

# Territorial analysis and identification of Lea Artibai Region

*Leartibai Development Agency*

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The template comprises five steps in the creation of this analysis:

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## 1 Landscape and heritage characterisation

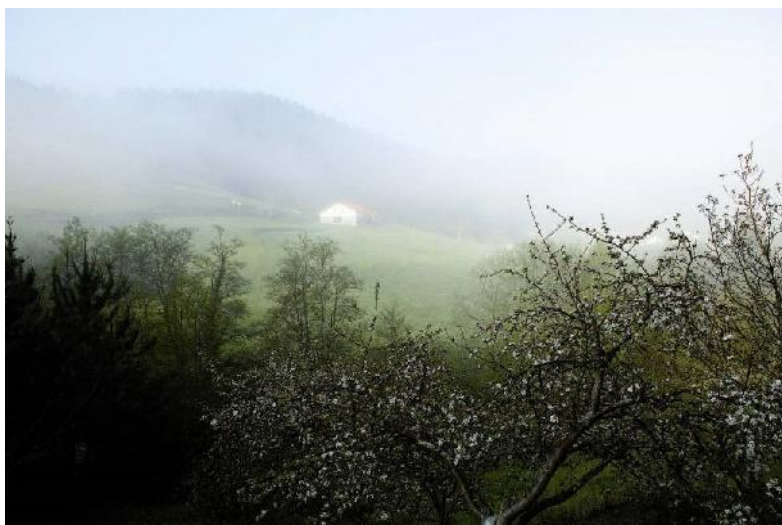
Lea Artibai is a region of the Basque coast located in Bizkaia. The name of this mountainous coastal area is taken from its two rivers that structure the region into two valleys, each with a distinct urban, rural and social composition, and give it its own, strong personality.



Its rivers and valleys are created as a continuation of the massif in the Urkiola nature reserve. To the North, this region looks out onto the Bay of Biscay, which gives it one of its characteristic traits: the boisterous, maritime nature of its people. These rivers have a basin that has not changed much and that is preserved in a magnificent state, with good reason Lea is considered one of the cleanest coasts in the Basque Country. In the upper sections, where the banks are well preserved, alders, ashes, oaks, and hazelnut trees grow. Aquatic vegetation is very abundant and diverse in the basin, since there are numerous dams and reservoirs that transform the rivers in some sections into small ponds or pools, thus alternating with areas of rapids.



This region has been successful in maintaining its ancestral costumes and rural life style throughout the generations, which continue in the diverse farmhouses, villages and harbours throughout its geographical landscape. With the emergence of blacksmithing activities the wooded forest landscapes gave place to pastures and orchards, which are very typical.





Nonetheless, even today we can find enclaves of Cantabrian oak groves, with its characteristic flora of strawberries, bay leaves, climbing plants such as sarsaparilla or rubia peregrina, reforestations of oaks, chestnuts, beech trees, hawthorns, hazelnuts, as well as heather and whin.



The importance that some of these forests have played throughout the centuries can be seen in the stones used in the farmhouses; a faithful reflection of that is the characteristic sandstone used in the farmhouses surrounding the forest of Oiz, and the famous marble from Markina-Xemein taken from their quarries.



Markina-Xemein Village

In order to obtain an excellent view of the interior land and coast there's nothing better than to climb the forests of Kalamua, Iluntzar and Oiz. The latter is the highest one in the region and has the youngest forest in Bizkaia; it is one of the 5 Hornblower Mounts in Bizkaia, from where the Gernika Committee was summoned to the General Council and to send emergency alerts to the province. Currently it can be seen practically from the entire region, given the windmill park that is located at the summit.



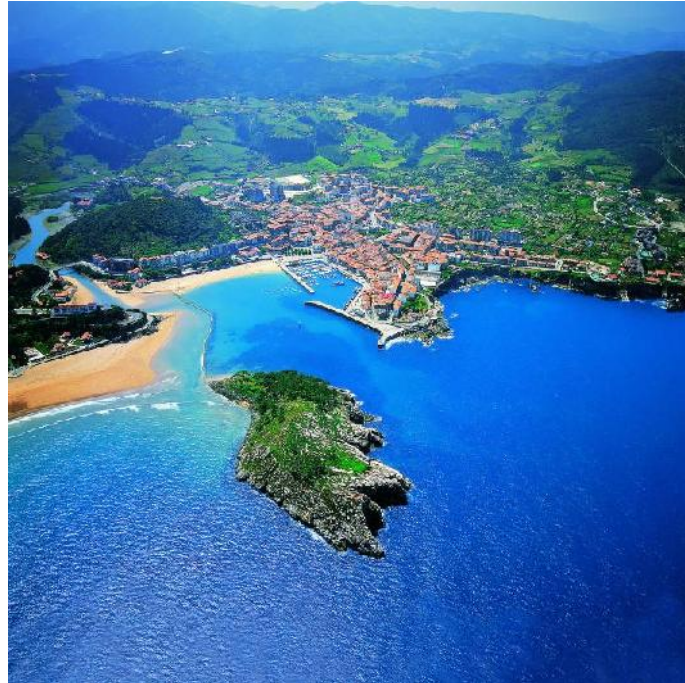
General view of Lea Artibai from Santa Eufemia mountain

