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CEP-CDCPP (2013) Prix 2F et Bil.

CONVENTION EUROPEENNE DU PAYSAGE

CEP-CDPATEP

PRIX DU PAYSAGE DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE DE LA CONVENTION EUROPEENNE DU PAYSAGE

– Réunion du Jury –

3^e Session 2012-2013

Conseil de l'Europe
Palais de l'Europe, Strasbourg
- Salle 3 -
16-17 mai 2013

*Document du Secrétariat Général
Direction de la Gouvernance démocratique
Direction Générale II – Démocratie*

Présentation

Prix du paysage du Conseil de l'Europe

La Convention européenne du paysage prévoit l'attribution d'un Prix du paysage du Conseil de l'Europe (article 11). Elle mentionne que sur proposition des Comités d'experts chargés du suivi de la mise en œuvre de la Convention, le Comité des Ministres définit et publie les critères d'attribution du Prix du paysage, adopte son règlement et décerne le prix.

Le Comité des ministres a adopté la Résolution CM/Res(2008)3 sur le règlement relatif au Prix du paysage du Conseil de l'Europe le 20 février 2008 (Annexe à ce document).

Le Prix a été lancé en 2008 et deux sessions du prix ont été organisées : en 2008-2009 et en 2010-2011.

Le Prix s'inscrit dans la lignée du travail accompli par le Conseil de l'Europe en faveur des droits de l'homme, de la démocratie et du développement durable, et met en valeur la dimension territoriale des droits de l'homme et de la démocratie, en reconnaissant l'importance des mesures prises pour améliorer les caractéristiques paysagères du cadre de vie des populations.

3^e Session du Prix du paysage du Conseil de l'Europe

Conformément à la Résolution CM/Res(2008)3 sur le règlement relatif au Prix du paysage du Conseil de l'Europe et dans le cadre de l'organisation de la 3^e Session du Prix du paysage du Conseil de l'Europe, les Parties à la Convention ont été invitées à présenter par la voie des Représentants permanents des Parties à la Convention pour le 15 décembre 2012 / 25 janvier 2013 des candidatures au Secrétariat Général du Conseil de l'Europe.

Le Secrétariat Général du Conseil de l'Europe a reçu 18 candidatures en provenance des Parties suivantes :

- Belgique,
- République tchèque,
- Finlande,
- France,
- Hongrie,
- Irlande,
- Italie,
- Lettonie,
- Lituanie,
- Pays-Bas,
- Pologne,
- Portugal,
- Roumanie,
- Serbie,
- Slovaquie,
- Slovénie,
- Espagne,
- Royaume-Uni.

Un jury international constitué en tant qu'organe subordonné des comités d'experts visés à l'article 10 de la Convention se réunit les 16-17 mai 2013 afin d'examiner les candidatures et de proposer le lauréat et possibles mentions spéciales. Mme Mireille DECONINCK a été élue par le Comité directeur

de la culture, du patrimoine culturel et du paysage (CDCPP) comme sa représentante afin de siéger dans le Jury (Décision du CDCPP adoptée lors de sa 1^e Session Plénière, Strasbourg, 14-16 mai 2012 - CDCPP(2012) 35 REV., Point 5.4.2).

Lors de sa 2^e Réunion (Strasbourg, 27-29 mai 2013), le CDCPP examinera les propositions du jury et adressera ses propositions quant au lauréat du prix et, le cas échéant, les mentions spéciales, au Comité des Ministres.

Au vu des propositions du CDCPP, le Comité des Ministres décernera le prix et les mentions spéciales éventuelles. Le prix et les mentions spéciales seront remis par le Secrétaire Général du Conseil de l'Europe avec la participation du (de la) Président(e) du CDCPP et du (de la) Président(e) de la Conférence du Conseil de l'Europe sur la Convention européenne du paysage, ou de leur représentant(e)s.

Une présentation des candidatures figure sur le site Internet du Conseil de l'Europe de la Convention européenne du paysage

<http://www.coe.int/EuropeanLandscapeConvention>

section consacrée au Prix du paysage du Conseil de l'Europe

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/Prix/Session2013_fr.asp.

Les candidatures ayant été primées ou reconnues par des mentions spéciales seront présentées à l'occasion de la 13^e Réunion du Conseil de l'Europe des Ateliers pour la mise en œuvre de la Convention européenne du paysage.

* * *

Voir pour information:

«*Prix du paysage du Conseil de l'Europe* », Série du Conseil de l'Europe aménagement du territoire et paysage, 2012, n° 96 (présentation des réalisations des sessions 1 et 2 du Prix)

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/Publications/LandscapeAwards_fr.pdf

11^e Réunion des Ateliers du Conseil de l'Europe pour la mise en œuvre de la Convention européenne du paysage «*Forum des sélections nationales du Prix du paysage du Conseil de l'Europe – Sessions 2008-2010 et 2010-2011*», Carbonia, Italie, 4-5 juin 2012

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/ReunionAteliers/carbonia_fr.asp

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1. HOGE KEMPEN NATIONAL PARK, REGIONAAL LANDSCHAP KEMPEN EN MAASLAND VZW, BELGIUM

I. STATE CONCERNED AND APPLICANT

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II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECT

3. Name of the Project	HOGE KEMPEN NATIONAL PARK
4. Location of the Project	Belgium, province of Limburg, municipalities of As, Dilsen-Stokkem, Genk, Lanaken, Maasmechelen, Zutendaal

5. Summary of the Project

In the early 1990's, the situation in the Hoge Kempen region was as follows: the four present coalmines were closing and the landscape was intersected by roads and fragmented due to poor spatial planning. Several smaller nature reserves existed in the area but were separated from each other.

The Hoge Kempen National Park (started in 1998, opened in 2006) turned this situation around. It is the framework that brings together every stakeholder or involved party. It is the tool for spatial and visual unification of the several nature reserves to a 5,700 ha joined heath land and forest area. It is a leverage for the integration of local economical activities and the employment chance for socially vulnerable people. It is the blossoming of biodiversity, integrated landscape quality and sustainable tourism. It is a supported bottom-up approach.

6. Photo representing the Project



III. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

7. **Start of the Project** month year

8. Partners

Government of Flanders (*public administration*)

- Agency for Nature and Forests (*government agency*)
- Roads and Traffic Agency (*government agency*)
- Agency for Spatial planning (*government agency*)
- Flanders Heritage Agency (*government agency*)
- Tourism Flanders (*government agency*)

Province of Limburg (*public administration*)

- Provincial Centre for Nature (*provincial services*)
- Provincial Centre for Cultural Heritage (*provincial services*)
- Limburg Tourism Board (*provincial non-profit organisation*)

City of Dilsen-Stokkem (*public administration*)

City of Genk (*public administration*)

- Kattevennen (*municipal non-profit organisation*)

Municipality of As (*public administration*)

- Kolenspoor (*municipal non-profit organisation*)

Municipality of Lanaken (*public administration*)

- Vrienden van Pietersheim (*municipal non-profit organisation*)

Municipality of Maasmechelen (*public administration*)

Municipality of Zutendaal (*public administration*)

- Lieteberg (*municipal non-profit organisation*)

Limburgse ReconversieMaatschappij (*public limited company*)

Limburg Sterk Merk (*public benefit purpose foundation*)

Hasselt University (*university institution*)

9. Financing bodies

The same as the partners mentioned above.

10. Central aims of the Project

The basis for the Hoge Kempen National Park project was created in 1990 when the NGO Regionaal Landschap Kempen en Maasland was set up. It was the first Regional Landscape in Flanders and was founded by the NGO for nature conservation Natuurpunt and the Kempense Steenkoolmijnen (Campine Coal mines). It led to a concept, similar to that of a 'National Park', 'Naturpark' (D), 'Nationaal Landschap' (NL) or 'Parc Naturel Régional' (F), being officially embodied in a law. The twelve municipalities involved, Limburg's provincial administration and nature, woodland, hunting and agricultural organisations – active in the region – joined the ranks as working members.

In 1998 the organisation launched the 'Hoge Kempen, Green Opportunity' campaign on behalf of its members. It was an appeal to the Government of Flanders to make every effort regarding the special qualities of the Hoge Kempen landscape and to capitalise on those qualities, using the international and highly valued concept of 'national park' for stimulating the local economy.

In 2000 this led to the contract for the development of a 'Hoge Kempen National Park Master Plan', with the partnership comprising the manager (Agency for Nature and Forests), the involved municipalities, the province of Limburg and social partners (employers and employees).

Following a decision made by the Government of Flanders (2002) an official steering group and an administrative project group were established in which all the partners were represented. The operational responsibilities were entrusted to a professional project agency that was assigned the following tasks:

- organising the structures for consultation,
- encouraging, aligning and supporting the different partners' actions,
- ensuring a substantive contribution of third-party initiatives (sub-projects) to explicitly develop the Hoge Kempen National Park concept,
- monitoring the quality and the concept of the Hoge Kempen National Park,
- examining the feasibility of actions in the master plan and further detailing and updating them if necessary,
- elaborating and implementing a plan for shared recreational use and visitor management, taking into account the area's ecological carrying capacity,
- developing and managing innovative projects for shared recreational use,
- coordinating and encouraging projects related to nature-oriented tourism,
- organising innovative forms of education and visitor support,
- promoting international contacts and collaboration,
- developing recommendations for sustainable management (economic, tourist, technical-environmental, etc.) for the Hoge Kempen National Park.

The contract for the organisation of this project agency for the Hoge Kempen National Park was entrusted to the NGO Regionaal Landschap Kempen en Maasland.

This was the first time that a cross-sector partnership had been established in Belgium on this scale for a large, well-defined landscape unit (the Hoge Kempen, approximately 40,000 ha). In other words, a '*task force*' with a clear mandate (= implementing the master plan), an operational tool (= the project agency with additional staffing and creative capacity) and the necessary financial resources (= additional, as well as those traditionally earmarked for the landscape). Herein lies the basis of the internationally acclaimed and much valued Hoge Kempen National Park project.

The objective of the Hoge Kempen National Park project is to preserve the intrinsic value and quality and functional coherence of the Hoge Kempen landscape, to restore it where possible, to enhance it where necessary, and to open it up for the people to enjoy it. Bearing this in mind, a National Park occupying approximately 6,000 ha, was demarcated in the centre of the Hoge Kempen region and supplied with quality visitor facilities.

The project's implementation involved seven areas of activity:

- delimitation: 80% of the nature reserves is public property; the perimeter is consistently translated into policy instruments for nature, landscape care etc,
- reducing fragmentation: transforming existing roads into cycling paths; construction of ecoducts (wildlife crossing bridges) over roads that can't be closed to traffic,
- handling enclaves: realising exit and transition scenarios for conflicting functions,
- management: management by the Agency for Nature and Forests: implementation of a nature and landscape restoration plan,
- heritage: core area of "Hoge Kempen rural-industrial landscape", eligible for UNESCO World Heritage,
- improved access and shared recreational use: quality route network for walkers, cyclists and horse

- riders; permanent maintenance service; Ranger activities,
- welcoming visitors and tourism: five Gateways to the National Park, in close cooperation with existing local hospitality and lodging businesses.

11. Outcome

The Hoge Kempen National Park project yielded a considerable dynamic, and establishing its end date is neither feasible nor desirable. The landscape requires continuous care, permanent consultation structures and new projects that respond to new insights and developments. It is precisely the project structure's permanent character and the 'go as you grow' idea that make this landscape project sustainable.

Nevertheless, important milestones have been achieved, strategic leverage projects have been carried out and the National Park can be seen as a demonstrable success in this area.

- The opening of the Hoge Kempen National Park on March 23th 2006 represented a key moment where the most important landscape and spatial conditions were achieved.
- At the same time the 'Gateways' to the National Park were developed, with a clear focus on improved spatial quality: the beginning of the Lieteberg development in 2003, of Kattevennen and As in 2004 and of Pietersheim and Mechelse Heide in 2005.
- The launch of the feasibility study and finally the inclusion of the Hoge Kempen on the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative list on May 25th 2011 is another major milestone.

