

THEME 3**LANDSCAPE AND SPATIAL PLANNING (ARTICLE 5)**

Presentation of topics to be dealt with, by Mr F ZOIDO, Council of Europe Expert

Objectives

1. The two main objectives of this initial document are:
 - to provide guidelines for the report to come;
 - to provide an outline of the report.

General

2. Broadly, the report will:
 - view spatial planning as a political practice which needs to be more solidly based on a comprehensible, commonly accepted and practical view of its objectives;
 - explain the connections and different types of interaction which justify linking landscape and spatial planning;
 - stress proper knowledge and assessment of landscape as a basis for making proposals on the protection, management and development of landscapes.

The concept and practice of spatial planning

3. Spatial planning is a political practice which is establishing itself firmly throughout Europe, firstly as a result of the contributions in terms of back-up and methodological guidelines made by the Council of Europe (*the European Regional/ Spatial Planning Charter*, 1983; *the European Regional Planning Strategy*, 1988; and *the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent*, 2000) and the European Union (*the European Spatial Development Perspective*, 1999) and secondly because of national, regional and local political changes that have occurred in European countries, mainly since the recovery following the second world war.
4. Although the objectives of spatial planning have been expressed in varying ways depending on the particular situation and the size of spatial unit to which they relate, they can be summed up in one main idea, namely that because regions are the geographical reflection of a community, they must help to achieve that community's basic aims such as peaceful co-existence, social well-being and balanced and sustainable development.
5. In institutional terms spatial planning may involve different policy arrangements but its objectives must be the same for all political sectors which have a spatial impact. Spatial planning requires that all sectors and all tiers of government co-operate in preparing and implementing any plan.
6. For spatial planning policy to be implemented satisfactorily, there needs to be horizontal and vertical co-ordination between authorities. Horizontally, spatial planning ensures consistency between central government activity and the aims and activity in sectors with a spatial impact. Vertically, the application of the principles of subsidiarity and reciprocity has to guarantee both that general interests are protected and that local/regional decisions are taken at the levels of government closest to the citizen.
7. Spatial planning consists mainly in regulating land use and the activities that characterise it in keeping with the general aims referred to in paragraph 4. In any given area, irrespective of its size, spatial planning must:
 - define the regional structures and systems which help regions to retain their cohesion;

- distinguish those parts of the region which require different types of intervention.

8. Spatial planning and town planning policies are always closely linked; however, the degrees of affinity or similarity between them vary according to the approaches and spatial or socio-economic characteristics of different states, regions or settlements. In this report the expression “spatial planning” will be used in its broadest sense, extending the analysis, diagnosis and recommendation of activities and follow-up, all of which are usually associated more with local levels, to all tiers of government or sizes of spatial unit, including towns.

Interaction between the landscape and spatial planning

9. There are such clear correspondences between the region and the landscape that, frequently, the latter cannot be defined without reference to the former. Landscape policies certainly do establish close ties with spatial planning policies. In the Articles and the explanatory memorandum of the *European Landscape Convention*, it is acknowledged that these relationships are a priority, because spatial planning is mentioned expressly and in first place as one of the policies into which landscape should be integrated. The *Guiding principles for sustainable spatial development of the European continent* and the *European Spatial Development Perspective* also single out the landscape as a major component of spatial planning policies.

10. The landscape and spatial planning interact in the following main ways:

- The landscape provides a permanent test of good or bad practices in the regions; causal and technical knowledge of the landscape explains or helps to know whether land use is appropriate and whether buildings or amenities are properly located.
- Activities which have a regional impact and take account of the landscape may help to enhance proposed spatial planning projects.
- Regard for the landscape stimulates and facilitates public participation in spatial planning activities and decision-making processes.

The landscape as a spatial planning tool

11. Integrating landscape policies into spatial planning policies will often require work to clarify the responsibilities assigned to various tiers of government, as landscapes and the regions are still a separate issue as far as the various authorities that take decisions affecting them are concerned. Landscapes can be viewed and used as means of co-ordination between administrative authorities because they frequently extend beyond political limits, both in their formal aspects and in their causes or underlying factors.

12. Since the European Landscape Convention takes such a broad view of the landscape as a whole, it will be necessary in many cases to amend the provisions dealing with it in regulations in force (at central government, regional and local level). At all events, the landscape deserves to be dealt with differently to other semantically related concepts (such as ecosystems, heritage items, etc.), especially if the spatial planning instrument concerned is close to the citizen. In all spatial planning instruments, irrespective of the size of the territorial unit or the tier of government involved, the landscape must be considered in all its complexity, in an approach including steps to understand and assess it, make recommendations for its preservation or improvement and monitor its development.

13. Where the distinction needs to be made between spatial planning instruments for larger territorial units or higher tiers of government and those for smaller units or lower tiers, these instruments must set the following quality objectives:

- improving conditions of access to landscapes and increasing their visibility;
- preserving landscape diversity.

Thus, these instruments will have to establish general guidelines for action, particularly in the following areas:

- raising public awareness of the landscape;
- preparing typologies of existing landscapes and their links with the typologies of different-sized territorial units;
- distinguishing the general types of activity required by the different types of landscape thus established.

14. Lastly, these instruments will, without detracting from existing law, make it possible to give preference to activities which are justified because they serve public interests or have some strategic value.

In basic instruments, particularly local ones, the landscape appears not just as a factor but as an intrinsic element of spatial planning. These instruments must therefore include an inventory of landscape resources and conflicts expressed by means of maps (at the appropriate scales) and making reference at least to the following questions:

- the precise delimitation of landscape units according to a systemic approach implying a knowledge of their distinguishing features and their underlying processes and causes;
- a general analysis of visibility and the establishment of a visual zoning system depending on degrees of visibility, taking account of the most highly frequented or developed itineraries or viewpoints.
- the delimitation and localisation of social perceptions and preferences with regard to extraordinary and commonplace landscapes with specific reference to unusual features and the main conflicts.

By establishing relationships between the three aforementioned aspects it will be possible to pinpoint different landscape quality objectives and specific systems of protection, management or development for each area or zone of the region under consideration.

These instruments may include planning proposals aimed at improving local landscapes and enhancing their public image including:

- signposting and localisation of itineraries or viewpoints;
- improved landscaping of access to locations;
- priority work on facades, waterfronts, the outskirts of towns, etc.
- regulations on advertising and signs.

15. In the relationships between the landscape and spatial planning, transfrontier landscapes (the definition of which could be extended to include all landscapes which straddle a political or administrative boundary) warrant particular attention, both because of the exemplary nature of activities carried out in these areas but also because of the specific problems which complicate the integrated planning of these areas where, paradoxically, landscapes are often of exceptional value owing either to their isolation or the unusual features of their history.