



CDCPP THEMATIC SESSION

**CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT AS RELATED
TO HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY,
and specifically, culture, heritage and landscape
resources**

Estonian contribution

related to natural landscape
and urban resilience

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Estonian contribution to the 8th Plenary Session of the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP)

Compared to the other European countries Estonia is in relatively good position, because the habitats of our shores and banks are mostly natural. It helps to mitigate the adverse effect of floods caused by climate change. In Estonia each water body has restriction zones, where land use changes are mostly prohibited.

We can also point out that since 2011 for 16 densely populated areas in Estonia there have been prepared flood risk assessments. Flood hazard has been mapped and management plans for mitigating flood hazard risks have been prepared. These are updated in every six year. These maps are available in the geoportal of the Estonian Land Board (<https://xgis.maaamet.ee/xgis2/page/app/yua>) for general public, policy makers, planners etc. These up-to-date maps show the probability of water levels` rise over 10, 50, 100 and 1000 years. Among other topics (like protected areas, wastewater treatment plants etc) these maps also contain the information about cultural monuments.

The second point is about human settlements. Most of the European countries are rapidly urbanising. This is a huge challenge and not only for the cities that are growing but equally so for the shrinking regions. However, discussions on sustainable cities tend to focus on bigger cities and how to make these greener and smarter. But we also need scenarios for the areas that are losing population. Some of the smaller towns in Estonia have lost a third of their population. It affects the community and their heritage. Smaller community needs less space and there is a huge overstock of buildings. Based on one pilot municipality Estonia has produced spatial planning guidelines for shrinking regions (<https://planeerimine.ee/static/sites/2/suunised-kahanevate-piirkonade-planeerimiseks.pdf>; in Estonian only). The guidelines in a nutshell include 3 suggestions: 1) revive historic city centre, which is at the same time more valuable heritage-wise; 2) all public investments should go only in the city centre; 3) move people from half empty and less valuable buildings on the outskirts into the centre and turn the sites into green areas. Investing in the historic centres coincides with the strategic goals of the heritage sector.