

Heritage & landscape are two sides of a coin. Cultural heritage is an essential foundation of landscape, which frames everyone's lives, and landscape provides ways to understand heritage better and to value, use and connect it to modern life. Heritage and landscape reflect people's history, identity, memories, lifestyles and aspirations, and are important ways in which people connect with their environment and interact socially and intellectually. They are both local and universal, personal and collective. Bringing them together increases their social, economic and environmental values.

For a world facing anthropocentric environmental degradation, demographic pressure and social changes, the currently-dominant policies based on economic market forces or eco-environmental solutions are on their own insufficient. To complement them – to be a counterweight - a strong cultural and societal dimension is required in decision making and planning. The ideas discussed at the CHeriScape conferences promote such a people-centred, culturally-sensitive approach: in other words, a CHeriScape approach offers cultural solutions for culturally-created problems.

CHERISCAPE'S PRINCIPLES

CHeriScape's principles were framed by the European Landscape Convention, the ELC (2000), the Faro Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage to Society (2005), and the ESF/COST Science Policy Briefing 'Landscape in a Changing World' (2010). They have been reinforced during our five conferences and at CHeriScape sessions, our closing workshop in Alden Biesen and at five other international conferences. For this 'Key Messages' document, we summarise them in just four brief statements:

New Ambitions

CHeriScape promotes a culturally-focussed, socially-oriented and people-centred context. It creates an alliance between modern ideas about heritage (e.g. the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) recommendation) and the broad and interdisciplinary interpretation of 'landscape' found in, e.g. the European Landscape Convention). The 'landscape approach', gaining ground in several quarters over the past decade or two, is a mainstreaming and integrative policy tool for addressing challenges in more ambitious ways than heritage conservation or landscape protection can.

Heritage, Nature and Landscape

Heritage perspectives on landscape and nature underline time depth, human agency and social value within landscape and landscape's cultural construction in past, present and – most importantly – future. Its cultural starting point does not marginalise nature, but places nature within cultural filters, thus highlighting the reciprocity of nature and culture in the creation of sustainable places.

Convergent World Views

Heritage and landscape are intimately inter-connected. Both are ways of seeing and acting that help people make the transition from past to future. It can seem as if the terms are simply different words for the same idea. Their combination gives a people-centred world view of great social and cultural use. Other terms are similarly integrative – ecosystems services or environmental humanities for example – and the bringing together of landscape and heritage may only be a first step.

Common Ground

Landscape is a meeting point and an arena for negotiation. It can be used to encourage participation by a wide public and by civil society in general. It sets the stage for research and action at both inter- and trans-disciplinary scales. It encourages the integration of academic interests around important research themes and their convergence with policy and practice on a grand scale.

OUR UNDERPINNING IDEAS

The network created by our conferences included people from many different academic and action communities with diverse cultural, disciplinary, national and historical backgrounds. We realised in listening to our interdisciplinary colleagues during these meetings that ideas taken for granted by some were new or controversial to others. Even apparently basic ideas taken for granted in one group sometimes prompted lively debate. Not everyone for example was completely familiar with the idea that landscape and heritage are 'everywhere' (e.g. everyday as well as special areas), contain 'everything' (e.g. ever-widening definitions of heritage) or derive from 'every-when' (all of human history). Not everyone hears the same things in the word landscape. For example: we take for granted (and do not always spell out) that landscape is a symbiosis of nature and culture, and it covers cities, the sea - and even 'wilderness' - as well as countryside. Some of the four ideas summarised below may appear self-evident to some readers, but they will be new to others. They set the scene, and we hope everyone will find at least one new idea, whether inspiring or provocative.

Essentially cultural Landscape in the ELC sense only exists when perceived by people, even in areas apparently natural. It is fundamentally cultural in the widest anthropological sense. Firmly embedded in our understanding of landscape is the presence of people, and, inevitably therefore, society: commons, shared rights, collective management, people interacting within societies - in short, culture. Landscape is a forum for discussion, hence the overarching need to find ways to widen democratic participation. Its cultural foundation connects strongly with ideas of the Anthropocene and its global problems. People-centred and culturally-focussed solutions are as necessary as environmental responses, because culturally-created problems (from climate change to social injustice) call for cultural solutions.