The strategy of the Hoge Kempen National Park's project agency has always aimed to transcend strict local and sectoral boundaries. National parks embody an international dimension and concern more than only nature conservation. Since the start of the Hoge Kempen National Park project, there has been close contact with other European national parks (in Wales, Estonia and the Netherlands, to name a few), mostly through cooperation in European projects.

The project agency is also preparing a nomination file about 'Hoge Kempen, rural-industrial transition landscape' for application to UNESCO World Heritage. The site is already enclosed on the Belgian Tentative List. The combination of the present medieval heath land patches and the more recent coalmining relicts, forms a unique cultural landscape. A special feature is the unique urban-architectural heritage of the "garden-cities" belonging to the former coalmines that are located around the National Park. Together they are a cultural and nature-historical symbiosis.

The project's implementation involves seven ongoing areas of activity. This is an overview of the outcome so far:

- **DELIMINATION:** Although the project is located in the broader Hoge Kempen region, the central and most valuable part was demarcated as a National Park in accordance with international norms and standards for national parks. Eighty percent of this area is public property and the government is implementing an active policy to acquire the remaining land and/or to make long-term agreements with the owners regarding appropriate management of the landscape. This perimeter is consistently translated into policy instruments for nature and

landscape care, spatial planning and so on, to guarantee sustainable protection.

- **REDUCING FRAGMENTATION:** In a densely populated region such as Flanders (Belgium), it is proved impossible to protect an area measuring more than 1,000 ha without it being intersected by roads. Therefore, the project also involves a far-reaching plan to reduce fragmentation in co-operation with road managers. One local road (4 km) and one main road (3 km) have been closed to all traffic and transformed into a cycling path. An existing bridge spanning the E314 motorway was transformed into an ‘ecoveloduct’. The ‘Kikbeekbron’ ecoduct (wildlife crossing) was constructed as the provisional end section. This has become an important landmark.
- **HANDLING ENCLAVES:** As a result of poor spatial planning policy in the past, there are several conflicting functions within the perimeter of the National Park such as sand and gravel extraction, an industrial site, a rally racing circuit and care institutions. An exit and transition scenario was developed for each of the ten enclaves. In the meantime, two of the three large sand and gravel quarries (300 ha) have been reconstructed and integrated into the surrounding landscape. A sand processing factory (4 ha) was dismantled. Three car parks (3 ha) in the area were vacated and a health care institution (30 ha) was purchased in order to redevelop it and give it a more appropriate destination. Exit scenarios were fine-tuned for other enclaves such as the rally racing circuit and the industrial site (35 ha), but due to the duration of existing operating licenses, these scenarios are subject to a long lead time.
- **MANAGEMENT:** The Agency for Nature and Forests is implementing an ambitious nature and landscape restoration plan. The focus lays on blurring the sharp, man-made boundaries between woodland and heath land. The large concentrations of heath land were substantially increased due to the accelerated transformation of recent, coniferous plantations. Other efforts involve forcing back alien species, restoring the hydrology and traditional heath land management.
- **HERITAGE:** Management of the National Park and the surrounding woodland and nature areas is based on the preservation and enhancement of the cultural landscape of the heath land. It represents an ancient rural economical system with an exceptional biodiversity. Furthermore, since the beginning of the 20th century, the Hoge Kempen landscape has been marked by one of the largest coal mining operations in Western Europe. The skyline is not just defined by the headgear and slag heaps but also and especially by the garden cities, which are unique architectural landscapes. This rare combination of an interwoven and contrasting rural and industrial landscape is so unique that on May 25th 2011, the Hoge Kempen file was included on the Belgian Tentative List to be considered as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The National Park project devotes special attention to gaining increased knowledge about this heritage site, as well as improved protection and access.
- **IMPROVED ACCESS & RECREATIONAL USE:** Welcoming residents and visitors in a responsible and sustainable way is one of the project’s key objectives. Basically, the number of facilities do not need to be increased, just improved. For example, the existing range of signposted walks was critically evaluated, resulting in a new, less extensive network of walking routes with a higher quality standard. Horse riders and cyclists are also channelled through specific routes and not just in the National Park, but throughout the Hoge Kempen region as a whole, distributing the recreational pressure more efficiently.
As a result, the scope of the integral undisturbed zone in the National Park could be systematically increased. A permanent maintenance service, comprising twelve workers, guarantees an outstanding landscape quality (cleaning up litter and illegal dumping, replacing

damaged peripheral infrastructure, mowing verges, pruning vegetation alongside paths, etc.).

- **WELCOMING VISITORS & TOURISM:** At the moment, annual visitor numbers to the (region of the) National Park amount to 750,000: these include walkers, cyclists, horse riders or visitors to one of the five local Gateways.

The creation of five 'Gateways' into the National Park is key to this operational activity. Each one recounts part of the landscape story to the visitor and provides the necessary facilities (car park, sanitary facilities, cafeteria, information desk, etc.). They each represent a tourist destination in itself with integrated activities (planetarium, petting farm, barefoot trail, etc.). Because the Gateways are located outside the National Park, sometimes even a few kilometres away, they ensure that the landscape quality boost created by the National Park is spread across the region. Moreover, they prevent excessively high levels of recreational stress in the actual National Park and help to manage mobility (collective car park, range of public transportation). Many car parks in and around the National Park have been vacated.

The Gateways were improved content-wise, each one focuses on a main theme related to nature, culture and biodiversity, and all Gateways were given a landscape 'facelift'.

In Kattevennen (Genk), the existing buildings were demolished and the facilities were reorganised into a single, central building. The domain was pedestrianised and an impressive stone garden emphasises the Hoge Kempen's geological value.

The oldest railway station in Limburg, Station As (As), was restored, the platforms were reconstructed and a replica of a wooden shaft tower from the pioneering coal mining period was installed.

In Lieteberg (Zutendaal), which is located in an old gravel quarry, a landscape plan was implemented that transformed the site into a green oasis. It forms the basis for a much broader landscape restoration plan for the southern edge of the Kempen Plateau. The 'Panorama der Kempen' (1954, Charles Wellens, oil paint, 33 m x 2 m), which found permanent refuge here, is highly significant.

In Mechelse Heide (Maasmechelen), a factory site was cleared and redeveloped to create a gateway and the landscape was reconstructed. Less able-bodied visitors can explore the Hoge Kempen's most striking landscapes using the wheelchair route (which includes sand dunes, a fen and heathland).

In Pietersheim (Lanaken), a landscape restoration plan was established for the 80 ha castle domain. Lanes were restored, grassy fields were transformed into meadows and the area around the castle was pedestrianised. The unique water castle ruins were consolidated and reclassified, in a very daring manner, as a visitor centre. It led to winning the Flemish Monument Award in 2010. A main Gateway will be constructed under the shaft towers (listed as monument) of the former mining site of Eisden.

IV. RESPECT OF THE CRITERIA OF THE ATTRIBUTION OF THE AWARD

12. Sustainable territorial development

The Hoge Kempen National Park project does not only aim towards the conservation and development of biodiversity; it aims to bring together ecology, esthetical experience and local economy. To achieve this layered, sustainable vision, a bottom-up strategy is handled. The aforementioned project agency launches ideas, initiatives and activities, but none of them is carried out without the agreement of the involved parties (political and other). This results in the National Park

being supported by the inhabitants, and it strengthens the social cohesion around the National Park.

The spatial concept of the Gateways (location of the Gateways outside the National Park) safeguards the vulnerable heart of the area from recreational pressure, without being restrictive or using fencing. In this manner an important ecological aim is fulfilled, and an extra point of interest is created for the nature-loving visitor who is interested in the heart of the park.

Letting visitors experience beauty and how that creates moral value to a landscape, is also one of the aims of the Hoge Kempen National Park project. Immediately after the delimitation of the National Park, a corporate identity was implemented. All Gateways are designed using the same landscape elements (wood, boulders and pebbles of the National Park substrate, lean grassland, tall oaks). The consistent use of these design elements add to a greater visibility and overall landscape quality in the area. The design of the Gateways was honoured with the award for Best Design of Public Spaces in Flanders (2008).

The cultural value of the National Park is especially one of a cultural landscape that embodies obvious relicts of traditional land use. It can be combined with the coal mining heritage around the borders of the National Park. This is the core theme of the nomination file to UNESCO World Heritage, as mentioned before.

The report “*Hoge Kempen, High benefits*” (Triple E, 2011) shows that the different investments from 10 years work starts to pay off in a social-economical way. This involves higher value for land, tourism, employment, environmental services, etc. The growing awareness of above mentioned values and meaning of the National Park, is to thank for this.

A national park seems to be an obvious concept elsewhere in Europe, but in spatial heterogeneous, fragmented and metropolitan Belgium (especially Flanders) it's a rare respite. In and around the Hoge Kempen National Park several spatial planning actions are in process to reduce fragmentation, to handle disturbing activities and to expand the National Park.

The main principle for this project is an integration of all efforts and instruments to achieve a large, coherent and undisturbed cultural landscape (5,700 ha) as leverage for a quality boost for landscape and nature in the broader Hoge Kempen region (40,000 ha). To this end, land use plans are adjusted, properties are acquired and/or brought under management, extra financial sources are tapped for any necessary restoration, and infrastructure for improved access is supplied and tailored in the landscape. A boost for the local economy, predominantly through nature-oriented tourism, acts as the project's driving force. This is a long process which, with a stable policy, will produce permanent results. A visible and close, multidisciplinary team plays a crucial role because complex social, economic and planning processes are involved.

13. Exemplary value

The Regionaal Landschap Kempen en Maasland (the non-profit organisation that entrusts the Hoge Kempen National Park project agency) is an active member of the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and the EUROPARC Federation. Its director, Ignace Schops, was appointed Ashoka fellow and received the Goldman Environmental Prize (both in 2008), and was named IUCN ambassador for Countdown 2010 (2009-2010). Prizes and titles were awarded because of some internationally valued

good practices that were created by the Hoge Kempen National Park project:

- Thanks to its comprehensive sectoral and regional cross-border approach, the Hoge Kempen National Park project is a much talked-about project both in Belgium and abroad. This working method is known as the (re-)connection model.
- The project is also of exemplary value because of the maintenance team employment initiative (for social vulnerable people), for finding a balance between the traditional rural and the more recent industrial (heritage) elements, for the integration of conflicting elements, and for doing this all in participation with everyone involved.

Every year, dozens of administrative and official delegations from Belgium and abroad visit the Hoge Kempen National Park project and staff members of the project team are much sought-after speakers at (inter)national forums, symposia and conferences. The project is shown and/or explained in detail to delegations and/or during conferences from/in European countries (the Netherlands, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Italy, Greece, Kosovo, Slovenia, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Ireland, Finland) and non-European countries (the United States, China, Japan, Tanzania, Brazil, South Korea).

As a result of the Hoge Kempen National Park project, the Regionaal Landschap Kempen en Maasland hosted the international 'EUROPARC Conference' (www.europarc2012.com) in 2012, bringing a lot of international attention along. It was attended by approximately 650 participants from over 30 European countries and 10 non-European countries, one of the speakers being Janez Potočnik. A great achievement is that the conference was completely paperless: brochures and other information could be uploaded via three digital information devices.

14. Public participation

In the Hoge Kempen National Park project, the public's involvement is paramount. More than 750,000 people visit the National Park and its Gateways every year, where local volunteers are actively involved in the hospitality aspect. This is the case at the five local Gateways, and for the 40 volunteer 'Rangers' who show more than 12,000 visitors around the park every year.

Direct and active participation by residents, visitors and businesses is one of the project's cornerstones, especially because of the fact that involvement leads to the highest form of protection, which is often stronger than legal protection. Public indignation if something threatens to go wrong in 'our' National Park landscape, is a powerful tool in landscape management and conservation.

