



EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION
LANDSCAPE AWARD OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

7th Session – 2020-2021

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 2021** 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
www.coe.int/en/web/landscape/landscape-award

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I. STATE CONCERNED AND APPLICANT

1. State	PORTUGAL
Represented by	Mrs. Fernanda do Carmo
<i>Address:</i>	Direção-Geral do Território Rua Artilharia 1, 107 1099-052 Lisboa Portugal
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<i>E-mail:</i>	fcarmo@dgterritorio.pt
2. Applicant	Municipality of Moura, Alentejo
<i>Name of the local, regional authority(ies) or NGO(s)</i>	
Represented by	Pedro Nuno Azenha Rocha
<i>Address:</i>	Praça Sacadura Cabral, 7860-270 Moura
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<i>E-mail:</i>	pedro.rocha@herdadedacontenda.pt

II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJET

3. Name of the Project

Herdade da Contenda- A tale of resilience for Nature

4. Location of the Project

Municipality of Moura, Alentejo

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

The project in question consists of the implementation of a landscape policy in a territory of around 5,270 hectares called the Contenda Estate (Herdade da Conteda), belonging to Moura Local Authority, a Portuguese Municipality situated on the border with Spain. The importance of this cross-border landscape goes back to the Middle Ages, to a time when it was managed as a community. Target of disputes between Portugal and Spain, the vast property was divided between the two countries at the end of the 19th century.

The Portuguese part then became managed by the Municipality, which allocated it for lease for agricultural production. However, its over exploitation led to its decline, leading to loss of biodiversity, to abandonment and to the degradation of its landscape. The Local Authority, working together with the Forest Services (the present Institute for Nature Conservation and Forests - ICNF), implemented policies of regeneration and landscape value in two phases, converting it into an appealing territory, of great scenic and ecological wealth.

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



Author: Daniel Pinheiro

7. Website of the Project (if exists)

<https://www.herdadedacontenda.pt/>

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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| Municipality of Moura |
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10. **Financing bodies**
- | |
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| FEADER, POCTEP/INTERREG, LIFE |
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11. **Central aims of the Project**

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| <p>The central aims of this landscape policy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To promote landscape management, in its diverse components, aiming to give value to ecological, landscape heritage existing in the Contenda Estate;• To promote the development of pedagogical, educational activities to ensure awareness for the importance of landscape;• To ensure community and stakeholder involvement in the decision-making process on the landscape of the Contenda Estate;• To promote the exploration of activities relating to agriculture and livestock, beekeeping and hunting in a sustainable way;• To promote the recovery of waterlines including the revitalization of the river bank galleries• To promote the development of tourist activities relating to Nature tourism, enjoyment and contemplation of the landscape, namely walks, riding, dark sky observation and observation of fauna including birdwatching;• To promote sustainable forest exploration, contributing to the mitigation of climate change and reducing the risk of forest fires, via the adoption of species adapted to local edaphoclimatic conditions;• To promote scientific research within the areas of landscape, forest, biodiversity and hunting.• To deepen cross-border cooperation, namely with the Municipalities of Aroche and Encinasola, and public area managers neighbouring Contenda. |
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12. Outcome

The following results have already been noted:

Phase 1 and Phase 2 – since 1958

- Reforestation, begun at the end of the 50s of around 3,000 hectares of degraded landscape with indigenous species namely: holm oak, cork oak and stone pine (umbrella pine);
- Installation and upkeep of 20 beehives and a honey extraction, processing and packing centre (“The Honey House”)
- Management of a permanent livestock of Portuguese native breeds (Serpentine goats and black Merino sheep) that have won various prizes at both regional and national level;
 - National Hunting Area created in 1989
 - Recovery of habits for the Iberian Lynx and cinerous vulture.

Phase 2 – since 2012

- Recovery of the riverbank gallery of the Murtigão River and the Iberian Minnow carp (Saramugo – *Anaecypris hispanica*) habitat (fish species classified with the extinction risk of “critically endangered” in accordance with IUCN);
- Restoration of historic buildings associated with the smuggling routes and the former forest services, total of 5 restored buildings;
- Creation of a 38.9 km walking trail network and the placing of explanation boards for the carrying out of walks to observe heritage, fauna and the night sky;
- Installation and upkeep of a vulture feeding station and a visitor observatory;
- Recovery of the red deer population and the removal of a herd of cows in order to save the “montado”;
- Placing and recovery of dozens of nests and platforms for the cinerous vulture, resulting in the species nesting;
- Development of partnerships with schools and training centres, resulting in the development of professional traineeships and the carrying out of dozens of visits to the Contenda Estate;
- The carrying out of various awareness raising activities in a local and regional context involving hundreds of participants;
- The carrying out of meetings to listen to the community for debates, presenting and collecting ideas for the future of the Contenda Estate;
- Publication of pamphlets to raise awareness for the values of landscape and their distribution amongst the community and visitors.

