



IV INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL DAYS ON CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

***CULTURAL LANDSCAPES FACING CLIMATE
CHANGE. TRANSITION ADAPTATION AND
TRANSFORMATION***

Girona / Olot, July 3rd to 5th, 2025

Presentation

We are facing a situation of climate crisis whose effects are increasingly evident in our landscapes: the erosion suffered by our coastlines is generating problems such as landslides, earthflows or changes in the coastline with an impact also on cultural assets located on the front line; drought is leading to the abandonment of certain crops and traditional land uses, in addition to the disappearance of the hydraulic techniques associated with them and the landscape structures, as well as its impact on biodiversity. Extreme heat waves increasingly affect daily activities carried out in different territories, conditioning their habitability, and suspended particles generate a harmful impact not only on buildings and monuments, but also on soils and the air quality of our landscapes, all of which affects the lives of local communities and the maintenance of the character of the landscapes we know.

Thus, the climate crisis is a very significant transforming factor that is beginning to become evident in our landscapes and in the values and meanings that these landscapes have for the population. In other words, we must not only focus on how climate change will impact the physical landscape we perceive, but on how the significance that these landscapes (those that are disappearing and those that are emerging) have for the population will change. Let us not forget that landscapes do not only have a tangible, material dimension, but are also the representation that we culturally make of them. They not only allow a global understanding of the interaction between nature and society, but they are often precisely what moves human societies and strengthens their collective imagination.

The Council of Europe reminds us, through the European Landscape Convention and other recent declarations, of the direct relationship between landscape and people's health. Living in quality landscapes results in greater well-being, not only physical but also psychological; while life in degraded landscapes is negatively affected, something that has a direct relationship with the effects of climate change, as these are one of the greatest threats to the quality of landscapes.

Faced with this situation, two types of strategies are being adopted. On the one hand, we have measures aimed at mitigating the effects of climate change, focused on reducing the carbon footprint and the emission of greenhouse gases. On the other hand, we have adaptive measures, which, assuming the transformations produced by change as irreversible, seek to moderate potential damage or extract lessons from the opportunities associated with these changes to achieve resilient territories and landscapes.

Both have an impact on the landscape: the former, for example, with the implementation of infrastructures for generating energy from renewable sources such as wind farms or solar parks. While within the latter we can find everything from the creation of climate shelters in cities or the management of agroforestry mosaics to make them more resilient, to the recovery of traditional trades and techniques.

At COP28 held in Dubai in 2023, a call was made to the Member States of the United Nations for the protection of cultural heritage from the effects of climate change through the development of adaptive strategies that guarantee the safeguarding of cultural practices and heritage sites, and the implementation and design of resilient infrastructures based on traditional knowledge. In this sense, cultural landscapes represent a source of knowledge of incalculable value when facing the challenges posed by climate change.

On the other hand, the year 2025 marks the twentieth anniversary of the creation of the Landscape Observatory of Catalonia, an institution that was established in 2005 following the approval of the European Landscape Convention in 2000 and that, embracing the principles of the Florence Charter, has addressed in its works and studies the quality of landscapes and their impact on well-being, the importance of local participation and landscape education, sustainability, and the role of landscape in shaping the memory and identity of local communities.

This anniversary represents a very special opportunity to celebrate these fourth International Technical Days on Cultural Landscapes in collaboration with the Observatory, an institution that since its inception has collaborated with the National Plan for Cultural Landscape, forming part of its Monitoring Committee, in addition to being one of the reference institutions, at an international level, in the implementation of the principles of the European Landscape Convention.

The Ministry of Culture is very aware of how the landscape is, at the same time, a magnificent indicator and a reliable resource to adequately address climate change, as well as the great work carried out in the last twenty years by the Landscape Observatory of Catalonia, which has decisively contributed to generating greater knowledge, appreciation and protection of our landscapes.



Source: Image archive of the Landscape Observatory of Catalonia (Ricard Vaqué/Paisatges Verticals)

Objectives

- To reflect on the impact that climate change is having on the different types of landscapes from cultural, social, environmental and economic perspectives.
- To assess how climate change is changing the values and meanings that these landscapes have for the population.
- To assess the transformations and physical changes that are taking place in the different cultural landscapes.
- To analyze and define mitigation and adaptation strategies in relation to cultural landscapes.
- To assess the opportunity of adaptation to climate change to promote quality landscapes that are safe, fair, inclusive, equitable and healthy.
- To exchange projects and initiatives developed in recent years at national and international levels.
- To develop the climate change line of the National Landscape Plan.
- To align the Ministry of Culture with the initiatives of the Group of Friends for Climate Action based on Culture, created at COP28 and of which Spain is a part along with other States, bodies and institutions.
- To promote collaboration between Administrations, at international and national levels.

