

Landscape networks and their meaning in planning activities

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**CULTURAL ROUTES  
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE:  
CULTURAL HERITAGE, LANDSCAPE AND TOURISM  
WORKSHOP**

**SCIENTIFIC COORDINATOR  
SILVIA BELTRAMO**



**DIST TEACHING PROJECT 2022**

LM48 PIANIFICAZIONE TERRITORIALE, URBANISTICA E PASAGGISTICO-AMBIENTALE  
MSc TERRITORIAL, URBAN, ENVIRONMENTAL AND LANDSCAPE PLANNING

LM3 PROGETTAZIONE DELLE AREE VERDI E DEL PAESAGGIO

LM80 GEOGRAFIA E SCIENZE TERRITORIALI

LM56 ECONOMIA DELL'AMBIENTE, DELLA CULTURA E DEL TERRITORIO



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CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: CULTURAL HERITAGE, LANDSCAPE AND TOURISM  
Workshop with study visits (July-September 2022)  
DIST Teaching Project 2022  
Interuniversity Department of Regional and Urban Studies and Planning  
Politecnico di Torino-Università degli Studi di Torino

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# PRESENTATION

**Andrea Bocco**

Politecnico di Torino-DIST  
Head of the Department

In 2020, DIST signed an agreement of adhesion to the University Network for Cultural Routes Studies, which includes 22 other universities interested in studying and researching the European Cultural Routes (ECRs) and supporting scientific, teaching and third-mission activities on them. With this act, a commitment was officially formalized with the European Institute of Cultural Routes – which some colleagues had been pursuing for years, in particular Silvia Beltramo, with her assignment as expert evaluator of ECRs. Only two other Italian universities are part of the network: Bologna and Milano Bicocca.

This adhesion is entirely coherent with the institutional activity of the department: one of the three DIST research strands is “Heritage”, with reference to territorial cultural heritage and territorial systems of cultural heritage. DIST covers almost all the disciplinary fields present in the network: from heritage making and interpretation to cultural heritage management; from cultural and environmental landscape to urban regeneration; and from economics and the geography of tourism (with a focus on local development issues) to sociology (with a focus on local community participation).

Thanks to its multidisciplinary nature and its role in a Bachelors degree and six Masters degrees, DIST is able to offer courses in almost all the areas listed under the mission of the University Network for Cultural Routes Studies: heritage; tourism; urban and territorial planning; geography; heritage and cultural tourism; territorial management; local development; governance and participation; political studies; new technologies; tourism economics; and heritage law. Particularly within the Masters degrees in “Cultural Heritage and Creativity for Tourism and Territorial Development” (Università degli Studi di Torino) and in “Economia dell’Ambiente, della Cultura e del Territorio” (Università degli Studi di Torino, inter-university), as well as the Masters degrees in “Pianificazione urbanistica e territoriale | Territorial, Urban, Environmental and Landscape Planning” (Politecnico di Torino), “Architettura del Paesaggio” (Politecnico di Torino, inter-university), “Geografia e Scienze Territoriali” (Università degli Studi di Torino, inter-university) and “Digital Skills for Sustainable Societal Transitions” (Politecnico di Torino, inter-university).

A variety of skills and professional profiles that could unfold complementary contribution to really make initiatives such as the ECRs into opportunities for enhancing heritage, local development and strengthening European cohesion beyond the borders that today, after a period in which at least in Europe they seemed to have been erased, are sadly returning to being closed, to separate people, to radicalize real or fictitious identities that distinguish “us” from “them”.

On the other hand, the Council of Europe’s Cultural Routes programme, launched in 1987, has the opposite aim: through the recognition and promotion of itineraries that can actually be travelled, or which are linked by a thematic thread, to highlight themes representative of a multiple European cultural identity made up of many elements, stratified over the centuries and even spurious, contributing to the interpretation of diversity in today’s Europe. There are now 48 itineraries as part of the programme, dedicated to themes of incredible richness and variety, plots that unite the many pieces that make up this small continent.

By selecting Silvia Beltramo’s proposal through a call for departmental teaching projects, DIST supported the creation of a workshop entitled “Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe: Cultural Heritage, Landscape and Tourism” (to which this volume is dedicated), in which different local authorities and students from various Politecnico and Università degli Studi di Torino’s degree courses were involved. I believe that this workshop should be repeated in a more expanded version, for example as a summer school, to extend participation.

