



EUROSCAPE 2020

REFRAMING THE FUTURE OF THE EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE:

– POLICY VISIONS AND RESEARCH SUPPORT –

Seminar in Stresa (Italy) May 23rd-24th 2008

On the initiative of LANDSCAPE EUROPE, a network of institutions devoted to landscape research and policy development, a *High Level Landscape Seminar* took place in Stresa (Lago Maggiore, Italy) on 23/24 May 2008. In preparation of this event, the organisational committee consisting of Bas Pedroli and Dirk Wascher of Alterra Wageningen UR and Maria Luisa Paracchini of the European Commission's Joint Research Centre had prepared an illustrative pocket book entitled "*Blueprint for EUROSCAPE 2020*". Offering objectives and visions for putting European landscapes on international and national agendas, the booklet had been distributed to all participants prior to the event.

The invitational seminar was opened by the Minister of territorial policies and environmental resources of the Italian Regione Piemonte, Mr Sergio Conti, followed by Giovanni Bidoglio, Head of the Rural, Water and Ecosystem Resource Unit at JRC's Institute of Environment. The European Commission was further represented by Ms Caroline Raes (DG Agriculture and Rural Development) and Ms Michaela Gensheimer (ESPON) who highlighted forthcoming issues in rural development and spatial assessments with regard to the role of landscape. From the national perspective, Ms Anita Wouters of the Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Nature & Food Quality demonstrated commitment and a 'broader view' when presenting the Dutch perspective on landscapes in an European context. Ms Beate Jessel, president of the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, called for strengthening the links between biodiversity and landscapes when reporting back from the 6th Conference of the Parties on CBD which was taking place at the same time in Bonn.



The following roundtable discussion and parallel sessions were mainly focused on the Blueprint's three headline topics:

- (1) establish a **policy monitoring** for rural development on the basis of **landscape criteria and functions**;
- (2) introduce new **spatial planning instruments** to support the concept of Rural Retreat, Remote Areas and Vital Bridges; and
- (3) develop new forms of **governance** involving local and regional authorities, people and decision-makers.

The parallel sessions – facilitated by a professional team – succeeded in initiating problem-oriented discussions and generated pro-active input by many participants pointing at a number of opportunities for enhancing the cooperation between research and policy. Great attention was given to the local dimension of landscape impact and knowledge, to awareness raising and to potential input of landscape science in EU policy implementation (rural development) and knowledge transfer (reporting and monitoring). Also a strong plea for a European Landscape Observatory could be heard.



On the second day of the event, participants were given the opportunity to learn about land use history, traditional landscape changes and the increasingly difficult water supply in the Po Valley's for rice production in the Piemonte region.

The visions and actions tabled in Stresa will be followed up by further national and international activities in the framework of a *EuroScape 2020* programme to be developed with key partners.