Thematic Blocks

1. Coastal Landscapes.

Coasts are territories especially vulnerable to the effects of climate change due to their exposure to the increase in sea level, on the one hand, and the risk of erodibility, on the other. From a Landscape point of view, we find ourselves in situations that require great attention, such as floods, the disappearance of beaches and deltas, the destruction of waterfront promenades, or the loss of cultural assets in general, which necessitate a change in the way we think about, manage, and intervene on the coast, both regionally and locally.

2. Urban and Peri-urban Landscapes.

The majority of the world's population lives in cities, and future dynamics indicate that the phenomenon of urbanization will continue to increase. Furthermore, cities and their peripheries are one of the hotspots of climate change. This fact makes it even more necessary to achieve quality urban and peri-urban landscapes that positively impact people's well-being and health.

3. Rural and Agroforestry Landscapes.

Rural and agroforestry landscapes are living and productive landscapes that, in turn, are severely threatened by some of the effects of climate change such as droughts, floods, forest fires or the decrease in snow cover... without forgetting others that can be linked more or less indirectly such as depopulation, which is jeopardizing the survival of these landscapes - and their associated heritage - which occupy the largest part of the territory.

4. Landscapes and Renewable Energies.

One of the main mitigation strategies for the effects of climate change involves the installation of new infrastructures in the landscape such as wind or solar farms. This is a novel phenomenon, especially in terms of its scale, which is interesting to analyze and consider in relation to its impact on the landscape and its acceptance by communities.



Source: Image archive of the Landscape Observatory of Catalonia (Rafael López-Monné)

Dynamics of the conference

The meeting is structured in two days of technical seminars with four round-table discussions, each led by a moderator who will ask different questions to the speakers, which will be debated among all the members of each roundtable.

The conference will open with an inauguration and, after the interventions of the authorities and two presentations to frame the theme, the debates will begin in each of the tables during the morning and afternoon of Thursday.

At the end of Friday morning, the conclusions of each table will be presented as a closing to generate a debate among all participants.

On Saturday there will be an optional excursion to visit the landscape of the Empordanet-Baix Ter (Costa Brava).

Composition of the Tables

| TABLE 1: COASTAL LANDSCAPES MODERATOR: Antonio Antequera (Ministry of Culture) | |
|---|--|
| Department of Territory, Housing and Ecological Transition of the Government of Catalonia | Rosa Vilella Gassiot Deputy Director General for Territorial Strategies and Landscape |
| Greek Initiative for Climate Change and Cultural Heritage | George Kremlis Director |
| Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) | Eloísa Vaello Marco Head of the Department of Cooperation and Cultural Promotion |
| Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage of Ireland | Michael MacDonagh Chief Archaeologist at the National Monuments Service of Ireland |
| Ministry for Ecological Transition – Spanish Office for Climate Change | Miriam Bueno Lorenzo Asesora |

| TABLE 2 URBAN LANDSCAPES MODERATOR: Elena Vázquez (Ministry of Culture) | |
|--|--|
| Barcelona Metropolitan Strategic Plan | Irene Navarro Solé Coordinator of the Technical Cabinet |
| Madrid City Council | David Rejano Peña Deputy Director General of Urban Landscape and Public Art |
| Illice of Cultural Landscapes and World Heritage Affiliated Sites | María del Pozo López Secretary General |
| Autonomous University of Barcelona | Francesc Muñoz Ramírez Senior Lecturer |
| The Nature of Cities | David Maddox Founder and Executive Director of TNOC |
| NFS geography and landscape | Narcís Sastre Fulcarà Geographer and landscape architect |

| TABLE 3: RURAL AND AGROFORESTRY LANDSCAPES MODERATOR: Laura Puigbert (Landscape Observatory) | |
|---|--|
| Priorat County Council | Joan Vaqué Sans Area of regional economic development, landscape and sustainability |
| Andalusian Institute of Historical Heritage (IAPH) | Silvia Fernández Cacho Head of the Landscape Laboratory of the IAPH |
| Autonomous University of Madrid | Rafael Mata Olmo Professor |
| University of Girona | Joan Nogué i Font Professor |
| Liquid Cartographies (Paraguay) | Jorge Navas Almaraz Cultural Projects Manager |
| Ministry of Territorial Cohesion (Portugal) | Marta Rodrigues |

