

THE CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

Recommendation 150 (2004)¹ on the contribution of local and regional authorities to the implementation of the European Landscape Convention

The Congress,

1. Recalling its Recommendation 40 (1998) on the draft European Landscape Convention, which presented the first draft of the Convention and which invited the Committee of Ministers to examine this draft with a view to adopting it as a Council of Europe convention;

2. Noting with satisfaction that:

a. in the course of 1999, the Committee of Ministers, with assistance from an intergovernmental expert committee, prepared the final draft European Landscape Convention based on the text proposed by the Congress;

b. on this basis, following the favourable opinion of the Steering Committee for Cultural Heritage and the Committee for the activities of the Council of Europe in the field of biological and landscape diversity, the Committee of Ministers adopted the European Landscape Convention (ETS No. 176) on 19 July 2000;

c. the Convention has been opened for signature on 20 October 2000, and to date it has been signed by 28 member states of which 12 have also deposited the instruments of ratification with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe;

d. following its ratification by 10 member states, the Convention entered into force on 1 March 2004;

3. Welcoming the fact that:

a. the European Landscape Convention refers to all the key principles contained in the first draft prepared by the Congress;

b. in accordance with the subsidiarity principle, the Convention pays special attention to the role of local and

regional authorities in the protection, management and planning of the landscape;

4. Convinced that:

a. the entering into force of the European Landscape Convention will contribute to the democratisation of the landscape by bringing it closer to directly concerned local and regional communities;

b. the Convention opens up a new dimension for international public action to improve quality of life in the whole territory of Council of Europe member states;

5. Stressing that:

a. the adoption, opening for signature and entry into force of the Convention do not mean that the work of public authorities in the landscape field has been accomplished. On the contrary, this work has just commenced and its realisation is closely linked to the effective implementation of the Convention by the states concerned;

b. in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, states must be able to establish co-operation at European level in order to protect, manage and plan their landscapes;

c. in this respect, the Council of Europe's expert committees responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Convention should play an essential role,

6. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe:

a. make sure that the monitoring system to be set up by the responsible expert committees guarantees an integrated approach to the Convention, and that the role of local and regional authorities is duly taken into consideration;

b. make sure that the monitoring system to be introduced is flexible, so that decisions taken by the expert committees can be quickly translated into concrete action in the field;

c. invite the governments of member states which have not already done so to sign and ratify the European Landscape Convention so that it can be rapidly implemented in the whole of Europe.

1. Debated and adopted by the Congress on 27 May 2004, 3rd Sitting (see Document CG (11) 12, draft recommendation presented by L. Becker (Hungary, L, EPP/CD), rapporteur).