Related to the coast, the Lea Artibai region is made up of about 20 Km. of coast, where one can find geological structures and landscapes of great interest.

Our beaches are one of the best well known attractions of our coast. From the wild beach called Ogella in Ispaster, to the spirited beaches of fine sand in Lekeitio, Mendexa, and Ondarroa.

Another characteristic of the coast is the cliffs that descend to the sea, some of them almost vertical and inaccessible, but ideal for birds, such as seagulls, cormorant and peregrine falcons to build their nests protected from predators. In addition, the differential erosion of our coasts has created structures such as the Garraitz- San Nicolas Island, rocky limestone outcrops where rugged nature meets with the histories of plagues and ancient medieval monasteries.





The village of Leketio

The intimate relationship of the inhabitants of this region with the sea has been known since prehistory. Currently this intimate relationship between man and the sea can be seen in the harbours and fishing activities that take place there. No wonder the ports of Ondarroa and Lekeitio, located at the estuary of the two main rivers in the region, is an ideal example of the traditions and way of life of the sea.

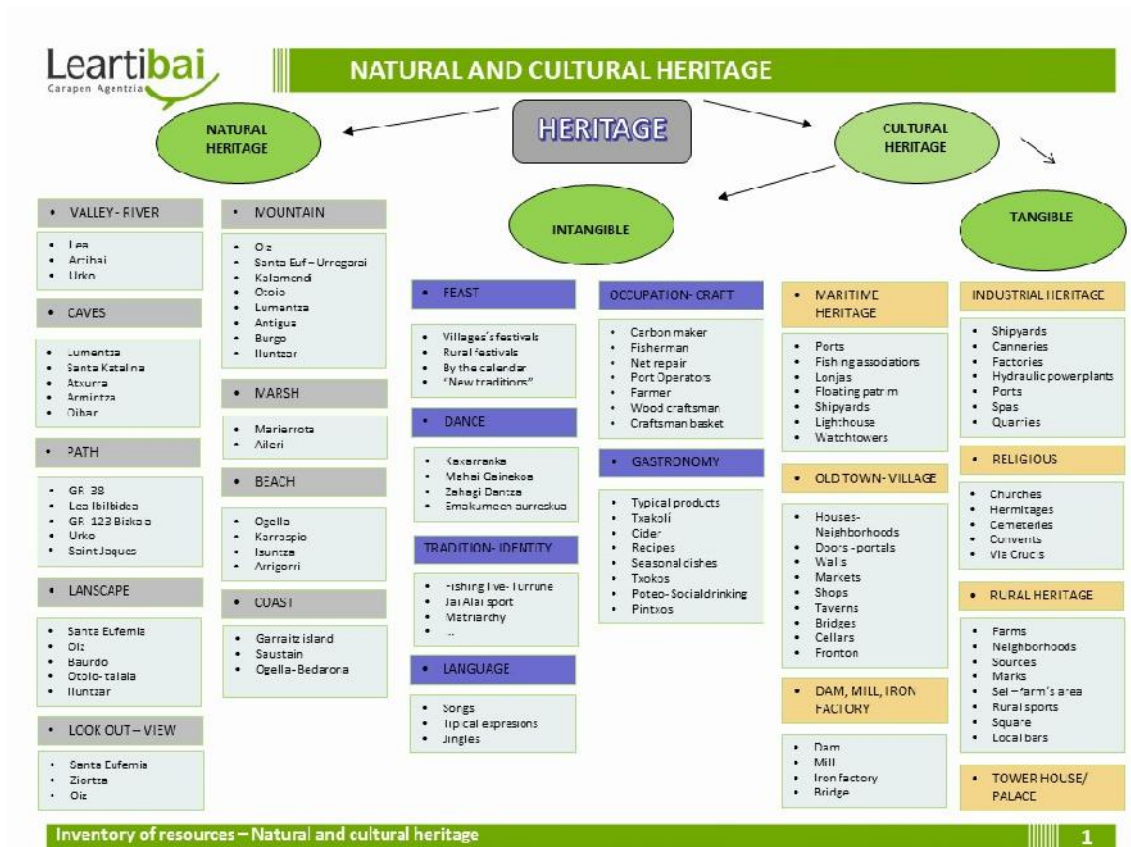


The village of Ondarroa is the first fishing port in the Bay of Biscay

The natural richness of the region coexist with an extraordinary cultural heritage that shows the authenticity and the essence of our territory.

