



PRESIDENT'S BULLETIN

CHRISTMAS TREES

[December 2014]

IFLA EUROPE

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION
OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

SILVER JUBILEE - 35 YEARS CARING FOR LANDSCAPE

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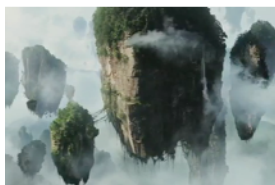
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Whilst Christmas trees surround us, the Lima Climate Change Conference has drawn to a close. This United Nations Summit is but a reminder of the unique historical moment we are living, characterized by similar problems all around the world: excessive urban concentration, industrial pollution, overexploitation of natural resources, to name a few. As a result of these, landscape becomes subject to an accumulative degradation of environmental values which has attained a planetary scale. The fact that we have interfered simultaneously with the ecological, cultural and socio-economic dimensions of our habitat is having collateral effects on the life quality of human communities: 40% of human mortality worldwide is related to environmental pollution, be it soil, air, or water based.

The raise of an environmental conscience has **since the 1970's** been at the core of many organisations: the World Heritage Convention (1972) already understood *natural heritage as of outstanding interest and therefore needs to be preserved as part of the world heritage of mankind*. Twenty years later, at Rio de Janeiro, the Earth Summit was organised by the UNO and the Convention on Climate Change was signed. In 1997, the Kyoto Protocol was launched. Since then, many other meetings and actions have followed with various outcomes –we surely all remember the failed Copenhagen Summit-.

European policies are also striving to stop environmental loss. In 2011 the European Commission adopted the EU strategy for biodiversity till 2020, following previous directives such as the well-known Natura 2000 network. The work of our Federation inscribes itself in this European setting, having been specially active this year in these issues.

Projects such as linking *Green Infrastructure* to the implementation of Nature Directives, as well as the *No Net Loss of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*, or the scientific meetings dealing with the integrated management of cultural and natural heritage in Natura 2000 sites **IFLA EUROPE is active** in, aim at a complex vision of landscape. As landscape architects this understanding lies at the very core of our profession: environmental issues are always fundamental to our projects.

In this time of change we must insure environmental issues remain central to our work, as they will have real consequences in people's lives. Right now, our working groups are active compiling best practice projects under the leadership of Leor Lovinger (Israel) together with Ian Philips (UK), and Mario Kahl (Germany), in quest for the future...

To all the members of IFLA EU our most sincere best wishes for the New Year and Merry Christmas!