| | |
|--|---|
| | President of the Executive Board of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention. Technical Advisor President of the Executive Bureau of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention |
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| TABLE 4: LANDSCAPE AND RENEWABLE ENERGIES MODERATOR: Jordi Grau (Landscape Observatory) | |
|--|--|
| Girona Provincial Council | Marc Marí i Romeo Head of the Environment Service |
| Regional Government of Castilla-La Mancha | Patricia Hevia Head of the Archeology Service |
| Ministry for Ecological Transition – Spanish Office for Climate Change | María Sintes Zamanillo Technician of the Office |
| Landscape Observatory of Catalonia | Pere Sala i Martí Director |
| Tecnalia | Aitziber Eguskiza Senior researcher |

In addition, there will be the presence of:

Nino Latsabidze- Department for the Reykjavík Process and Environment, Directorate of Social Rights, Health and Environment, Council of Europe (Council of Europe).

Day 1 – Thursday, July 3d

09:15 – 09:45 h. Official Opening:

- Mr. Marc Riera. President of the Official College of Architects of Catalonia, Girona district
- Mr. Pere Sala i Martí. Director of the Landscape Observatory of Catalonia.
- Ms. Ángeles Albert de León. General Director of Cultural Heritage and Fine Arts.
- Honorable Ms. Sílvia Paneque. Minister of Territory, Housing and Transition Ecology of the Generalitat de Catalunya

09:45 – 10:00 h. Presentation of the seminars – Ms. María Agúndez Lería. Deputy Director General of Management and Coordination of Cultural Assets (Ministry of Culture).

10.00 – 10.30 h. Keynote speech 1. "The relaunching of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention". Ms. Nino Latsabidze (Policy Advisor. Department for the Reykjavík Process and Environment. Council of Europe)

10.30 – 11.00 h. Keynote speech 2. "The evidence of climate change" – Mr. Arnau Queralt (Director of the Advisory Council for Sustainable Development of Catalonia (CADS)).

11:00 – 11:30 h. Coffee Break.

11:30 – 13:30 h. Working Session 1.

13:30 – 15:30 h. Lunch Break.

15:30 – 17:30 h. Working Session 2.

17:30 h. Visit to the Cathedral of Girona.

21:00 h. Official Dinner.

Day 2 – Friday, July 4th

08:00 h. Transfer to Olot (Headquarters of the Landscape Observatory).

09:30-10:00 h. Presentation "Twenty years of the Landscape Observatory of Catalonia" – Mr. Pere Sala i Martí (Director of the Landscape Observatory).

10:00-11:30 h. Working Session 3.

11:30-12:00 h. Coffee Break.

12:00-13:00 h. Working Session 4. (drawing up conclusions).

13:00-14:15 h. Presentation of conclusions and debate.

14:15-14:30 h. Official closing:

- Ms. María Agúndez Lería. Deputy Director General of Management and Coordination of Cultural Assets.

- Mr. Pere Sala i Martí. Director of the Observatory of Landscape of Catalunya.

14:30-15:00 h. Introduction to the Olot Landscape School (at the Museu Comarcal de la Garrotxa, located in the same building)

15:00-17:00 h. Lunch at the Europa Restaurant

17:00-18:30 h. Visit to *Espai Cràter*, guided by Xevi Collell, Director of the museum.

18:30-20:00 h. Transfer and visit to the *Fageda d'en Jordà* (Jordà beech forest).
Explanations by Joan Montserrat (forestry engineer of the Volcanic Zone Natural Park of La Garrotxa)

20:00 h. Return to Girona.

Free Dinner

Day 3 – Saturday, July 5th

8.30 h. Departure to the landscape of the Empordanet - Baix Ter

- Stop at the elevated point of Font Pasquala to view the Empordanet-Baix Ter landscape and learn about the historic irrigation system and the cultural dimension of this landscape. We will be accompanied by professors Anna Ribas and Albert Llausàs, from the University of Girona.
- Visit to the de-urbanization and restoration project of La Platera. We will be accompanied by Jordi Colomí (mayor of Torroella de Montgrí); and Xavier Quintana, head of the European programs developed.
- Lunch at **13:30h** in the restaurant L'Horta de Can Patxei.
- Boat trip at **17h** to the coast of Montgrí.

19.30 h. Return to Girona.



Source: Image archive of the Landscape Observatory of Catalonia (Jordi Blas).