Related to the cultural heritage, the region has tried to conserve much of its heritage, tangible and intangible. Part of this cultural heritage is inventoried, qualified and protected, but it is necessary to provide more tools to the region for its protection and management.

Leartibai Development Agency is developing a diagnosis and an inventory of the heritage of the region, including both the elements already cataloged and those that are important for its contribution to the identity and reality of Lea Artibai.





In relationship to the protected and qualified heritage, the following resources of the region highlight:

ENVIROMENTAL PROTECTION	
Lea river	NATURA 2000 NETWORK- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)
Artibai river	NATURA 2000 NETWORK - Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)
CULTURE HERITAGE PROTECTION	
Lea Valley	Protected and qualified: Industrial Lanscape
Artibai Valley	Open file: Industrial Lanscape
Lekeitio's old quarter	Protected and qualified: Monument Site
Markina- Xemein's old quarter	Protected and qualified: Monument Site
Ondarroa's old quarter	Protected some elements.
Mendieta shipyard	Protected and qualified: Monument
Saint Jaques Road (different resources)	Protected and qualified: UNESCO Site

We have mentioned some of the most important elements of the heritage of the region, although the list is greater. Moreover, we want to stop a moment in the Lea River's valley, recently qualified as INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE by the Basque Government (2015), because it takes one of the two valleys of our region.

In the case or Artibai River's valley, in this moment there is an open process to make an inventory, and to qualified and protect all the areas of the valley, carrying on with the example of Lea River.

Related to the Lea Valley, the Industrial Landscape of the River Lea, located in the north of the province of Bizkaia, in the region of Lea-Artibai, is set up by a series of movable, immovable and valuable heritage sites linked to a ferromassage and naval activity developed at the time Industrial preindustrial next to the river Lea.

The Lea River rises on the north slope of Mount Oiz, crosses 5 different municipalities and, after a journey of approximately 24 km, finally flows into the Cantabrian Sea, between the

coastal towns of Lekeitio and Mendexa. Along its route it receives a great number of races and the environment in which it is located is a rural, mountainous zone, of difficult communication and low density of population. Of all the estuaries of the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country, this is the river basin that less transformation has suffered and its waters stand out for their high quality. The cultural heritage of this industrial landscape is formed by several productive units that have left traces in this valley, and which are integrated by various buildings - halls, mill, shipyards, hydroelectric power stations and sawmills - as well as a series of hydraulic infrastructures - dams, canals Water diversions, reservoirs or bulkheads, sewers, hydraulic tunnels and socaces or channels of water drainage - which serve to drive the water of the river Lea to each productive unit to be put into operation; Using hydraulic energy. Next to the ironworks, mills and shipyards, the units are completed by other residential buildings, and some religious building, which show the scarce population and the difficult communication of these valleys. As evidence of the communication channels of the time there are still some elements of civil works such as bridges.

Munitibar-Arbatzegi-Gerrikaitz, Aulesti, Gizaburuaga, Ispaster, Amoroto, Lekeitio and Mendexa are the municipal terms in which we find these properties, strategically located and interrelated by the river Lea itself, creating a sequence of structures adapted to the Orography and slope of these valleys, and making possible an overall reading.

Therefore, this industrial landscape is exceptional because it still retains the relationship between space and human activity developed in it in the pre-industrial and industrial times, and for conserving many of its original elements, being scarce the affection suffered in the time of The industrial revolution, unlike other river basins of the Basque Country.



Returning to the whole of the region, while its location is quite central in Euskadi, the topography of the Lea Artibai region and the distance to the main roads have led to some isolation of the region. This isolation has facilitated greater conservation of the landscape and historical heritage, along with lower industrial development in relation to other regions. This situation has affected all areas of regional development: employment, demographics, landscape conservation, urban development ...

Thus, in general, the local landscape and heritage are well preserved, with natural areas of great wealth, and unique elements of high heritage value, as the shipyard Mendieta, considered a landmark of maritime heritage in the Bay of Biscay.

## **2 Existing knowledge, material and approaches**

Leartibai is a fisheries dependent area in a depopulation process because of the general crisis and the particular fishing industry crisis. It needs to develop a holistic and sustainable strategy aimed at diversifying the economy and creating jobs. It has a significant and yet unexploited touristic potential, as it is rich in cultural and natural heritage.