Future-oriented New paradigms of heritage assert that it is a socially-embedded process not a mere collection of objects; more, that the process is future-oriented. Heritage contributes to creating tomorrow's world (or landscape), because it is principally concerned with the transmission of values and of the material remains they reflect. Landscape is also concerned with a continual remaking of the world in the context of inheritance and legacy. But sustainable policy towards the future requires understanding long-term past trajectories of change. It is not enough to understand the present-day landscape or even its very recent past, not enough to 'know where we are' - we must know how we reached this position.

Plurality and Complexity Heritage is always and unavoidably contested, landscape is always subject to debate and disagreement; both have complex constructions and uses. Their intrinsic complexity (like change) is an unavoidable and valuable attribute. Furthermore, heritage values (tangible or intangible) and landscape meanings are endowed on heritage by people and are therefore necessarily plural. Complexity and plurality give heritage and landscape their richness and power, and everything we heard in our conferences confirms the vital need for a multiplicity of views to flourish. But research, policy and even practice are pulled towards over-simplification, seeking often-hollow consensus.

Old paradigms Established ideas can stand in the way of new policies.: e.g. (i) The still widely-held views that landscape is natural, and quasi-synonymous with 'environment', are obstacles to using landscape effectively in policy; (ii) The reductionist concept of 'the landscape scale' (which still survives in parts of academia and policy) undermines one of the main strengths of the landscape approach, its scalability; (iii) Preservation as the default response to threats to heritage and landscape underestimates the importance of change as an essential attribute of landscape, does not fit with new future-oriented views, and leaves less room for the co-construction of future landscapes.

THE WAY FORWARD - CHERISCAPE CHALLENGES

Even if all these insights are accepted, society and government is still faced with the challenge of putting them into practice: operationalising them in policy, creating a good transition from research to action via democratic engagement. What is to be done? By whom?

After listening to the debates at our conferences, we believe that a CheriScape way of seeing and acting using the social, political and environmental potential of landscape and heritage can reach out towards a cultural sustainability. CheriScape perspectives and action can help society address even its biggest global challenges - including climate change responses, demographic change, environmental degradation, food and water security, social cohesion and political exclusion, migration and mobility. All these are land-based and spatial issues that can be addressed through landscape. All involve the transition between past and future, and questions of identity and memory, which can be addressed through heritage. They are culturally-caused problems for which solutions lie in the cultural, social and political dimensions of the heritage and landscape nexus.

Structural Challenges

The structures and institutions that control how decisions are taken, even how problems are defined, do not encourage integrated or holistic thinking. At local scales people act holistically but regional, national and European government rarely uses a landscape approach to address global challenges. When they do, they focus on ecological, environmental and narrow economic priorities, instead of culturally-based solutions that bring people together. From CheriScape debates come suggestions for changes, e.g.:

- Better transversal and integrative structures within government to confront sectoral fragmentation, with heritage and landscape connecting departments;
- More use by decision makers of knowledge of the cultural, anthropocentric factors that underlie global challenges; alliances between science and policy;
- Stronger, sustained communication between all parties, informed by community as well as expert participation; thus, exploiting the commonality of landscape and heritage throughout society;
- Government measures to correct the free market's inability to manage heritage or landscape values or to use them to address broad challenges.

Landscape Rights

While land is owned by individuals, corporations or the state, landscape and heritage (through identity and memory, for example) is shared by all those who perceive, use or remember it. Landscape is never owned, and through the concept of universal commons it is a way to materialise democratic rights. The tensions between the rights and responsibilities of landowners and landscape and of public and private stakeholders need balancing by collaborative partnerships and mutual respect. Landscape is a framework for doing this. Landowning is key to rural management, but there are other effective forms of stewardship, landscape management requires strategies beyond ownership, such as long-term masterplans, or legal instruments to support common aims. Landscape ideas such as commons and use-rights (like landownership, intangible heritage in themselves) can bring rights and responsibilities together.

Coping with Scale

Participation and decision-making with respect to landscape and heritage are faced with various levels and types of scale and their complex, not necessarily hierarchical, inter-relationships. Landscape operates as a tool at all scales, so policy needs to do the same. Individual regional development plans for example can connect to policy decisions at both local and (inter)national scales. The level at which decisions are taken and policy (state or municipality) formulated needs to be aligned with the scale of the landscape affected. There are also questions about the scales at which heritage values are formulated. Timescales used by decision makers and the public fail to reflect the very long duration of heritage and landscape, often from deep past to far future, and thus may not find long-term solutions.

