



FLORENCE CONVENTION

25th Anniversary of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention

27 October 2025

Florence, Italy

Villa Medicea “La Petraia”

Meeting of representatives of the States Parties and Observers

REPORT

REF : T-FC (2025) CONF 14 E



Opening session and adoption of the agenda

1. Mr Rafael Benitez, Director of Social Rights, Health and Environment opened the and welcomed the participants. Participants were shown a video on the Council of Europe Landscape Convention produced for its 25th Anniversary, as well as a video showcasing Council of Europe's efforts in environmental protection.
2. Ms Marta Rodrigues, Chair of the 13th Conference on the Implementation of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention, emphasised the crucial opportunity provided by the Ministerial Conference to review the progress made over the past 25 years. She commended the work of Ms Maguelonne Déjeant-Pons, former Secretary of the Landscape Convention and acknowledged the initiatives aimed at integrating landscape into national policies to safeguard the quality of life for future generations. Ms Rodrigues also recognised the contributions of States Parties and NGOs in advancing Convention's implementation and promoting its celebration.
3. Ms Rodrigues presented draft programme of the meeting which was adopted (Annex I).

Implementation of the Work Programme 2024-25

Presentation of the main outcomes of the 12th Landscape Conference [\[T-FC \(2024\) CONF 11 E\]](#)

4. Mr Gilles Rudaz, Chair of the 12th Landscape Conference and representative of Switzerland, presented the outcomes of the 12th Conference on the Implementation of the Landscape Convention. The 12th Conference addressed the issues landscapes are facing today. Notably outcomes included the Landscape Award, the recommendation on Landscape and Health, and the necessity to develop a new information system for the Landscape Convention.
5. Mr Rudaz also emphasised the great opportunity of the Reykjavík Declaration as a green tool for the Convention. He expressed his satisfaction with the promotional video presented at the meeting, noting it was excellent opportunity for enhancing communication and visibility, especially in the light of Convention's 25th anniversary. While acknowledging the progress made, he emphasised that challenges remain, and there are still gaps to be addressed in the implementation of the Convention.

Presentation of the Ceremony of the 8th Session of the Landscape Award in Portugal [\[CM/Del/Dec\(2025\)1520/7.1\]](#) and launch of the applications for the 9th Session of the Landscape Award

6. Ms Marta Rodrigues introduced the Landscape Award, highlighting the award-winning project and those receiving special mentions as exemplary models of excellence. These projects demonstrate how inclusive, multidisciplinary efforts can effectively support the creation of sustainable and resilient landscape strategies, serving a valuable reference for other countries. She also presented the ceremony for the 8th Session of the Landscape Award held in Portugal with over 50 participants (mainly

online). A field visit was organised alongside the award ceremony to showcase the villages that received the award.

7. Ms Rodrigues also introduced the 9th Session of the Landscape Award (2025-26), which was officially launched in February 2025. This session holds special significance as it coincides with the 25th anniversary of the Convention. Following a request from the international jury, the Council of Europe developed guidelines for the landscape Award to assist States Parties in preparing their applications. She also outlines rules, criteria and procedures of the Award.

Update on the preparation of the explanatory report and the draft Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers on “*Landscape, a Living Environment*” and exchange of initiatives with representatives of the States Parties for the effective implementation of the Recommendation on *Landscape and Health* [\[CM/Rec\(2025\)1\]](#) adopted by the Committee of Ministers.