This heritage has not even been holistically analyzed, which means that there are still several municipalities unaware of all the elements that comprise their cultural and natural heritage, and so there is a need to identify them and compile an inventory. In these sense, it is worth stressing that our key cultural heritage is linked to the fishing industry which includes a great variety of elements that range from real property (housing, wholesales fish markets, lighthouses, watchtowers, fishing associations, and so on) movable property (shipping vessels, shipyards, fishing tools and equipment...) and intangibles(tradition, celebrities...). However, industrial heritage has not traditionally been considered as “cultural heritage” and so it deserves special protection. Along the same lines, intangible heritage requires special treatment as it has a greater risk of disappearing.

On the other hand, investment in heritage preservation and restoration is decreasing, and it is gradually deteriorating. There is therefore a need of analyzing the state of those elements and deciding how to address each one. It is important to highlight that in order to preserve this heritage it is critical to raise community awareness of their cultural heritage so that it is valued, respected and well disseminated. We therefore need to improve accessibility of cultural heritage to citizens in a physical, educational and digital way.

In sum, our cultural heritage management needs new management tools that finds a balance between the preservation and exploitation, as well as a new governance model that involves actors from the quadruple helix.



In order to achieve a better comprehension and approach, we have made an SWOT analysis about the heritage in our region:

**STRENGTHS:**

- Natural and coastal cultural heritage of high scenic and historical value, quite well preserved.
- Legacy shared at European level. Enormous potential for knowledge about Europe from a point of view close to the citizen (connections and interdependencies of cultural, social and natural history on the continent, local / European identity) that can be incorporated through narratives and narratives in educational policies , Cultural, tourism, etc.
- High testimonial value.
- Incorporation of Heritage into Sustainable Urban and Economic Development Strategies
- Experiences of interest applicable in our region.
- Capacity of the agents involved. Strong stakeholders network.

**WEAKNESSES:**

- Reduced awareness of the value of heritage at the level of citizenship / public authorities.
- Tendency to fossilize the patrimony, especially the industrial one.
- Consideration of heritage as ballast, not as an asset for the development of the territory.
- Distribution of competences between administrations that sometimes causes a lack of coordination between the institutions involved.
- Initiatives more or less dispersed the territory (creation of interpretation centers, inventories and catalogs, studies of industrial landscapes, etc.).

**OPPORTUNITIES:**

- Economic profitability: reuse / new use of spaces; Development of management models that allow interventions to be economically viable; Creation of innovative projects based on tangible and intangible heritage (apps, 3D design, conservation technologies, monitoring, digitization, etc.); A key element for new, more innovative approaches to tourism (routes, museums, etc.); Eco-innovation; Social innovation; etc.
- Social profitability: Natural and cultural heritage considered as an asset that contributes social cohesion and identity value to the community on which it is based;

Incorporation of stories that allow the preservation of intangible heritage for future generations.

- Environmental performance: landscape preservation; new activities to disused spaces, etc.
- New models of transverse governance, paradigm shift. The success of heritage interventions from the perspective of sustainable development, with an integrated approach.
- Spatial planning: processes of regeneration of public spaces that imply a more efficient use of resources (soil, etc.), with the aim of preserving and maintaining the landscape.
- Sustainable local / regional economic development. Natural and cultural heritage, a factor for the valorization of the territory and the promotion of sustainable economic and social development.
- Multiple possibilities of public intervention at different levels and with different degrees of investment required.
- Ability to generate a new value chain for the sustainable development of the territory around the coastal landscape.
- Integration of the landscape into the regional specialization strategies RIS3 (PCTI Euskadi 2020, culture and territorial and urban planning are considered as opportunity niches linked to the territory) in order to explore in greater depth possible synergies with other sectors.
- 2018, European Year of Cultural Heritage.

#### THREATS:

- Fragility. Quick deterioration of the heritage caused by the absence of intervention.
- Progressive disappearance of the intangible legacy
- Reticence on the part of the administrations to intervene in heritage, due to the difficulties that it implies in conservation, and due to possible limitations to new uses too.
- Absence of integral planning of patrimonial resources; Planning based on watertight compartments. Absence of heritage governance from an integral- holistic point of view.
- Territorial transformations (new infrastructures, etc.)
- Plunder of the heritage.

Related to the approaches, Leartibai Development Agency has participated in the process of updating the **Partial Territorial Plan for the Functional Area of Gernika-Markina**, which establishes a series of measures and make proposals for action oriented to, as a primary goal, to get a comprehensive management of the functional territorial area.

