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Strasbourg, 14 October 2025

COUNCIL OF EUROPE LANDSCAPE CONVENTION

Draft Work Programme for 2026-2027

Document prepared by the Secretariat

1. Introduction

1.1 The Council of Europe Landscape Convention ([ETS No. 176](#)) is a pioneering legal instrument that promotes a multidisciplinary approach by integrating environmental, cultural, heritage, and socio-economic dimensions. It fosters sustainable landscape management for the benefit of our societies and the quality of life.

1.2 The [Reykjavík Declaration](#), adopted at the 4th Council of Europe Summit in May 2023, underscored the importance of the environmental protection in the face of triple planetary crisis of pollution, climate change and biodiversity loss. It also emphasised the Council of Europe's key role in landscape protection and management.

1.3 The Council of Europe Strategy on the Environment adopted at the 134th Session of the Committee of Ministers (Luxembourg, 13-14 May 2025) sets the direction for the Council of Europe's environmental actions. It promotes a strong, multistakeholder approach and reinforces the connection between environmental protection, human rights, the rule of law, and democracy.

1.4 The Strategy further reiterates the role of the Council of Europe in environmentally friendly landscape management and planning. It identifies the protection of wildlife, ecosystems, habitats and landscapes as one of its strategic objectives, supported by an Action Plan outlining activities for 2025-2027.

1.5 The 12th Conference on the Implementation of Council of Europe Landscape Convention, held on 29-30 October 2024 in Strasbourg, marked a significant milestone as a relaunch conference for the Convention following the Reykjavík Summit. The Conference also adopted a work programme for 2025-2026.

1.6 The work programme for 2026-2027 builds on the strategic directions outlined in the documents above and takes into account activities related to the terms of reference of the Council of Europe steering committee responsible for monitoring implementation of the Convention.

2. State of play of the activities set by the work programme for 2025-2026

2.1 Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2025\)1](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the implementation of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention – Landscape and Health

The recommendation, accompanied by an explanatory report, highlights the strong connection between landscape and health, emphasising the undeniable link between healthy surroundings and overall well-being. It was adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 26 February 2025, during the 1520th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies.

2.2 Landscape: a living environment: recommendation and draft report

To prepare the recommendation on "Landscape, a Living Environment" and its explanatory report, the Group of Experts on "Landscape, a Living Environment" was established in April 2025. It is composed by 20 members and consists of: nine national representatives to the Council of Europe Landscape Convention, six government representatives and five experts. At its first meeting on 12 May 2025, the Group elected a chair. A lead expert was also appointed. The group conducted three meetings (May, July and September 2025) and agreed to establish a Pool of core experts composed by Ms Ines Hrdalo, Mr Michael Oldham, and Mr

Pere Sala i Martí to improve the structure of the draft report (consisting of an explanatory report and its corresponding draft recommendations) and refining key definitions, with the support of the Secretariat.

The Group of the experts designated by the State Parties focuses on defining what constitutes a "living environment" considering the role of democratic participation and balancing rights related to landscape and environment, with a view to facilitate the implementation of the Landscape Convention and enhance its role as a multilateral platform to contribute to the implementation of the Reykjavík Declaration on the Council of Europe and the Environment.

The new recommendation is expected to be endorsed by the committees of experts referred to in Article 10 of the Convention in autumn 2026 and adopted by the Committee of Ministers in the first trimester of 2027.

2.3 Council of Europe Landscape Award Forum of National Selections 8th Session (2022–2024)

Based on the Jury's recommendations and the proposals of the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP), the Committee of Ministers at its 1520th meeting granted the Award and special mentions to the following projects on 26 February 2025 ([CM/Del/Dec\(2025\)1520/7.1](#)):

- **Winner of the Landscape Award:** *Villages of Serra da Lousã - Where villages Sound Unique* (State party: PORTUGAL / Applicant: Municipality of Lousã).
- **Special mention:** *Orland - FindingHome - The Rusaset project and the Austrått landscape* (State party: NORWAY / Applicant: Municipality of Ørland).
- **Recognised as an Exemplary Achievement:** *Protection and Development of the Slovenian Landscape: Starting Points for the Development of Landscape Policy* (State party: SLOVENIA / Applicant: Association of Landscape Architects of Slovenia, CIPRA Slovenia - Association for the Protection of the Alps, IPoP - Institute for Spatial Policy).

The Forum of National Selections took place on 27 June 2025, in a hybrid format (in Lousã, Portugal and online). The event showcased the submitted projects for the 8th session of the Landscape Award and offered a platform to reflect on their achievements and impact.

The Forum also included a field visit to the award-winning project, "*Villages of Serra da Lousã – Where Villages Sound Unique*", and featured a public award ceremony.