8. Mr Massimo Castaldi, Head of the Administrative Coordination Service of the Department for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, Ministry of Culture of Italy, opened and moderated the session, presenting the draft recommendation on “*Landscape, a Living Environment*” and Recommendation on “*Landscape and Health*”.
9. Ms Ines Hrdalo, lead expert of the Group of experts on “Landscape, a living environment” introduced work carried out on the draft recommendation. She highlighted the alignment of the Group’s work with the 2023 Reykjavík Declaration which reaffirms the Council of Europe’s commitment in addressing the triple planetary crisis of pollution, climate change and loss of biodiversity on human rights, rule of law and democracy. She further noted the Council of Europe’s Strategy on the Environment, as well as the mandate of the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP) of the Council of Europe to develop a draft recommendation on “Landscape, a Living Environment” by 2026.
10. The Group of Experts composed of 20 experts met online three times to develop the explanatory report of the recommendation and define the concept of “living environment”. The current draft of the report is composed of two parts: a preliminary analysis, and the second part, which includes recommendations for the Committee of Ministers. To streamline the process, the Group agreed on 29 September to establish a pool of core experts to improve the structure of the draft report and refine key definitions, with the support of the Secretariat.
11. Despite the progress made, the report is not yet considered mature enough for submission to the CDCPP during its 14th Session, scheduled for 18-20 November 2025, nor to the Committee of Ministers in the first trimester of 2026. The draft report and the recommendations will instead be presented at the 13th Conference of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention in 2026, then submitted to the respective Steering Committee, and subsequently to the Committee of Ministers for adoption. As several experts have noted, further elaboration is essential to arrive at a shared and actionable definition of “Landscape, a Living Environment”. Ms Hrdalo expressed her commitment to continuing collaboration with the experts during the upcoming months.

12. Mr Gilles Rudaz then introduced the recommendation on Landscape and Health. Eleven experts contributed to the development of the recommendation, including a Greek professor who passed away last summer, to whom Mr Rudaz paid a tribute. The explanatory report of the recommendation emphasised the concept of health in its three dimensions: physical, mental and social, and clarified that all three dimensions are incorporated in the report.
13. The topic has sparked tremendous enthusiasm leading to the development of 12 guidelines. According to Mr Rudaz, the underlying rationale is that enhancing the quality of landscape in urban areas can foster increased physical activity, which in turn improves health. There is a synergy between landscape quality and public health and improving landscapes is in essence a public health measure.
14. Ms Marta Rodrigues shared an example of a good practice for implementing the recommendation on Landscape and Health. She highlighted the growing importance of food transition and food security within the framework of the Reykjavík Declaration. Several initiatives in the Lisbon metropolitan area are developing visions for 2030 focused on sustainable food production and its role in promoting public health and climate adaptation. These network projects are contributing to the social, ecological and economic enhancement.
15. Mr Antonio Antequera Delgado, Vice-Chair of the 13th Conference on the Implementation of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention and representative of Spain, presented another successful example from Madrid: the rehabilitation of a former wasteland into a green space and urban extension, specifically a peri urban park. This park serves as an important biodiversity hub for the city and acts as a carbon sink, helping to decarbonise Madrid. It is the second largest peri-urban park in Europe and has improved geological functions, creating corridors and connections with green infrastructures. The park also recycles rainwater, vital feature in Spain, as it experiences severe droughts. Drawing approximately one million visitors annually, the park fosters a sense of community, with local residents participating in projects like tree planting. Environmental education is a key focus, with a center located at the heart of the park. This project was presented for the 9th Session of the Landscape Award for Spain and earned second place in the national selection.
16. Mr Gerhard Ermischer, President of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe, reiterated the strong call for the Council of Europe to adopt additional protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights recognising the right to a healthy environment.

Presentation and exchange of views on [Recommendation 529 \(2025\)](#)^[1] “*Water resources under stress: towards better local and regional governance*”, adopted by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

17. Mr Gianluca Silvestrini, Head a.i. of the Reykjavík Process and the Environment Department, introduced Recommendation 529 (2025) “Water resources under stress:

towards better local and regional governance”, which was adopted by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, along with the response of the Committee of Ministers. He stressed that water quantity and quality are increasingly under pressure due to climate change and urbanisation. A sustainable, inclusive and right-based water governance is necessary. The conservation and sustainable use of freshwater is crucial for development, health, and climate resilience. Public awareness on sustainable water governance is also essential in ensuring climate resilience and ecosystem services.

