expériences internationales – Forum d'expériences : Paysages
fluviaux et des eaux intérieures**

Landscape and Water: and Slovenian experiences and perspectives

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We talked a lot about the meaning of water and about how to achieve sustainable development of the riverbed, based on a balanced and harmonious relationship between social needs, economic activity and the environment.

The trends connected with the interests of many different and often antagonistic stakeholders meeting in the river space are the cause of both positive and negative changes of the quality and quantity of the water, waterbed and the water landscapes.

The greatest influence on the riverbed is the result of demands by following activities:

- spreading urbanisation and building of public infrastructure;
- hydropower utilisation;
- flood protection;
- nature conservation (protected areas, natural riches, Natura 2000);
- traffic infrastructure development;
- intensive farming;
- touristic infrastructure development;
- sport and recreation;

- fishing.

As a result, the natural dynamic flow of rivers and the riverbed has changed. Wetlands are one of the most endangered habitats. A lack of appropriate management of wetlands in the past led to wetland loss and degradation. In the last 50 years, many wetland areas were hydro-meliorated, especially in agricultural land. Agricultural intensification and flood control has been the main human factor causing wetland loss and degradation everywhere in the world.

Despite these changes and rivers disappearing, riverbeds with riparian forest still represent a crucial habitat for some of Europe's most endangered species and are subject to intensive nature conservation. A larger part of river sites in Slovenia are still part of the Natura 2000 network and have an environmental, economic, social and cultural significance.

The body of waters and its benefits are crucial to the survival, health and quality of life of present and future generations. The sustainable protection and planned use of water resources are critical to the long-term preservation of the quantity and quality of our water resources. These are one of the key pillars of ensuring a healthy living environment and sufficient food production, as well as carrying out economic activities with high added value.

The main aim in water policy must be:

- to increase the awareness and knowledge level of the functions and services which healthy rivers provide and;
- to improve existing river management practices by integrating ecosystems services and participatory approaches.

We will achieve this goal by effectively managing surface water and groundwater, coastal and maritime resources, and ensuring their good status.

New demands, potentials and challenges in the field of water policy and in other sectoral policies will be able to deal comprehensively solely just through an integral landscape approach which considers social needs, economic activity and the environment protection.

Slovenian experiences and perspectives in the field of water policy

Slovenia is a land of water. In Slovenia, water is everywhere you go. We have nearly 26,000 km of rivers. On average, each square kilometre of land in Slovenia has 1.3 kilometres of surface watercourses.

In Slovenia water resources represent a public good that is managed by the state. For the two million residents of Slovenia, access to clean public drinking water is a constitutional right. In Slovenia, therefore, we protect water as a liquid gold.

Regarding the regulation of water in Slovenia, the motto is to return, to give back the freedom to the rivers and to preserve their natural state. Rivers are the lifelines of sustainable development in Slovenia.

The priorities of the water management policy in Slovenia are:

- the current goal is determination of aquatic and coastal land: special conditions for use will be applied;
- a catalog of hydro morphological measures is being developed for the general guidelines of water management for spatial acts or as a mitigation measure for water bodies in Natura 2000;
- regarding climate change, most of the water projects are linked to flood regulation and measures (Danube floodplain, Gomura).

Slovenia confirms its orientation towards preserving the natural dynamics of water with the recent listing of the Mura River on the list of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme.