

European Territorial Cooperation Objective
Transnational Cooperation Operational Programme
Italy-Switzerland 2007-2013



PAESAGGIO CONDIVISO – SHARED LANDSCAPE
Abstract

Cultural Heritage and Landscape Observatory of Biella (Piemonte, Italy)
Ethnographical Museum of Valle di Muggio (Ticino district, Switzerland)

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The parallel experiences of **Cultural Heritage and Landscape Observatory of Biella** (Piemonte, Italy) and of **Ethnographical Museum of Valle di Muggio** (Ticino District, Switzerland) have their common roots in the European Landscape Convention that has recently been ratified by the Swiss government.

The “Shared Landscape” project origins therefore from common visions, initiatives and results that make possible today to put into action what the ELC states at Cap. III in which signatory States are advised to:

- Foster the transnational cooperation both at local or regional level through shared projects that can tackle landscape management and protection;
- Cooperate in order to strengthen the effects of ELC implementation on both side of the borders;
- Exchange technical and scientific know-out that is related to landscape issues at all levels;
- Encourage landscape expertise exchange, particularly in the fields of education and communication;
- Foster information exchange about ELC implementation methods.

In this perspective, the partners will shared their experiences and good practices, already tested in their own territories, with the two main aims of:

1. setting up a common methodology for ELC implementation (art. 6) based on the previous experiences the partners have acquired in their areas;
2. applying this shared methodology in both the contests (Italy and Switzerland) in order to obtain tangible results for improving life quality of citizens in the three areas where the project will be implemented (Magnano and Verrone municipalities in the Italian province of Biella on one side, and Cabbio municipality in the Ticino District on the other).

2. INTENTIONS

The more prevalent landscape in the Italian and Swiss alpine regions is characterized by the presence of a valuable cultural and natural heritage, often under-used or neglected, along with urban and peri-urban areas, whose fast, unplanned growth tend to spoil the overall value of the landscape.

This socio-environmental condition, known as “urban sprawl”, requires new tools for assessment, management and governance to increase sustainable, responsible development that will add value to the territories instead of further impoverishing them.

The project “Shared landscape” will strengthen the transnational cooperation both at the institutional level and at the civil society level in order to sustain common policies for landscape planning and conservation.

The project “Shared landscape” will develop through the following steps:

- Italian and Swiss landscape regulations will be compared with particular attention to the ELC and the Concezione Paesaggio Svizzero (CPS) directive.
- Preparatory actions of landscape restoration and conservation will be planned and performed to give the inhabitants the opportunity to access their landscapes.
- The participatory process will be started, according to the art. 6 of ELC, so that the inhabitants can be part, together with the local authorities, in the process for identifying, assessing and setting the quality objectives for the landscapes.
- Awareness-raising initiatives and know-how exchange will be promoted to involve others local actors that can play a significant roll in the participatory process.
- Public events will be advertised and performed in order to get citizens involved in the project so that they can contribute to it and benefit from the outcomes.

The cooperation Italy-Switzerland will derive advantage from the participatory methods already experimented by the two partners, which have already worked with several forms of active citizenship in the past few years. In particularly:

- Cultural Heritage and Landscape Observatory of Biella will contribute with its experience in involving citizens in explorative field trips into the landscape. It will also contribute with its knowledge about how to use parish-maps, documentary-films or the WEB-GIS system in awareness rising for landscape. These methods and tools were first applied in 2007 when the Observatory, together with local authorities, civil society organisations and with the contribute of RECEP-ENELC, launched an pilot-project for the implementation of the ELC in the Biella’s province, called Progetto Paesaggio Biellese (PPB):
- Ethnographical Museum of Valle di Muggio will contribute with its thirty-years experience in conservation of cultural landscapes.

3. OUTCOMES

The main outcome that the partners will acquire is to increase the public awareness on landscape as the most important common heritage that citizens have got.

Landscape mirrors the society that has determined and transformed it along the years and it contains the elements of our individual and social identity.

The partners see as crucial to regain the knowledge for being truly “citizens” of a landscape. Since the contemporary way of living has progressively cut off the socio-emotional links between inhabitants and territories. Contemporary inhabitants have lost most of the knowledge that previous generations had about how to deal with the landscape, how to take care of it, how to understand and shape it. Without this knowledge modern citizens find extremely difficult to see limits and potentialities in the places they live in, and they get often confused in a world where social and environmental issues have got a global dimension and require transnational policies and approaches as the ELC also points out.

The positive effects of this approach will surely have an impact on the overall life quality of those who inhabit the areas where the ELC is implemented and they will also contribute to consolidate the European identity.

Along with the results already acquired by the partners in the past few years, this implementation of the ELC project in Italian and Swiss similar landscapes will build up a model that may be further developed and trasfered in other areas with similar peculiarities.

Together with some local actions that will have their direct effects in the three areas listed above, the partners will also realize:

- a comprehensive booklet with the guide-lines for the implementation process of the ELC in the Italian and Swiss areas. The issue will include also a legislation and methodology comparison based on the partners previous experiences;
- a parish-map for each territory that will be further developed into a preparatory spatial planning document;
- a guide to the “shared landscape” that will pick up the crucial aspects of the project and that will help other local actors to understand and further develop it.