



IFLA EUROPE
INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION
OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

CLIMATE CHALLENGES

Since the second half of the 20th century variations in climate have accentuated: nowadays the change in temperature and in rainfall, the raising of the sea level and the intensification of extreme episodes such as draughts and fires are imposing severe consequences in biodiversity and people's way of life not only in our continent but worldwide. In this scenario of change and uncertainty in which variables are yet developing, it becomes imperative that we traduce Climate Challenges into a vision for designing, planning and managing our landscapes as they will be a fundamental resource for the welfare of future generations.

The undersigned, as representatives of the 34 National Associations of the European Region of the International Federation of Landscape Architects, having considered the Resolution on *Climate Challenges* at our General Assembly in London, United Kingdom 2018, wish to contribute to the prevention and resolution of these concerns.

We therefore make the following statement:

WE BELIEVE

landscape is resilient

It aims at stabilising changes favourably for the quality of life of populations.

Nature is distributive

It manages its resources wisely so as to create solidarity-based societies.

Recognising that climate change is now perceptible throughout Europe and that it will have a repercussion in the environment at a quicker pace than climatic variations in the past. It will transform biogeographical areas and therefore the conditions for the maintenance of biodiversity, accelerating desertification and provoking decisive transformations in the ways people inhabit and manage their territories.

Understanding that natural resources on which societies rely for their survival are being continually eroded. The loss of biodiversity is the result of human activities due to excessive exploitation: the destruction and fragmentation of natural habitats, the impact of exotic species and mass extinctions poses major threats to the degradation of ecosystems.

Conscious that landscape has become subject of an accumulative degradation of environmental values which is having collateral effects on the life quality of human communities in the short and long run. Climate change will influence the destiny of the world in the 21st century, and will be one of the biggest challenges of future generations.

Aware that climate change has transcended scientific circles and is easily observed by all citizens, present in the public realm as it has become a source of concern throughout Europe. It is now evident for all the dimensions and scale of climate change, and the fragility of our landscapes as the ancestral relations human communities had with nature have been progressively modified.

WE URGE

the Council of Europe, the European Union and all IFLA Europe Member States to promote landscape in their decision making; developing a holistic vision regarding cultural, social, political, environmental, and economic balance beyond political borders, thus:

Evaluating the manifestations and scale of climatic change and its potential impacts so as to take strategic decisions which will allow not only to anticipate future crises but to develop ways of living favourable to the preservation and the development of the quality of life of populations affected by climate disruptions,

Advocating the integration of environmental parameters in decision making, conferring it paramount importance as the rate of ecosystem deterioration outpaces our ability to manage them; increasing the efforts of the administration to limit climate change so that it becomes a priority in political agendas,

Promoting the promulgation of legislation in favour of environmental and landscape protection and conservation which will include financial tools and managerial systems so that that a more flexible and holistic management of its changes and evolution can be established, capable to cope with new climatic manifestations as well as reasserting collective interests,

Mobilising public debates and raising public awareness via environmental knowledge so as to activate an indispensable change in society, which will have to maintain and manage landscape and territories with radically different ethical and material concepts,

Developing new ways of living for human societies, drawing from local traditions for energy efficient landscapes and ecological integrity, as nature based strategic sustainable development is capable of deflecting climate change,

Recognising the importance of the environmental dimension in the design and planning of our landscapes –be them urban or rural-, requiring professionals and administration alike to integrate climate challenges into their projects.

Following other international and European texts on the matter such as:

- *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC, 1992).
- *Paris Agreement on Climate Change* (Paris, 2015).
- *The Århus Convention* (UN Economic Commission for Europe, 1998).
- *European Climate Change Programme* (EU ECCP, 2000).
- *European Union framework for climate and energy 2020 – 2030* (EU 2014).
- *Bern Convention, Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats* (CoE 1979).
- *The European Landscape Convention* (CoE, Florence, 2000).

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