18. In its response the Committee of Ministers affirmed the role of the Landscape Convention in tackling threats and challenges to landscapes, including water scarcity, extreme weather events driven by climate change, while also identifying opportunities, such as creating urban water spaces, integrating landscape in water management policies, and promoting flood prevention and water pollution through cooperation. The Reykjavík Declaration recognises landscape as a key component of ecological and societal well-being.
19. Mr Michael Oldham, representative of the European Region of International Federation of Landscape Architects, stressed the importance of national landscape strategies for water use, in addition to the local and regional strategies outlined in the recommendation 529.
20. Mr Silvestrini agreed, clarifying that while the recommendation is focused on local and regional aspects, due to its adoption by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, the importance of addressing this issue at the national level is equally significant.
21. Ms Blanka Bartol, representative of Slovenia, raised the issue of melting glaciers across Europe, which exacerbates water scarcity. She pointed out that continent is witnessing the creation of new landscapes as glaciers retreat, introducing a new dimension to landscapes as a living environment, with economic implications. This is a pan-European challenge for mountainous regions with glaciers.
22. Mr Silvestrini emphasised the crucial role of glaciers as natural reservoirs for drinking water. He also highlighted the link between the melting of the permafrost and health risks, noting that it could trigger the emergence of new viruses.

Information System on the Council of Europe Landscape Convention

23. Mr Silvestrini introduced the topic of the Convention’s information system, emphasising the need to enhance the effectiveness of implementing the Landscape Convention. The key tool for monitoring implementation progress among States Parties is the implementation questionnaire, which serves as a comprehensive monitoring mechanism. In 2016, the ELC-L6 system was developed to host the questionnaire, but it has since become obsolete. A modern, user-friendly and efficient platform is currently under development. The Secretariat considered several alternatives, including the United Nations Environment Programme - World Conservation Monitoring Centre

(UNEP-WCMC)'s platform, which was presented at the 12th Landscape Conference. Recently, a pilot project was launched with EvalandGo, a French company, selected through a competitive tendering process for its cost effectiveness and its oversight by the Directorate of Information Technology (DiT) of the Council of Europe. The platform is currently being developed, and the Secretariat has invited representatives of the States Parties to participate in the pilot phase to test the new tool.

24. Ms Sarah Tunnicliffe, representative of the United Kingdom, volunteered to participate in the pilot phase of the new system.
25. Mr Antequera Delgado also volunteered on behalf of Spain, noting that they make extensive use of the platform and would be happy to test the new one.
26. Ms Ingrid Gojevic, representative of Croatia, submitted the form to volunteer for testing the new system. She expressed dissatisfaction with the previous information system and emphasised the need for clear Terms of Reference to ensure the platform is user-friendly.
27. Ms Emilie Fleury-Jägerschmidt, representative of France, reiterated her commitment to the information system and confirmed her participation in the pilot phase.

Work Programme 2026-27

28. Mr Silvestrini introduced the Draft Work Programme for 2026-27. He reaffirmed the vital role of the Council of Europe for the protection of the environment in the context of the triple planetary crisis and underlined that the proposed work programme is aligned with the strategic directions of the Council of Europe.
29. Mr Silverstrini reminded the States Parties about the deadline for submitting proposals for the 9th Session of the Landscape Award, which is the end of 2025. He noted that the 13th Conference on the Implementation of the Landscape Convention will be held in 2026 in Strasbourg or in a State Party interested to host the conference. The conference will set future priorities. In 2026, it is also planned to improve the Information System for monitoring the implementation of the Convention.
30. For 2026, the Secretariat proposed four activities to the Representatives of the States Parties:
 - The development of a new recommendation (with three topics proposed).
 - Organisation of a seminar on the implementation of the Convention.
 - A workshop on the triple planetary crisis and its impact on landscape.
 - A national/regional Symposium on landscape policy and implementation.
31. Mr Silvestrini also presented proposed activities for 2027, which include: The Ceremony of the 9th Session of the landscape award to be hosted by the winning State Party; launch of the 10th Session of the Landscape Award (2027–2028), submission of the draft Recommendation on “Landscape as a Living Environment” to the Committee of Ministers for adoption, organisation of an online workshop to bring

together private-sector actors - landscape architects, planners, consultants, and companies - to explore collaborative approaches to sustainable landscape management and attract private sector support, and the continued improvement of the visibility of the Landscape Convention.