Among the objectives of the Plan are the following:

- Maintenance and enhancement of uniqueness, natural and landscape values.
- Preservation of built elements of rural heritage and rehabilitation of areas with historical and / or cultural value.
- To promote the preservation of historical, cultural and architectural heritage as a tourist value.

The Plan includes Natural Elements and Singular Spaces that have own protection figures and **Cultural Property Qualified, protected by law 7/1990, which make up the Cultural Heritage of the Basque Country**, which should be incorporated into municipal planning.

Therefore, in this case the approach to the analysis about landscape has been made from the point of view of the territorial development, in a general way that integrates all aspects affecting heritage in such development.

So, in relationship to the landscape, the **PTP** makes some highlights to take on account for this project: The specifically landscape management of this PTP comprehend six aspects, which can be understood as major objectives of landscape quality:

- 1.- Protection of Areas of Special Landscape Interest
- 2.- Approach and enjoy the landscape in a respectful way
- 3.- Valuation of the landscape resources of the rivers Lea, Oka and Artibai
- 4.- Improvement and re-qualification of the landscape
- 5.- Landscape integration of buildings, infrastructures and activities
- 6.- Maintenance of the hamlets- farms and conservation of their environment

#### 1 Protection of Areas of Special Landscape Interest.

Areas of Special Landscape Interest are parts of the territory which, due to their intrinsic landscape values and their good conservation, or because they are topographically prominent and highly visible areas, are specially protected.





## 2.- Approach and enjoy the landscape in a respectful way.

The PTP promotes the creation of a Network of Tours of Landscape Interest providing rich visions of the diversity of landscape configurations of the Functional Area and visual planes at different scales: overall panoramas, medium planes and good visions of proximity, allowing at the same time a rapprochement and enjoy the landscape in a respectful way, being, to a large extent, routes based on existing roads that respect the parceling and do not interfere in agricultural activity. In our region, we highlight these ones:

♣ Saint Jaques Road: Qualified by the Basque Government as Cultural Heritage with the category of Monumental Set by Decree 2/2012 of 10 January. It traverses the Functional Area from east to west, supporting part of its route in the river course of Artibai. It crosses the urban centers of Markina, Ziortza Munitibar, Ajangiz Gernika and Morga, to enter the Functional Area of Durango, out of Lea Artibai.

♣ GR 123, or Bizkaia Round. This path is object of a project of conditioning and signaling, within the E-9 European Coastal Path, by the Department of Agriculture of the Region. In its section near the coast it would correspond with the path of the sea, driven by the Review of the Planning Guidelines (DOT).

♣ Gr 38 o Route of Wine and Fish. They are routes that leave the municipalities of Bermeo, Ondarroa and Lekeitio and they converge in Gernika, passing through Busturia and Mendata, among others.

♣ Lea, Artibai and Oka landscaped river routes For its uniqueness, its value is discussed in the following section ...

The routes of scenic interest shall include, as far as possible, elements of particular scenic interest, among which the following can be distinguished:

- Landscape landmarks, conformed by watchtowers and viewpoints, as prominent elements of the relief and socially qualified.
- Elements or Cultural Assemblages of scenic interest, by their own value (hermitages, some rural centers, isolated hamlets, prehistoric monuments and their surroundings), their integration in areas and / or itineraries of scenic interest, or to offer panoramic views of interest.

## 3. Improvement of the landscape resources of the Lea, Artibai and Oka rivers.

From the PTP it is recommended to the municipal planning to propose actions that, with a minimum intervention, enhance the value of the landscape river routes as elements of access to the landscape while preserving its ecological and natural value.

Among other actions, it is recommended, where they do not exist, the establishment of information bases on these routes, which coordinate certain facilities to carry out the route by the visitor (parking, collective transportation stops ...)

In particular, it seeks to put into value the intrinsic landscape values of the Oka basin and the river course and surroundings of the Lea and Artibai rivers.

#### 4. Improvement and re-qualification of the landscape.

The measures proposed by the PTP in the field of restoration and maintenance of the landscape are focused on the recovery of degraded areas and the care of the border elements and transition between the anthropized landscape and the natural environment. The main measures to be developed are:

- ♣ Restoration and regeneration of the most degraded spaces and elements (especially quarries and their environments). The PTP proposes landscape restoration initiatives to recover, as far as possible, the original situation of the affected land.

All actions will be promoted to get the recovery of potential vegetation and the maintenance and recovery of native vegetation and geomorphological formations of greater natural and landscape significance. The landscape restoration of the areas subject to extractive activity will be encouraged, as the resources of the same are depleted.

- ♣ Restoration and conditioning of coastal edges, including revegetation and cleaning.

- ♣ Treatment of the environments of the main communication routes, in order to mitigate the impact they produce on the territory.