The Democratic Challenge

Democratic 'ownership' of heritage and landscape also needs to be balanced, with responsibilities such as participation, respect for other viewpoints, shared sustainable use of common resources or recognition of broader non-local contexts. All these matters reside in the concept of landscape and can be moderated through a landscape approach. Shared responsibilities and rights were historically a natural, customary part of local landscape use, but larger-scale modern societies need written process, agreements and sometimes law. Community management of landscape, as much as landownership requires a broader democratic and strategic context for decisions and actions. Local people may be central to managing landscape (e.g. under alternative names such as 'place' or 'neighbourhood'), but important stakeholders and interested communities (such as communities of interest, heritage communities, scientific communities) may not be local. Local opinions and aspirations usually need wider contextualisation. Landscape offers an equitable framework for such societal balancing acts.

Sharing and Learning.

Ensuring sophisticated public awareness and understanding of landscape and heritage is a major challenge. Experts also need to learn, for example to comprehend local 'understandings' of landscape value, to see how landscapes are 'lived', to benefit from the wealth of practical expertise about their landscapes that local people may still hold. Public and 'academic' ideas about landscape and heritage are poorly aligned; academic 'complications' need to be made more accessible to civil society and experts in other fields, including politicians and planners. What is required is good stories, better communications, stronger understanding of the social and cultural processes within landscape, appreciation of the *longue durée*, the legibility of the past within the present landscape, and the value of landscape change as well as conservation – in other words, learning about and through landscape - which will strengthen connections between people, landscape and heritage. The starting point, ideally from first school onwards, is the teaching of 'landscape-literacy' tools so that people have additional ways of seeing landscape and can teach themselves to look and think about their own landscapes, how their landscapes develop(ed) and how they can be improved. Learning about and through landscape should teach not only about endangerment and protection (which most current awareness-raising focuses on) but also about the shared social aspects of landscapes, the centrality of change in landscape and the reflective role of landscape in making the future.

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Making Connections

Landscape studies are one of the most interdisciplinary and action-oriented of scientific fields, hence the increasing acceptance in many fields of the value of taking a 'landscape approach' to global environmental and social challenges. But the great integrative and analytical potential of landscape is not always realised because of lack of connection between action and practice, disciplinary fragmentation and poor alignment with (for example) global challenges and decision making at all scales. Low awareness of the intimate connections between landscape, heritage, nature, culture and society creates obstacles to the use of landscape as a tool to meet global challenges. Connection with the wider public through reciprocal knowledge exchange is a continuing challenge, because of limited formal structures.

Our challenges are closely inter-connected and co-dependent, difficult to separate. They all contribute to other challenges not mentioned here, such as governance, stewardship and awareness. Common to them all is the need for increased communication between all actors. Each challenge might appear to be the 'job' of a specific group of people, but in the CHeriScape approach collaboration with other groups is always essential, whether those groups are the public, politicians, planners or other practitioners, landowners or researchers.

Our conferences demonstrated a wealth of exemplars for how to put CHeriScape ideas into practice (www.cherscape.eu). Most have ideals of co-construction / co-production at their heart. These methods however, like on-the-ground landscape and heritage management, tend to be most used at small-scale site level. They need to be scaled up to regional or national level.

They include the power of good examples, storytelling as a powerful method of communication, creative engagement and performance to enhance participation, dialogue to drive inter- and transdisciplinarity, new communication technologies (currently the power of social media), and a strong role for communication specialists.

In conclusion (at present), the three-year long conversation facilitated by the 2014-16 JPI-CH project underlined the benefits of bringing heritage and landscape together. Their 'partnership' offers exciting new ways to influence decision-making from the highest level to the most local in relation society's global challenges. Heritage and Landscape is a golden combination to be cherished for the sound future of Europe's cultural identity. It can also help ensure a sound socio-environmental future. Because it is founded on socially and culturally embedded understandings of the challenges facing society, it offers **cultural solutions for cultural problems**.

Of course, we have so far identified challenges and research opportunities rather than solutions. But the CHeriScape network and its debates will continue after the 2014-16 JPI pilot project, and the exemplars, case studies and lessons from our conferences remain an important resource.



A JPI-Cultural Heritage Network

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