

Florence, 16 March 2009

Ref.: RECEP/RP/DOC/2009 – 5E rev.1

The *European Landscape Convention*: a litmus test for the exercise of local and regional authorities' public responsibilities at national and international level

Document prepared as a contribution of RECEP-ENELC to the 5th Conference on the European Landscape Convention - Strasbourg, Council of Europe, on 30-31 Mars 2009

I. The *European Landscape Convention*: a political project initiated by local and regional authorities

Reflecting growing social pressure, in recent years European local and regional authorities' interest in and commitment to landscape protection and enhancement have made significant progress. In this context, in 1993 the Mediterranean Regions of Andalusia (Spain), Languedoc Roussillon (France) and Tuscany (Italy) signed in Seville the *Mediterranean Landscape Charter* (also known as the Seville Charter). On this basis, the Council of Europe's *Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities* (CPLRE) adopted a formal resolution explicitly referring to the necessity of drawing up a European framework convention on the protection and management of natural and cultural landscapes continent-wide¹.

In response to these developments and as the body representing local and regional authorities at European level, in 1994 the *Congress of Local and Regional Authorities* (the institution which replaced the CPLRE within the Council of Europe) began preparing a draft international convention devoted exclusively to the landscape. In 1997, the Congress approved a first draft [see Resolution 53 (1997)], based on a preparatory document expressed in non-legal terms [see the Explanatory report / Resolution 53 - (doc. CG (4) 6)]. Following the organisation of a conference to consult central governments on the possible adoption of an international treaty entirely dedicated to landscape issues (Florence, 2-4 April), in 1998 the Congress approved a final draft Convention and recommended its adoption to the Committee of Ministers [see Recommendation 40 (1998) - the final draft is appended to the recommendation].

At the end of 1998, the Committee of Ministers requested an opinion on this document to the competent Council of Europe intergovernmental committees – i.e. the *Cultural Heritage Committee* (CC-PAT) and the *Council of Europe Committee on biological and landscape diversity* (CO-DBP). CC-PAT expressed a positive opinion on the draft drawn up by the Congress on 17 February 1999; CO-DBP did the same on 19 April. Given the favourable reaction by the above-mentioned committees, at the end of 1999 a restricted intergovernmental group was created by the Committee of Ministers and entrusted with the preparation of a final text. The group met three times (twice at the end 1999 and once at the beginning of 2000). Following the mandate by the Committee of Ministers, the group prepared a text based on the original draft Convention approved by the Congress in '98. On foot of this and following official opinions by the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly (of May 2000) and Congress (June 2000), the Committee of Ministers adopted the European Landscape Convention on 19 July 2000.

The Convention was opened for signature to Council of Europe Member States on 20 October 2000 in Florence (Italy), at a ministerial Conference organised by the Italian Ministry for Cultural Assets and Activities and the Council of Europe Secretariat (Congress' Directorate), in co-operation with the Tuscany Region. After ten Council of Europe member States had deposited the instruments of ratification, the Convention entered into force on 1 March 2004.

As of 1st March 2009, 30 States had ratified the Convention: Armenia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Turkey, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom.

Six States have signed but have not yet ratified the Convention, i.e.: Azerbaijan, Greece, Malta, Serbia, Sweden and Switzerland.

Albania, Andorra, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Monaco and Russia have neither signed nor ratified the Convention.

The Convention has been either signed or ratified by 24 out of the 27 European Union Member States and it is in force in 21 of them.

¹ Resolution 256 (1994), paragraph V.6.

The large number of signatures to the Convention and the growing number of ratifications are confirmation of the political importance national governments ascribe to this European treaty. This great interest is probably rooted in the convention's novel approach and its likely legal and political effects, both quantitative and qualitative, at local, regional, national and European levels.

The Convention is considered an international legal framework for a *political project* – conceived by local and regional politicians - aimed at sharing and consolidating a new approach to landscape issues continent-wide. It is the first international treaty to be exclusively concerned with all aspects of the European landscape. It applies to the entire territory of the Parties and covers natural, rural, urban and peri-urban areas. It concerns landscapes that might be considered outstanding as well as everyday or degraded landscapes. The Convention proposes legal and financial measures at the national and international levels, aimed at shaping "landscape policies" and promoting interaction between local and central authorities as well as transfrontier cooperation for landscape protection, management and planning.

As stated in the Explanatory memorandum related to Resolution 178 (2004) of the Congress on the contribution of local and regional authorities to the implementation of the European Landscape Convention² «the Convention's entry into force will open the way to:

1. the democratisation of the landscape, by linking it to the local and regional communities directly concerned;
2. a new dimension for international public action to improve the quality of life of these communities throughout the organisation's member States.

Reflecting its origins, the Convention pays particular attention to local and regional authorities, by:

1. referring explicitly to the *subsidiarity* principle and the *European Charter of Local Self-Government* (Article 4);
2. committing the Contracting States to establishing procedures for local and regional authorities' participation in defining and implementing landscape policies (Article 5);
3. requiring full local and regional authority involvement in identifying and assessing landscapes (Article 6).

Taken together, these provisions provide local and regional authorities with a strong legal incentive to exercise their institutional landscape responsibilities».

With this in mind, the present report sets out to further clarify the role of local and regional authorities in implementing the Convention. It describes their contribution to such implementation at national level and international level, notably within the *European Network of Local and regional authorities for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention* (RECEP-ENELC).

Further to the creation of three separate (but co-ordinated) European networks for the implementation of the Convention – respectively gathering local and regional authorities (RECEP-ENELC), universities (UNISCAPE³) and civil society (CIVILSCAPE⁴) – in its final chapter, this report makes a number of proposals with a view to promoting the organisation of a multilevel, multidisciplinary co-operation system based on the intergovernmental monitoring structures active within the Council of Europe and the above-mentioned networks.

² Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, Council of Europe, Strasbourg , 2004 - Doc. CG (11) 12 Part II.

³ UNISCAPE – *European Network of Universities for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention* has been constituted in Florence – Italy on 19 January 2008 by almost fifty European universities. For further information please consult: www.uniscape.org.

⁴ CIVILSCAPE – *Non-governmental organisations for the European Landscape Convention* has been constituted in Amsterdam – The Netherlands on 23 February 2008. For further information, please consult www.civilscape.org.