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 area covered by the project is totally integrated in the Nature network 2000/ Rede Natura 2000, as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA), a European policy that aims via the creation of an ecological network on a European scale to ensure the upkeep and recovery of biodiversity in European territory. The more recent interventions in the Contenda Estate are also inserted in the implementation of a National Strategy for Nature Conservation and Biodiversity 2030, a national strategy that aims to give Portugal's contribution to the fulfilling of the goals of Agenda 2030 for the Sustainable Development of the United Nations.

Throughout recent years, not only has the state of conservation of this landscape improved but also a bet has been placed on the promotion of knowledge for its own intrinsic worth, promoting its appropriation by society. For that purpose, apart from the recovery of indigenous plant cover via plantations, the creation of water points in strategic places, extra food in critical periods (both for herbivores such as the deer and also for scavenger birds) the creation of shelters (for example for the European rabbit) and the construction and reinforcement of nesting areas for the cinerous vulture, there were also defined routes, an image and a brand and organized events aimed at different audiences. The carrying out of a biodiversity session in 2015 integrated within the Festival *Terra Sem Sombra* (land without shade), when more than a hundred participants came together, is one of the examples of these initiatives.

Via this planned intervention it was possible to contribute to the improvement of the environment, by recovering degraded landscape, where the tree cover had been degraded or destroyed and the species of indigenous fauna, two of which in danger of extinction, had lost their nesting, shelter and feeding places. In social and economic terms this municipal property is no longer an abandoned territory but is now an attractive landscape of reference where it was possible to create jobs (the permanent Contenda Estate team has 12 posts of employment). The Contenda Estate now mobilizes visitors, interested in its natural and cultural heritage and it is a motive of pride for its citizens. A place of recreation, leisure and contemplation, it is also a place to form a connection with Nature and get to know it, especially when thinking of the younger ones. Managed in a sustainable way, the Contenda Estate has launched some products onto the market such as honey, goat's milk, goat meat and lamb.

The implemented landscape policy has allowed the tendency of decline and abandonment that the Contenda Estate was subjected to, to be inverted. From an arid territory, where agricultural activity was residual and biodiversity loss was accentuated, it has become a landscape rich in terms of biodiversity and of great scenic quality. The present management practices adopted, such as the use of machinery and adequate equipment in forest interventions, plantations on contour lines, the development of regular census of hunting and protected species, respect for nesting periods and the protection of natural regeneration

(namely through the use of individual protectors), allow the objectives recommended by the Nature Network 2000/ Rede Natura 2000 to be ensured.

14. Exemplary value

Can the project be considered of exemplary value? Why?

Which are the good practices that it implemented?

The project brings together a set of conditions that give it exemplary value, being an inspiring example liable to be mirrored in other contexts and environments with similar challenges, although within a different landscape, namely:

- Integrate a cross-border landscape (article 9 of the European Convention on landscape), that was part of a community territory until 1893. The division of this territory established, there is no physical border or fence at present and this situation has been consensual between both countries. The animals of the Contenda Estate, such as red deer, wild boar, cinerous vulture and other species roam freely between Portugal and Spain. The cross-border territory has a common management practice for protection of the forest against wild fire.

- Tree cover was the reply using native species, being managed in the northern area within an agro-forest system traditionally known as the “montado”. The montado system carries out very important functions in the conservation of the land, in the regulation of the hydrological cycle, in the removal of carbon from the atmosphere, also presented as an extraordinary Mediterranean forest ecosystem, extremely rich in terms of biodiversity and identified as being most important for the conservation of Nature, both on a national and European level.

- The recovery of the Contenda Estate landscape has come to be seen as an example of reference and case study with regard to the recovery of degraded land, contradicting the process of degradation that was in course. It has equally been pointed out as a success story for the recovery of biodiversity in fauna and flora.

- The Contenda Estate has a reserve of cork oaks (*Quercus Suber*) where the cork has not been removed, possibly being the only case in the world. It is a native forest species found in the western area of the Mediterranean, for this reason deserves exemplary value, its monotorisation being accompanied by a forestry technician as a case study.

- The Contenda Estate landscape accommodates an important colony of cinerous vultures, estimated at 10 breeding pairs, species which had been considered extinct in Portugal, and which, at present, have begun a recolonization process due to the efforts associated with the recovery of this landscape.

- There is an important red deer population in the Contenda Estate, estimated at around 1,300 individuals that roam freely in the border territory. This is a species that forms the landscape by their intervention in habitats for which reason they are intrinsically associated with Contenda’s landscape.

- In 2010, the Contenda Estate was considered one of the places of interest within the work integrated in Long Term Ecological Research, due to its diverse landscape, scenic interest and the recovery of its biodiversity, this being a platform of communication, documentation and collaboration amongst scientists developing research on the environment.

- The management of the landscape continues to be a reference in terms of the sustainability of its practices which integrate the following measures, amongst others: maintaining grazing rates low, protection of natural regeneration of forest species; adoption of measures against forest wild fires (structural prevention and vigilance), use of machinery and adequate techniques for the fragility of the more sensitive forest spaces; restoration and upkeep of the existing building heritage.

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?