2.4 The 9th Session of the Council of Europe Landscape Award (2025-2026)

The 9th Session of the Landscape Award (2025-2026) was launched in February 2025. The deadline for submitting candidatures is 31 December 2025.

2.5 Informal Ministerial Conference for the 25th Anniversary of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention

An informal Ministerial Conference was held in Florence, Italy on 27-28 October 2025 to mark the 25th Anniversary of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention. The event offered an opportunity to reflect on key milestones, achievements and impact of the Convention since its opening for accession in 2000, as well as to address current challenges and future opportunities for landscape protection and management in a rapidly evolving world.

The Conference concluded with a Declaration outlining a strategic vision to strengthen multilateral co-operation and promote the effective implementation of the Convention, including its integration into national policies.

2.6 Meeting of representatives of the States Parties and Observers

In the margins of the Informal Ministerial Conference marking the 25th Anniversary of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention, a technical meeting of representatives of the States Parties and Observers was held in Florence, Italy, on 27 October 2025.

Participants reviewed the implementation of the 2024–2025 work programme, set priorities for the Convention's future activities, and exchanged views on the organisation of the 13th Landscape Conference in 2026.

Discussions were also held with representatives of the States Parties on the preparation of the explanatory report and the draft Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers on "Landscape, a Living Environment." In addition, participants explored initiatives and good practices for the effective implementation of the Recommendation on Landscape and Health [[CM/Rec\(2025\)1](#)], adopted by the Committee of Ministers.

3. Work Programme for 2026

3.1 Landscape: a living environment: recommendation and draft report

The Group of Experts will continue its work on the preparation of the draft report (i.e., the explanatory report and its corresponding draft recommendations of the Committee of Ministers to the members States) on "Landscape, a Living Environment".

3.2 The 9th Session of the Council of Europe Landscape Award (2025-2026)

An international jury, tasked with making proposals regarding the winner of the 9th session of the Landscape award, will meet to evaluate the admissibility of the candidatures and propose the award winner and special mentions from the candidates admitted.

The committees of experts referred to in Article 10 of the Convention will examine the jury's proposals and forward its proposals concerning the award winner, and, wherever appropriate, special mentions, to the Committee of Ministers for final decision by the end of 2026.

3.3 The 13th Conference on the Implementation of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention

The 13th Conference on the implementation of Council of Europe Landscape Convention will take place at the beginning of Autumn 2026, in Strasbourg (or another location should the State Party offer to host). The main event will be a one or two-day conference, with optional side events focused on topics of interest to the State Parties.

The conference will provide an opportunity to discuss the main developments and achievements within the Council of Europe, in the environmental field with special focus on the Landscape Convention since the adoption of [Reykjavík Declaration](#). It will also reflect on the outcomes of the informal Ministerial Conference marking the 25th Anniversary of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention.

States Parties will assess the implementation of the Convention, review progress under work programme endorsed at the 12th Conference, and set priorities for future activities.

3.4 Development of a new recommendation/Seminar /Workshop/Symposium

The Secretariat proposes the following alternative activities for 2026 to be decided by the States Parties.

a. Development of a new recommendation to be adopted in 2027. The topic will be determined by the States Parties during the Technical Meeting in Florence on 27 October 2025. Following proposals are outlined below for consideration, without excluding the possibility of other topics being identified by the States Parties:

- Recommendation on landscape and the triple planetary crisis: focusing on the impact of pollution, climate change, and biodiversity loss on landscapes, this recommendation would align with the principles of the Reykjavik Declaration, emphasising the urgent need for integrated landscape management to address these global challenges.
- Recommendation on Landscape rehabilitation and management in territories affected by armed conflicts: this recommendation would aim to provide guidance on the rehabilitation and sustainable management of landscapes in regions affected by armed conflicts, promoting recovery, resilience, and the restoration of ecosystem services in post-conflict areas.
- Recommendation on emerging information technologies and the landscape. This recommendation would address the opportunities and challenges posed by emerging information technologies, such as digital infrastructure, artificial intelligence and immersive tools, for the implementation of the Convention. It would encourage member States to promote landscape-sensitive digital development, ensure ethical and inclusive use of AI in spatial planning and monitoring, and support the use of digital tools to enhance public participation, education and resilience in landscape management.

b. Organisation of a seminar on the implementation of the Convention by the States Parties, taking into account relevant Committee of Ministers recommendations. The purpose of the seminar would be to present and discuss responses to the questionnaire prepared by each State Party on the Convention's implementation and related Committee of Ministers recommendation(s).

The seminar will highlight the critical issues, facilitate constructive dialogue among stakeholders at national, regional and local level, and identify obstacles to full implementation of the Convention.