Moreover, all the actors, both public and private, were brought together specifically for the application to UNESCO World Heritage. This initiative is a catalyst particularly for local heritage associations to position their knowledge and insights in a broader landscape context.

15. Awareness-raising

The National Park project functions as an organisation that stimulates administrations and organisations to visit the quietness and space of the National Park, and – if and where possible – to co-operate. This comes from the core idea that a national park should keep on offering beauty, nature, silence, quietness, contemplation, space, fresh air, heritage... Sustainable beauty is one of the core themes of the project. It proves to all visiting parties that taking care of a landscape is a responsibility for all of us dealing with health care and stress relieve, spatial planning, economic development, science and culture, public transport and traffic.

Raising awareness is an important operational task for the Hoge Kempen National Park project agency. A lot of communication devices and recreational activities were developed to reach out to visitors and inhabitants to enjoy the above mentioned.

- Digital: an accessible all around website in four languages > <http://www.nationaalpark.be>; Facebook and Twitter accounts; Disconnect-application for smartphones > <http://www.disconnectapp.com/>; low threshold heritage database was created specifically for the application to UNESCO World Heritage > <http://www.erfgoedhogekempen.be>
- Publications: yearly renewed visitors guide; art poster; appealing walking, cycling and horse riding maps; photography book, yearly 'Landscape Newspaper' distributed door-to-door in the region with a circulation of 110,000 copies
- A variety of Ranger-guided tours, educational activities and exhibitions on nature and landscape care at the local Gateways etc.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN THE TOWN OF STRAKONICE YEAR BY YEAR OR 'PILGRIMAGE THROUGH THE CONTEMPLATIVE LANDSCAPE, MUNICIPALITY OF STRAKONICE', CZECH REPUBLIC

I. STATE CONCERNED AND APPLICANT

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II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECT

3. Name of the Project

Pilgrimage through the Contemplative Landscape
or The Environmental Education of Strakonice Town Year
by Year

4. Location of the Project

Districts of Strakonice, Vodňany and Blatná

5. Summary of the Project

The nominated educational project of the town of Strakonice is a set of interrelated one-year thematic cycles focusing on the landscapes of the Strakonice, Blatná and Vodňany Districts. Each sub-project demonstrates the uniqueness of the landscape in natural, cultural and historical context and the way how to read and understand the history of the region. In the complex approach of sustainable development it explains the need of protection and functional management of landscapes as a mutually interlinked and influenced setting. Through its comprehensive nature, the project increases general awareness about the South Bohemian Region and helps people to gain healthy self-confidence and respect for the place where they were born and where they live. Every thematic cycle is accompanied by a quotation from the book “The Contemplative Landscape” (Země zamyšlená), written by a local artist Ladislav Stehlík (1st edition, 1947). Comparisons between this text, which is over fifty years old and the situation today, provide an inspirational view of the development of the South Bohemian landscapes.

6. Photo representing the Project



This picture reflects an idea of the nominated project – connection of natural, historical and cultural heritage of the South Bohemian Region. Pupils cheers nearby newly cleaned and renewed stream and chapel named “Good Water” (Dobrá Voda), under the Podsrp hill near Strakonice.

III. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

7. Start of the Project

month February

year 2003

Comment:

This project is not disposable (single oriented, “one shot” project), but has a continual character, which means, that every year starts a new thematic cycle. That is why we decided to give an exception on projects of this character (it does not have to be completed three years previously). This is considered to be a sign of sustainability and popularity of the project.

8. Partners

Municipality of Blatná
Municipality of Vodňany
Regional Museum of Střední Pootaví – Strakonice
South Bohemian Region
South Bohemian Radio – České Budějovice
Regional press -Strakonice Journal (Strakonický deník)
Forests of the Czech Republic, state-owned company
Povodí Vltavy, state-owned company
ZOO – Plzeň
Nadace Partnerství Brno (Environmental Partnership Foundation)

9. Financing bodies

Municipality of Strakonice (96%)
Donation Programs of South Bohemian Region (3%)
Financial gift from the Forests of the Czech Republic (1%)

10. Central aims of the Project

- To familiarise the public with landscapes of South Bohemian Region in an unforced, popularly instructional, creative, competitive and practical form, with an emphasis on the environmental aspect and the maintenance of cultural heritage from the comprehensive perspective of sustainable development;
- To increase general awareness of values of today’s landscapes for the purpose of receiving healthy self-confidence and respect for the place where are born and live;
- To expand this awareness within the Czech Republic;
- To serve as an inspiration to the public through an active example of respect towards the landscape and its values (practical activity, presentation in the media (in the press, on the radio) and conferences);
- To renovate the “soul” of regional landscapes on the bases of stories passed down through narrations of seniors - practical activities, e.g. planting original strains of fruit trees, renovating old springs and fountains, renovating minor sacred structures, and so on;
- To involve the public of all social and age categories, including elderly and handicapped, with an emphasis on pupils in primary and nursery schools.

11. Outcomes

Beginnings of the educational project can be dated back to 1997, when the Environmental Department of the Municipality of Strakonice began publishing series of articles about protected monument trees and protected territories, and held an exhibition about natural beauties of the Strakonice District in 2001. Afterwards the exhibition was taken to twinned cities in Netherlands and Switzerland. The idea of providing information about the region through themed sub-projects (cycles) is definitely not a new one, but the one, that is becoming increasingly attractive through the use of modern technologies which make possible to involve citizens of all age categories and contribute to the maintenance of both natural and cultural heritage.

Every cycle consists of a theoretical (expert lectures, competitions, publications, DVDs, articles on website or in local newspaper, exhibitions, broadcasting) and a practical form (e.g. springs and fountains renovation and cleaning, banks of the Otava river cleaning, reforestation, monitoring and renewal of alleys of original species of fruit trees, renovation of sacred structures, forest cemeteries and so on). In both, all social and age categories of public, including elderly and handicapped, are involved. The project is being used within the framework of school education as well (Biology, Homeland Study, History, Geography, Literature and so on).

So far 10+1 thematic cycles have been realised:

- 2003 *Step by Step - Visiting Protected Nature Areas of the Region*: a cycle about specially protected areas
- 2004 *Step by Step - Visiting Protected Nature Areas in Blatná and Vodňany Districts*: continuation of the cycle about specially protected areas in the Region
- 2005 *In The Shadow of Protected Trees of the Contemplative Landscape*: presentation of protected monument trees in the region, connected with the yearlong activity "Year of the Tree"
- 2006 *At Springs of Living Water I" of the Contemplative Landscape*: a cycle about the most important "miraculous" and medicinal springs of the region
- 2007 *At Springs of Living Water II" of the Contemplative Landscape*: the second part of the cycle, now joined with the cleaning activities
Town in Nature, Nature in Town: a cycle about natural and cultural monuments and attractions in the town of Strakonice. This cycle was incorporated as a part of the celebration on an occasion of 640th anniversary of receiving a town charter of incorporation and granting of town privileges to Strakonice. Activities included renovation of minor sacred structures at Dobrá Voda (Good Water), a pilgrimage site at the Podsrp hill near Strakonice.
- 2008 *From Springs to Estuaries, or Rivers, Brooks and Streamlets of the Contemplative Landscape*: a cycle about regional waterways, this time accompanied by the cleaning of the Otava River, renewal of springs and storytelling of Otava bargeers in Timber Rafting Museum in Hoštice
- 2009 *On Waves of Silver Fishponds of the Contemplative Landscape*: a cycle about the most important fish ponds and pond culture systems in the region
- 2010 *On Pathways of Mansion Parks and Gardens of the Contemplative Landscape*: a cycle about regional chateau and mansion parks and gardens, accompanied by monitoring and planting of fruit trees of local origins in the former estates
- 2011 *Mysterious Shadows of the Forest of the Contemplative Landscape*: this cycle was conducted with the international "Year of Forests" activities. This time the cycle described forest complexes in the region and was accompanied by remembering and cleaning of Jewish forest cemeteries at Radomyšl, Pražák and Hoštice u Volyně.

2012 *“He Went That Way, He Had Bagpipes” of the Contemplative Landscape*: a cycle organised within the framework of the “Year of the Bagpiper”, providing information about the bagpiping tradition in the region and its historical context (*Name of the theme was created from the words of traditional folk song*).

Other cycle is being prepared for 2013. This time pupils at primary schools will work on “stories” about the historical management of local landscapes, which are restored in the memories of seniors. The three winning schools will then have practical demonstrations of farming in the past, named “Life at the Mill”, at the Hoslovice Mill, a national cultural monument near Strakonice. Pupils will practically try out today almost forgotten farming activities, as milking, baking bread or making wicker baskets. A course for the public will be run at the same place in mowing with a scythe. Other cycles are being prepared for 2014 and 2015 about the mineral wealth and the relationships between the South Bohemian landscapes, region and culture in literature, paintings, movies and folklore.

Partial results from the thematic cycles:

Practical activities: maintenance of springs and fountains under the patronage of schools, forest planting and clearing, cleanings of the Otava River, cleanings along roads, renovations of little sacral monuments and so on.

Publications:

- Protected Monument Trees in the district of Strakonice (2006)
- At Springs of Living Water in the district of Strakonice (2008)
- Chateau Parks of the Region and Forests of the Region (under preparation)

Articles: series of 10 up to 18 articles focused on the natural, cultural and historical context to the subject are published every year, initially in the local journal, and since 2006 they are freely available on Strakonice websites.

DVDs:

- Year of the Tree in the Strakonice District (2006)
- At Springs of Living Water (2007)
- Rivers, Brooks, Streamlets (2008)
- Bagpipers in the Strakonice Landscape (under preparation).

Exhibitions:

- Museum of Middle Otava Region in Strakonice – Protected Monument Trees in Strakonice, Blatná and Vodňany Districts (2006)
- Strakonice House of Culture and Strakonice Library - thematic yearly exhibitions of primary schools (2009 – 2012)
- Museum of Middle Otava Region in Strakonice – permanent thematic poster exhibition

Nationwide conference: Ecological Education in Practice, Strakonice (2010)

Two-day thematic field trips around the Czech Republic are organized for winning schools in the competition with an emphasis on the landscape of national parks and protected landscape areas (since 2003).

Thematic lectures are organised for primary schools, nursery schools, municipalities, retirement

homes, the handicapped, etc., 10 lectures per year.

Radio broadcasts: South Bohemian Radio Č. Budějovice (2004, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012).

Promotional items: cups, t-shirts, caps, frisbees, stickers, tree-based memory games, bookmarks, thematic timetables for schools, and so on (since 2005).

IV. RESPECT OF THE CRITERIA OF THE ATTRIBUTION OF THE AWARD

12. Sustainable territorial development

Outcomes of the project take into account the sustainable development policy of the South Bohemian Region. The project increase general awareness about the region and awareness of how its mutual natural, cultural and historical relationship shapes today's way of life. Practical parts of the project increase cultural and aesthetic values of the landscape through repairing the damage caused to the landscape in both long and recent past (renovations of springs and fountains, cleaning the banks of Otava River, renovations of minor sacred structures, planting suitable types of forest trees in specially protected areas, monitoring and replanting of alleys of fruit trees and so on). Thereby all activities contribute towards the maintenance not only of the natural but also the cultural heritage of the region. Participation of the young generation is a promise, that in the future there will be a continuous interest about local landscapes presented this way. The sustainability of the project can be demonstrated precisely through its long-term character and the increasing interest of the greater public, local authorities, other regions or non-governmental organisations. At the same time the project is being used within the framework or in coordination with other activities, organised by the Municipality of Strakonice (e.g. Year of Waste, European Mobility Week) or non-governmental organisations (lectures held by a new branch of Cassiopeia NGO in Strakonice), or the combination of school subjects as Literature, Homeland Study, Geography, History, Biology and others.