In conclusion, I would like to express the hope that DIST’s commitment to the ECRs will continue through teaching activities (with didactic programmes and degree subject offerings specifically dedicated to them at all three levels of education), through research (with collaborations and exchanges with other universities in the network) and through the third mission (with more direct involvement in the scientific and managerial support of the itineraries; also by developing projects that use these itineraries as an opportunity to increase the sustainability of the territories they pass through).





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# INTRODUCTION

**Silvia Beltramo**  
Politecnico di Torino-DIST

The teaching project inaugurated with the workshop entitled “Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe: Cultural Heritage, Landscape and Tourism” is based within a consolidated international network of contacts acquired with Italian and foreign universities as part of the scientific and teaching activities of the University Network for Cultural Routes Studies under the patronage of the European Institute of Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, a network that the Interuniversity Department of Regional and Urban Studies and Planning–DIST joined in 2020.

The network of contacts established over the years thanks to participation in numerous European projects, includes national and international professors from the disciplines of landscape, architecture, geography, the economics of culture, territorial planning, cultural tourism and the history of architecture and the city. Together with some professors from DIST, and with the collaboration of the School of Specialization in Architectural and Landscape Heritage (SBAP) and the Interuniversity PhD programme in Urban and Regional Development (URD), they constitute the teaching staff.

The overall Teaching Project originates from the experience I have gained over 15 years as an independent expert for the Council of Europe as part the European Cultural Routes (ECRs) programme, and also includes DIST’s participation in the “Commissione per la qualità delle opere cimiteriali della Città di Torino”.

The aim of the workshop (held between July and October 2022) was to address, through a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary perspective, the theme of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, which in their specificity represent a crucial node in the active interpretation of cultural heritage and are strategic tools for guiding processes of territorial and landscape valorization.

The activities also involved the collaboration of lecturers from other universities and from numerous national and international institutions and associations, as well as public administrations: Università di Bologna–Centre for Advanced Studies on Cultural Tourism (CAST); Università del Salento; Fondazione Santagata; Fondazione Homo Viator San Teobaldo; the European Association of the Via Francigena Ways; the European Association of Historic Cemeteries; Rotta dei Fenici; the European Association Romea Strata; AFC Torino s.p.a; the Piedmont Region; the Emilia Romagna Region; the Municipality of Turin; the Municipality of

Bologna; the Municipality of Fidenza (PR); and the Municipality of Pontremoli (MS).

The workshop, which lasted a total of 75 hours, was organized in three main modules: lectures (20 hours); site visits days (Emilia Romagna, Tuscany, the Historic Cemetery of Turin – 20 hours); and project activities (35 hours).

The seminar days (lectures) constituted the backbone of the workshop, from which the subsequent modules cascaded down. They were organized in order to offer both a general framework on the topic and an in-depth analysis from different perspectives on specific itineraries, activities, projects and programmes, ongoing and future, and also to address themes related to cultural promotion, management, applications, etc... The purpose of the lectures was to motivate a desire for knowledge, and to constitute moments of in-depth analysis and mutual exchange through collective discussions and reflections.

The site visit days and the students’ final projects focused in particular on two ECRs, which are examples of great interest: the Via Francigena and the Historic Cemeteries Route. They represent two specific cases: a development of the route on a territorial scale and a punctual network at the urban one.

This publication intends to summarise what matured during the opening experience of the Teaching Project, collecting some reflections of the lecturers and invited guests who have offered their contribution regarding the seminar days, together with the outcome of the students’ final projects. The volume is therefore structured into three main parts:

Part I is composed of short essays on topics such as the illustration of general themes inherent to the ECRs programme, more specific aspects referring to individual itineraries, challenges regarding the valorization and promotion of cultural heritage and sustainable tourism, and projects currently underway that also involve rural territories.

Part II collects a photo diary of site visits days.

Part III presents the students’ final project proposals regarding the ECRs on which they were invited to reflect.

The workshop represented the first event of a growing teaching project that intends to become a summer school, held on an annual or biennial basis, with the involvement of other university members of the network and open to international students.

# THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S HERITAGE VISION: FROM THE CULTURAL ROUTES PROGRAMME TO THE FARO CONVENTION

Luisella Pavan-Woolfe  
Council of Europe-Venice Office

The Council of Europe has always been acutely aware of the importance of culture and cultural heritage and, since its foundation in 1949, it has understood these as crucial to promoting human rights, democracy and the rule of law and achieving greater unity among Europeans.

When the Santiago de Compostela Declaration was signed in 1987, a novel and exciting way in which to further those aims began. It marked the start of the Organisation's European Cultural Routes Programme.