Conclusions from the discussions will form a basis for a report and potential recommendation by the Committee of Ministers.

c. Workshop on the impact of the triple planetary crisis of pollution, climate change and loss of biodiversity. The workshop would explore these challenges in depth and consider efforts to mitigate their impact. It could be organised in the framework of the Council of Europe Landscape Award Forum of National Selections 9th Session (2025–2026).

d. National/Regional Symposium on the Council of Europe Landscape Convention to foster debate on landscape issues and related policies. The State (or States) hosting the event, and the main theme will be determined in consultation with the States Parties and any interested non-States Parties.

3.5 Improving the information system for monitoring the implementation of the Convention

The monitoring of the Convention's implementation is expected to benefit from an improved information system designed to streamline and enhance the reporting process. This central platform will compile data submitted by States Parties and feature a user-friendly, adaptable interface for easier submission, consultation, and analysis.

The previous system, ELCL6 - developed in 2017 has become increasingly difficult to maintain due to its outdated infrastructure, raising concerns about its usability and sustainability.

For this reason, the Secretariat has explored several options to host the implementation questionnaire and enable States Parties to fulfil their obligations in submitting replies to the questionnaire in accordance with Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2013\)4](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the European Landscape Convention Information System of the Council of Europe and its glossary (Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 11 December 2013).

One of the options considered to replace the obsolete system was the Online Reporting System (ORS), provided by the United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), which was presented during the 12th Landscape Conference (28 - 29 October 2024).

More recently, the Council of Europe has launched pilot projects to evaluate Eval and Go, a new online system designed to submit questionnaires and to monitor the implementation of conventions, to be widely used across the organisation. The system is hosted by an external provider in France and was selected by the Directorate of Information Technologies (DIT) of the Council of Europe through a tendering procedure, based on criteria such as security, operational efficiency, intuitive design, and overall value for money. Its main advantage is that it is developed under the supervision of the DIT, which reduces risks while ensuring a cost-effective, user-friendly and intuitive solution.

In this context, a new platform with the implementation questionnaire of the Landscape Convention is currently being developed on the Eval and Go system. The Secretariat is planning to arrange a pilot testing session involving group of volunteer States Parties that would complete the questionnaire and provide feedback on their experience. The feedback gathered will be a key factor in deciding whether and how to implement the system.

3.6 Visibility

The website of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention will be upgraded to enhance the visibility of ongoing and planned activities under the Convention and to make it more accessible to the public.

4. Work programme for 2027

4.1 Council of Europe Landscape Award Forum of National Selections 9th Session (2025–2026)

Council of Europe Landscape Award Forum of National Selections 9th Session (2025–2026) will be hosted by the award-winning country. It will serve as a platform to present the Landscape award to the project and to celebrate its achievements.

4.2 10th Session of the Council of Europe Landscape Award (2027-2028)

The 10th Session of the Landscape Award (2027-2028) will be launched, with the call for the candidatures to be officially announced.

4.3 The draft recommendation on "Landscape, a Living Environment" will be submitted to the Committee of Ministers for adoption in the first trimester of 2027.

4.4 Finalisation and adoption of the Committee of Ministers recommendation

This activity will depend on the decision of the States Parties outlined in paragraph 3.4 of this document.

4.5 Online workshop on the collaborative approaches to implementing the Landscape Convention

The workshop will bring together private-sector stakeholders, such as landscape architects, urban planners, environmental consultancies, and companies from the tourism, agriculture, and construction sectors, to explore collaborative approaches for implementing the Landscape Convention. It will focus on exchanging best practices in sustainable landscape management and developing practical, cost-effective solutions for landscape rehabilitation. Its primary aim is to encourage private-sector involvement by leveraging their expertise and resources, thereby fostering stronger partnerships in support of the Convention's objectives. Additionally, the workshop will serve as a platform to engage and attract potential private-sector sponsors.

4.6 Visibility

Run social media campaigns (in cooperation with the communication officer and the Directorate of Communications) that highlight the importance of landscape protection and promote the work of the Convention. These campaigns could feature interviews with experts, case studies of successful landscape initiatives, and general educational content about the Convention. This will help raise awareness while engaging the public and attracting support from the civil society, private sector and academia.

4.7 Other cross-sectoral activities

The establishment of a network of landscape professionals is intended to strengthen collaboration and promote the exchange of knowledge on innovative approaches to landscape protection, management, and planning across all sectors - including national authorities, NGOs, academia, and private companies. This cross-sectoral initiative will complement the information system deployed by the Convention by providing a collaborative platform for sharing best practices and effective responses to contemporary challenges. Stakeholders will be invited to submit concise case studies via a shared cloud-based folder, accessible to the Secretariat and designated representatives. The initiative will contribute to more integrated and effective landscape management efforts across States Parties.