



EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION
LANDSCAPE AWARD OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

6th Session – 2018-2019

APPLICATION FORM

Presentation

The European Landscape Convention aims to promote the protection, management and planning of landscapes and to bring together European co-operation in this field. It is the first international treaty exclusively devoted to all dimensions of European landscape. Taking into account the landscape, natural and cultural values of the territory, it contributes to promoting the quality of life and well-being of Europeans.

The Resolution 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 Landscape Award of the Council of Europe and that it is in keeping with the work carried out by the Council of Europe concerning human rights, democracy and sustainable development. It effectively promotes the territorial dimension of human rights and democracy by acknowledging the importance of measures taken to improve the landscape for people's living conditions.

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.

*We would be very grateful if you could send no later than **30 January 2019** the following elements of the candidature file (20 pages maximum) established for your country on the basis of the proposals forwarded to you by the Ministries:*

- by E-mail, the Application form completed to: maguelonne.dejeant-pons@coe.int; susan.moller@coe.int;
- by post, a copy of the Application form completed together with a CD-Rom, DVD or USB key, containing the all the additional material to: Maguelonne Déjeant-Pons, Executive Secretary of the European Landscape Convention, Council of Europe, Agora (A4-15V), F- 67075 STRASBOURG Cedex.

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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: www.coe.int/EuropeanLandscapeConvention

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I. STATE CONCERNED AND APPLICANT

1. State

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Represented by

Ms / Mr

Address:

Ministry of Environment & Energy

Telephone:

E-mail:

2. Applicant

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

Region of Thessaly

Represented by

Mr. Konstantinos Agorastos

Address:

Koumoundourou & Papanastasiou,
41110, Larissa

Telephone:

2413506552-447

E-mail:

Periferiarxis@thessaly.gov.gr

II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJET

3. Name of the Project

“Recreation of Lake Karla”

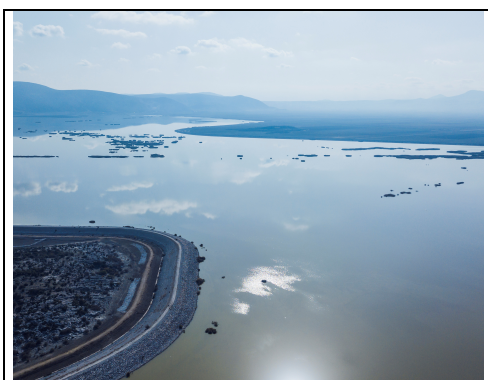
4. Location of the Project

Region of Thessaly

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

The “Recreation of Lake Karla” is considered as the largest environmental project in the Balkans, which was also implemented by the Region of Thessaly and concerns the creation of a wide wetland area of 3.800 hectares and that has been planned to reverse the adverse environmental conditions, caused by the lake drainage. It is a project of local development and national importance with multiple positive effects on the lake area, in Thessaly, which is began being financed in September 1999 and was initially included in the 3rd CSF 2000-2006 and subsequently as a bridge project in the NSRF 2007-2013. The total expenditure for the project comes to 245,000,000€. Through this project, both the water supply of the lake is carried out, while simultaneously the water supply of wider area is enhanced, as well as the flood protection of Thessaly is secured along with the irrigation of arable land, and the development of agrotourism.

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



7. Website of the Project

<http://www.limnikarla.gr/en/>

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**
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| Ministry of Environment & Energy
Ministry of Infrastructure, Transport & Networks
Ministry of Rural Development & Food
Region of Thessaly |
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10. **Financing bodies**
- | |
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| European Funds (CSF 2000-2006, NSRF 2007-2013)
Ministry of Infrastructure, Transport & Networks
Region of Thessaly |
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11. Central aims of the Project

The plan of the project proposed the creation of a reservoir in the lowest depression plain of the former lake Karla that will occupy a maximum area of about 38 km², through the construction of two embankments, one in the eastern part and one in western part of the lake. Its objective is:

- The environmental upgrading of the wider region.
- The effective flood-proofing of the wider region.
- The gradual uplift of underground aquifer of surrounding areas.
- Finding sufficient quantities of drinking water from drilling for improving the water supply of the urban complex of Volos.
- The expected change of the microclimate of the area.
- Mild agrotourism development of the region and the consequent reduction in unemployment
- The educational outcome; exemplary, scientific, ecological, cultural aspects of the project
- Network of ancient and traditional settlements related to the Historic Lake

12. Outcome

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flood protection• Sustainable and full-scale irrigation of 92,500 acres (doubling the value of agricultural production)• Water Supply of the city of Volos, Magnesia (Possibility of water supply with existing sources, at least 160,000 residents)• Restoration of aquifer (reduction of abstractions from 40 cm³ to 23 cm³)• Recreation of the wetland• Reducing pollution in the Parasitic Gulf• Recreational and ecotourism development (estimated 5.000 visitors per year)• Nodes of a Cultural and Educational Network : Exhibition-Informative-Workshop Spaces |
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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?