The main objective of the Programme was to encourage Europeans to embark on voyages of discovery: learning about each other, overcoming differences and celebrating diversity in order to create a more cohesive and inclusive society. European Cultural Routes were conceived as grassroots tools, by which Europe's art and history would be better and more widely understood through exchanges among people from across the European continent and beyond.

This is about cultural diversity, mutual understanding, and intercultural dialogue – necessary ingredients of peaceful coexistence, something that we sorely need today on a continent which witnesses, once more, the brutality and tragic consequences of armed conflict on its soil. In the context of the war in Ukraine we are once again reminded of how cultural heritage is often a deliberate target and erasing cultural traces of the past equates to destroying people's memory, causing a permanent damage to their identity.

Europe – and the challenges we face – have changed since 1987. But the values on which the European Cultural Routes are based, and the benefits that they bring, both endure.

As the past thirty-five years have gone by, the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes Programme has only grown stronger. There are now 48 certified routes, winding through all 46 Council of Europe member states and beyond. Their themes are varied and range from the lives of Mozart, Saint Martin, Charles V, Napoleon, Charlemagne to the deeds of the Vikings and the Phoenicians; from historic gardens and thermal towns to Jewish and Industrial heritage; from abbeys and fortified cities to Megalithic culture and Impressionism. But they all bear one message: the heritage of the different countries in Europe contribute to a shared cultural heritage and a European identity.

Through the years in order to achieve this, the Council of Europe has worked hand-in-glove with the other founding fathers of the Programme, namely Member States and the European Institute of Cultural Routes, as well as with important external partners – the European Union, the UNWTO and UNESCO.

All these initiatives enhance democratic culture, promote sustainable tourism and foster collaboration among stakeholders and institutions. The routes today more than ever fulfil their role as a tool for grassroots participation and democratic citizenship, as they operate as transnational networks, based on legally established associations, and bring together multiple European stakeholders from both the public and private sectors.

They promote the educational value of European heritage, with a heavy emphasis on involving young people from a wide variety of cultural, geographical, and social backgrounds, so that they can meet, exchange viewpoints, and develop their common European identity and citizenship.

At the local level, the European Cultural Routes contribute to sustainable environmental and social development by highlighting the tangible and intangible heritage of an area, its traditions and crafts, raising awareness of its identity, creating unique cultural offerings for tourists, reaching out to home-grown SMEs and supporting their contribution to the local economy, especially in less-developed, rural areas.

By promoting a wider understanding of heritage and its relationship to communities and society, the Council of Europe has been encouraging citizens to recognize the importance of cultural heritage objects, traditions, monuments and sites through the meaning that these convey and the values they express and with which they identify as individuals and members of communities. It has done so through the running of the European Cultural Routes Programme, but also through the adoption of legal instruments which have inspired national legislation and policies, thus strongly influencing the lives of millions of Europeans.

One of the main aspects of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, also known as the Faro Convention, is the importance it places on the need to involve all citizens, those aware

of their cultural rights as well as those less fortunate in this respect, in the definition and management of cultural heritage. This requires going beyond passive participation by trying to identify ways and processes that allow civil society to express fully not only its rights, but also its responsibilities vis-à-vis cultural heritage.

Long-term citizens' awareness and participation necessitate the conscious involvement of the younger generation to ensure that today's efforts by heritage communities are not subsequently thwarted by the indifference of young people. Heritage education and new technologies are thus crucial to retain young people's interest, their connection and contribution. This is another of the many suggestions coming both from the European Cultural Route Programme and the Faro Convention vision.

Another shared message is that cultural heritage can play an important role in responding to the global challenges facing us today and the need to ensure the sustainability of future human development. If cultural heritage is often the victim of unchecked growth, it can also actively contribute to economic, social, environmental and cultural sustainability.

A clear example of this is tourism development which constitutes both a threat and a potential opportunity for cultural heritage preservation and enhancement.

The Faro Convention tells us that we should depart from the dominant paradigm of business-oriented tourism marketing and consumption and opt for a sustainable, environment friendly tourism that favours at the same time social transformation. The European Cultural Routes translate this into practice, forging pilgrims ways, paths and journeys respectful of land, history and people.

Finally, the Faro Convention and the Cultural Routes of Council of Europe are all about communities. Because of increased international mobility, population movements and displacement both within countries and across national borders, communities are becoming increasingly multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and diverse. Preserving and enhancing heritage can contribute to fostering recognition, empathy and mutual trust. It can help integrating newcomers, facilitating dialogue, opening minds, revitalising communities and ultimately improving people's well-being.

