



# What do we mean for landscape?

When we travel and we observe the space around us, we realize that the reality around us can appear in very different ways, depending on the place where we are. These **shapes of the space** in geography are called **landscapes**. Giving a definition of landscape is not easy, because it is the **sum of different elements which make up the geographical space**. They are **natural elements** (mountains, rivers, forests...) and **elements created by human intervention** (cultivated fields, roads, houses...): these are called **anthropic elements**. Finally, as well as by visible elements, landscape is influenced by **invisible elements**, like **geographical position, climate or presence of minerals** in the **subsoil**. Landscapes are of different types and they are classified according to the most important element. Therefore there are **mountain, hill and plain landscapes**. But also **city** represents a type of landscape.

What is an **“anthropic” landscape**? Today there are **few landscapes** which are **totally “natural”**. In fact also landscapes without anthropic elements, like those which are totally desert or of high mountain, are subject in some ways to human intervention: let's think about the decrease of glaciers and of arctic ices caused by air pollution or the

territories that became desert because of tree and forest knocking. Therefore it is important to give a precise definition of what we mean for **“anthropic landscape”**. Anthropic is a **territory organized by the man for a specific purpose**: this new organization substitutes, by modifying it, the preexisting landscape.

Is there any difference between **environment** and **landscape**? Often the term landscape is used as synonym of “environment”, but actually they are two different concepts. The word **environment** indicates generally the **complex of natural elements** (plants, animals, water and land) **and of the resources which surround the man and any other living organism**. Instead the word **landscape** indicates the **specific shape that the environment can assume**.

An example of **anthropic landscape**: panorama view of the **Po Valley**, Pianura Padana, in the countryside of Bologna, Italy.



## True or false?

1. A landscape is only made by natural elements.
2. A landscape is influenced also by invisible elements, like climate.
3. Today there are few landscapes which are totally “natural”.
4. An anthropic landscape is a territory organized for a specific purpose.
5. Environment and landscape are synonyms.

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