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## A balanced approach to the rescuing of archaeological finds from development projects

**Reply to Recommendation<sup>1</sup>:** Recommendation 1942 (2010)  
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has examined Parliamentary Assembly [Recommendation 1942 \(2010\)](#) on “A balanced approach to the rescuing of archaeological finds from development projects” and has brought it to the attention of member states’ governments. It has also sent it to the Steering Committee for Cultural Heritage and Landscape (CDPATEP) whose comments have been taken into account in the present reply.
2. The Committee of Ministers observes that cultural heritage has an important role to play as a means of fostering awareness and mutual understanding between peoples. It therefore welcomes the interest shown by the Assembly in issues relating to the preservation and to the fair and sustainable use of cultural and historic heritage and its efforts to promote the Council of Europe’s legal instruments in this field.
3. The Council of Europe’s priorities for 2011 include an assessment of the relevance of the Council of Europe conventions and reform of the Organisation’s intergovernmental structures. In this context, the Committee of Ministers is exploring appropriate arrangements that will allow the Council of Europe to effectively pursue the monitoring of its own conventions, in accordance with its obligations in this area and to give, if necessary, greater prominence to some of these conventions and to promote their signature and ratification.
4. The entry into force in June 2011 of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro, 2005), which approaches heritage resources from the standpoint of human development and the sustainable management of the territory, confirms and updates the approaches set out in the three conventions relating to the architectural and archaeological heritage and the landscape.<sup>2</sup> The Committee of Ministers notes that, in a number of countries, the Faro Convention has already provoked a future-oriented analysis of the concept and role of cultural heritage in changing societies. It further wishes to underline the work done by the CDPATEP in monitoring the implementation of these conventions. Through its efforts, the CDPATEP contributes to the framing, application and adjustment of cross-sectoral and intersectoral policies relating to heritage and the environment, in which the public authorities, the private sector and voluntary associations are all involved. The Committee of Ministers further notes that the integrated approach to heritage to which the Assembly refers, with particular emphasis on the interaction between cultural and natural heritage, was given concrete shape by the work of the CDPATEP, which deals with all activities relating to cultural heritage and landscape. From this angle, the Committee of Ministers also wishes to underline the relevance of the European Landscape Convention.
5. The Committee of Ministers notes that there has been a whole series of other activities along the lines advocated by the Assembly. For example, the Valletta Convention and the archaeology sector served as a reference and a case study for the construction of the reinforced convention monitoring mechanism, and a

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1. adopted at the 1118th meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies (6 July 2011)

2. Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada Convention), European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (revised) (Valletta Convention), European Landscape Convention (Florence Convention).



new version of the HEREIN information system will be put online in 2011. This mechanism, which will make it possible to monitor several conventions simultaneously, will provide both a database which countries can easily update and tools for processing information and managing case studies, thus facilitating the sharing of the good practices to which the Assembly refers. It will also facilitate the incorporation into member states' legislation and practices of the provisions set out in the Valletta Convention and the results of the collaborative process set in motion by the Council of Europe. At this stage the theme of illegal archaeology has been identified as a first possible focus for research using the new tools, and the theme of rescue and preventive archaeology, highlighted by the Assembly, could also give rise to the systematic pooling of experiences within the context of the monitoring of the Valletta Convention.

6. The Committee of Ministers recalls that there is extensive co-operation with the European Union through the regional co-operation programmes in priority regions with regard to the rehabilitation of the built environment and in the joint European Heritage Days programme. Activities specific to the management and enhancement of archaeological heritage, as suggested by the Assembly, could be included in the framing of future joint Council of Europe/European Union programmes, in accordance with the main aims identified in this area.