This is the Council of Europe's vision of cultural heritage as one of the strategic elements to help address global challenges and as driver of social transformation.

The aim, today more than ever before, is that of creating an open and diverse cultural space and a safe and sustainable environment as a basis for peaceful and democratic societies in Europe.

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# LANDSCAPE NETWORKS AND THEIR MEANINGS IN PLANNING ACTIVITIES

**Claudia Cassatella**  
Politecnico di Torino-DIST

“Landscape contributes to the formation of local cultures and that it is a basic component of the European natural and cultural heritage, contributing to human well-being and consolidation of the European identity” (Council of Europe, European Landscape Convention, 2000).

The landscape concept played a key role in bringing together and promoting together the consideration for both natural and cultural values, so allowing for an integrated interpretation of local and regional heritage. Collaboration between UNESCO, ICOMOS, and IUCN on such issues started in the nineties and is particularly evident in policy statements, in the emergence of new interpretative frameworks (such as the historic urban landscape) and guidelines and practices.

The landscape is not a specific object or scale, but it's an approach.

The landscape concept is not only about preservation, but also about development if heritage is a component of our future scenario. Because the landscape is dynamic, it is a process, and the preservation of landscape heritage is a non-sense, if not intended as managing change.

Landscape planning means proposing future scenarios which underpin existing heritage values.

In 2000 the Council of Europe opened to the signature of the European Landscape Convention:

“Noting that the landscape has an important public interest role in the cultural, ecological, environmental and social fields, and constitutes a resource favourable to economic activity and whose protection, management and planning can contribute to job creation”.

Landscape contributes to the economic system in many ways, and valorisation is just the other side of preservation. In the following paragraph, the fruition of landscape is discussed in a broad sense: the physical and mental experience of places.

Many projects for valorizing landscapes are projects of itineraries: linking heterogeneous resources (assets) in a unique spatial image and providing opportunities to enjoy them as a whole. Characteristic aspects of this approach are the heterogeneity of the targeted resources, the multiplicity of the means for making the experience of the sites, and multisensoriality (for instance, tasting local products).

Blue ways and greenways, trails, railways, white roads, and cycle routes can be linked to provide access to the countryside. And to provide access to historic monuments, natural

environments, and scenic resources in a continuum. Such a frame needs planning and implementation.

An example is the Green Crown of Turin. Around 25 years ago, when the city was a post-industrial city in search of new perspectives (and for the rehabilitation of thousand square meters of brownfields), a vision was proposed. The idea of reconnecting the city with its surroundings, plenty of historic towns, historical assets, gardens and parks, rural and natural environments, views, and vistas. Immediately after the nomination of the Royal Residences of the House of Savoy within the UNESCO WHL, the Piedmont Region proposed to create a system of greenways to connect them. Crossing the urban periphery was a challenge. But, implementing this vision implied the requalification of several areas, which turned out into urban parks, green riversides, and such. Nowadays, a cycle route of around 90 kilometres is available and acts as a pivot to further linkages: Turin to Venice (more than 600 km), or simply Turin to some alpine valleys, or Milan.

The Green Crown is a new spatial image which gained room in the local, then national and international. Besides the connection of human itineraries, the landscape entails connections among habitats of other species, the so-called ecological networks. This concept is crucial in biodiversity conservation strategies. Animals and plants need to move in space and find their habitats, which are often fragmented by artificial barriers. Thanks to Landscape ecology, we can identify ecological networks and even design new ecological corridors to preserve or enhance the species' life. For instance, rivers, woodlands, hedgerows, and tree lines... depending on the targeted species.

It has to be noted that not every linear feature is an ecological corridor, and that “green way” doesn't have an ecological meaning.

Usually, this term refers to a linear feature for slow mobility, meaning that the species on the run is the human!

In the previously mentioned project, the Green Crown, the ecological networks were explicitly addressed by ad hoc strategies and interventions (for instance, improving the riverine systems, and inserting fish escalators).

The integration of greenways and ecological corridors is possible if it is planned and designed.

In the case of Turin, converting the brownfields along the rivers into a continuous system of urban parks improved the environmental quality.

The Green Crown is a multifunctional network. It includes:

- a. Cultural itineraries (see the Unesco WH Serial Site);
- b. Slow mobility (see the greenways and blueways, the facilities for touristic boats and rowing);
- c. Ecological connectivity – ecological corridors.

Scaling-up, the same framework and program have been adopted by the Regional Landscape Plan of the Piedmont Region (2017), at a broader scale. The landscape multifunctional network is a strategic project.