There are various measures and initiatives with regards to public participation and community involvement in the elaboration and implementation of this landscape policy. Firstly, all planning and specific Nature conservation projects for landscape recovery were presented and went up for public consultation, the Plan for the Ordering and Management of Contenda Estate and the Plan for Contenda Estate's Forest Management to be highlighted here.

Participative processes have increased in the last decade: to be highlighted are actions to collect opinions and contributions on the management of this landscape and future challenges to be faced, such as:

Technical and scientific conferences have been organized at the Contenda Estate. The first edition of these conferences was in April 2013, its objective being for researchers, present and former colleagues of intervention in the Contenda Estate to meet in order to get to know the work that has been carried out and work still in progress and to study social memories about the territory.

In 2016, the VII Forum 21, a forum organised by Moura Local Authority dedicated to the future of the municipality, had as its theme "What will Contenda be like in the future?" Making the best use of the Contenda Estate's different potential was debated in this meeting, both for Santo Aleixo da Restauração, the parish where Contenda is situated, and for the municipality of Moura itself.

Furthermore, the Technical and Scientific Board and the Consulting Board for the Hunting Area are to be mentioned as they fulfill the aims of participation of society in the management of the Contenda Estate.

Also, LIFE projects have been presented to the community, regarding the recovery and promotion of the Iberian Lynx habitat, the promotion of the cinerous Vulture's habitat and the conservation of the Iberian Minnow carp (saramugo), the smallest fish in the fauna of the Guadiana River basin. Within the scope of these projects, visits to the Contenda Estate were promoted, information and public participation sessions were developed and also awareness raising sessions held for schools.

It is also important to state that the landscape policy implemented in the Contenda Estate is in line with other policies implemented on a national level, the National Programme of Policies for the Ordering of the Territory deserving to stand out here, whose last revision dating from 2019, foresaw measures to be implemented: "Give value to the territory via its landscape", "Claim Biodiversity as a territorial asset", "Giving value to the resource Land", "Ordering and revitalizing Forest Territories".

Regarding policies implemented on a regional level, the Plan for the Ordering of the Forests of the Lower Alentejo (2006) is also a reference in line with this landscape policy as an instrument of forest management, having attributed the statute of "Model Forest" to the Contenda Estate, given that conditions like no other come together for the development of research/experimentation and demonstration, namely with the use of innovative forestry techniques in the directing of tree groups and the development of models of optimized exploration for the various strands, grounded in greater economic return. On the level of research, the project SKA Square kilometer Array, is also to be highlighted. This is an international project that develops innovative technology in the area of radio astronomy.

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?

Contenda Estate is a privileged space for raising society's awareness on the value of landscape and measures to be adopted for its safeguard, contributing to the increase of awareness in society via the many activities targeting the community, students, researchers and professionals.

- Throughout the last decade various awareness raising initiatives have been implemented to show the importance of landscape, including making known management practices within a Mediterranean environment. The following activities are examples of these initiatives:
- The 1st Discussion Group about the Contenda Estate was organised in February 2013. This activity was targeted at local people and aimed at collecting proposals for the Contenda Estate's future management;
- The XII Forum was organised by the National School of Hunting, Fishing and Biodiversity in May 2017 with the theme "Tourism and Nature";
- Also, dozens of walks were organised in the Contenda Estate between 2015 and 2020 – joint initiatives between the School of Hunting and Nature Conservation and Comoiptrel, an agricultural cooperative with its headquarters in the municipality and the Moura Local Authority.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=L3extUYz8Tc>;
- Activities open to the public with the theme of biodiversity have been implemented (e.g., Around the Contenda Estate – Biodiversity in the Border Area" within the FTSS 2015 programme – festival that promotes erudite music and a region within the Alentejo)

Various cooperation initiatives with institutions linked to Teaching and Professional Training have been rolled out since 2012, highlighting field trips from these institutions within the training context and also the Contenda Estate hosting professional traineeships. To be noted are the protocols signed with Évora University and with the Professional School Al-Sud.

The Contenda Estate has recently created a webpage (www.herdadedacontenda.pt) and a Facebook page. The former reached 30,897 visualisations between April and October 2020, whilst the Facebook page reached 760 followers from January to the present date.

The initiative to vote online for the name of a baby cinerous Vulture born in Contenda should be noted with its more than 200 participants. It was named Chaparrito and has a transmitter so that the public can see its movements, this coming from a partnership initiative between the Contenda Estate, the Nature Protection League (LPN), an environmental NGO and the Vulture Conservation Foundation, also an environmental NGO.

Two projects in the area of environmental and hunting visits and enjoyment are being carried out at present:

-*Contenda Nature* project – Integrated Plan for Tourist Development in the Contenda Estate (in process) for the qualification of the territory as a differentiated tourist destination, preserving and giving value to natural resources, dynamics to the economics of local tourism, preserving authenticity and compatibility with tourist activities, promotion as a factor for social cohesion;

- Contenda Hunting Management – to improve the management of the National Hunting Area and to diversify the offer within Nature tourism.

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

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- 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).*

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