II. From the *design stage and establishment phase* to concrete implementation

As stated in the Explanatory memorandum of Congress' Resolution 178 (2004), «in the beginning the proposal to produce the outline of an international treaty on the landscape was considered by an important number of States very difficult to fulfil. Fifteen years later, this lack of understanding seems to be behind us and it might perhaps be claimed that the dream is about to become reality. The Convention has finally offered the foundation for a general consensus on what constitutes a "landscape" and why the landscape is so important to European people. Probably as a consequence of their political objectives and its proximity to citizens' everyday needs, elected local and regional representatives, assisted by an outstanding team of experts and officials⁵, have managed to secure agreement on the landscape among all those concerned, while avoiding interminable doctrinal disputes about the definition of landscape and whether it is the domain of the architect, the biologist, the ecologist or the nature conservationist, or exclusively the province of archaeologists, historians, cultural heritage conservators or whatever. Today, as an international treaty, the Convention sets forth clear, binding, principles committing the Contracting States to adopt policies and measures aimed at promoting landscape quality throughout their entire national territory, with the involvement of the people concerned. This is why the Convention is considered an *international legal expression of a political project aimed at strengthening a new approach to landscape issues continent wide*.

However, excessive enthusiasm is still not in order. The Convention's ratification by the vast majority of Council of Europe member States by no means set the final seal on governments' landscape activities. The work has just started and its completion is intimately bound up with the implementation of the political project of which the Convention is simply the authoritative legal expression. This project is undoubtedly an ambitious one, indeed some have even called it revolutionary. The terms are not unjustified, given that what is sought is a major shift in the relationship between public authorities, people and the character of the setting of their everyday life. For the project to succeed, Contracting States must ensure that, like a liquid flowing through a complex structure, the Convention's principles penetrate the innermost workings of society. Without the co-operation of national, regional and local authorities, but also education institutions and NGOs, the liquid in question could remain in its exalted European container, where it could be put on display by a small number of particularly proud, inspired or zealous civil servants or university professors. Yet this liquid is no magic potion, but simply a form of sap which, if it is to bring life, must be allowed to flow and become a resource accessible to all. This sap must course through the veins of the civil, administrative and institutional structures of the States that make up our continent. Based on the *subsidiarity* principle, it must reach the very roots of our complex society and inspire those who still treat their natural surroundings exclusively as a means of satisfying their own material interests rather than as an essential source of environmental balance, public health, cultural identity, sustainable development».

In this respect, when formulating his conclusions on the occasion of the Landscape Research Group Seminar dedicated to the implementation of the Convention (Sheffield, 19-20 November 2007)⁶, Adrian Philips was right to note that «we are at a critical stage in the history of the Convention. The first stage, up to 2000, was about building up to the triumphal agreement at Florence: in effect, the design stage. Since then the second stage has involved a preoccupation with obtaining ratifications – you might call this the establishment phase. Now we are moving into the all-important implementation phase. And it is at this point that things can go wrong. There are two possible paths forward. In one, the ELC becomes increasingly important both at the national and international level. It is referred to more and more by governments. It actually influences the outcome of decisions on the ground. It is welcomed by

⁵ Michael Dower (University of Gloucestershire – United-Kingdom); Yves Luginbuhl (University of Paris I - France); Michel Prieur (University di Limoges - France); Florencio Zoido Naranjo (University of Seville - Spain). Bengt Johansson – Ministry of Culture, Sweden, and Régis Ambroise, Ministry of Agriculture – France also assisted the Congress in the drafting activities. Riccardo Priore, European officer, has been in charge of the activities related to the Convention in the framework of the Council of Europe Secretariat General / Congress' Directorate from 1994 to 2004.

⁶ For any further information regarding the seminar, please consult www.landscaperesearch.org.

communities throughout Europe and it really affects the lives of its citizens for the better. Along the other path, it founders in an atmosphere of frustration and indifference. We can't get governments to take it seriously, we can't engage properly with communities, landscape remains a second or third order issue in public policy, and we watch the landscapes of Europe deteriorate around us (...). We have to win the argument that landscape is a medium or context through which to guide development and change every bit as much as a resource to be protected, managed and created. If we can do that, then the builders of roads, power plants and new homes will see a full understanding of landscape as a way to get the right development outcome, not just as an obstacle to their ambitions. At the same time, we need to build alliances between landscape and areas that command high political and public attention, like health, education, biodiversity protection and coping with the effects of climate change and the switch over to a low carbon economy. We have to show how a better understanding of landscape will help achieve these broad societal goals».

III. Some urgent issues to face when implementing the Convention

The activities related to the monitoring of the Convention at intergovernmental level do not seem sufficiently oriented to a number of key questions. Some give the impression that the Convention is just a central government (or intergovernmental) administrative matter, to be discussed among ministerial experts. This attitude could hamper or slow down an urgent political discussion on a series of crucial issues such as:

1. the impact of the European Union's policies on the landscape dimension continent-wide;
2. the division of public responsibilities with regard to landscape at national level;
3. the support / supervision of local and regional authorities' action in the implementation process and the integration of the landscape dimension in regional and town planning instruments as well as in other public policies (regarding agriculture, energy, waste disposal, transport, infrastructure, etc.).

These issues should be tackled more in depth by the responsible national and intergovernmental monitoring bodies.

The Convention does refer to the above mentioned issues, explicitly referring to the possible implementation in the EU territory, the division of responsibilities at national level and the role of local and regional authorities in the implementation process.

Concerning the European Union, Article 14 sets forth that *after the entry into force of the Convention, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe may invite the European Community to accede to the Convention by a majority decision as provided in Article 20.d of the Council of Europe Statute, and by the unanimous vote of the States parties entitled to hold seats in the Committee of Ministers.*

This provision proves to be particularly appropriate as it is recognised that the spending of the EU (870 billion euro in the period 2007-2013) can have a significant impact upon landscapes. However, – event though 24 out of the 27 EU member states have either signed or ratified the Convention (and have thereby committed themselves to recognise landscapes in their national legislation and in all policies that have an impact on the landscape, including those policies which draw on powers and funding from the EU), European landscapes do not figure prominently in the formal objectives which drive EU policies or in the criteria by which environmental impacts are judged within the EU.