It provides a representation of all the existing resources on the same map, inviting local actors to think outside of their box, to take care of the possible interconnections in an integrated manner – adopting a landscape approach.

The planning approach is strategic, rather than normative.

Nevertheless, the existence of such a planning scheme influences sectorial policies of the same region (tourism, infrastructure, culture, parks...).

The same scheme supports private initiatives. In particular, a big private Foundation granted several projects which had to accomplish the goals of the RLP, contributing to its implementation

In addition, for some small municipalities being part of such a large design stimulated and empowered their will to act for the landscape.

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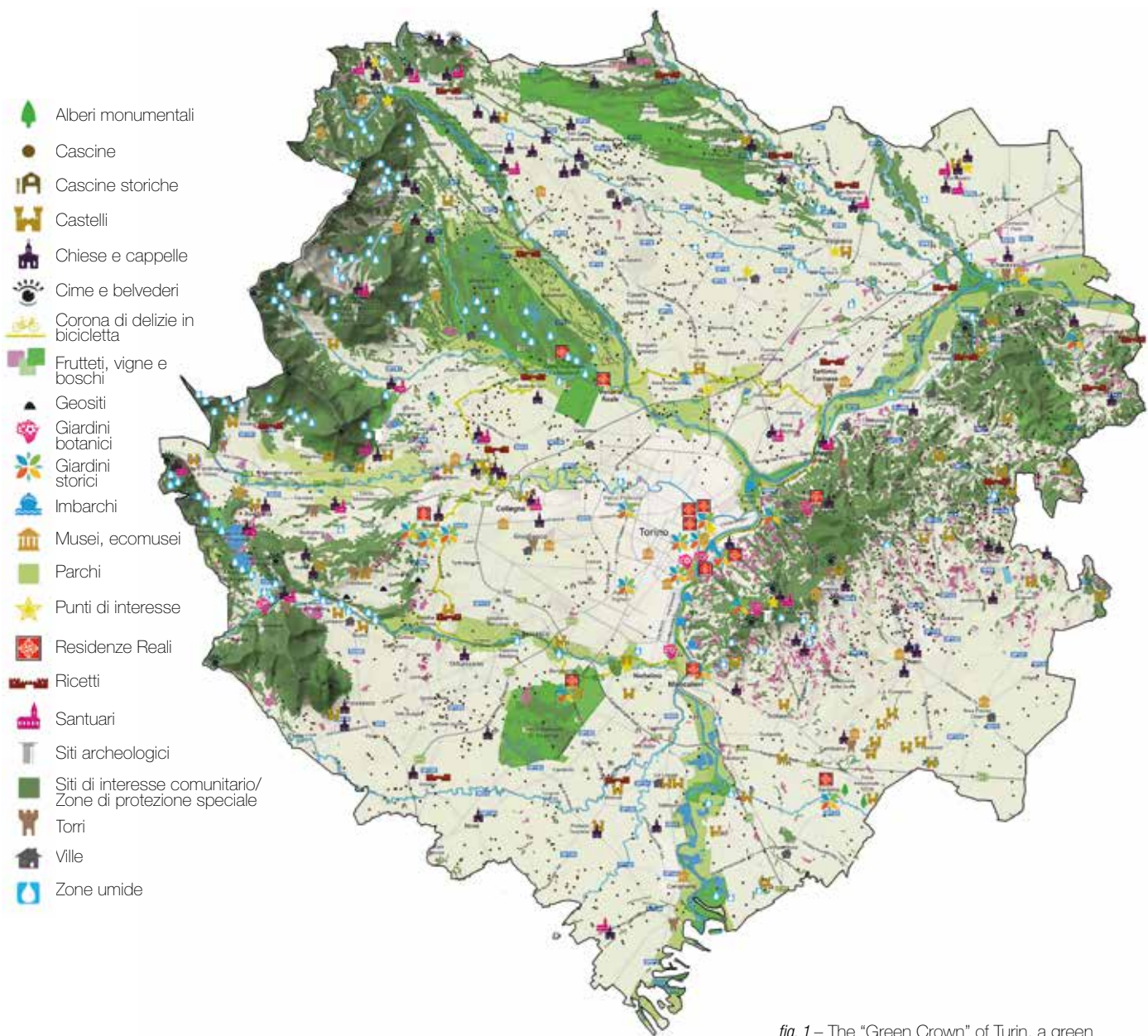
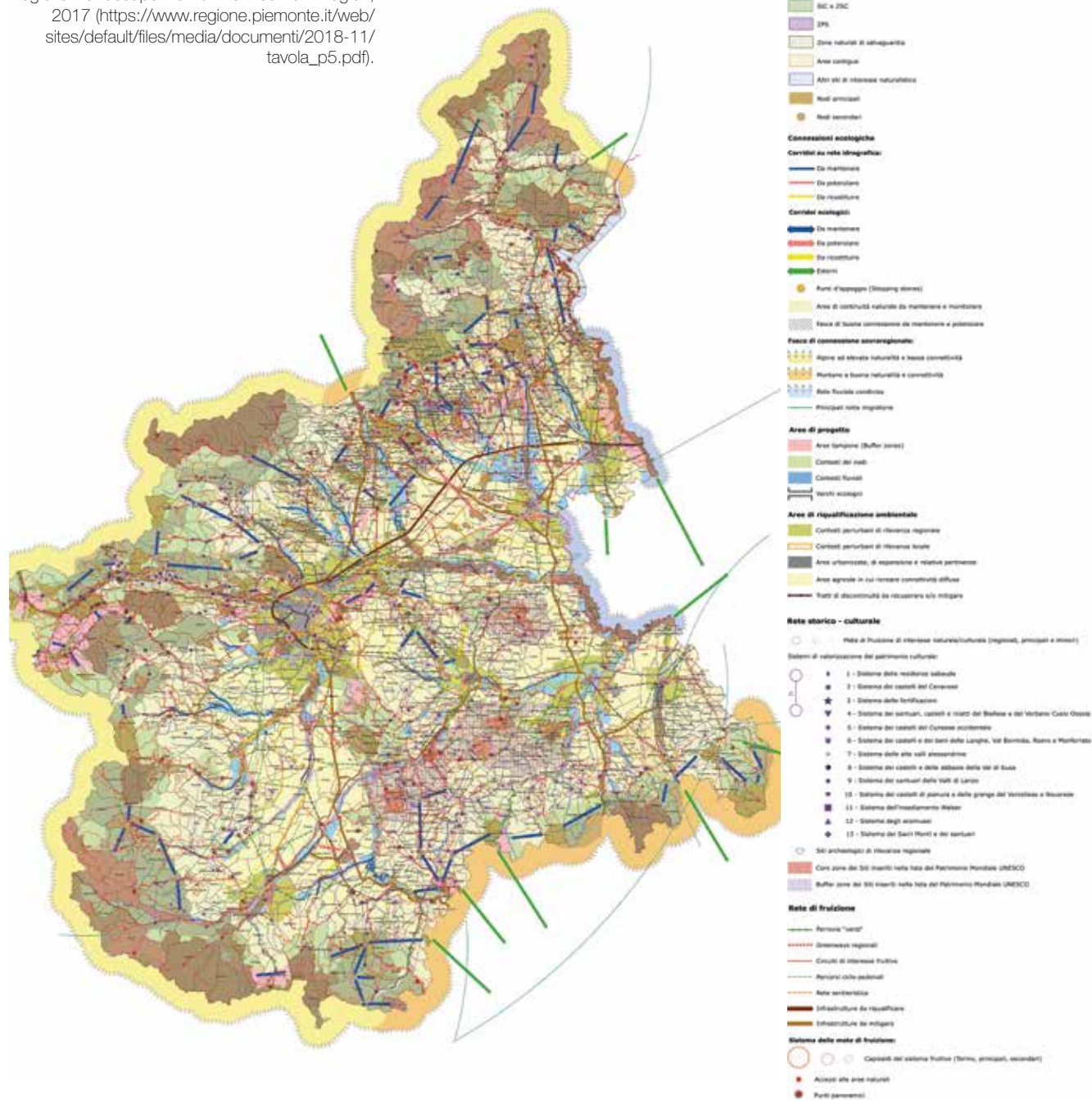


fig. 1 – The “Green Crown” of Turin, a green and blue infrastructure (graphic elaboration by Piedmont Region, around 2013).

fig. 2 – The landscape multifunctional network  
 Regional Landscape Plan of the Piedmont Region,  
 2017 ([https://www.regione.piemonte.it/web/sites/default/files/media/documenti/2018-11/tavola\\_p5.pdf](https://www.regione.piemonte.it/web/sites/default/files/media/documenti/2018-11/tavola_p5.pdf)).



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Council of Europe, Santiago de Compostela Pilgrim Routes declaration as Europe's first Cultural Route, October 1987



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