- ♣ Treatment of the façades of the main urban centers, especially in the limits with the rural environment, where in addition will be taken care of the elements of edge, as they can be road or fenced perimetrales of plot.

- ♣ Treatment of marine facades. It is understood by marine facade the set of natural and / or constructed elements that exposed to the sea configure an identity image in the landscape. The proposals presented in this PTP are directed to the conditioning and improvement of the coastal edge avoiding the transformation of the relief of the coast and the formation of architectural screens. It promotes the visual and functional permeability of the coastline through the enhancement of the public spaces of the sea front that generate elements of leisure and recreation in continuity with the routes and corridors proposed by the Plan.

- ♣ Environment of the Rural centers, giving a morphological sense the boundary between the settlement and the rustic soil.



♣ Valorization of the patrimonial and landscape elements of the coast, guaranteeing the conservation of the same. In this sense, the PTP is committed to the reuse of built heritage as a key element for the creation of routes of scenic interest.

♣ Enhancement of accessibility and contemplation of the landscape, guaranteeing the continuity of areas and routes and respecting the principles of minimum intervention, restoration and conservation, in accordance with the provisions of the Special Plans or Landscape Ordinances.

#### 5. Landscape integration of buildings, infrastructures and activities

Landscape integration aims to enhance the relationships between the elements that make up a project and the landscape that surrounds it, so that, despite the inevitable transformation, the first comprises and complements the second.

Access to the landscape should be ordered in an integrated way by the Town Councils involved, ensuring continuity. Priority will be given to ensuring that the detailed planning of the proposals is carried out jointly by the Town Councils involved.

In general, in the integrated system of access to the landscape, the intervention regime will correspond to the principles of minimum intervention, restoration and conservation, and will have to conform to what is established for this purpose by the Special Plans or Landscape Ordinances.

#### 6. Maintenance of the hamlets- farms and conservation of their environment

The PTP defends the maintenance of the hamlets- farms with uni or bifamiliar residential use linked mainly to the primary activity and the conformation of the landscape of this territory.

So, as we can see, the main policies about the management of the landscape in our region derive mainly from this Plan.

At the same time, we participate too in the development process of the **municipality's subsidiary rules of urban planning**, where the landscape and coastal heritage appear as elements to preserve and protect.

In these processes, Leartibai Development Agency is engaged in the provision of comprehensive assistance to municipalities so as to maintain current business network and generate new sustainable economic activities, based on the preservation and development of natural and cultural heritage. We design and implement specific actions plans through citizen participatory processes.



Citizens proposed many options for the urban planning of the municipality of Lekeitio, in an open forum and exhibition.

February 2017.

Other approaches to consider are the **coastline and tourist development plans**, those are managed by our agents Hazi and Basquetour, respectively.

At a regional local level, the **Maritime Heritage Center in the municipality of Lekeitio**(2006), establishes an approach to the heritage from local development, trying to find that balance between conservation and exploitation of the heritage resources of the coast.

### 3 Existing policies on landscape and heritage

First, we must refer to the territory management and, more specifically, spatial planning instruments. So, to create a legal framework for this competition, the Basque Country approved the **Law 4/1990 of May 31th, for the Regional Planning**. The following instruments of Planning established in this law (art. 2):

- Planning Guidelines (DOT)
- Partial Territorial Plans (PTP)
- Sectorial Territorial Plans (PTS)

The Law 4/1990 performed in the following definitions:

- **Guidelines Spatial Planning of the Basque Country** (art. 4) are the general framework for the formulation of the remaining management tools and management plans.
- **Partial Territorial Plans** (art. 11) are the development of the DOT in the functional areas- regions of the Basque Country. The DOT delimit 15 Functional Areas all over the country.
- **Territorial Sector** (art. 16) Plans are territorial impact plans developed by the departments of the Basque Government or the Regional- Provincial Councils to develop their skills.

About the Partial Territorial Plans, they will develop the Territorial Planning Guidelines in the areas or zones that they delimit, specifying for each specific management criteria that the Guidelines established. Respect to Lea Artibai, the new **PTP of Gernika.-Markina was approved in 2016**.

Related to the landscape, in 2009, the Basque Government agreed to its accession to the European Landscape Convention, signed in 2000 in Florence by the Council of Europe. Later, one of the commitments arising from the accession to that convention is to integrate landscape into spatial planning policies. Guidelines for Regional Planning of the Basque Country include the need to list those visual areas that should have a special landscape treatment, and that every work or action to break the current modeling of the landscape is accompanied by the corresponding landscape study. The Guidelines also specify that these issues should be developed in the Territorial Plans.