13. Exemplary value

In terms of its scope and focus, this project is unique primarily because of its comprehensive character. Since 2007 it has inspired a creation of a nationwide "Town of Trees" campaign. Thanks to its exemplary nature, the nationwide conference "Ecological Education in Practice" for employees of local authorities, non-governmental organisations and other interested parties from the Czech Republic was held in 2010 in Strakonice itself. The project also serves as inspiration for the town of Blatná, which has commenced annual thematic exhibitions (protected trees, birds, fishpond culture, insects, medicinal herbs, beekeeping and others).

The cycle "In the Shadow of Protected Trees" and activity "Year of the Tree" became very inspirational. In cooperation with Environmental Partnership Foundation – Brno, the activity of regional character turned into a republic-wide campaign "Town of Trees". Since 2007 towns of Tachov, Broumov, Uherské Hradiště, Krnov, Kroměříž and many others have participated in this activity. Since 2013, The Czech Landscape and Garden Society (NGO) is going to become a referee of this action.

14. Public participation

Every cycle is implemented in a theoretical and a practical form, with an involvement of all social and age categories of the public. Primary schools in the region use the project within the framework of

their schoolwork (History, Homeland study, Geography, Biology, Literature and others). The possibility to join the competition, with the help of “new” technologies (internet), has become very popular at many schools, and not only town but also nearby village schools has commenced long-term cooperation with local authorities in Strakonice. Some primary schools have even created their own projects. The involvement of witnesses and elderly has been successful in the acquisition of information about the state of the landscape in the past. This information has been subsequently incorporated into articles and other texts. Pupils can also participate in decision-making processes regarding the further development of the region through a Children’s Council. The Council deal with particular matters relating to the appearance and cleanliness of the town, environmental issues and the maintenance of cultural heritage. Information for adults is provided through comparisons with the landscape, as it was captured sixty years ago in the book “The Contemplative Landscape”, written by Ladislav Stehlík. The oldest living witnesses have become involved in the projects through their memoirs about landscape management in the past, which are subsequently used in the preparation of the thematic texts. The participation of the younger generation (primary and nursery school pupils) is a promise that in the future they will be more interested in the landscape presented this way. Very pleasing is also a spontaneous involvement of variety of local associations and schools in the annual cleaning of springs and fountains.

15. Awareness-raising

General awareness about the importance of the landscape for societal development is given primarily through the conceptual character of the project as a whole. One component of the landscape is presented in an integrated manner each year. The set of information is continuously supplemented in order to create an integrated complex.

The integrated information will allow the public to build up a positive relationship to the region in which they live, and to understand their belonging to the landscape as well as their responsibility for the direction of its development. Thanks to the quantity of information presented in an unforced manner, the landscape of Strakonice, Blatná and Vodňany Districts has become attractive for both family and exploratory excursions and cycling trips around the region, which also contribute towards the individual and collective feeling of well-being.

Locals also realise now their relationship to the landscape of the South Bohemian Region and consider it both as the place from where they can “fly away” to other parts of the world, as well as the place to which they can return at any time. In addition they gain a feeling that they are part of the “European” landscape, similarly like water from streams and rivers from the Strakonice District flows to the sea, like fish from fishponds in the Blatná and Vodňany Districts are exported throughout Europe, like the wood from South Bohemian forests helped to build Prague, Vienna and Hamburg, like the hard life on the slopes of the Šumava mountains frequently led previous generations to search for work abroad and like the International Bagpiping Festival held in Strakonice is an expression of an lively interest in their own roots. In short, that “local” people cannot get lost even when confronted with the European identity, on the contrary they have much to offer. And therein lies the main strength and power of the beautiful and unrepeatabe South Bohemian landscape.

3. THE LANDSCAPE PROJECTS OF HYYPPÄ VALLEY, CITY OF KAUAJOKI, HYYPPÄ VILLAGE ASSOCIATION, THE FINNISH FORESTRY CENTRE/PUBLIC SERVICES/THE UNIT OF SOUTH AND CENTRAL OSTROBOTHNIA, FINLAND

I. STATE CONCERNED AND APPLICANT

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2. Applicant	City of Kauhajoki, Hyyppä village association, The Finnish Forestry Centre/Public Services/The Unit of South and Central Ostrobothnia
Represented by	Mrs. Marketta Nummijärvi, Mr. Asko Ojala and Mr. Matti Seppälä
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II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJET

3. Name of the Project	The Landscape Projects of the Hyyppä Valley
4. Location of the Project	Kauhajoki, Finland

5. Summary of the Project

Applicants have implemented major, long-term landscape maintenance through several projects. The base project is titled the Establishment of the Hyypä Valley Landscape Conservation Area. Within this project, the following have been achieved: 1) A Preservation Plan, including definitions of the special landscape features and values, and numerous illustrated instructions for preservation actions, 2) Co-operation and confidence building among the 1200 landowners and villagers, the local municipality, regional and state authorities, specialist organisations, enterprises, international volunteers and local associations, 3) 41.5 ha of landscape maintenance operations have been implemented, 4) Permanent action groups for landscape maintenance and a discussion forum for villagers, associations and authorities have been established and 5) A juridical Landscape Conservation Area in Hyypä has been founded by the Ministry of Environment, in the autumn of 2009.

6. Photo representing the Project



III. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

7. **Start of the Project** month year

8. **Partners**

City of Kauhajoki, Hyypä village association, The Finnish Forestry Centre/Public Services/The Unit of South and Central Ostrobothnia

Landowners, villagers, associations of the area, nature preservation association, local forest management society

9. **Financing bodies**

The Ministry of Environment, The City of Kauhajoki, The Finnish Forestry Centre

10. Central aims of the Project

The aims of the project were:

- 1) to compile an overall description of the Hyypä landscape, its natural conditions, the historical development of the landscape, a description of the present community structure and a summary of the villagers' values and the threats they face from changes in the landscape,
- 2) to define the special landscape features and values of Hyypä, based on the compiled description,
- 3) to compose a conservation plan for the special features and values, including easily understandable landscape conservation instructions for landowners, new builders, associations and authorities,
- 4) to establish co-operating, motivated bodies to maintain and advance landscape conservation
- 5) to investigate whether a Landscape Conservation Area* could be established in the Hyypä Valley and to apply for its establishment if sufficient grounds and motivation for doing so are confirmed
- 6) to take landscape conservation actions, such as opening out views
- 7) to engage local actors in landscape conservation

*Finnish legislation on nature conservation allows the establishment of landscape conservation areas to protect, preserve and manage sites of natural, cultural and historical or other value.

11. Outcome

The projects have been a success. The prime outcomes are:

- 1) concrete, major landscape maintenance and conservation actions implemented in these projects, which are improving the quality of life in Hyypä and conserve significant landscape values.
- 2) a comprehensive information package on special features and values, which helps public authorities in their supervisory work, builders in their building projects and villagers in landscape maintenance and
- 3) the establishment of permanent, participative landscape conservation bodies such as the Landscape Conservation Work Group of the Hyypä Village Association and the Hyypä Valley Landscape Conservation Board,
- 4) significant co-operation and open discussion between all of the involved parties.

In addition, the projects have strengthened positive attitudes towards landscape conservation and the credibility of conservation, raised the profile of the Hyypä Valley at both regional and national level and generated new projects that are implementing the aims stated in the conservation plan. All projects have been implemented using participatory planning methods, and by carefully listening to feedback from the involved parties and interest groups. Employment of such methods has promoted human rights, democracy and sustainable development.

IV. RESPECT OF THE CRITERIA OF THE ATTRIBUTION OF THE AWARD

12. Sustainable territorial development

The projects involve the implementation of sustainable development policies. They advance ecological, social and economical sustainability in an exemplary manner; in these projects natural, landscape and recreational values have been preserved and strengthened, local enterprises have been supported and catered for, actions have been performed in a sustainable manner and projects have improved local participation in decision making, as well as the quality of life.

These projects contribute to the enhancement of the landscape's environmental, social, economic, cultural and aesthetic values.

Environmental: natural species have been surveyed, their habitats and natural conditions reported to the authorities for account to be taken of them in planning, three new wetlands have been established in recent projects and small streams and springs have been restored.

Social: villagers and landowners have taken all of the major decisions with respect to these projects and have raised no opposition. Recreational possibilities have improved. Voluntary work as well as project meetings have brought villagers, landowners and authorities together.

Economic: the projects have improved the possibilities for tourism in the area. Local meeting places, local products and local labour have been used in the projects.

Cultural: old traditional buildings have been surveyed and reported to the authorities. One old building was painted with traditional, home-made paint by an international group of young volunteers. The projects support the maintenance of traditional livelihoods and the nuances, which are under threat, of the area's traditional farming methods.

Aesthetic: several long, breathtaking vistas that had been closed off were re-opened by removing trees and shrubs. A deteriorated building in a central location was given a new coat of paint and a facelift by volunteers. Unacceptable building has been prevented by a set of rules and instructions composed based on a broad consensus and cooperation. The value-threatening construction of a road was prevented through a consensus achieved by the villagers.

The projects have successfully countered the pre-existing environmental damage and urban blight (see above). Several long, breathtaking vistas that had been closed off were re-opened by removing trees and shrubs. A deteriorated building in a central location was given a new coat of paint and a facelift by volunteers. Unacceptable building has been prevented by a set of rules and instructions composed based on a broad consensus and cooperation. The value-threatening construction of a road was prevented through a consensus achieved by the villagers. Exploited springs and natural streams have been conserved under the projects.

13. Exemplary value

The projects represent exemplary practices and values, while leading to the implementation of good practices.

1) All of the projects have been implemented with strong local participation and have included intensive communication practices. A minimum of three open discussion meetings were held for each project; at the beginning of the project to set common goals, after the first draft of a plan had been composed to test the ideas alongside villagers, and after the final plan was completed in order to introduce the proposals and ensure their acceptance. In addition, a steering group formed by authorities, local villagers and representatives of associations, and an action group composed of villagers, supervised the process. Briefing letters were mailed to landowners and the media, and the internet was used to inform everyone else. Villagers and landowners have had the last word in decisions, while the authorities were also consulted.

2) The projects have strengthened positive attitudes on landscape conservation and built trust between the parties. They have brought authorities, specialist organisations, associations, villagers, landowners, sponsors and enterprises together, on an extensive basis, to discuss, decide, plan, generate ideas and implement actions for landscape conservation and maintenance.

3) The projects have been carefully built in order to be meaningful for local people, including farmers, and have led to improvements in quality of life.

4) The projects have led to the creation of permanent bodies for different parties who wish to continue the related discussions; inform each other about projects, needs, achievements and opinions; and to maintain the initial spark generated by the projects.

14. Public participation

The project actively encouraged the public's participation in the decision-making process, and generated permanent participative methods for the villagers, landowners and societies. These methods allow interest groups to follow and participate in any ongoing development that may have an impact on the conserved area.

In this project, the crucial principle was respect for local opinion. This principle was emphasised throughout the process by both the landowners and the authorities. Local village associations were asked if they wished to participate in the project. Several surveys were implemented to identify the opinions, values and needs of local villagers, farmers, entrepreneurs and societies. Goals were set on the basis of the results of these surveys. During the process, three open discussion meetings were held for the villagers, landowners and anyone interested in the subject. Three information letters and the final product, the Landscape Preservation Plan, were mailed to all of the almost 900 landowners involved, to inform them of the project and provide them with opportunities for participation. Several landowners were in personal contact with the project manager, in order to present feedback. A work group of representatives of each village society within the project area was established at the beginning of the project and held several productive meetings during the process. In addition, societies were also represented on the project's official steering group, as members with equal status to the authorities.

Account was taken of all feedback collected in the meetings, surveys and elsewhere, when composing the maintenance principles for the area.

In the end, the responsible village association had the power to make the decision about applying for the establishment of a landscape preservation area. Landowners were heard on one more occasion after this, and no opposition was presented.