One could expect that the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers might start considering the possibility of inviting the European Community to accede to the Convention itself as provided in Article 14. In preparation for such an invitation, the bodies entrusted with the monitoring of the Convention at intergovernmental level should urgently develop a dialogue with relevant organs of the EU (responsible for cohesion, regional and rural development, energy, infrastructures, transport, etc.) with a view to reaching a common understanding of how landscape considerations can be reflected in policies and in the criteria by which environmental impacts are judged.

Concerning the share of public responsibilities regarding landscape issues at national level and the role of local and regional authorities, Article 4 of the Convention set forth that *each Contracting State shall implement the Convention, in particular Articles 5 and 6, according to its own division of*

powers, in conformity with its constitutional principles and administrative arrangements, and respecting the principle of subsidiarity and taking into account the European Charter of Local Self-government.

Paragraph 23 of the Convention's Explanatory report sets out that *landscape is the concern of all and lends itself to democratic treatment, particularly at local and regional level.* These provisions give a first, paradigmatic idea of the importance given by the Convention to local and regional authorities regarding its implementation. The importance of local and regional authorities is confirmed in the Preamble, where it is stated that the Convention is signed *having regard – inter alia - to the legal texts existing at international level in the field of regional planning, local self-government and transfrontier co-operation, in particular the European Charter of Local Self-government.*

Regarding *the European Charter of Local Self-government*, it should be noted that the vast majority of the States which have ratified the Convention are also contracting parties of the Charter. The latter contains agreed definitions of the *self-government* and *subsidiarity* principles:

1. the first, defined as *the right and the ability of local authorities, within the limits of the law, to regulate and manage a substantial share of public affairs under their own responsibility and in the interests of the local population;*
2. the second indicating that *public responsibilities should be exercised, in preference, by those authorities which are closest to the citizen. Allocation of responsibility to another authority should weigh up the extent and nature of the task and requirements of efficiency and economy.*

With this in mind, after making reference in paragraph 27 to the extension of the scope of local authorities' official landscape action to cover the whole national territory, paragraph 34 of the Explanatory report confirms that *on the basis of the principle of subsidiarity, responsibility for action relating to landscape lies with public authorities not only at national and international levels, but also at local and regional levels.*

The report also refers to the *necessity that local and regional authorities, and groupings of such authorities, are guaranteed formal involvement in the implementation process at national level.* It is subsequently stated that *where local and regional authorities have the necessary competence, protection, management and planning of landscapes will be more effective if responsibility for their implementation is entrusted to the authorities closest to the communities concerned.* In this respect, by making express reference to Article 4 of the Convention, the Explanatory report encourages the States to *set out in detail the tasks and measures for which each level – national, regional or local – is responsible and should lay down rules for inter-level co-ordination of such measures, in particular where town planning and regional planning instruments are concerned.*

The requirement to implement both the *self-government* and *subsidiarity* principles in the implementation process at national level, is based on two fundamental provisions of the Convention, referring in particular to:

1. the landscape definition (Article 1 - *“Landscape” means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors*);
2. the scope of the Convention (Article 2 - *Subject to the provisions contained in Article 15, this Convention applies to the entire territory of the Parties and covers natural, rural, urban and peri-urban areas. It includes land, inland water and marine areas. It concerns landscapes that might be considered outstanding as well as everyday or degraded landscape*).

In order to implement these provisions, contracting States cannot rely solely on the action of competent central administration bodies. The latter would not be able to take care of (i.e. protect, manage and plan) the landscape dimension of the entire national territory. In the vast majority of European States, these bodies lack the necessary human, technical and financial resources; and, above all, they could hardly succeed to formulate – in accordance with Article 6.D and 1.c - *landscape quality objectives* that are an expression of *people's aspirations with regard to the features of their surroundings.*

That is why, when implementing the Convention, Contracting States should never forget that *landscape lends itself to democratic treatment, particularly at local and regional level.* As affirmed by

the Congress' politicians during the drafting of the Convention⁷, *landscape actions should no longer be merely a field of study or a limited area of action which is the prerogative of specialised central government bodies. Landscape should become a mainstream political subject, since it plays an important role in the well-being of Europe's citizens, for whom it is no longer acceptable that their surroundings are transformed by technical and economic changes regarding which they have no say.*

Local and regional elected representatives aware of the importance of preserving the quality of the landscape dimension of their communities – recognised as a fundamental life dimension – could develop the political ambition to integrate that quality in their political objectives and programmes. In the framework of electoral processes, they could therefore be interested in asking for the vote of their communities also on the basis of a *landscape quality commitment*, and, thanks to the (possible) achievement of such a commitment, hope to be re-elected.

Considering the growing social demand regarding the quality of everyday landscapes, the establishment (or the consolidation) of such a democratic *circle* at territorial level would help to improve the landscape dimension continent-wide. With this in mind, Contracting States should invest energies and resources in the organisation of awareness raising activities at local and regional level and, at the same time, encourage decentralised authorities to co-operate at national and European level.

In most European countries direct responsibility for everyday landscape matters already lies with regions and local authorities, in the latter case sometimes as a regionally delegated responsibility. Local and regional authorities committed to landscape policies, landscape quality objectives and landscape projects towards the protection, management and/or planning of the whole landscape dimension of their territories would make a substantial contribution to the implementation of Articles 5 and 6 of the Convention. These provisions explicitly undertake the Contracting States to establish procedures for the participation of local and regional authorities in:

1. the formulation of *landscape policies* and the integration of landscape into its regional and town planning policies as well as in other public policies (regarding agriculture, energy, waste disposal, transport, infrastructure, etc.);
2. the programmes aimed at increasing people awareness about the importance of the landscape and their involvement in the related public decision making;
3. the landscape identification and assessment procedures and the definition of the *landscape quality objectives*.

Everything should be done in order to alert local and regional authorities to the importance of their role. Bearing in mind Article 4 of the Convention, the time has come for local and regional authorities to assume their responsibilities in accordance with the *subsidiarity* principle. In some cases, this is already a reality.

