



Brussels, 04/06/2024

Subject: IFLA Europe Statement about Nature Restoration Law

“We are witnessing a rapid transformation of the planet, of society, and consequently of those territories that inevitably register the transformation of our landscapes, sometimes with the loss of identity that generates a consequential “disorientation”” (IFLA Europe, 2023). Severe changes alter all landscapes whether rural, peri-urban, or urban, with loss of our natural and cultural heritage. Environmental challenges, climate change and the living conditions of the inhabitants of larger cities oblige us to take nature beyond the emphasis on aesthetic perspectives.

In design, planning and management of landscapes, Landscape Architects face a contemporary challenge to repurpose our cities: to design with nature and introduce a more natural shape for cities, utilizing nature-based solutions and thus bringing cities function closer to the cycles of nature. It is important to promote an integrated nature-culture approach that highlight the linkages between the ecological and social values and functions of land and other natural resources, and the connections between production and consumption, in ways that promote low carbon, healthy lifestyles in harmony with nature.

Taken into consideration the objectives of the EU Biodiversity Strategy and the targets of the post-2020 GBF under negotiation of at least 20% of deteriorated ecosystems to be under restoration by 2031, IFLA Europe- the European Region of the International Federation of Landscape Architects- aims to promote and establish the importance of all matters relating nature restoration and landscape as the physical, socio-economic, cultural, visual, conceptual, and spatial context of our European communities.

We believe that now more than ever it is essential as Landscape Architects “to apply our professionalism and sensitivity to the transformation process, helping to manage change by working with nature” (IFLA Europe, 2023), by creating a new balance, preserving nature, memory, and a sense of places.

The Nature Recovery Law is acknowledging the importance of restoration of our natural systems and the need to secure the conservation, development, and management of our landscapes to ensure climate resilience, as an extension of the European Green Deal or the new European Bauhaus Declaration.

Landscape Architects fully endorses the Nature Recovery Law and points out the need to raising awareness through innovative and attractive solutions, ensuring that nature and ecosystems benefits are well communicated to society.

Therefore, we urge the European Union, the European Commission, the European Parliament:

- to promote the importance of nature, and the quality of landscape planning, delivery, and management, provide nature-based solutions in climate change mitigation and adaptation and ensure transformational changes in landscape, urban and rural areas.
 - to aim at restoring a sustainable balance for an improved quality of life of all species, employing a “design process that feeds on a working memory”.
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- to initiate any necessary actions for the application of Nature Recovery Law in all Member States of the European Union, for the rescue of nature - and our planet.
- to advocate dynamic conservation strategies which allow biodiversity and essential ecosystem services to be maintained thanks to continuous innovation, transfer between generations and exchange with other communities and ecosystems.
- To promote financial tools and managerial systems more flexible and adaptable to climate changes as well as to reassert collective interests.

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References

1. IFLA Europe (2023). IFLA Europe Resolution ‘LOST LANDSCAPES’. Naples, Italy.
https://www.iflaeurope.eu/assets/docs/2023_IFLA_EUROPE_Resolution_Lost_Landscapes_FINAL.pdf
2. IFLA Europe (2023). IFLA Europe Position Paper to the CoR opinion on the EU Nature Restoration Law, addressed to the Commission for Environment, Climate Change and Energy.