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Strasbourg, 17 February 2025

COUNCIL OF EUROPE LANDSCAPE CONVENTION

**GUIDELINES FOR THE LANDSCAPE AWARD OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: ELIGIBILITY,  
PROCEDURES AND CRITERIA**

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

Document prepared by the Secretariat

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Landscape Award of the Council of Europe recognises exemplary achievements which aim to improve the quality of landscapes in the territories of the States Parties to the Council of Europe Landscape Convention (the Convention). Established by Article 11 of the Convention, the Award promotes sustainable landscape practices, human rights, democracy, and public participation, contributing to the well-being of individuals and society. This guidance outlines the process, eligibility, and criteria for the award, based on **Resolution CM/Res(2008)3** and **Resolution CM/Res(2017)18**, taking the **Reykjavik Process** into consideration.

The 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government, held in Reykjavík on 16 – 17 May 2023, recognised “the urgency of additional efforts to protect the environment, as well as to counter the impact of the triple planetary crisis of pollution, climate change and loss of biodiversity on human rights, democracy and the rule of law.” It committed the Council of Europe to strengthening work on the human rights aspects of the environment and initiate the Reykjavik process of focusing and strengthening the work of the Council of Europe in this field, as laid down in Appendix V of the Reykjavík Declaration on “The Council of Europe and the environment”.

Appendix V of the Reykjavík Declaration references the Landscape Convention to highlight that “landscape has an important public interest role in the cultural, ecological, environmental and social fields and is a key element of individual and social well-being, and that landscape protection, management and planning entail rights and responsibilities for everyone.”

## 2. OBJECTIVE OF THE LANDSCAPE AWARD

The purpose of the Landscape Award is to:

- **Acknowledge outstanding landscape projects:** reward exemplary measures or policies by local or regional authorities, their groupings, or particularly remarkable contributions by NGOs for landscape protection, management, or planning implemented within the Convention's framework.
- **Promote sustainable territorial development:** recognise projects contributing to environmental, social, and economic sustainability, enhancing people's living conditions.
- **Raise awareness:** increase public's understanding of the value, role, and changes in landscapes.
- **Foster public participation:** encourage inclusive decision-making processes in landscape policy development, ensuring the involvement of diverse stakeholders.

## 3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR CANDIDATES

Eligible participants:

- **Local or Regional Authorities and groupings:** local or regional authorities, or their groupings, that have adopted policies or implemented measures for the protection,

management, or planning of landscapes. These measures must have demonstrated lasting effectiveness, serving as examples for other regions.

- **Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs):** local, regional and international NGOs that have made significant contributions to landscape protection, management, or planning.
- **Transfrontier authorities:** local or regional authorities and their groupings involved in managing a landscape across national borders, provided they are working together on shared landscape initiatives.

#### **Types of projects eligible for submission:**

- **Landscape protection and management projects:** initiatives designed to improve or restore landscapes in a sustainable manner.
- **Landscape planning projects:** strategic plans for managing or transforming landscapes with long-term positive effects.
- **Landscape public policy projects:** initiatives aimed at developing, implementing, or strengthening public policies related to landscapes, promoting coherent and sustainable territorial management.
- **Transnational and collaborative projects:** projects involving cooperation between multiple regions or countries that exemplify the Convention's principles.

#### **Eligible time frame of the project:**

- The project must have been completed three or more years, when the candidatures were submitted. The result had been published and made accessible for the general public.

## **4. AWARD PROCEDURE**

It is recommended that, in countries where national professional associations are involved in landscape design, planning, management, or research, a process of consultation and collaboration be carried out to ensure the selection of the most outstanding projects for the competition.

The award procedure is structured into three stages:

### **Stage 1 – Submission of candidatures**

- **Eligibility of a candidature:** each Party to the Convention may submit one candidacy, either directly or as the result of a national competition. The candidacy must align with the rules and criteria for the award.
- **Documents to be submitted:**
  - **presentation of the candidate:** a document (up to three pages) outlining the candidate's identity and landscape-related achievements.

- **detailed project description:** a paper (approximately 20 pages) describing the completed landscape project, demonstrating its lasting effectiveness. This document should also refer to the relevant provision(s) of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention that the project addresses.
- **Supporting Materials:**
  - Digital copy of the documentation in PDF format on a USB Key.
  - Posters and visual materials (e.g., before-and-after images of the landscape).
  - Optional video (approximately five minutes) showcasing the project.
- **Language:** Submissions must be made in one of the official languages of the Council of Europe (French or English).
- **Other considerations:**
  - All materials must be copyright-free to allow the Council of Europe to use them for communications purposes. The authors' names will be credited.
  - Incomplete or non-compliant applications will be rejected.
- **Deadline:** applications must be submitted to the Secretariat of the Convention at [landscape@coe.int](mailto:landscape@coe.int) **no later than 31 December 2025**. The award is typically conferred every two years.