In a number of countries, the entry into force of the Convention has already prompted a growing number of local and regional authorities to strengthen their political and institutional commitment with regard to landscape. In some cases, this process already went through a gradual but substantial adaptation of their technical, administrative, legal and/or statutory framework. Some regions adopted specific laws in order to integrate the European Landscape Convention's principles in their domestic legal system and approved funding instruments with landscape purposes.

However, given the complexity of the task, it is important that local and regional authorities are effectively supported by central governments and European institutions, and encouraged to exchange information in a spirit of co-operation and to their mutual benefit.

⁷ Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, Council of Europe, Strasbourg - 1997 – Resolution 53 (1997), Doc. CG (4) 6. See also the Congress' documents related to Recommendation 40 (1998) and Resolution 178 (2004).

IV. RECEP-ENELC: an important contribution to the international co-operation regarding the Convention

Aware of the needs described in the previous chapter - after recommending the adoption of the Convention in 1998 - in 2004, by its Resolution 178⁸, the Congress called on local and regional authorities of member States to launch a *European network for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention* in line with the following considerations and recommendations.

1. *The entering into force of the European Landscape Convention will contribute to the democratisation of landscape by bringing it closer to directly concerned local and regional communities.*
2. *The entry into force of the Convention is appropriate for local and regional authorities to assume the responsibilities entrusted to them by the Convention, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity and in conformity with the European Charter of Local Self-government;*
3. *Within the limits of their competences, local and regional authorities will be called upon to implement activities aimed at protecting, managing and/or planning the landscape, activities that will require substantial scientific and technical means.*
4. *The local and regional authorities concerned will have to exchange regular and systematic information and, if necessary, to base their decisions on advice from competent organizations, universities and associations.*
5. *The establishment of a Europe-wide network of local and regional authorities interested in disseminating knowledge about and facilitating the implementation of the European Landscape Convention should be supported; this initiative should be extended to cover the whole territory of the member States which have signed the European Landscape Convention.*
6. *The network should:*
 - a. *constitute a structure of coordination, assistance and support made available to local and regional authorities in order that they can discharge their institutional responsibilities in the field of landscape, in accordance with the principles laid down by the Convention;*
 - b. *contribute to improving the technical and scientific potential of local and regional authorities within the framework of their respective responsibilities, in particular in the areas of planning and licensing, in co-operation with the State authorities;*
 - c. *undertake, in particular, activities in the framework of elaborating documents relating to the identification and evaluation of landscape elements, the setting of objectives for landscape quality and activities aimed at the protection, management and planning of the landscape;*
 - d. *represent a forum for dialogue and coordination of landscape policies for the local and regional authorities concerned;*
 - e. *implement actions complementary to the work of the committees of experts responsible within the Council of Europe for monitoring the implementation of the Convention.*

In reply to the Congress' recommendation, following an initiative by a group of Mediterranean regions led by the Region of Campania (Italy), on 30 May 2006 twenty-two local and regional authorities constituted in Strasbourg the *European Network of Local and Regional Authorities for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention* (RECEP-ENELC). This international body was officially constituted under the aegis of the Council of Europe's Congress, in the framework of the French Legislation (Alsatian / *Mosellain* Law).

RECEP-ENELC is a European non-governmental organisation composed of public authorities. Its main objective is to support local and regional authorities at the scientific, technical, political and administrative levels, in their activities aimed at implementing the principles of the Convention within

⁸ See Appendix 2.

their own territories. Further to its formal constitution, RECEP-ENELC was registered in Strasbourg at the Administrative Tribunal⁹.

Almost fifty authorities from eight different European countries have joined RECEP-ENELC so far.

Among them there are local or regional institutions from: Austria (Land of Tyrol); Belgium (German Speaking Community; municipality of Lennik), France (Region of Provence/Alpes/Cote-d'Azur); Italy (Regions of Campania, Toscana, Emilia-Romagna, Umbria; Provinces of Milan, Naples, Reggio Emilia, Ascoli Piceno, Rieti; municipality of Rome etc.), Spain (Provinces of Mallorca, Tenerife; Andalucia, Catalunya, Murcia, Valencia); Romania (County of Prahova, County of Alba - observer); Slovakia (Trnava Self-Governing Region); Sweden (Region of Västra Götaland). Other local and regional authorities have sought to access RECEP-ENELC or have expressed an interest in its activities. As it happened for the Convention, RECEP-ENELC was begun by a number of Mediterranean regions. This is why Southern Europe is currently more represented in the network than other areas of the continent. With this in mind, one of the political objectives established by the network's statutory bodies is to promote the accession of local and regional authorities from Northern and Central-Eastern Europe. In this framework, in 2008 regional authorities from Sweden and Slovakia acceded to RECEP-ENELC. Following the political contacts established for this purpose, municipalities, provinces, counties and regions from the Netherlands, United-Kingdom, France, Germany, Belgium and Czech Republic and other countries could join the network during the period 2009-2010.

RECEP-ENELC assists and supports its members in carrying out their landscape responsibilities in accordance with the Convention's principles. It helps them to improve their decision-making capacities in their respective spheres in conjunction with central administrations, particularly in the areas of planning and authorisation procedures. Through the network, members have the opportunity to cooperate on landscape issues at a European level, by establishing direct contacts with international organisations, EU institutions, NGOs, universities as well as other public and private bodies interested in the Convention's principles. In this respect, RECEP-ENELC represents a political forum for dialogue between the politicians and the officials concerned, with regard to landscape related issues.

More particularly, in the framework of its programme of activities, RECEP-ENELC:

1. promotes the development of the knowledge of the landscape concept established by the Convention and assists its members in its concrete implementation at territorial level, as well as in relevant discussions with central authorities;
2. promotes and supports the organisation of national and international conferences and organises information meetings / training courses open to representatives of local and regional administrations;
3. searches and starts programmes and projects financed by the European Union with regard to landscape issues and, if requested, takes an active part in them (as partner or associated partner);
4. promotes implementation projects of Articles 5 and 6 of the Convention at national level with the participation of central authorities and NGOs;
5. assists interested local and regional administrations in the preparation of technical documents related to landscape identification and assessment, landscape quality objectives and the consequent decisions concerning landscape protection / management / planning.