With this regulatory framework, in 2014 the Basque Government approved the **Decree 90/2014 on the protection, management and landscape management in regional planning of the Basque Country**, with the aim of setting the standard mechanisms to implement these

forecasts and thus achieve a more coherent and systematic way, meeting the objective of the integration of landscape into spatial planning.

The Decree identifies instruments such as the **landscape catalogs, landscape Determinations, Landscape Action Plans and landscape integration studies**. The Decree also responds to the commitments made by the Basque Government to promote awareness, training, education, participation and other support actions in the field of landscape.

Within the Sectoral Territorial Plans, we have to mention one of them: **The Sectorial Territorial Plan (PTS) for the Protection and Coastal Management**, which comes with an essential goal: achieving a greater degree of environmental and ecological shield natural heritage which is the coastline of the Basque Country.

In fact, it aims to become a determining factor, since the consideration of the Basque coast as a whole, arbitrate effective protection measures that lessen the impacts of activities that put pressure on the instrument.

It is, in short, not only to protect and manage, but also, in addition to optimizing the coordination of territorial and urban development between different administrations operating on coastal and terrestrial environment, so that maximum efficiency is guaranteed to preserve what environmentally good health and improve or regenerate, if any, areas that require it.

Moreover, in relation to cultural heritage, the **Law 7/1990, of July 3, for the Basque Cultural Heritage** is the reference document. That law aims defense, enrichment and protection as well as the dissemination and promotion of Basque cultural heritage.

At the local level, each municipality develops its own **subsidiary rules of urban planning**, where the landscape and coastal heritage appear as elements to preserve and protect.



## 4 Ongoing policy development processes

We are working on these projects and plans:

The **Tourism Master Plan for the Basque Coast**, managed by Basquetour, that coordinates the different initiatives promoted by all of the organisations which work in the development of tourism in the towns and regions of the Basque Country. Basquetour is in charge of promoting the tourism in the Basque Country, so they have deep knowledge of its heritage. They are experts in enhancing and disseminating it with a holistic approach in accordance with the Basque Tourism Strategy. They are also in contact with the entire touristic network.

The Tourism Master Plan for the Basque Coast (PDTCV), a document drafted by Basquetour in 2010, establishes the guidelines that, in matters of tourism policy, should be carried out by the group of agents present in this tourist destination, both those from the private sector (companies Services, establishments and agents, etc.), such as those in the public sector (institutions of different levels Administrative: municipalities, counties, provincial councils and Basque Government).

Its implementation, in a participatory way, allows to establish a logical tourism planning of the coast Basque, a territory that was identified as a sum of micro-destinations, where numerous Resources and initiatives local and regional coexist with disparate tourist development.

Beyond a planning exercise of specific actions, it also aims to coordinate and plan the activities of the different institutions and private entities operating in the Basque Coast, betting on common projects and complementary to each other, to avoid competition between tourist enclaves that form the Basque coast. The plan seeks to be a reference tool that help to the global conceptualization of the whole of the littoral strip, under criteria of preservation, Sustainability and quality, for which it is considered necessary the participation of all tourist agents which operate at the destination.

For the implementation of the PDTCV, a system of relationship between agents has been a model of management that allows the articulation, coordination and joint work of all organizations with competence or incidence in the tourist space. It is made up of a series of Forums or work tables of different levels and nature of composition (institutional table, table Technical and sectoral groups public and private) that, in different degree of activity and development, structure and relate to the tourism sector.

The PDTCV marks the work guides, approved by all the intervening agents, although annually action plans for each working group and sector are detailed.

Related to the coastal natural and cultural heritage, this plan establishes the following working programs:

AXIS 4> Creation of tourism product oriented to achieve the tourism out of high seasonality

LINE 4.1> Development of a strategic program of actions linked to the Culture of the Sea.

LINE 4.4> Valuing nature and the coastal landscape.

LINE 4.1> Development of a strategic program of actions linked to the Culture of the Sea.

*This line is based on the constitution of an offer of cultural tourism, which pretends to be the differentiating element with respect to others, based on the importance and historical trajectory of the Basque people in their connection to the sea, fishing and maritime trade.*

*It must be an element, not only of knowledge towards the tourist, but also a tool of recovery, protection and socialization of an extensive and complex patrimony; of a way to understand life. It is about adding value to the heritage (movable and immovable property, traditions, events and trades) for incorporation into the tourist consumption process.*

*A program that must recover significant elements of the maritime heritage (both the coastal and the floating), rehabilitating them and reinterpreting them as a resource without losing their identity characteristics.*

*It will be a set of actions integrated in the reality and singularity of each coastal town, within an overall vision, where maritime heritage is the new axis on which to argue the new tourism offer of the Basque Coast.*