During the project, the responsible village association decided to establish a permanent landscape conservation work group from its active members. This work group has initiated and independently managed new projects to implement conservation actions stated in the conservation plan.

In addition, a formal counselling group was assembled after the establishment of the Landscape

Conservation Area. The Regional Environmental Centre of South Ostrobothnia raised the idea of establishing a counselling group and inviting environmental authorities, specialist organisations and local associations to name representatives for the group. The related initiative was taken by the City of Kauhajoki (City Board). All parties invited to join the group accepted the invitation; the group now includes eight public authority institutions, seven specialist organisations and seven local associations. The counselling group keeps all of these interest groups updated about ongoing projects and development in the conserved area, generates discussion about conservation and development needs, and acts in a proactive manner in order to promote positive development. The project is in line with wider policies such as the European Landscape Convention, National Aims for Land Use, The Regional Land-Use Plan of South Ostrobothnia, Finland's environmental legislation and the Building Order of Kauhajoki.

15. Awareness-raising

The project has effectively increased the public's awareness of the importance of landscape in terms of human development, the consolidation of European identity, and individual and collective well-being.

The Landscape Conservation Project underlined the diverse values of the Conservation Area from the viewpoint of landowners, villagers and authorities. Many people had found the landscape beautiful previously, but the project prompted the interested parties to appreciate other values, too, such as the nature values of the area's diverse flora, fauna and nature types, the architectural and historical values of the old buildings and roads, the value inherent in diverse livelihoods, the geological and hydrological values of the area and the value of the village's active, equal social life. During the project, villagers stated that they had now developed an even clearer appreciation of the beauty of the environment in which they lived. The project inspired volunteer landscape maintenance and people have performed conservation work with and without outside initiatives and support. The village association has independently continued the work done to actively conserve the landscape. The villagers took the initiative to establish a 5.5 km-long recreational route on private land, in order to provide all-comers with the opportunity to enjoy the area's outstanding scenery. They also wished to recondition a small, public swimming area in the river for villagers, but were not granted a permit for this by the environmental authorities.

4. PARC DU GRAND PRE, VILLE DE LANGUEUX, FRANCE

I. ETAT CONCERNE ET CANDIDAT

1. Etat	FRANCE
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2. Candidat	Ville de Langueux
Représenté par	M. Michel Lesage, maire de Langueux
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II. PRESENTATION DU PROJET

3. Nom du Project

Parc du Grand Pré

4. Localisation du Project

Langueux

5. Résumé du Project

Parc contemporain au sein de la petite ville de Langueux, le Parc du Grand Pré constitue le maillon permettant de relier le centre-bourg aux grèves de Saint Brieuc et aux grands horizons de la Baie d'Yffignac. Le projet crée un lieu fort et de convivialité qui intègre avec élégance une salle de spectacle dans une urbanité nouvelle. La ville, morcelée par un habitat pavillonnaire, trouve aujourd'hui une nouvelle qualité urbaine. Celle-ci s'exprime d'une part à travers un projet social, qui redonne toute sa place à un espace public générateur de mixité et d'échanges entre les habitants, et d'autre part, à travers un travail de composition fondé sur les vues et les matériaux permettant de recréer des relations visuelles avec le paysage alentour, et des points de repère. Le parc du Grand Pré devient ainsi la nouvelle centralité d'une ville en devenir.

6. Photo représentant le Project



III. CONTENU DU PROJET

7. Début du projet	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="2002"/>
8. Partenaires	Maîtrise d'œuvre : Laure Planchais, paysagiste mandataire. Assistance du Conseil en Architecture, Urbanisme et Environnement des Côtes d'Armor (CAUE)	
9. Organismes de financement	Ville de Langueux	

10. Principaux objectifs du Projet

La commune de Langueux est passée du statut de bourg d'environ 2500 habitants dans les années 60 à celui de petite ville de plus de 7000 habitants en une quarantaine d'année. Elle a subi une urbanisation pavillonnaire diffuse et l'implantation de la plus grande zone d'activités économiques de l'agglomération briochine. Cette urbanisation non maîtrisée a morcelé son territoire et brouillé les relations visuelles avec les paysages alentours, lui conférant en outre l'image d'une commune «dortoir».

Les objectifs de la maîtrise d'ouvrage visaient donc à changer l'image de la ville grâce à un lieu fédérateur à échelle intercommunale. Il s'agissait de créer un parc «naturel», «un vaste espace de développement orienté vers la nature, les sports, les loisirs, la culture, la convivialité». Le parc devait par ailleurs proposer l'implantation d'un futur équipement à vocation culturelle en préalable au lancement d'un concours d'architecture. En outre, il s'agissait de concevoir (en amont des futures extensions urbaines) un trait d'union entre le bourg existant, l'habitat diffus alentour, les extensions futures, et la baie.

11. Résultats obtenus

Conçu comme une véritable coulée verte s'appuyant sur un ruisseau existant, le parc permet de relier le centre ville et l'urbanisation diffuse alentours aux grèves de la baie de Saint-Brieuc et d'ouvrir ainsi le cœur urbain à la vue sur la façade maritime.

L'équipe de maîtrise d'œuvre a exploité un budget restreint en création et en gestion pour inventer un parc paysager pédagogique, écologique, contemporain et innovant, avec un parti pris de construction qui permet d'inscrire le projet dans la durée, notamment par un travail subtil sur le végétal et la gestion hydraulique.

Ce parc de 12ha comprend différents espaces : forêt de pins, esplanade, parking verger, jardin d'ombre, prairie, plaine de jeux dans une démarche expérimentale et pédagogique de développement durable. Il transite entre espaces urbains et ruraux, et puise son inspiration des paysages et particularités du cadre alentour : grands horizons sur la baie de Saint-Brieuc, vallons boisés, pinèdes littorales, vergers, et luxuriance d'ambiances exotiques permises par la douceur du climat.

Son organisation exploite les lignes de force du site et les vues sur le lointain. Une grande esplanade crée une vaste plateforme mettant en scène les vues sur le littoral. La conception du parc propose et

articule l'implantation du futur bâtiment à usage culturel sur cette esplanade. A proximité immédiate, le parc intègre un espace dévolu aux cirques qui viennent en résidence, la ville de Langueux en faisant la promotion et accueillant depuis 2009 un festival annuel de cirques.

Sur la plus grande longueur du parc se développe une vaste promenade qui vient chercher le visiteur depuis le centre de Langueux jusqu'au rebord du plateau agricole. Sur ses franges, le parc vient tisser des liens avec les quartiers existants et à venir qui le jouxtent en proposant de nombreux cheminements vers son centre.

Les espaces de stationnement (3 espaces pour un total de 440 places) sont conçus de manière à participer aux lieux de promenade lorsqu'ils sont vides. Cet aspect est primordial pour le parc qui nécessite peu de stationnement au quotidien mais doit accueillir plusieurs centaines de visiteurs lors des spectacles dans le bâtiment culturel. Leur emplacement à proximité d'autres équipements publics existants (médiathèque, crèche et école privée) et futurs (pôle enfance) permet d'en optimiser l'usage.

IV. RESPECT DES CRITERES D'ATTRIBUTION DU PRIX

12. Développement territorial durable

Cette opération s'inscrit dans le projet de développement urbain de la ville. En effet, aux limites du parc, la commune s'urbanise progressivement et à terme, seule la partie Nord Est qui ouvre sur la baie sera maintenue en espace ouvert. Le parc permet donc d'envisager un développement harmonieux et cohérent de la ville en remédiant à un morcellement du territoire et à un brouillage des relations visuelles entre la ville et les paysages alentours, et notamment avec sa frange littorale. Nouvelle centralité d'une ville en devenir, nouveau lieu culturel et de convivialité, le parc change en outre l'image de cité dortoir qui était attachée à la ville. Il est l'expression d'une nouvelle qualité urbaine, qui s'exprime notamment à travers un projet social, qui redonne toute sa place à un espace public générateur de mixité et d'échanges entre les habitants.

L'image du cours d'eau qui traverse le site est, elle aussi, requalifiée, grâce à un projet qui permet d'améliorer les qualités écologiques de celui-ci et qui le met en scène.

La dimension écologique du parc du Grand Pré est dictée par une volonté de tirer parti au maximum du site et des moyens mis à disposition à proximité, une volonté expérimentale partagée entre le maître d'œuvre et le maître d'ouvrage, ses services techniques et les impératifs économiques d'un budget contraint. Cette approche stimule un renouvellement des questionnements techniques et esthétiques pour proposer un espace singulier. La réflexion a été développée tant sur la conception que sur la gestion du site.

Le Parc du Grand Pré allie ainsi renforcement des valeurs environnementales, sociales, économiques, culturelles et esthétiques au sein de la ville de Langueux et rayonne au-delà de ses frontières.

13. Exemplarité

Cette opération s'inscrit dans le projet urbain de la ville. C'est à la fois dans les choix d'urbanisme et dans la commande passée, que l'initiative de la commune est exemplaire.

Le jury du Grand Prix National du Paysage 2012 a tenu à saluer une démarche, pour l'approche paysagère menée, dans le cadre d'un projet de développement communale. Ce projet démontre en effet l'intérêt pour les élus d'anticiper le devenir de leur commune au travers d'une approche qui articule paysage et urbanisme.

14. Participation du public

Le parc constitue l'élément central du projet de la collectivité, sur lequel s'articule l'ensemble des autres opérations inscrites dans le cadre du projet urbain de la ville.

15. Sensibilisation

Le parc est devenu un nouveau lieu de convivialité dans la ville, un lieu propice à l'épanouissement individuel et collectif. Par ailleurs, il constitue un outil pédagogique tant pour les habitants que pour les propres services de la ville, au service de la promotion du développement durable. En effet, il a permis de développer des initiatives nouvelles dans la ville et de faire évoluer les mentalités dans ce domaine. Il est en outre le support d'actions pédagogiques, en particulier dans le domaine de l'écologie.

4. GRAND PRÉ PARK, THE CITY OF LANGUEUX, FRANCE
(Original French – English Translation)

I. STATE CONCERNED AND APPLICANT

1. State	FRANCE
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2. Applicant	The city of Langueux
Represented by	M. Michel Lesage, mayor of Langueux
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II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJET

3. Name of the Project	Grand Pré Park
4. Location of the Project	Langueux

5. Summary of the Project

Contemporary park in the small town of Languieux. Grand Pré Park links the village center to Saint Briec and the wide horizons of the Yffignac Bay. The project creates a strong and friendly place that features elegant views in a new urbanity. Today, the city, fragmented by suburban housing, has a new urban quality. This is expressed on the one hand through a social project, which gives its place in a public space that generates diversity and exchanges between people, and secondly, through composed views and materials that recreate the visual relationship with the surrounding landscape and landmarks. Grand Pré Park becomes the new centrality of a city in the making.

6. Photo representing the Project



III. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

7. **Start of the Project** month year

8. **Partners**

Project management : Laure Planchais,
landscape agent.
Assistance from the Council of Architecture,
Planning and Environment of the Cotes
d'Armor (CAUE)

9. **Financing bodies**

The city of Languieux

10. Central aims of the Project

In about forty years, the city of Languieux has grown from about 2500 inhabitants in the 1960's to a small town of 7000 inhabitants. The town underwent a residential urban sprawl with the implementation of the largest area of economic activities: Briec agglomeration. This uncontrolled urbanisation has divided its territory and blurred the visual relationship with the surrounding landscape, giving it the image of a common dormitory suburban town.

The objectives of project management therefore sought to change the image of the city through a unifying scale of intercommunal place. It was to create a "natural" park, a broad space for development-oriented nature, sports, leisure, culture and friendliness. The park also had to propose the implementation of future-oriented cultural facilities which were connected to the launch of an architectural competition. In addition, it was designed (with future urban extensions in mind) as a hyphen between the existing town, the diffused surrounding habitat, future extensions and the bay.