In accordance with its Statutes, RECEP-ENELC organs are the *General Assembly*, the *Executive Board*, the *Technical Co-ordination Board* and the *Scientific Committee*.

At the first meeting of the General Assembly of RECEP-ENELC (20 March 2007), Mrs Gabriella Cundari, Minister for Town and Spatial planning of the Campania Region, was elected President of the network, for a period of four years. At the same time, Mr Joaquim Nadal i Farreras, Minister for Town and Spatial planning of the Catalonia Region (Spain), Mrs Giuliana Motti, Responsible political person for Culture and Landscape within the local Government of the Province of Reggio Emilia (Italy) and Mr Etienne Van Varenbergh, Councillor of the Lennik municipality (Belgium) were elected vice-Presidents for the same period. The Director of RECEP-ENELC is currently Mr Riccardo Priore, European officer.

⁹ Registration of 17 October 2006, official reference: *Registre des Associations - volume 84, folio 243*.

RECEP-ENELC's legal headquarters are based in Strasbourg. The operational permanent headquarters, including the head office, are situated in Florence, at the *Medicean Villa Careggi*. The Presidency – at this moment under the responsibility of the Campania Region - is currently established in Ercolano, near Naples, at *Villa Favorita*. Following a decision of the General Assembly, the Technical co-ordination Board and the Scientific Committee will be constituted during 2009.

On the occasion of its first meeting (20.03.07) the General Assembly, with reference to the period 2007-2009, established the following *programming guidelines*:

1. Affirm the role of local and regional authorities in respect of landscape issues, reinforce the political character of the network and its capacity to promote the dialogue among public institutions at every level concerning landscape protection, management and planning
2. Enhance the European dimension of the network, by involving local and regional authorities of different Council of Europe member States.
3. Promote the sharing of public responsibilities and institutional relationships regarding landscape issues, implementing Article 4 of the European Landscape Convention.
4. Encourage the formulation of landscape policies and the integration of landscape issues in other policies at local and regional level, implementing Article 5 of the European Landscape Convention.
5. Start pilot projects for the implementation of Article 6 of the European Landscape Convention within specific areas of the territory of the Members, with a view to protecting, managing and/or planning the landscapes concerned.
6. Carry out initiatives aimed at making local and regional authorities more aware of the importance of landscape quality at the social and economic level and organise training activities regarding landscape issues.
7. Taking into account the availability of the authorities of the Region concerned, examine the proposal aimed at constituting within the territory of Emilia-Romagna (Italy) a Centre for training political representatives and staff of local and regional authorities regarding landscape issues.
8. Put forward suitable solutions regarding landscape planning and the way in which landscape issues can be usefully integrated in town and regional planning instruments at local and regional level (bearing in mind the European Union's European Spatial Development Perspective and the Goteborg and Lisbon Strategies).
9. Identify specific working themes and do the necessary to be developed and followed-up by single RECEP-ENELC members, as project-leaders.
10. Promote the exchange of good practices, among RECEP-ENELC Members and other local and regional authorities at the continental scale, concerning the implementation of the European Landscape Convention, also using the RECEP- ENELC web site.
11. Focus on landscape problems related to specific areas or types of landscape (e.g. rural, coastal, peri-urban) in order to identify orientations, strategies and intervention modalities capable to provide suitable solutions to the problems encountered.
12. Create the conditions for RECEP-ENELC to make public statements concerning specific behaviours of local and/or regional authorities:
 - a) which are aimed at promoting landscape quality and/or the implementation of the principles of the European Landscape Convention throughout their territory – in these cases, RECEP-ENELC could attribute official awards and recognitions;
 - b) which represent a violation of the Convention's principles or which, taking into consideration the relevant legal acts and local circumstances, can be considered a threat to the landscape quality in the area concerned.
13. Study and formulate suggestions regarding the role of intermediary territorial authorities (counties, *departments, province, cabildos, consells* etc.) concerning landscape issues.
14. Examine the financial agenda of the European Union for the period 2007-2013 in order to identify financing opportunities for the projects promoted by RECEP-ENELC Members aimed at promoting landscape quality as part of the implementation of the European Landscape Convention.
15. Promote working relationships and co-operation with the bodies which, within the Council of Europe, are responsible for the follow-up of the European Landscape Convention.

16. Initiate relationships with extra-European local and regional communities / authorities with a reference to landscape issues and the European Convention.

On the basis of the above-mentioned guidelines, as from April 2007, RECEP-ENELC was able to promote an important number of activities, and, thanks to the first results achieved, to start being recognised as one of the reference institutions with regard to European co-operation concerning landscape protection, management and planning.

Evidence of the work done (but also of the activities which have been started or planned) can be found in the network's official documentation regarding: guidelines; reports; agendas relative to statutory and informal meetings; minutes of the above-mentioned meetings; internal regulations on institutional and financial issues; financial recapitulative tables and balance sheets; working documents related to: co-operation protocols and agreements, sponsorship and decisions concerning administrative / political support to specific events (conferences, seminars, colloquies), training courses, projects related to the implementation of the Convention, EU territorial co-operation programmes, etc.

At the outset of its activities, RECEP-ENELC concentrated its energies on the promotion of the role of local and regional authorities with reference to the landscape continent-wide. In achieving this purpose, the Network's representatives organised, supported and/or actively participated in several international events regarding the Convention and its implementation process.

In the period 2007-2008, on the technical level, RECEP-ENELC constantly supported its members in their activities related to the implementation of the Convention within their respective territories. In this context, also using its website (for detailed information on this topic see chapter V.) it contributed to the circulation of the relevant information among the interested parties. When requested, as already highlighted, it assisted the members in the drafting of the relevant working documents with reference to landscape policies and spatial / town planning (Article 5 of Convention). Some members have asked RECEP-ENELC to support them in the decision making processes concerning landscape identification and assessment procedures and in the implementation of policies aimed at landscape protection, management and planning (Article 6 of the Convention). These projects, notably regarding the Mediterranean area, have been set up with the aim of: establishing specific *landscape policies*; achieving concrete *landscape projects* in the areas concerned; integrating landscape issues into spatial planning instruments and other relevant public policies. The above-mentioned projects and experiences have been regularly discussed by the members on the occasion of informal and statutory meetings.