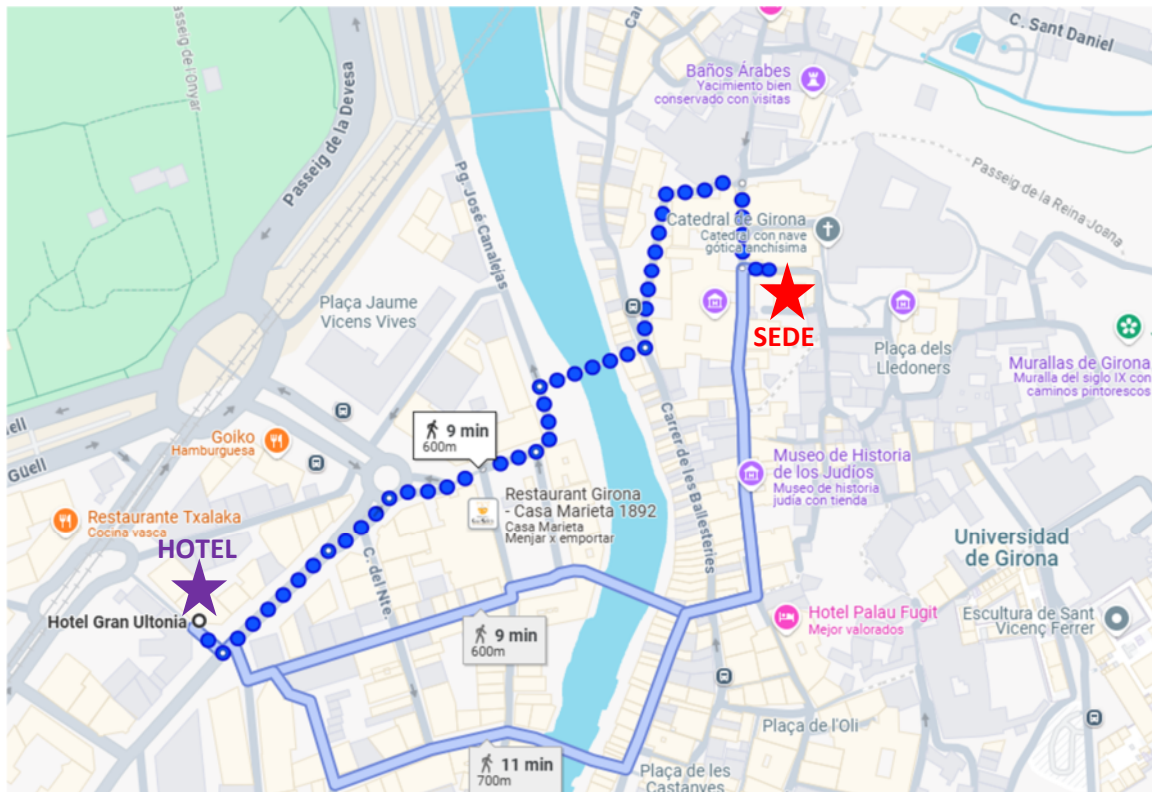
Venue and Modality

The 4th International Technical Conference on Cultural Landscapes is organised in collaboration with the Landscape Observatory of Catalonia, and will therefore be held in two venues: the Girona Delegation of the Association of Architects of Catalonia (Thursday 3 July) and the headquarters of the Landscape Observatory of Catalonia in Olot (Friday 4 July).

We would like to thank the Girona Delegation of the College of Architects of Catalonia and the Catalan Institute of Cultural Heritage for providing the venues for the 3rd of July.

JULY 3rd VENUE

Location of the College of Architects of Catalonia – Girona Delegation



Practical Information

The Ministry of Culture will cover the costs corresponding to the speakers' flights, as well as their accommodation, official lunches and dinners on the days the Technical Days last. The excursion and lunch on July 5th are also included.

Accommodation:

[Hotel Gran Ultonia](#) (Breakfast included) / [Location](#)

Lunches:

Thursday, July 3rd: Catering in the College of Architects of Catalonia (Venue day 1).

Friday, July 4th: Restaurant Europa in Olot ([location](#))

Official Dinner:

Thursday, July 3rd: Restaurant Blanc (21 h.) ([location](#))

Transfer from the hotel to the Observatory headquarters (Olot):

On Friday 4th July a minibus will pick up the participants at the hotel at 08.00 h.

Excursion to the Empordanet - Baix Ter landscape

On Saturday 5th July the bus will leave the Hotel at 8.30am.

Comfortable shoes and sun cream are recommended.

Contact Persons:

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Publication

The conclusions reached will be collected in a summary document that will be published in electronic format by the Ministry of Culture within its series of proceedings of congresses and technical seminars.



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