11. Outcome

Designed as a green corridor based on an existing creek, the park connects downtown and the surrounding urban sprawl of the Bay of Saint-Brieuc. It links the urban heart of the town to views of the sea.

The project management team set-up a management framework to create an educational landscape which is environmentally friendly, innovative and holds a contemporary budget. This allows the project to work effectively in the long-term, including works on plant and water management.

This 12ha park offers the following: a pine forest, a plaza, an orchard park, a shade garden, a meadow, an experimental pedagogical playground promoting a sustainable development approach. The park functions between urban and rural areas, and draws its inspiration from the surrounding landscape features: the wide horizons of the bay of Saint-Brieuc, wooded valleys, coastal pine forests, orchards; lush and exotic atmospheres created by the mild climate.

The organisation exploits the park's best features which incorporate the wide horizons. A large plaza was created with a broad platform that features views of the coastline. The design of the park offers and articulates the implementation of future building and cultural use of the boardwalk. In the immediate vicinity, the park includes a space devoted to the circus. Since 2009, the city of Languieux promotes and hosts an annual circus festival.

Along the length of the park, a wide promenade was developed that transports visitors from the city center to the edge of the Languieux agricultural plateau. On its fringes, the park builds connections with existing and future neighborhoods by adjoining walking paths that lead to the city center.

Parking spaces (3 spaces with a total of 440 places) are designed to be incorporated in the walking areas, even when empty. This is particularly important for a park that requires little daily parking but must accommodate several hundred visitors during performances in the cultural building. Their location close to other existing public facilities (library, nursery and private school) and future facilities (childhood center) allows for optimal use.

IV. RESPECT OF THE CRITERIA OF THE ATTRIBUTION OF THE AWARD

12. Sustainable territorial development

The park is part of the city's urban development project. The town urbanises gradually and in the future, the park will be limited to the northeastern part of the bay.

The park makes it possible to envision a harmonious and coherent development of the city by addressing territorial fragmentation and a blurring of the visual relationships between the city and the surrounding landscape, especially with its coastline. The city's centrality becomes a new friendly cultural venue. The park also changes the image of Langueux as a dormitory suburban town. It is the expression of a new urban quality, expressed mainly through a social project, which restores its place in a public space that generates diversity and exchanges between people.

The image of the river which crosses the site is also reclassified, thanks to a project that improves the environmental qualities of it. The ecological dimension of Grand Pré Park is dictated by a desire to make the most of the site with an experimental determination shared by the contractor, the client and technical services while having a limited budget.

This approach encourages a renewal of the technical and aesthetic questions in order to provide a unique space. The reflection was developed both in the design of the park and its management.

Grand Pré Park strengthens the environmental, economic, cultural and aesthetic values in the city of Langueux and radiates beyond its borders.

13. Exemplary value

The project is part of the city's urban plan. This is reflected both in the choice of planning and its control in the past. The initiative of the municipality is exemplary. The jury of the Grand National Landscape Award 2012 paid tribute to the landscape approach conducted within the framework of a proposed municipal development. This project demonstrates the effects of interest of elected officials to anticipate the future of their town through a structured approach of landscape planning.

14. Public participation

The park is the community's centerpiece which articulates all other operations included in the urban plan.

15. Awareness-raising

The park has become a new friendly place in the city, a place that focuses on individual and collective fulfillment. Moreover, it is an educational tool for people which shows the specific services of the city and promotes sustainable development. The park has developed new initiatives in the city and changed public attitudes in this area. It also supports educational activities, especially in the field of ecology.

5. COMPLEX LANDSCAPE REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM IN THE GERECE MOUNTAINS AND THE ÁLTAL CREEK VALLEY, THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE RESTORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ÁLTAL CREEK VALLEY (TATA), HUNGARY

I. STATE CONCERNED AND APPLICANT

1. State

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2. Applicant

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II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJET

3. Name of the Project

Complex landscape rehabilitation and development program in the Gerecse Mountains and the Által Creek Valley

4. Location of the Project

The Által Creek Valley and the Gerecse Mountains

5. Summary of the Project

The Association for the Restoration and Development of the Által Creek Valley was established in 1995 in order to promote the preservation and sustainable utilisation of the environment and rich natural/cultural heritage of the Által Creek Valley, a former industrial site struggling with numerous environmental challenges. Following its initial efforts aimed at protecting water quality, the Association made its activities more complex in 2002 when it decided to embark on the complex rehabilitation and development of the Gerecse Mountains and the Által Creek Valley on the basis of ecological considerations. An outstanding achievement is the creation of Gerecse Nature Park based on the sustainable utilisation of natural/cultural heritage and born through the joint action of 29 communities in the region and other affected organisations. Consisting of local members, the Association performed all operations from planning to implementation in a systematic manner and with the involvement of other stakeholders.

6. Photo representing the Project



III. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

7. **Start of the Project** month

 year

8.	Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Danube-Ipoly National Park Directorate- North Transdanubian Water Management Directorate- Nature Lovers Association of Komárom-Esztergom County- Hungarian Ornithological and Nature Conservation Association			
9.	Financing bodies	<table><tr><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">- Local Action Group for Által Creek Valley- Municipality of Tata- Komárom-Esztergom County Unit of</td></tr><tr><td>MTESZ (Federation of Technical and Scientific Societies)</td></tr><tr><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">- Által Creek Association</td></tr></table>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Local Action Group for Által Creek Valley- Municipality of Tata- Komárom-Esztergom County Unit of	MTESZ (Federation of Technical and Scientific Societies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Által Creek Association
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Local Action Group for Által Creek Valley- Municipality of Tata- Komárom-Esztergom County Unit of					
MTESZ (Federation of Technical and Scientific Societies)					
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Által Creek Association					

10. **Central aims of the Project**

The Által Creek Association set the target of turning this area, which used to be famous mostly for its isolation as well as for its coal, bauxite and limestone mines, into an “eco-tourist” landscape known for its natural and prehistoric values.

The main purpose of the programme is to implement the complex rehabilitation and development of the landscape determined by the Gerecse Mountains and the Által Creek Valley, and to achieve a major cooperation for the preservation of landscape and natural values and for enabling the general public to have access to such values.

The Association set the following partial targets within the framework of the programme:

- preparations for and creation of the Gerecse Nature Park;
- improvement of water quality and preservation of the natural values of Lake Old in Tata;
- ecology-wise landscape improvement in the Által Creek Valley;
- provision of environmental training and information for people living in the Gerecse Mountains and the Által Creek Valley.

11. **Outcome**

- 1) In its feasibility study of the Gerecse Nature Park (2008), the Által Creek Association identified the natural/cultural values, tourist attractions and areas enjoying or in need of protection in 16 communities. The nature park initiative involving 16 communities was extended to cover a total of 29 communities and the eastern part of the Gerecse Mountains in 2009-2010. That is how a feasibility study for the nature park’s eastern block was prepared (2010), followed by steps to actually create the nature park (2012). Assignment of the title of the nature park: 1st February, 2013.
- 2) As part of the nature park documentation, proposals were made (2008) for nature-friendly

tourism enhancing actions and sustainable farming forms.

- 3) As part of the nature park documentation, an infrastructure development of the route of the “Gerecse 50” performance tour was elaborated (2008). The annual performance tour allows thousands of tourists to get a deeper knowledge of the rich natural/cultural heritage of the Gerecse area.
- 4) In the period between 2002 and 2010 the Által Creek Association helped to renew the Country-House Museum in Vértesszőlős, create the Schwäbisch House in Vértistolna and enlarge the Country-House Museum in Kocs.
- 5) Based on a Dutch pattern and supported by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, a board game was designed in 2007 highlighting the actual problems of water management, environment protection and nature conservation. Lake Old of Tata is also featured as an example in the game.
- 6) The Association successfully raised its voice against several investment projects that would have considerably disrupted the unique and harmonic landscape of the Által Creek Valley, Small Plain and the Gerecse Mountains, and campaigned for the preservation of natural waters and shores by refusing excessive controls (e.g. opening of new mines, use of slurry-based animal husbandry technologies).
- 7) The Association published its initiatives in the form of information materials. The non-exhaustive list of its publications is as follows:
 - “The Old Lake in Tata” (2002, English version);
 - “Dutch-Hungarian project for the preservation of Lake Old in Tata (2003, Hungarian, Dutch and English version);
 - “Nature park plans for the Által Creek Valley” (2004, Hungarian version);
 - “Our joint responsibility: renewal of the Által Creek” (2006, Hungarian version);
 - “Gerecse Nature Park” (2008, Hungarian version);
 - “Cultural landscape developments in the Által Creek Valley” (2008, Hungarian version);
 - “Gerecse Nature Park – walking on the paths of creation” (2009, Hungarian version);
 - “Gerecse Nature Park – tourist attractions” (2009, Hungarian version);
 - “Gerecse Nature Park – targets and action proposals” (2009, Hungarian version);
 - “Rehabilitation of the Martos lakes” (2011, Hungarian and Slovak version).
- 8) Thanks to their successful preservation, the landscape, natural and culture-historical values of the Gerecse Mountains and the Által Creek Valley (e.g. prehistoric man exhibition in Vértesszőlős, habitat for *Ferula sadleriana*, nesting place for rare predatory birds, hundreds of caves and sinkholes) can now be studied and displayed responsibly.
- 9) The cooperation between the Association and its partners has substantially changed the approach of local inhabitants and, therefore, the nature park spirit is now a part of the daily routine in the Által Creek Valley and the Gerecse Mountains.

IV. RESPECT OF THE CRITERIA OF THE ATTRIBUTION OF THE AWARD

12. Sustainable territorial development

The Association's objectives for the region and the steps of the implementation are also in line with higher level planning processes and horizontal plans: the area covered by the programme is part of the zone specified as a priority landscape protection area in the National Spatial Plan (2008); the protection of the Gerecse Nature Park and the Által Creek was incorporated in the county spatial plan (2005) and in the 2009-2014 environment protection programme of 10 communities in the Tata microregion (2009).

The integrated urban development strategy of Tata calls for industrial development far from the natural, cultural and historical values. The document also deals with the protection of water quality and natural values.

The programme elaborated and implemented by the Association initiated the creation of new wetlands, nature trails and protected local areas, and contributed to higher biological diversity and strengthened nature conservation in the broader region of Lake Old of Tata. All these efforts facilitated the reconstruction of the south-western bay of Lake Old and the replacement of concrete with natural sand along the entire eastern shore of Lake Old. It leads to favourable changes in the landscape character.

13. Exemplary value

A special feature of the programme is the systematic, strenuous and complex management and development of the landscape in the long run. All of the completed operations are driven in the same direction: the sustainable development of the affected areas of the Gerecse Mountains and the Által Creek Valley on the basis of local values and endowments. The programme of the Association and the related projects were developed as a result of extensive discussions and through the involvement of other competent civil bodies.

Representing a major result of this work and, also, a kind of framework for further work, the Gerecse Nature Park was created by the region's 29 municipalities and 17 organisations under the coordination of the Association.

14. Public participation

Cooperation between the Association, the population, the authorities and other civil organisations has been uninterrupted since the start of the programme (2002). For the purposes of extensive advance discussions, the affected parties may actively take part in each preparatory, planning or commenting phase through public hearings or forums.

- Supported by the local population, the Association raised its voice against initiatives carrying the potential of landscape destruction or environment pollution. In many cases the authorities took into consideration the opinions made or mediated by the Association: e.g. Dunaszentmiklós – opening of a quarry, Környe – opening of a sand mine, Környe – construction of a pig farm, Tatabánya – opening of a sand mine, Baj – opening of a sand mine, Tatabánya – pollution of Galla streamlet.
- The Association started the project titled “Rehabilitation of Lake Old of Tata and the Által Creek Valley” in view of the opinions expressed by the population and other civil bodies.