On a political level, when requested, RECEP-ENELC directly supported local and regional authorities in the drafting of protocol agreements and in the discussions concerning the review of regional and/or national laws regarding landscape issues. In 2008, this happened with regard to the integration and review of the Italian national law on cultural heritage and landscape - *Codice dei beni culturali e del paesaggio*¹⁰.

At European level, RECEP-ENELC organs have established formal relationships with: the representatives of the Conferences of the Council of Europe dedicated the Convention (2007, 2009) and the relevant administrative departments of the Council of Europe Secretariat. In the future, they intend establishing a formal relationship also with the *Committee for Cultural Heritage and Landscape* (CD-PATEP), which was recently entrusted by the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers with monitoring the implementation of the Convention at the intergovernmental level. Concerning universities and civil society, an official partnership has been agreed by RECEP-ENELC with UNISCAPE and CIVILSCAPE¹¹. Concerning EU funding programmes, RECEP-ENELC is directly involved in a number of co-operation projects regarding landscape in the Mediterranean area. In this respect, a political partnership between RECEP-ENELC and some regions already co-operating in the Mediterranean area at EU level (Andalusia, Campania, Catalonia, Tuscany, Umbria), has been agreed on the occasion of the second meeting of the General Assembly (Strasbourg, Council of Europe, 5 May 2008).

¹⁰ This text was definitely approved by the Italian Government on 26.03.08

¹¹ For any further information regarding the networks and their co-ordination, please consult www.eurolandscape.net.

Other information on RECEP-ENELC statutory meetings, working programme and planned activities (period 2007-2009) are presented in Appendix 1. For any further information on RECEP-ENELC, please consult the following website: www.recep-enelc.net. This site was activated in June 2007. Following a decision of the Executive Board a substantial upgrading was completed at the beginning of 2009. The new layout of RECEP-ENELC site is intended:

1. to offer a constantly up-to-date overview on the European Landscape Convention and its implementation at local, regional, national and international level;
2. to improve Members' access to the network's data base, by simplifying the navigation of the content areas, programs, funding opportunities and projects on the European scale;
3. to provide a broader information platform with news, texts, photos, videos, events and other initiatives on landscape issues from all European countries in the public and private sectors.

V. Towards the setting up of a pan-European multilevel, multidisciplinary co-operation system dedicated to the Convention

In the explanatory memorandum of Resolution 178 of 2004, the Congress affirmed the conviction that «Drawing on the proposals of local and regional elected representatives in the Congress, the Council of Europe has secured acceptance for a path-breaking international treaty concerned with cultural heritage and sustainable development. As such it has made its mark in an area of great current importance and in doing so has reaffirmed its origins and its underlying identity and values. In order to send out a clear message to governments preparing to implement the European Landscape Convention, the Council must make it clear that from both environmental and cultural heritage standpoints monitoring the Convention is one of its priorities».

In this respect, the Congress expressed the opinion that «it would be regrettable if, after so much effort, the resources needed to implement the Convention were diverted to other initiatives that, while worthy of interest, might give governments the impression that the Council of Europe could not cope with its own success. Following its opening for signature, the underlying philosophy and conception of the Convention, not to mention its texture and structure, were soon put to the test in the face of widely varying attitudes towards how landscape in Europe was perceived and how it should be protected and enhanced. It is therefore gratifying to discover that the Convention has already started to have an impact on the activities of the national, regional and local authorities directly concerned. It has stimulated research and an interchange of information, modifications to certain regulations, new legislation, changes to existing practice, and the framing and implementation of original new policies and related measures. Equally, the provisions of the Convention will have to be interpreted in the light of the needs expressed at different national levels, particularly the regional and local and ones. This probably underlies national governments' requests to the Council of Europe, even before the Convention's entry into force, to establish arrangements and programmes to promote co-operation in this rapidly expanding field».

Having prepared the draft European Landscape Convention, through the Congress, local and regional authorities already expressed their readiness to co-operate with the Council of Europe expert committees set up to monitor its application. In this respect, through Resolution 178, they recommended the setting up of a *flexible, transversal, cross-disciplinary* monitoring system able to ensure that decisions can be rapidly translated into practical action by the territorial authorities concerned, in a spirit of institutional co-operation¹².

Concerning the question of the proper functioning of the monitoring system, at the Sheffield Seminar it was observed that «a successful convention requires three things: a *periodic Conference of the Parties*; a *fund*; a *dedicated secretariat*. The ELC has none of these things. It is indeed seriously constrained by Article 10.1, which assigns responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the

¹² See Explanatory memorandum of Resolution 178 (2004) of the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities – par. 37-41.

convention to existing committees of experts who report to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. This arrangement means that the level of political drive behind the convention and the high aspirations that it has engendered is very limited – one might cruelly liken this to a tanker driven by an outboard motor»¹³.

Considering that it is unlikely that States will decide to create (at least in the near future) a Conference of Contracting Parties, a fund and a dedicated secretariat (which in any case remain desirable achievements) a possible option forward could be the immediate building of a multilevel, cross-disciplinary co-operation system. Such a system could make the monitoring process at international level more effective by using the existing resources. Its establishment would require the setting up of a permanent, official partnership between the competent Council of Europe bodies and the European associations (of local and regional administrations, universities, civil society, professionals, etc.) created over recent years with the aim of supporting the implementation of the Convention. This option recognises that implementation of the convention cannot be left to the Council of Europe (which could hardly involve in its work EU institutions and European countries which are not members, in case they were invited to accede to the Convention). It would just have the advantage of effectively complementing the existing formal inter-governmental monitoring mechanisms.

As already highlighted, in parallel to these mechanisms, RECEP-ENELC, UNISCAPE and CIVILSCAPE and their respective Members (at present, almost 150 entities representing local and regional authorities, universities and civil society) are already committed to supporting the implementation of the Convention, in a co-ordinated manner (www.eurolandscape.net). In this framework, they co-operate on specific projects and initiatives, exchanging information on a permanent basis. In order to make this process more effective, they are ready to co-ordinate their work with the activities carried out by the competent authorities of the Council of Europe. This would contribute to the setting up of a pan-European multilevel, cross-disciplinary co-operation system which could represent a first step to make the *implementation phase* as successful as the *design stage* and the *establishment phase*.