The re-construction of Lake Karla has both environmental and socioeconomic benefits for the area. To ensure sustainable restoration and use of wetlands, and to avoid adverse impacts, the contribution of cultural heritage, local practices and social needs was important. Thus, it is very important, local people to be a component of the re-constructed ecosystem and not only the receiver of the benefits. The operations included:

- Reclaim of pre-existed ecosystems' functions
- Enhancement of wild life, especially of birds (creation of wildlife habitats and enhancement of biodiversity)
- Support of a complex food web
- Increase of water resources in Thessaly (improvement of the quantity and quality of freshwater and groundwater)
- Improvement of climatic conditions in the area of Thessaly
- Decrease of erosion, trapping of sediments and creation of a standard landscape (Establishment of wetland buffer and riparian zones)
- Decrease of pollution in Gulf of Pagasitikos
- Agricultural benefits from the enhancement of irrigation
- Supply water benefits for the city of Volos and the nearby villages
- Enhancement of fish populations and establishment of alternative sources of income (monitoring fish populations, enhancement of species in engineered wetland)
- Economic benefits from the enhancement of tourism, through subtle landscape infrastructure, to support hiking tourism: observation posts in suitable positions, and a network of suitable roads, bicycle tracks and hiking paths
- Assembling of an Educational Network which promotes landscape sensibilisation of wider public, anticipates the participation of populations that belong to the traditional lake-shore villages of Karla, and opens-up to research and educational programs and workshops: construction of (a) an information centre, b) a museum of natural history and culture,
- Improvement of landscape quality, development of areas for environmental education activities, linkage to neighbouring areas which belonged to the Historic Lake Cultural Network and development of ecotourism infrastructure.
- Enhancement of local culture (enhancement of archaeological sites), aiming at the development of a subtle network connecting the area's archaeological and historic sites.

14. Exemplary value

Can the project be considered of exemplary value? Why?

Which are the good practices that it implemented?

The project can be considered of exemplary value, since the major benefits extracted from it along with the good practices that it implemented are:

- A landscape-infrastructure project that posed remedy to an environmental damage which created multifaceted problems to the surrounding environment since the 1960's
- The upgrading of the aesthetics of a landscape that used to be fabulous –before the Lake's Drainage- and had become an indifferent place
- The enhancement of the water supply to the broader region of Volos with high-quality subterranean water. The replacement of the use of subterranean water of the region for irrigation with water from Lake Karla enables the utilization of part of this water, through new boring projects, for the supply of water to the Urban Complex of Volos, which is currently facing a lack of high-quality water (the greater area of Volos is forced to meet its needs by using water containing chlorides).
- The partial restoration of the ecosystem (which existed before the lake was drained), through the recreation of the lake and the creation of the planned wetlands and plant ecosystems around it.
- The recovery of the subterranean groundwater level by reducing extractions, which will be achieved by replacing the use of subterranean water for irrigation with water from the lake.
- The effective protection of the broader region from flooding, as it is situated at point of lowest elevation in the plains of Thessaly.
- The minimization of the contribution of the Lake Karla catchment area effluents to the pollution of the Parasitic Gulf, with the collection of effluents in the lake. The use of the Karla tunnel for removing water from the Karla catchment area to the Parasitic Gulf will only take place in the case of intense or extended flooding, when the anti-flooding functioning of the artificial lake is no longer possible.
- The gradual improvement of the quality and increase of the usable quantity of surface water, through the construction of the dam and the cleaning of leachates from the irrigation of crops using natural processes (engineered wetland for leachate cleaning).
- The improvement of soil quality. The project results in improvement of the physical and chemical properties of the soil in the broader region.
- The environmental upgrading of the broader region, flora and fauna, with the support of wildlife and particularly migratory avifauna.
- The support of (permanent and seasonal) relocation to the region. The project contributes towards reversing the population shrinkage of the region and attracting visitors through the creation of eco-tourism networks, educational nodes, and recreation projects.
- The creation of infrastructure and favorable conditions for the realization of new activities and employment opportunities that are compatible with sustainable growth (aiming at the authorization of fishing activities in the lake restricted to the populations of the former fishermen villages–when the environmental conditions are favorable-).
- The open-call to the University of Thessaly and schools of the Thessaly Region to visit and take part or organize educative workshops in situ, in collaboration with the local societies
- The expected change to the microclimate of the region (lower temperatures in the summer, higher temperatures in the winter).

