



Welcome to Issue 2 of CIVILSCAPE-news

CIVILSCAPE is a network of Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), which was established in 2008 to support the European Landscape Convention of the Council of Europe (ELC). Also in 2008, CIVILSCAPE was officially registered as a lobby organisation with the EU. CIVILSCAPE is one of three networks linked to the principles of the ELC. The other two are ENELC, the European Network of Local and Regional Authorities and UNISCAPE for academic institutions. CIVILSCAPE membership is open to NGOs from all over Europe. At the moment CIVILSCAPE has 25 national and international members and is growing steadily. CIVILSCAPE now has a new website: www.civilscape.eu which is hosted by one of our members, The Society for Spring Ecology and Spring Conservation. We would also like to give a special thanks to Pam Moore from ECOVAST for the English editing of our newsletter.

General Assembly in Florence

In November 2008 the first General Assembly of CIVILSCAPE was held in Florence. After the introduction of the (potential) members and the work of their organisations, the participants got to work on a future action plan for CIVILSCAPE. Several actions were identified and discussed in working groups:

- 1) Policy towards EU: raise the profile of the ELC within the EU;
- 2) Setting up a new website;
- 3) Feed back on the organisation of the first conference of local implementation of the ELC in the Czech Republic;
- 4) Evaluation of the implementation of the ELC throughout Europe;



Follow-up on these actions can be found further on in this newsletter.

Statements on EU policies

On behalf of CIVILSCAPE three statements were submitted on EU policies:

- 1) **Impact assessment of EU legislation:** The impact assessment of all EU laws and regulations should ensure that no unwanted side effects will cause damage to areas, which are not defined by a law or regulation. At present, the impact on social aspects, economy, the free market and ecology is tested. We believe that also the impact on landscape and cultural heritage must be tested, as many recent regulations have an enormously negative impact in this field, such as the regulations on water, which lead to a massive destruction of historic landscape elements. As we heard of this consultation at a

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very late stage, we could only endorse a major paper by the German Society of Pre- and Protohistory, which is currently chaired by our Secretary General.

- 2) **Green paper on social cohesion:** This paper was mentioned at the last conference of CIVILSCAPE in Florence. The Province of Terni promised to draft a statement, which was circulated to all members of CIVILSCAPE for comment. The Secretary General edited the proposal and it was circulated again in a final version, which was submitted by CIVILSCAPE itself as well as by a number of our members individually. We asked for landscape to be recognized as a key element for social cohesion – a necessary request as the world landscape does not appear in the Green paper at all. We also recommended the adoption of the holistic definition of landscape given by the European Landscape Convention.
- 3) **Integration of ecologic sustainability in development projects** This was a small scale consultation which was only out for a very short period and was mainly dealt with between the Secretary General and the President. CIVILSCAPE submitted a short statement, which endorsed the proposal to make ecologic sustainability a key element of all EU projects in developing countries but asked to also implement landscape and cultural heritage, according to the guidelines of the EU environment assessment strategies, which were clearly at the heart of the proposal.

Lobbying for the Landscape and the Landscape Convention

In Florence the CIVILSCAPE members agreed to lobby for the landscape and the Landscape Convention at different levels. It is obvious that this is a task for all members. In the last six months CIVILSCAPE was represented at a number of international events, such as the conference on Heritage Care through Active Citizenship in Mechelen (Belgium) and the conference of landscape observatories in Ascoli (Italy), which were both attended by the Secretary General. On national level in Germany CIVILSCAPE was introduced at a number of events, such as a workshop for cultural landscapes and a conference of the German Forum for Cultural Landscapes in December 2008 and at the board meeting of the German Forum in March 2009.

The next big event for landscape will be the conference on the implementation of the European Landscape Convention on local and regional level, to be held in Nove Hradý (Czech Republic) from May 27-30 2009. CIVILSCAPE will be well represented at this conference by many member organizations. More information can be found at <http://www.landscapeconventionconference.com>



Projects

A first proposal for an EU funded co-operation project has been submitted through our member the BHU (Bund für Heimat und Umwelt) and thanks to the work which Alexandra Kruse put into it before the submission deadline of March 27. It is a COST-project on evaluating cultural paths (historic or thematic trails). If it succeeds, it will be open to all members of CIVILSCAPE.

Implementing the European Landscape Convention – marking progress!

Terry O'Regan of Landscape Alliance Ireland (lai.link@indigo.ie) wishes to advise CIVILSCAPE members that the LAI 'ELC Marking Progress' template is now available on the LAI website www.landscape-forum-ireland.com

With 30 states having ratified the European Landscape Convention, it is now being progressively implemented across a large part of Europe. The Convention requires a wide range of measures to be undertaken across administration, education and development processes in each state. It can be difficult for those who enthusiastically support the implementation of the Convention, and indeed for those responsible in each state for implementing the Convention, to measure the progress being made at national level. At recent conferences and workshops a degree of tension has surfaced with regard to the perceived lack of uniform progress being achieved throughout Europe in implementing the Convention.

Landscape Alliance Ireland believes that some impatient advocates may be underestimating the height of the mountain we have to climb to fully realise the aims of this great Convention. Equally some complacent administrations may be underestimating the effort required and the urgency for action. This is a potentially volatile situation feeding off misunderstanding and disillusionment which may seriously damage the

Convention. It is therefore important that there should be methodologies in place to enable citizens within each state to assess the extent of the progress achieved to date and equally the extent of the further work required to fully implement the Convention. In Landscape Alliance Ireland we have developed such a methodology entitled the 'ELC Marking Progress' template for this purpose. The methodology involved assigning maximum marks to each of the various measures contained in the Convention which require action to be taken by the ratifying/participating state.

We would note that the template can also be used in states that have not signed or ratified the Convention but who recognise the effectiveness of the integrated structure of the Convention with regard to ensuring landscape quality. The 34 page pamphlet describing the marking progress template is now available on our website as a Pdf. Those who would wish to carry out an assessment of the progress in their own state can obtain a word version of the template from Landscape Alliance Ireland. We would welcome feedback on the use of the template and suggestions for improvements or modifications. We wish to stress that this template is for use at state level only and is very unlikely to be appropriate for interstate comparisons, though it should still provide the basis for productive interstate discussions.



ECOVAST offer to organize an event in Cumbria and South West Scotland, UK

ECOVAST (The European Council for the Village and Small Town), a founder member of Civilscape, is willing to organize a three day event in April 2010 in Cumbria, north west England, and the south west of Scotland. This event would be held in association with Europa Nostra UK and the National Trusts of England and Scotland. The proposed programme would enable participants to learn about and enjoy the very different landscapes of these two areas and to discover the challenges which they, and the people who live there, face. Cumbria is famous for its lakes and upland areas, whereas the locations we plan to visit in Scotland are a mixture of coastal area, and inland rolling landscape.

The fee would be modest – just sufficient to cover costs of accommodation, meals and transport. If you are interested, please contact ECOVAST Secretary General (and Civilscape Board Member), Pam Moore, who will ensure that you receive more details when they become available. Pam's email address is : pam.moore59@ntlworld.com.