¹³ Adrian Philips, conclusions of the Sheffield Seminar, see footnote n. 6.

Appendix 1

Information on RECEP-ENELC statutory meetings / information on achieved, ongoing and planned activities (2007-2009)

A) Further to RECEP-ENELC constitution (2006), the following statutory meetings took place:

1. *Strasbourg*, Council of Europe (France), 20 March 2007: first meeting of the General Assembly;
2. *Rome*, Headquarters of Campania Region (Italy), 4 June 2007: first meeting of the Executive Board;
3. *Ercolano*, Presidency (Naples - Italy), 17 October 2007: informal meeting of the Members' political Representatives;
4. *Ercolano*, Presidency (Naples - Italy), 18 October 2007: second meeting of the Executive Board (2007);
5. *Barcelona*, Ministry for spatial and town planning of the Government of Catalonia (Spain), 18 February 2008: third meeting of the Executive Board;
6. *Florence*, Head Office (Italy), 25 June 2008: informal meeting of the Members' political Representatives;
7. *Strasbourg*, Council of Europe (France), 5 May 2008: second meeting of the General Assembly;
8. *Palma de Mallorca* (Spain), Department of Spatial planning of the Government of Mallorca (Spain), 24 October 2008: fourth meeting of the Executive Board.
9. *Ascoli Piceno* (Italy), Department of Culture, Education and Landscape of the Government of the Province of Ascoli Piceno: fifth meeting of the Executive Board.

NB: The third meeting of the General Assembly is being organised on 22nd June 2009, in *Strasbourg*, Council of Europe (France) – *date to be confirmed*.

B) In 2007-2008 RECEP-ENELC promoted, co-organised, supported and/or took active part in the following international conferences:

1. Fourth Conference of the Council of Europe on the European Landscape Convention- Strasbourg, 22-23 March 2007 (www.coe.int/eurolandscapeconvention.int).
2. 6th Workshop of the Council of Europe on the ELC "Landscape and rural heritage" - Sibiu, Romania, 20-22 September 2007 (www.coe.int/eurolandscapeconvention.int).
3. International Seminar on the implementation process of the ELC - Sheffield (United Kingdom), 19-20 November 2007 (www.landscaperesearch.org).
4. Conference on *Landscape Indicators* - Barcelona (Spain), 29-30 November 2007 (www.catpaisatge.net).
5. Conference on *The European Landscape Convention and its relevance to land use and landscape planning* - Birmingham (United Kingdom) 29 January 2008 (www.landscapecharacter.org.uk).
6. 7th meeting of the Workshops on ELC implementation on *Landscape in planning policies and governance: towards integrated spatial management* – Piestany (Slovakia), 24-25 April 2008 (www.coe.int/eurolandscapeconvention.int).
7. Conference on the role of intermediate self-governing authorities in implementing the ELC - Fermo, Italy, 9 May 2008 (www.saggipaesaggi.it).
8. High Level European Seminar on Sustainable Perspectives for Regional Policies, Planning and Research - Stresa (Italy), 23-24 May 2008 (www.landscape-europe.net).
9. International Conference 'A Wider View on Cultural Landscape Challenges in Europe 2008' in Radio Kootwijk - Appeldoorn (The Netherlands), 16-18 June 2008 (www.triennale.nl).

10. Conference to mark the eight anniversary of the European Landscape Convention - Florence (Italy) 12-15 November 2008, in the framework of the *Biennale Toscana del Paesaggio* (BTP) (www.biennaletoscanadelpaesaggio.it).

D) As from 2007, RECEP-ENELC supported and took part in the following projects:

1. PAYSMED.URBAN Co-operation Project in the framework of the EU MED Programme (transnational territorial co-operation programme 2007-2013 - Project leader Andalusia Region - Spain). NB: RECEP-ENELC is involved in this Project as *Associated partner* (www.programmemed.eu).
2. Contribution to the proposal related to PAYSMED.NET Project (Project leader Tuscany Region – Italy) – not yet approved.
3. *Progetto Paesaggio Biellese* – PPB Project - implementation project of articles 5 and 6 of the Convention in the Biella territory (Italy), with the participation of the Piedmont Region, the Province of Biella, the Municipality of Biella, other local authorities and a number of NGOs (www.paesaggiobiellese.it).
4. *Progetto Valdaso* - implementation project of articles 5 and 6 of the Convention in the territory of Valdaso (Italy) with the participation of the Marche Region, the Province of Ascoli Piceno, the Municipality of Altidona, other local authorities and a number of NGOs (website under construction).
5. *Landscape Trnava Project* – implementation project of articles 5 and 6 of the Convention in the region of Trnava (Slovakia) with the participation of the Trnava Self-Governing Region, the Slovak National Ministry of the Environment and a number of local authorities and NGOs (website under construction).
6. *La Real Project* - implementation project of articles 5 and 6 of the Convention in the island of Mallorca (Spain), with the participation of the *Consell insular de Mallorca*, the Balears autonomous Community and the Municipality of Palma de Mallorca and a number of NGOs (website under construction).
7. *Euroscape 2020* process “Landscape for sustainable life” – following the High Level European Seminar on Sustainable Perspectives for Regional Policies, Planning and Research, Stresa (Italy), 23-24 May 2008 (www.landscape-europe.net).

E) Further to the active participation and the support of a number of initiatives related to the European Landscape Convention in different European countries (meetings, seminars, conferences, etc.) RECEP-ENELC:

1. in August 2007, promoted a political agreement between the Tuscany Region (Italy) / and the Catalonia Region (Spain) in order to carry out a project for implementing articles 5 and 6 of the ELC in their respective territories;
2. in May 2008, at the second meeting of the General Assembly, promoted and signed a protocol of agreement with a number of regions already co-operating in the Mediterranean area at EU level with regard to landscape issues (Andalusia, Campania, Catalonia, Tuscany, Umbria). The protocol is open for signature to interested local and regional authorities;
3. in September 2008 supported the Umbria Region (Italy) in its co-operation with CURE - *Convention for Urban and Rural Europe* – (an inter-regional cooperation project started up in the context of the EU program INTERREG IVC was promoted without success in this framework); in October 2008, decided to support a research programme on landscape indicators / observatories initiated by the *Polytechnic School of Turin* in co-operation with the Piedmont Region (Italy).
4. in January 2009, started co-operation with the Slovak Ministry for the Environment for the implementation of the Convention in Slovakia at local, regional and national level.