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?

Public Participation BEFORE the Project implementation

The Re-Creation of Lake Karla is a project that was planned, funded and implemented, after a long period of at least 20 years of environmental malfunctions, which affected the drained lake's wider area, and directly affected this area's populations. In the mid 1980's, a declaration-statement of the area's inhabitants, through the Agricultural Cooperative of lake Karla area, demanded for the construction of a series of water reservoirs. Thus, the Greek polity, responded to a public demand: the people, the stakeholders and inhabitants of the area directly concerned, thus by making their claim, participated in the decision making before the beginning of the Re-Creation of the Lake. The polity, by setting as a priority instead of the construction of a plain large water reservoir, the planning of an environmental restoration – following the Ramsar directives, added value to the local citizen's demand.

Public Participation in the Present

The project aims to actively encourage the public's participation in the decision-making process through specific actions that focus on promoting dialogue with interested parties (stakeholders) on the environmental (and social / ethical) issues, which include:

- The reward from the European Commission and in particular the Commissioner of the Regional Policy Corina Cretu.
- Informing individual groups of the public about the positive impact of the project on the environment, on the inhabitants of the area and on the development of entrepreneurship through tourism (workshops, informative meetings in cooperation with the municipalities).
- organization awareness-raising actions, days of global environmental interest and local events within the spatial responsibility of the Managing Body
- Promotion to the local community of the usefulness and the perspective of the project.
- Promotion at national level of the project uniqueness.

The project followed the National Strategies, which have incorporated the European Union's Directives, such as on Climate Change Strategy as well as the Water Resources Management Policy.

Educational Aspects and Public Participation

Moreover, the Environmental Information and Student Awareness Program is implemented, which aims to promote the knowledge, awareness and direct contact of students with the biodiversity of the protected area, as well as the development of experiential and exploratory thinking skills in the natural environment. In addition, presentations in schools within and near the protected area have been carried out, such as the environmental information visit program of students to schools located within and near the protected area. the innovative and pioneering "KarlaSchool" Program is implemented, which aims at the information, education and training of young scientists, farmers and teachers to protect and preserve the biodiversity of the coastal area, as well as the areas' emergence as place of ecotourism development, funded by the "Natural environment & innovative actions" program of the Green Fund and will be implemented in the region until May 2019.

16. 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?

As part of the publicity of the project, the Thessaly Region carried out information campaigns (TV and radio spots, press releases, posters and leaflets).

Additionally, the Managing Body of Karla-Mavrovouni-Kefalovryso-Velestino-Delta Piniou implements environmental awareness and sensitivity programs, which aim at acquiring environmentally conscious citizens – visitors, who through the study of the existing reality and the identification of the environmental problems of the region, shape visions and have the desire to participate and act. The Managing Body in order to inform and sensitize residents and visitors of the protected area and society in general proceeds to information actions concerning the following:

- Attracting and acquainting the local community and the general public with the protected area, through the ongoing promotion of the Managing Body's actions (sending press releases, interviews to local and regional media, updating the Body's social media, updating channels on YouTube).
- Inform and raise awareness of the local community and the general public about the value of the protected area, through tour guides, distribution of information brochures and other information material, billboards, production and broadcasting of television and radio messages, film production, etc.
- Raise awareness of clusters of citizens and agencies in order to have a positive acceptance of the project.
- Publication of the project approved and funded by the EU, focusing on the immediacy of the information campaigns (TV and radio spots, press releases, posters and leaflets).
- Enhancing the recognition of the individual projects.

V. ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

Together with the printed version of the Application form, additional material in digital format should be included in one CD-Rom, DVD or USB key, and returned by post or courier to:

Maguelonne Déjeant-Pons

Executive Secretary of the European Landscape Convention

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E-mail: maguelonne.dejeant-pons@coe.int

- 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).*