32. Mr Silvestrini thanked all the Parties for their generous voluntary contributions. State contributions are of vital importance for the effective implementation of the Convention due to the limited ordinary budget.
33. After the presentation, Mr Silvestrini invited all participants to choose one of the four activities for the implementation process in 2026 and to share their views.
34. Mr Rudaz noted that the draft recommendation on “Landscape, a living Environment” needs further refinement. He expressed a concern about establishing a new group of experts in parallel with the current group of 20 experts to work on a new recommendation while the existing remains unfinished. He suggested it would be more reasonable to focus on finalising the current recommendation first, before initiating work on a new one. In addition, he recommended addressing only one of the three pillars of the triple planetary crisis during the workshop to be ensure more focused approach.
35. Mr Rudaz also emphasised the need for a more formal structure for the Convention, proposing the establishment of a bureau or standing committee. He noted that the current informal setup of the Task Force lacks the necessary structure, and a formal bureau would provide more autonomy and improve the functioning of the Landscape Convention.
36. Mr Silvestrini explained that when the Landscape Convention was adopted, some countries did not support the establishment of a standing committee to monitor its implementation. This is different from the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention, which was directly set up by the Convention itself. To address the absence of a standing committee, Ms Maguelonne Déjeant-Pons, former Secretary of the Landscape Convention, took the initiative to organise the conferences on the implementation of the Convention to compensate.
37. Mr Silvestrini informed participants that the establishment of a Steering Committee on the Environment (CDENV) depends on the decision of the Ministers’ Deputies following the negotiation of the budget for the next biennium. If the Committee of Ministers adopts the CDENV, the landscape-related work currently overseen by the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP) will be transferred to the CDENV.
38. Mr Silvestrini further suggested using the existing Task Force for the Landscape Convention as an informal bureau with more frequent meetings to discuss relevant topics. He also proposed expanding the bureau to include additional representatives, if necessary.

39. Mr Silvestrini emphasised the broad and expansive nature of the concept of “Landscape as a Living Environment”. He also suggested organising a seminar or workshop on a specific recommendation, as assessing the implementation of recommendations can sometimes be challenging. Furthermore, he highlighted the importance of a holistic approach, stressing the need of cooperation with the Council of Europe’s Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) particularly in addressing biodiversity loss and landscape management in relation to biodiversity conservation. It is essential to design strategies to mitigate the impacts of climate change on landscapes.
40. Ms Irene Hadjisavva, representative of Cyprus, expressed interest in recommendation on artificial intelligence tools. She noted that the topic does not have to be a recommendation, it could take a form of a workshop leading to a recommendation at a later stage.
41. Ms Olesya Petrovych, representative of Ukraine, stressed the fact that a balanced landscape contributes to clean water, pollution reduction and restoration of biodiversity. She supported organising a workshop on the link between biodiversity and landscape, noting that balance should be found between the land use for agriculture and biodiversity conservation. She stressed that climate is interconnected with all environmental aspects and economic activities should respect land use limits. Ms Petrovych highlighted that the management of lands affected by armed conflicts is particularly important for Ukraine, suggesting this as a workshop topic, given Europe’s extensive experience in restoring post-conflict zones. Additionally, she underlined the topic of information technologies as a promising area for discussions.
42. Ms Blanka Bartol, representative of Slovenia, emphasised that adopting recommendations is important to sharpen landscape topics and link them with broader issues, but that implementation is equally important. She raised the question “How do we implement recommendations?” and suggested that workshops and seminars could be effective tools. Regarding the proposed topics, she recommended a focused approach to address the triple planetary crisis through natural disasters or natural risks, referring to an example of agricultural land pollution from floodings in Slovenia.
43. Ms Júlía Tóbbiková, representative of Czech Republic, supported the proposal to expand the work of the bureau.
44. Prof. Aikaterini Gkoltsiou, representative of IFLA EUROPE, announced that a consortium of NGOs has called on the European Union to use the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Landscape Convention to place landscape at the heart of European policy. The consortium launched a call for action to the European institutions to encourage the EU to become a state party to the Convention. She underlined the need for more visibility of landscapes as the living space of people.
45. Prof. Dr Saša Dobričić, President of UNISCAPE, presented the Nova Gorica-Gorizia UNISCAPE Declaration on Borderless Landscapes, which is founded on key five principles for rethinking landscapes as inherently borderless: Territorial Borders: Lines

in the Sand, Borderscapes: Where Worlds Meet, Climate Crisis: A Borderless Planet, Migrations: The Moving Nature of Living Beings, Fluid by Nature.