During the rehabilitation programme of the Által Creek, the Association successfully campaigned for the restoration of Tófarok and the replacement of concrete with sand along the shore.

- In 2005 the Association actively took part in the preparation of the spatial plan for Komárom-Esztergom County.
- The Association has been constantly involved in the water basin management committee set up under the Water Framework Directive; it has been working since 2007 in the “Spring Working Committee” to promote the issue of the re-emerging karst springs in Tata and it has been supervising the Mikoviny Circle responsible for the elaboration of the environment and landscape protection programme of the Magyary Plan designed for the long-term development of Tata.
- The Association regularly takes part in the review of the water rights operational regulations of Lake Old in Tata.

15. Awareness-raising

The Association is keen on raising the landscape awareness of the local community.

The following programmes, aimed at raising landscape awareness, are organised through its active involvement every year:

- Search for water treasures: organised annually in collaboration with the North Transdanubian Water Works since 2005, this playful bicycle contest tests the environmental skills of primary school students;
- Tata Wild Goose Festival: organised annually in late November since 2001, this nature conservation festival makes publicity to Lake Old, wild geese and Ramsar Convention and also addresses the issue of the rehabilitation of Lake Old.

Furthermore, the Association tries to offer additional programmes at all other local and regional events (festivals, village fêtes, school events, etc.) with the aim of raising people’s awareness of and commitment to their landscape.

The cooperation between the Association and its partners has substantially changed the approach of local inhabitants and, therefore, the nature park spirit is now a part of the daily routine in the Által Creek Valley and the Gerecse Mountains.

6. BERE ISLAND CONSERVATION PLAN, THE HERITAGE COUNCIL AND THE BERE ISLAND PROJECT GROUP, IRELAND

I. STATE CONCERNED AND APPLICANT

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II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECT

3. Name of the Project: Bere Island Conservation Plan

4. Location of the Project: Bere Island, Co. Cork

5. Summary of the Project

The Bere Island Conservation Plan was completed in 2002. The aim of the plan is to shape the sustainable future of the Island. The Conservation Plan demonstrates the value of a landscape approach to Island management. In line with the European Landscape Convention, the Conservation Plan was developed with the full involvement of the Bere Islanders who were proactive in developing strategies to protect and manage their landscape. It has resulted in a series of projects inspired by its vision. The Conservation Plan and its projects are informing and shaping policy at a regional, national and European level. The Conservation Plan has also become a model of best practice for other European islands.

6. Photo representing the Project



Figure 1: Aerial View of Bere Island, Co. Cork

III. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

- | | | |
|------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 7. | Start of the Project | Sept. 2000 |
| 8. | Partners | Heritage Council, Cork Co. Council |
| 9. | Financing bodies | Heritage Council, Cork Co. Council |
| 10. | Central aims of the Project | |

The Bere Island Conservation Plan (2002) was born out of the need to tackle the increasing depopulation of the Island and create a more sustainable future for its residents while sensitively managing its unique landscape.

Bere Island lies approximately 1.5km off Castletownbere in Bantry Bay, Co. Cork on the south-west coast of Ireland. It runs west to east measuring 9.5km long by 3 km wide. The island is characterised by undulating landscape similar to that of the mountainous character of the Beara Peninsula. Land use is dominated by extensive agriculture, with species-rich peaty grasslands and heathland the predominant habitats.

The permanent resident population of the island is approximately 216 occupying 85 households. The population increases considerably during the summer months with an influx of holiday makers and military personnel. The island is unique from other islands on the south coast of Ireland due to its strategic location and as such has a long history of military activity. There has been a dramatic decline since the heyday of the island's military base in the mid 1800s when the population was over 2,000. This population loss reflects the national trend of a general decline in rural populations since the nineteenth century. The loss of the permanent full-time military base in the late 1930s also had a significant impact.

Agriculture dominates land use, with approximately 1,600 hectares available for farming. The main farming activity is animal husbandry, particularly cattle & sheep. The land quality varies from reasonable grazing to rough mountain pasture. One thousand hectares are privately owned, with the remainder in commonage. While the Department of Defence (DoD) own approximately 72 hectares, most of this land is leased to local farmers. The remainder is used for light military training, principally during the summer months. The island's variety and combination of habitats are considered to be of regional or county interest due to the extensive nature of current land management practices. The south coast cliffs are designated as ecological protection area (Beara Peninsula SPA site code: 004155). In terms of natural heritage and landscape, the island should be seen as one unit which should be managed so as to retain all aspects of its landscape and ecology.

Bere Island is situated in Bantry Bay, one of the deepest harbours in Europe. The Island is separated from the mainland by Berehaven Harbour (Sound) which provides an area of shelter for ships, fishing

boats and yachts. Castletownbere is home to the largest whitefish fishing fleet in Ireland. Until 1938, the bay was used as a base for the British Atlantic Fleet; indeed the development of the island and its population has been intrinsically linked to its maritime history for many centuries.

The shores and surrounding waters have good habitat diversity, with some beds of maerl (a soft white sediment, high in calcium) off the coast and the presence of many warm-water species characteristic of the south-west. Although listed as being of relatively high value in terms of marine habitats by the national BioMar Survey (a national survey of marine and coastal environments), the offshore areas adjacent to the island have not received any statutory protection. Traditionally, the waters around the island have contributed significantly to the livelihood of the islanders, with scallops, lobsters, oysters and sea urchins the most profitable species fished. Current commercial fishery activities in Bantry Bay are based principally on aquaculture (mainly salmon), shellfish farming (abalone, scallops, urchins, rope mussels) and the harvesting of seaweed.

Bere Island's cultural heritage has been largely influenced by its maritime nature and its strategic defence position near the mouth of Bantry Bay. The island is rich in archaeological sites dating from the Bronze Age through medieval times. The majority of these consist of ringforts/cashels, often with associated souterrains, standing stones, wedge tombs and burial sites. Many of the sites can be linked by a continuing story of defence, fortification, exploitation of marine resources and the power of the sea. Individually, few of these sites would attract more than local interest. As a collection, however, the island's archaeological sites are of great interest and an amenity asset to those willing to explore the island on foot.

The architectural heritage of the island is also largely linked with the theme of defence and fortification, with the most significant buildings being those associated with a military presence on the island. The buildings date from two distinct periods: the Martello Towers of the early 19th century; and the batteries and associated buildings of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Once again, the importance of the architectural heritage of the island lies not in individual buildings but in the collection of buildings which present the extensive and largely unique military history of the island.

Bere Island Conservation Plan

The Heritage Council pioneered the use of conservation plans in Ireland and the Bere Island Conservation Plan promotes this concept at a landscape scale. The Plan is centred on this vision developed by the Islanders in 2002:

‘The community of Bere Island has embraced this opportunity to document and plan for the future development of their island’s unique human, natural and cultural resources, and to ensure their future role as a viable and vibrant island community. It is a chance for the community to work together towards the common aim of having a Bere Island of the future where:

1. People can live and work to their satisfaction, while being able to fulfil their social and recreational needs.
2. Traditional skills and ways of life are appreciated and built on.
3. Economic developments go hand-in-hand with care for our environment and heritage.
4. The community has influence over what developments take place.’ (Bere Island Conservation Plan, p.20:2003)

For further detail on methodology and public participation see section 14.

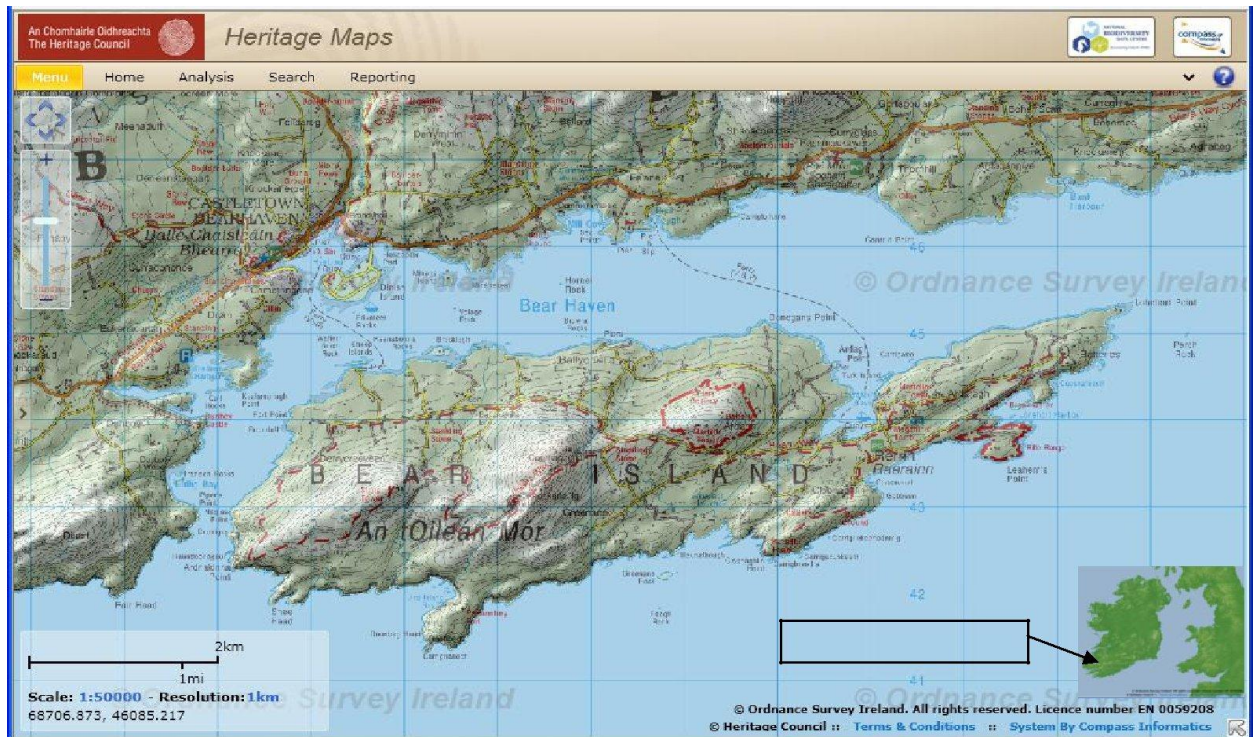


Figure 2: Map of Bere Island

11. Outcome

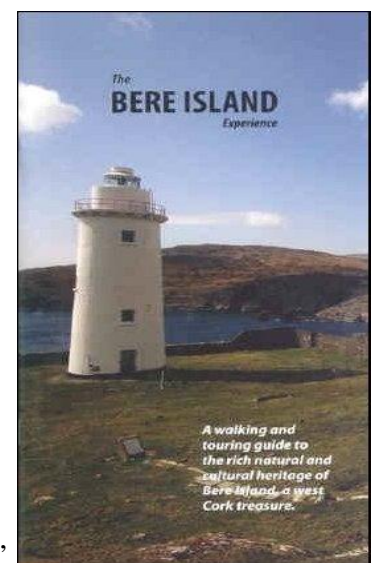
The Bere Island Conservation Plan is a framework for its inhabitants to achieve a sustainable future for the island through a 'harmonious relationship between social needs, economic and environmental conservation.

The Bere Island Conservation Plan has allowed a coherent series of projects to stream from its vision. Policies from the plan were adopted by Cork County Council for the 2003 West Cork Local Area Plan and were also used in other West Cork Islands.

1. **Aquaculture:** An Island based aquaculture co-op has been set up and a number of foreshore licences were granted in 2011 by the Department of Marine and Natural Resources to grow oysters, scallops and seaweed. In 2012 the group started to grow oysters on trestles and are also growing seaweed on long lines.