*There are numerous patrimonial elements on which to base these bases. It is only necessary to add the human component to build an authentic, truthful and singular offer. It is worth mentioning the importance of the port areas as elements of sea union that treasure history, and which are the reflection of an economic activity that today remains.*

*Similarly, the use of cultural heritage for tourism purposes will allow (along with other measures of economic diversification aimed at the fishing sector) the economic reactivation of certain nuclei of the Basque Coast. This will therefore require the active participation of the fishing sector itself as a guarantee of authenticity in the proposals for fisheries tourism that are developed.*

*Therefore, it is considered vital to put together a complete tourism offer together with maritime heritage and professionals of the sea.*

*Initially, the program of actions should establish the steps for the integration of maritime heritage into the tourist offer, promoting its recovery, protection and socialization through various actions ....*

*... Events and traditional folklore can and should be integrated into tourist consumption, being treated with the utmost respect and preserving its authenticity. In this sense, it is proposed the recovery and adaptation of events and traditions for their insertion in a tourist dimension; (For example, the anniversaries of Mutriku or Getaria - Elcano disembarkation), historical commercial routes (remembrance of the iron route through the association Itsasbegia, route of wool by Deba, fish and wine route in Ondarroa, Bermeo and Lekeitio, etc.).*

*It is also necessary to implement initiatives for the enhancement of maritime heritage through the development of more concrete actions, such as the design of circuits or local routes by land oriented to their heritage or to illustrious characters, traditions and legends, songs of the sea, Expressions, poetry and stories of the locality; The establishment of a route based panoramic points from defensive landmarks, hermitages and watchtowers; Or the development of a network of interpretation centers in ports or panoramic points. As a pilot initiative to promote is the conversion of a destination in a Center for Maritime Heritage (Lekeitio), as it encompasses numerous interventions that have revalued the resources of the maritime heritage being all accessible to the tourist.*

LINE 4.4> Valuing nature and the coastal landscape.

*The landscape is an essential part of the tourist offer, hence the nature and quality of the environment importance in the configuration of a holiday destination, a fact that is further accentuated in coastal areas of high scenic interest.*

*Therefore, given the great landscape value of the The Basque Coast, it is necessary to design and implement tourism initiatives to the coastal front, in balance with the environment and applying criteria of environmental sustainability. The design of routes or routes on the coast that integrate points panoramic views and elements of coastal heritage (watchtowers, hermitages, etc.) for the interpretation of the landscape and of the territory form a set of actions that must be carried out in the short term.*

**Leartibai BioGreen Strategy:** This county strategy promotes the sustainable economic development of the county for the job and wealth creation and a smart specialization strategy has been defined and it is being implemented. This strategy promotes the diversification of the economic activities and the creation of new activities related to the health and healthy areas. Within this strategy, tourism is envisaged as an activity for further social, cultural, economic and employment development in harmony with the environment - landscape.



Sustainability, wellness and identity are considered the key factors for the tourism development. Lea-Artibai tourism strategy is therefore closely linked to the maritime and fishing cultural heritage (considering both tangible and intangible elements), traditions, gastronomy and natural resources.

**The Maritime Heritage Center of Lekeitio**, a global intervention project to enhance the value of the existing heritage, cultural and natural resources, many of them considered unique in the Basque coastal heritage. The project has three dimensions: Cultural and recovering heritage, social and economic (Heritage also understood as a resource, as an element to dynamise the economy)

**The subsidiary rules of urban planning of the municipalities of Lea Artibai**. We provide assistance to municipalities, from the perspective of economic development.

The municipality of **Lekeitio** has developed in 2016 a **Landscape Action Plan**. This plan is more operative in order to develop the strategy for landscape management. In the case of Lekeitio, the plan refers to all the municipality.

The participation of the agents and the citizens concerned is of particular relevance in this matter in so far as the landscape and its scope are directly related with the perception of the people who work or inhabit the territory in question.





## 5 looking forward to 2018 Cultural Heritage Year

One of the great challenges of the region in relation to the management of the coastal heritage is the involvement of the population in the conservation, protection, promotion and dissemination of our heritage.

Therefore, we believe that 2008 Cultural Heritage Year gives us the opportunity to try to achieve a greater commitment of our stakeholders and the population of the region through activities aimed at value, awareness and appreciation of the coastal landscape's heritage, serving both the tangible and intangible heritage.

To do this, we will work with our stakeholders according to the communication strategy developed.

Related to this, in our stakeholders meetings and dissemination event, we can see that the involvement of our municipalities is increasing and the ideas to develop and action plan are clearer than at the beginning of the project.

We think that we are working on the right sense to achieve our aim.