5. Following a preliminary discussion with representatives of the Region of Västra Götaland (Sweden) in November 2008, is currently discussing a support programme dedicated to Northern European local and regional authorities with regard to the implementation of the Convention.

F) In 2009, RECEP-ENELC will organise, contribute to the organisation, support and/or active take part in the following international events:

1. Conference on *Jornada del Paisaje de la Región de Murcia* – Murcia, Spain, 5 March 2009 (www.carm.es/op).
2. Conference on *The achievement of a landscape policy in the Region of Umbria* - Orvieto, Italy, 19-20 March 2009 (www.regione.umbria.it).
3. Fifth Conference of the Council of Europe on the European Landscape Convention - Strasbourg, 30-31 March 2009 (www.coe.int/eurolandscapeconvention.int).
4. Conference on *The contribution of the observatories to people participation in landscape decision making processes* - Ascoli Piceno (Italy), 28 March 2009 (www.provincia.ascolipiceno.it).
5. Conference on *Paysages européens et mondialisation, Lettres, Arts et Sciences humaines* - Florence, Italy, 4-7 May 2009 (www.uniscape.org).
6. Conference on the *Local implementation of the European Landscape Convention* - Nove Hradý (Czech Republic), 27-30 May 2009 (www.landscapeconventionconference.com).
7. Conference on *Landscape and Education* – Barcelona (Spain), 19-20 November 2009 (www.catpaisatge.net).
8. Conference on *Nature protection and the European Landscape Convention*, - Dessau-Wörlitz Park (Germany), 22-25 October 2009 (website under construction).

G) Further to the initiatives described above, RECEP-ENELC is discussing / preparing the following new projects / initiatives:

1. Organisation of a training programme devoted to civil servants on landscape issues at local/regional/national/European level– initiative jointly promoted by RECEP-ENELC, HERISCAPE and other possible partners.
2. Organisation of an international awareness raising / information campaign on the Convention with regard to local communities at the EU level, co-financed by a number of local/regional authorities and the EU *LIFE + Programme / Information and Communication* section (2010-2011).
3. Support the organisation of a pan-European Conference to mark the 10th anniversary of the *European Landscape Convention* (2010) – in co-operation with the Council of Europe and the *European Landscape Network* (RECEP-ENELC, UNISCAPE, CIVILSCAPE).
4. Organisation of a public competition referring to video clips relative to the landscape, produced in co-operation with interested local / regional authorities, to be displayed on the RECEP-ENELC website.
5. Publication of a book aimed at promoting the Convention among children and young people – in co-operation with Regions of Tuscany (Italy) and Catalonia (Spain) and other possible partners.
6. Publication of a RECEP-ENELC book containing general orientations for implementing the principles of the Convention, to be distributed to interested administrations of local and regional authorities.
7. Publication of a RECEP-ENELC book on the drafting process of the Convention, focusing and stressing the importance that local and regional authorities played in the process.
8. Possible contribution to the Council of Europe's Landscape Award, in order to encourage and actively support local and regional authorities' participation, in possible co-operation with the Congress of Local and Regional authorities of the Council of Europe.
9. Support of UNISCAPE in the organisation of a number of meetings for a better co-ordination of advanced university landscape studies and, subsequently, the constitution of a centre for post-graduate training with regard to the implementation of the Convention.

10. Promotion, possible organisation of other conferences / seminars on landscape related topics, i.e.: the integration of landscape issues into regional planning and town planning instruments; constitution and functioning of landscape observatories at local/regional level; landscape and renewable energy; landscape and tourism; landscape and immigration, etc. (in partnership with local, regional and national authorities).

Appendix 2

Resolution 178 (2004)¹⁴

of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe 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 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 has 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 landscape;

4. Convinced that:

a. the entering into force of the European Landscape Convention will contribute to the democratisation of 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. Considering that with the entry into force of the Convention:

¹⁴ Debated and adopted by the Congress on 27 May 2004, 3rd Sitting (see doc. CG (11) 12, draft resolution presented by L. Becker, (Hungary, L, ILDG), rapporteur).

- a.* it is appropriate for local and regional authorities to assume the responsibilities entrusted to them by the Convention, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity and in conformity with the European Charter of Local Self-government;
- b.* within the limits of their competences, local and regional authorities will be called upon to implement activities aimed at protecting, managing and/or planning the landscape, activities that will require substantial scientific and technical means;
- c.* the local and regional authorities concerned will have to exchange regular and systematic information and, if necessary, to base their decisions on advice from competent organizations, universities and associations;
6. Wishing to assist local and regional authorities in the discharge of their responsibilities in conformity with the principles of the Convention;
7. Recalling the patronage that the Congress has granted in February 2002 to the Observatory for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention in protected areas, established by the National Park of Cilento and Vallo di Diano (Italy);
8. Convinced that:
- a.* the initiative of the Observatory should be extended to cover the whole territory of the member States which have signed the European Landscape Convention;
- b.* in this respect, the establishment of a Europe-wide network of local and regional authorities interested in disseminating knowledge about and facilitating the implementation of the European Landscape Convention should be supported;
9. Stressing that such a network should:
- a.* constitute a structure of coordination, assistance and support made available to local and regional authorities in order that they can discharge their institutional responsibilities in the field of landscape, in accordance with the principles laid down by the Convention;
- b.* contribute to improving the technical and scientific potential of local and regional authorities within the framework of their respective responsibilities, in particular in the areas of planning and licensing, in co-operation with the State authorities;
- c.* undertake, in particular, activities in the framework of elaborating documents relating to the identification and evaluation of landscape elements, the setting of objectives for landscape quality and activities aiming at the protection, management and planning of the landscape;
- d.* represent a forum for dialogue and coordination of landscape policies for the local and regional authorities concerned;
- e.* implement actions complementary to the work of the committees of experts, responsible within the Council of Europe for monitoring the implementation of the Convention;
10. Calls on local and regional authorities of member States to launch a European network for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention, in line with the proposals outlined above.