The European Landscape Convention
And
National Landscape Strategy
As a reflection of European identity and diversity, the landscape is our living natural and cultural heritage, be it ordinary or outstanding, urban or rural, on land or in water. The European Landscape Convention - also known as the Florence Convention, - promotes the protection, management and planning of European landscapes and organises European co-operation on landscape issues. The convention was adopted on 20 October 2000 in Florence (Italy) and came into force on 1 March 2004 (Council of Europe Treaty Series no. 176).
Preamble of the European Landscape Convention
"The landscape ...
... has an important public interest role in the cultural, ecological, environmental and social fields, and constitutes a resource favourable to economic activity and whose protection, management and planning can contribute to job creation; ... contributes to the formation of local cultures and ... is a basic component of the European natural and cultural heritage, contributing to human well-being and consolidation of the European identity;
Preamble of the European Landscape Convention
"The landscape...

...is an important part of the quality of life for people everywhere: in urban areas and in the countryside, in degraded areas as well as in areas of high quality, in areas recognised as being of outstanding beauty as well as everyday areas;
Preamble of the European Landscape Convention
"The landscape ... 
... is a key element of individual and social well-being and ... its protection, management and planning entail rights and responsibilities for everyone."
CM/Rec(2008)3

on the guidelines for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention

Suggests that we

"Consider the territory as a whole"

The convention applies to the entire territory and covers natural, rural, urban and peri-urban areas. It includes land, inland water and marine areas. It concerns landscapes that may be considered outstanding as well as everyday and degraded landscapes.
Landscape has as its components

the physical layers of land, sea and sky

The cultural layers of history, memory, attachment,

The social layers of cities and towns, villages and homes, housing, agriculture, transport corridors,

The industrial layers including factories, energy production and transmission, infrastructure,

To name a few
The Irish Government ratified the European Landscape Convention in 2004.

The development of the National Landscape Strategy (NLS) required considerable time and an engagement by many stakeholders.

The NLS was led by the Department of Arts, heritage and the Gaeltacht.
1.0 STRATEGY AIMS

1.1 LANDSCAPE STRATEGY VISION

Our Vision

Our landscape reflects and embodies our cultural values and our shared natural heritage and contributes to the well-being of our society, environment and economy. We have an obligation to ourselves and to future generations to promote its sustainable protection, management and planning.
The objectives of the National Landscape Strategy are to:

- implement the European Landscape Convention by integrating landscape into our approach to sustainable development;

- establish and embed a public process of gathering, sharing and interpreting scientific, technical and cultural information in order to carry out evidence-based identification and description of the character, resources and processes of the landscape;
The objectives of the National Landscape Strategy are to:

• provide a policy framework, which will put in place measures at national, sectoral - including agriculture, tourism, energy, transport and marine - and local level, together with civil society, to protect, manage and properly plan through high quality design for the sustainable stewardship of our landscape;
The objectives of the National Landscape Strategy are to:

• ensure that we take advantage of opportunities to implement policies relating to landscape use that are complementary and mutually reinforcing and that conflicting policy objectives are avoided in as far as possible.

The National Landscape Strategy will be implemented and co-ordinated by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in partnership with all key stakeholders.
OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

The implementation of the National Landscape Strategy will involve six core objectives with associated actions derived from the European Landscape Convention.

These will ensure that landscape is integrated in our collective decision-making processes and that all landscapes are recognised in this regard.

These objectives are not prioritised in order of importance and there are strong inter-dependencies and synergies between them.
## National Landscape Strategy for Ireland

**2015 - 2025**

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Landscape and transfrontier cooperation
Landscape and transfrontier cooperation
The first aim of the European Landscape Convention is to encourage States to introduce a national landscape policy that is not restricted to the protection of exceptional landscapes but also takes everyday landscapes into consideration. It further aims, through transfrontier cooperation, to create a genuine impetus to reinforce the presence of the landscape as a value to be shared by different cultures. The intention is thus to promote the integration of the landscape dimension in international relations, at national, regional and local levels.
Landscape and transfrontier cooperation

The Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)3 ......

considers that “Transfrontier co-operation may result in joint landscape protection, management and planning programmes and take the form of instruments and measures agreed between the authorities (different administrative levels and general and sectoral competences) and relevant stakeholders on both sides of the border”.
Landscape and transfrontier cooperation

The Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)3

It notes that “Transfrontier co-operation is possible not only between neighbouring states but also between neighbouring regions and communities in the same state which have different landscape policies, on the basis either of territorial contiguity or common features”.
Towards a
Landscape Observatory of Ireland

Tony Williams Irish Landscape Institute
Definition and expected Modus Operandii

• Guidelines for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention (ELC) from the Council of Europe (2008) identifies “landscape observatories, centres and institutes” as one of the main instruments for the development of landscape policies and to assist and direct their implementation.

• Their mission is the collection, production and exchange of information and studies protocols between states and local communities.

• The Landscape Observatory (LO) is intended to be an advisory body of the National Governments, the regional and local Authorities and for dissemination of information to interested parties, stakeholders and the general public.

• The LO will assist in informing society in general to matters of landscape. The LO will provide a framework for the studying of landscape, its monitoring and the preparation of proposals to develop, manage and protect the landscape.

• The LO will assist in enabling society in general to realise the benefits of better protection, management and planning of the landscape in Ireland in the context of responsible and sustainable development.

• The LO may function as a forum to ensure dialogue between the Governments, local authorities, universities, professional groups and, in society in general in relation to the management and preservation of landscape.

• The LO will assist in ensuring the enacting of the spirit and objectives of the European Landscape Convention in Ireland.

• The LO will function to provide a forum for thought and action in relation to the landscape.
The Landscape Observatory of Catalonia (LOC) is a model worth emulating and details are available at

http://www.catpaisatge.net/fitxers/OBS_eng.pdf

The LOC defines landscape as follows

‘__A landscape is an area, as perceived by the public, the character of which is the result of the dynamic interaction of natural factors (such as the relief, the rivers, the flora and fauna) and human factors (such as financial activities or historical heritage).__

___Landscape is both a physical reality and the representation that we make of it. It is the face of a land with all its natural and anthropological elements and, at the same time, the feelings and emotions that it arouses in us when we see it.

___Landscape is, also, a social product. It is the cultural projection of a society on an area determined from material, spiritual, ideological and symbolic dimensions.’

Tony Williams Irish Landscape Institute
Recommendation CM/Rec (2008)3 on the Guidelines for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention, “landscape observatories, centres and institutes” are one of the main instruments for the implementation of landscape policies (II.3.3). They allow collection, exchange of information and study protocols between states and local communities.
The Next Steps

• ILI and the Northern Ireland Landscape Institute have agreed to work together to ensure the observatory becomes a reality

• We will work with our European Colleagues and in particular the Landscape Observatory of Catalonia

• We recognise the work to date of the Heritage Council, An Taisce and other Governmental and Non Governmental Agencies within the Island of Ireland.

• We are setting up a corporate structure to ensure a legal entity exists and assembling other NGOs in the first instance

• We will observe and report and assist the process of managing our landscape in a coherent manner
Development of a coherent proposal and resourcing.

A work in progress and to be inclusive of the entire Island, the Atlantic coast of Europe

And eventually beyond........
Go Raibh Maith Agaibh
Thank you