46. Mr Silvestrini praised the work carried out by Mr Michael Oldham in the field of landscapes. He also informed the participants about the appointment of a new Secretary of the Landscape Convention from 3 November 2025, Ms Caroline Martin, who will dedicate efforts to follow up on activities with the delegates.

Closure of the Meeting

47. Ms Marta Rodrigues concluded the meeting. She highlighted the upcoming 13th Conference on the Implementation of the Landscape Convention, the shared initiatives across countries for the 25th anniversary, and the definition of the work programme for the next biennium.
48. Delegates agreed that workshops are an effective way to develop topics before translating them into recommendations.
49. Ms Rodrigues reminded participants to apply for the 9th session of the landscape award, and to volunteer to test the information tool. She also recalled that a more permanent bureau of 4-5 members had been agreed upon. Regarding the work programme activities, the workshop format was selected. Finally, she stressed importance of participants sharing good practices and ideas for the Ministerial session the following day.

Annex I

Monday, 27 October



Location: Villa Medicea "La Petraia"

14:00 - 14:30 | Arrival and registration of participants

14:30 - 15:00 | Opening session and adoption of the agenda

- **Mr Rafael BENITEZ**, Director of Social Rights, Health and Environment Department, Directorate General Human Rights and Rule of Law, Council of Europe
- **Ms Marta RODRIGUES (Portugal)**, Chair of the 13th Conference on the Implementation of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention

15:00 - 16:15 | Implementation of the Work Programme 2024-25

15:00 - 15:10 | Presentation of the main outcomes of the 12th Landscape Conference [[T-FC \(2024\) CONF 11 E](#)]

- **Mr Gilles RUDAZ (Switzerland)**, Chair of the 12th Conference on the Implementation of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention

15:10 - 15:20 | Presentation of the Ceremony of the 8th Session of the Landscape Award in Portugal [[CM/Del/Dec\(2025\)1520/7.1](#)] and launch of the applications for the 9th Session of the Landscape Award

- **Ms Marta RODRIGUES (Portugal)**, Chair of the 13th Conference on the Implementation of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention

15:20 - 16:15 | Update on the preparation of the explanatory report and the draft Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers on "*Landscape, a Living Environment*" and exchange of initiatives with representatives of the States Parties for the effective implementation of the Recommendation on *Landscape and Health* [[CM/Rec\(2025\)1](#)], adopted by the Committee of Ministers.

- **Ms Ines HRDALO**, Lead expert of the Group of experts on "*Landscape, a living environment*"
- **Mr Gilles RUDAZ (Switzerland)**, lead expert of the Group of experts on "*Landscape and Health*"
- Discussions moderated by **Mr Massimo CASTALDI**, Head of the Administrative Coordination Service of the Department for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, Ministry of Culture of Italy.

16:15 - 16:30 | Presentation and exchange of views on [Recommendation 529 \(2025\)^{\[1\]}](#) "*Water resources under stress: towards better local and regional governance*", adopted by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

16:30 - 16:45 | Coffee break

16:45 - 17:00 | Information System on the Council of Europe Landscape Convention

Implementation of Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2013\)4](#) of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe: transition phase to the new operation information system

- Information by the Secretariat
- Exchange of views with representatives of the States Parties

17:00 - 17:30 | Work Programme 2026-27

Key thematic initiatives for the implementation of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention in 2026 - 2027 and related budget issues

- Introduction by the Secretariat
- Exchange of views with representatives of the States Parties

[\[T-FC\(2025\)CONF4E\]](#) - Draft Work Programme for 2026-2027

17:30 - 17:50 | Organisation of the 13th Landscape Conference in 2026

- Introduction by **Ms Marta RODRIGUES**, Chair of the 13th Landscape Conference
- Exchange of views with representatives of the States Parties

[\[T-FC\(2025\)CONF8E\]](#) - Concept Note for the 13th Landscape Conference

17:50 - 18:00 | Closure of the meeting by the Chair and the Secretariat

Participation in a cultural event

