

*Message by Mr Francesco Bandarin,
UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Culture
on the occasion of the*

INICIATIVA LATINOAMERICANA DEL PAISAJE

2nd FORO INTERNACIONAL LALI GUAYAQUIL

El Paisaje como Catalizador

CENTRO REGIONAL GUAYAQUIL, 30 October 2013

It is a great pleasure for me to send my warm greetings to the participants of this international forum, which will certainly provide new opportunities for the Latin-American landscape initiative.

I would like to express my special appreciation to the representative of IFLA International Ms Moore and the former president of IFLA, Ms Fajardo. The agenda addresses a truly interdisciplinary subject: landscapes;

We may have different approaches to landscapes – each culture and community may have a different understanding of the concept, but there can be no doubt that **landscapes are a part of our daily lives**

UNESCO has extensive experience dealing with landscapes: Since the 1962 Recommendation on the Beauty and Character of Landscapes and Sites, the 1972 World Heritage Convention, which recognized cultural landscapes in 1992 and the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, which recognizes traditional practices essential for maintaining landscapes. You can also benefit from the lessons learnt through the elaboration and implementation of the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on Historic Urban Landscapes, which I strongly encourage you to take into account.

I also refer you to the recently published special issue of the World Heritage Review (No. 69) devoted to agricultural landscapes. It is available on-line in English, French and Spanish at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/review/69/>.

As most of you are aware IFLA's resolution for a Global Landscape Convention was submitted to UNESCO's Executive Board in spring 2011, but was not adopted. Instead we were encouraged to work within existing frameworks. I think that the Latin American Landscape Initiative represents a plan for action that can

serve as a model in other regions of the world. We will continue to promote similar initiatives to foster international recognition of landscapes.

Today we all recognize that threats to landscapes are increasing around the world: environmental degradation, unbridled urbanization, regional conflicts, natural disaster to mention only a few. Sustainable solutions must be found at the national, regional and international level and UNESCO stands prepared to assist in addressing these challenges. We are convinced that the solutions lie in integrating human-centred approach to development.

For this reason, UNESCO is leading international efforts to place **culture** at the heart of development strategies and policies. Culture can be an effective vehicle for environmental sustainability by integrating traditional knowledge systems and encouraging community involvement. The future of our planet depends on such an integrated approach.

I wish you successful deliberations