## Stage 2 – Consideration of applications

- **Jury Composition:** The Jury consists of:
  - One member of the committee of experts responsible for monitoring the Convention, specifically a member of a Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP).
  - A representative from the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe appointed by the Congress.
  - A representative from an international non-governmental organisation (INGO), appointed by the Secretary General.<sup>1</sup>
  - Three eminent specialists in landscape design, planning, management and/or science, appointed by the Secretary General.
- **Jury members are expected to:**
  - Inform the CoE of any personal or financial interests related to the subject matter of the jury's work.
  - Step down from any decision-making where a conflict of interest is present.

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<sup>1</sup> As of 18 September 2024, Alain Berset assumed the role of Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

- Ensure that their judgments are free from undue influence.

The Jury elects a president and a vice-president from among its members.

- **Evaluation process:** the Jury reviews the submitted applications to assess their compliance with the award criteria. It determines the admissibility of each application, considering the eligibility requirements and the information provided by the Secretariat, and evaluates the candidate's merits based on:
  - **Sustainability of the project.**
  - **Exemplary value and innovation.**
  - **Public participation and engagement.**
  - **The project's impact on the landscape and community.**
- **Voting:** The Jury votes in multiple rounds:
  - For the first two rounds, a **majority vote** is required.
  - For subsequent rounds, a **relative majority** suffices.
  - In case of a tie, the Jury president's vote is decisive.

The Jury may also propose **special mentions** for particularly notable projects.

### Stage 3 – Granting and presentation of the Award

- **Review process:** the Jury's proposed winner and any special mentions are thoroughly examined by the Committees of Experts referenced in Article 10 of the Convention. In accordance with the established procedure, the Jury's recommendations and assessments are forwarded to the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP). The CDCPP then transmits the reviewed recommendations to the Group of Rapporteurs on Culture, Heritage and Landscape (GR-C), which conducts a further review before the final recommendations are sent to the Committee of Ministers for adoption.
- **Final decision:** the Committee of Ministers officially grants the Landscape Award and any special mentions, taking into account the Jury's proposal and the committees' recommendations.
- **Award presentation:** the award and special mentions are presented during a public ceremony. The Secretary General of the Council of Europe or their representative will officiate the ceremony.

## 5. AWARD CRITERIA

The Landscape Award is based on four core criteria:

### Criterion 1 – Sustainable Territorial Development

- **Objective:** The project must demonstrate effective, tangible results in landscape protection, management, and/or planning. It should contribute to long-term sustainability across environmental, social, economic, cultural, and aesthetic dimensions.
- **Requirements:**
  - Project should show how they remedy damage to landscape features and enhance the landscape's quality.
  - It must integrate environmental, social, and economic considerations, and align with local or regional sustainable development policies.

### **Criterion 2 – Exemplary value**

- **Objective:** The project should serve as a model of best practice for others to replicate.
- **Requirements:**
  - The policy or measure should demonstrate innovative or effective solutions that others can adopt in similar contexts.
  - It should have a measurable, positive impact on the landscape.

### **Criterion 3 – Public Participation**

- **Objective:** The project must actively involve the public, local and regional authorities, and other stakeholders in the decision-making process.
- **Requirements:**
  - There should be active public consultation and dialogue (e.g. public meetings, workshops, and consultations).
  - Public participation in policy and decision-making processes should be evident throughout the project.

### **Criterion 4 – Awareness-Raising**

- **Objective:** The project must contribute to raising public awareness about the importance of the Convention for the management, protection, and planning of landscapes, as well as its crucial role in society.
- **Requirements:**
  - The project should include activities aimed at raising awareness of the value of landscapes, such as public campaigns, educational initiatives, and media engagement.
  - It should align with Article 6.A of the Convention, which stresses the importance of landscape awareness.

## 6. LANDSCAPE AWARD ALLIANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

As per **Resolution CM/Res(2017)18**, projects acknowledged by the Committee of Ministers are included in the **Landscape Award Alliance of the Council of Europe**. This alliance:

- **Promotes exemplary projects:** Recognised initiatives are highlighted to inspire other regions and stakeholders.
- **Encourages media coverage:** States Parties are encouraged to share their achievements and engage the public through media campaigns, enhancing the visibility of landscape projects across Europe.