Figure 3: Bere Island Experience Booklet

2. **Heritage Trail and Booklet:** A heritage trail was developed across the Island allowing walkers to explore and experience a range of , landscapes. A booklet, *The Bere Island Experience* (see Figure 1), accompanying the trail was published in April 2008 The booklet provides information for walkers on three of the island walks and the local landscape. The booklet is available from Fáilte Ireland bookshops, local bookshops and the Bere Island Heritage Centre.
3. **Bere Island Heritage Centre:** As part of the European ISLA project Bere Island received €650,000 in European funding to refurbish the old school house building. The building is now used as a heritage centre housing a permanent exhibition on the social and cultural history and landscape of the Island. It is also used as a multifunctional community facility with services such as a library, facilities and meeting room hire. The centre opened in July 2009.



In addition, as part of the project a number of studies have been carried out in the transnational part of the project on the role of government on island issues, island tourism, and the cultural and natural landscape of islands.

4. **Expansion of the Plan to encompass Whiddy and Dursey Islands:** The Department of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht affairs recognised the Bere Island Conservation Plan as best practice and has encouraged the implementation of its recommendations on the West Cork Islands of Whiddy and Dursey. The Bere Island project group staff now work with the communities of these Islands implementing the recommendations of the conservation plan that suit the particular Island.
5. **Waste Management/Environment:** Bere Island manages its own waste collection and recycling in partnership with Cork County Council. A weekly waste collection operates in summer and is bi-monthly for the rest of the year. The island operates a recycling 'Bring Centre' and recycles over 20 tons per annum. It also operates an ultrasonic glass crusher to provide cullet for drainage and non structural concrete and an industrial shredder to provide farmers with shredded paper for animal bedding. Bere Island won the 'Tidy Islands' award in recognition of its environmental achievements.
6. **Agriculture:** A farming study was carried out in 2006 on Bere, Whiddy & Dursey. Farmers are encouraged to join the EU funded agri – environment plan Rural Environment Protection (REPS) scheme and through the Islands IFA project team successfully lobbied for a 15% increase on REPS payments for island farmers in 2007.
7. **Lonehort Battery:** The Bere Island Project Group is currently in negotiations with the Irish Army to lease the Lonehort Battery site. This follows on from a previous tourism assessment of the site. Architectural and landscape surveys have already been carried out.

IV. RESPECT OF THE CRITERIA OF THE ATTRIBUTION OF THE AWARD

12. Sustainable territorial development

The development of the Bere Island Conservation Plan in 2000 was stimulated by the need to develop a sustainable development framework for the Island as the result of the gap in national policy in relation to landscape management. The Conservation Plan built on the work of the Bantry Bay Coastal Zone Charter (1998 - 2000). The Bantry Bay Charter was part of an EU demonstration project on Integrated Coastal Zone Management. The Conservation Plan was supported by Cork Co. Council in its development and in the development of the West Cork Local Area Plan (LAP) (2003) with 25 policies relating to Bere Island.

The Bere Island Conservation Plan allowed the island based tourism initiative to expand the Beara Way walking route in West Cork. Walking routes allow people access to enjoy and experience the Irish landscape. Opportunities to access the landscape are limited in Ireland as there is no network of public rights of way. The development of these routes has created a forum for dialogue between private landowners and the community on the island. Prior to the implementation of the conservation plan there was only one looped walking trail on the island (Ardnakinna Lighthouse Loop – 6km). This has been expanded to include a further five routes with a total of 46.5km of walking trails on the island. These trails have allowed access to previously unreachable areas of the island as the land is owned by private land owners. Under the walking scheme access to the land is negotiated with individual landowners and in return for a small payment landowners agree to allow walkers access and to maintain the route. It is estimated by Bere Island Project Group that the walking trails are worth €200,000 – €300,000 in revenue annually to the island economy. As mentioned earlier there is accompanying booklet – *The Bere Island Experience*

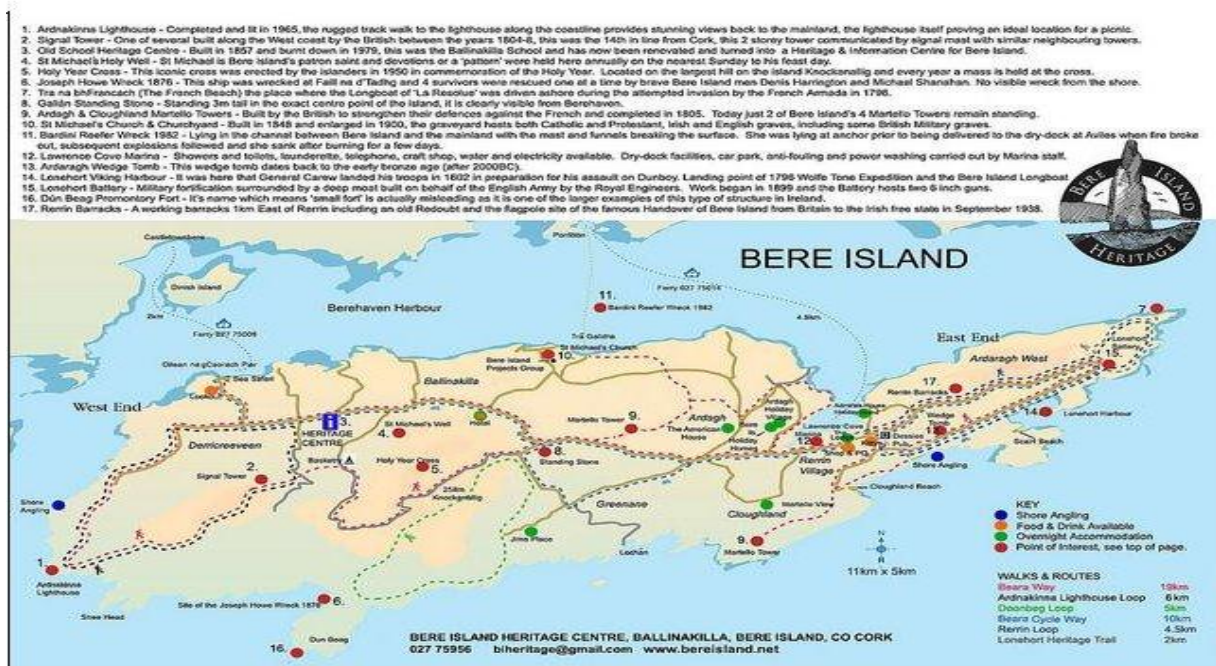


Figure 4: Bere Island Walking Routes

The Bere Island Conservation plan identifies the protection of Island's natural heritage as a priority.

Policy 5.4.2.5 specifically states:

The islanders should adopt the principles of the National Strategy for Waste Management (i.e. reduce, reuse, recycle, safe disposal) with support from Cork County Council and the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. (Bere Island Conservation Plan, p.27:2003).

This in conjunction with Policy 5.4.2.6:

The islanders should acknowledge their own individual responsibility by ensuring that the waste they generate is managed in an appropriate manner. Structures to facilitate any initiatives need to be put in place as soon as possible. (Bere Island Conservation Plan, p.27:2003).

This has resulted in the development a successful waste management programme for the island.

Waste Management

The main priority of the island's waste management programme, which commenced in 2003, was to try and minimize waste generation, and ultimately the volume of waste leaving the island, particularly as there are financial and logistical costs with transporting the waste to the mainland. The mainstay of the island's waste management plan is the recycling centre located on the pier in the western end of the island, which has seen a huge reduction in the amount of waste leaving the island.

A waste collection service was first introduced to the island in the late 1980s, with bags of all household waste collected on a regular basis and transported to the mainland, for a minimal yearly charge. However, the amount of waste being collected and the costs involved in transporting it to the mainland were proving prohibitive. It was decided to introduce a recycling initiative, and islanders were encouraged to take up home composting, with basic compost bins being offered at a reduced charge. In 2003 a dedicated recycling centre was erected, on the pier in the west end, by Cork County Council. The recycling centre includes a bottle bank along with containers for aluminum cans, clothes, plastic and paper.

The area, which is staffed by two islanders now deals with seven different types of recycling including glass, plastics, paper, tins and a clothing bank. As the recycled materials still needed to be removed off the island, it was decided to look at ways in which they could be treated and used on the island. The Tourism &



Environmental group purchased a glass crusher which now renders

glass safe to handle enabling it to be used in construction and drainage and as decorative garden mulch. All the crushed glass is used on the island. A group of artists who are currently involved in an artist in residency programme on the island are looking at ways to use the crushed glass in their projects, by making jewellery and bowls by fusing the glass in a kiln. The recycling centre also has a paper shredder, the end product of which is sold at a minimal charge for use as indoor animal bedding. It is estimated to save 75% in transport costs to the mainland by using the paper shredder and glass crusher.

There is a regular fortnightly waste collection from all households for any items, which cannot be recycled, which is paid for on a per bag basis. This charge is currently at €9 and the fortnightly waste collection is now down to a core group of 14 households. The Tourism & Environmental Working Group are currently looking at ways in which the recycling centre can be powered entirely by renewable energy.

Prior to the implementation of the Conservation Plan the Island had a significant problem of abandoned cars resulting in the degradation of the landscape. Previously, Bere Island, in conjunction with Cork County Council arranged for a car crusher to come onto the island, however with the current buoyant market for scrap metal, private contractors come in on a regular basis and pay the islanders to take away old scrap cars and metal. The removal of the old cars has made a huge impact on the island's environment.

Environmental Awards

The island is also a regular winner of the 'Tidy Islands Award', amassing their sixth consecutive win in 2012. The Tidy Island award is part of the Tidy Towns¹ competition in Ireland, over 820 communities in Ireland entered the 2012 Tidy Towns Competition. The Island first entered the competition in 2001, and achieved their first win in 2007. The island's Tourism and Environmental Group has now instigated a year round clean up initiative and has been instrumental in promoting the waste management programme.

Green Schools Programme

The Islands primary school which has 23 students is taking part in the An Taisce Green Schools Initiative². This initiative encourages school children to become environmental aware through learning about energy efficiency, recycling, composting and growing their own food in the schools garden. This insures that progress made by this generation of islanders will be carried on by the next.

¹Tidy Towns is an annual competition, first held in 1958, organised by the Irish Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in order to honour the tidiest and most attractive cities, towns, villages and islands in Ireland.



Figure 6: Green Schools Garden and Compost Bin

² www.greenschoolsireland.org

There are two invasive species eradication programmes, funded by the Heritage Council, currently in operation on Bere Island. The invasive plants are Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) which is in its fourth year of treatment and Gunnera (*Gunnera tinctoria*) which is in its third year of treatment. The eradication program is a combination of a public awareness campaign and treatment of plants using herbicide.

13. Exemplary value

In its 2010 policy document *Proposals for Ireland's Landscapes*³. The Heritage Council recognises Ireland's responsibility under the European Landscape Convention to

Promote landscape protection, management and planning, and to define landscape quality objectives, while fully involving the people concerned in the decisions that affect their area. (Proposals for Ireland's Landscapes p.6:2010)

The Heritage Council regards the Conservation Plan as exemplary approach to realising these objectives.

The Conservation Plan has also been recognized by the European Small Islands Network (ESIN) Interreg⁴ project as best practice examples of the following:

Awareness by islanders of the richness of their island, including natural, cultural assets. The content of the plan focused on the natural and human heritage of Bere Island, a heritage which must be safeguarded. The professional documentation of this, as well as the professional manner in which it is presented helps to underline its value.

Public participation - the success of consultation process which results in consensus amongst all stakeholders. Often small communities are deeply divided due to competing interests and the lack of neutral mediators. The process surrounding the conservation plan allowed actors from diverse and differing perspectives to make their positions known.

Community empowerment - a small community was actively encourage to make a plan for its own future with the means for implementing it. The fate of most plans developed by a community without outside help is the shelf. The sustained involvement of the outside agencies as well as the financial support to employ a coordinator to implement the plan helps to ensure the plan is more than a paper exercise.

The Buiten report from the ISLA Project⁵ recognised the Bere Island Conservation Plan as best practice examples of the following:

The development of the Bere Island Conservation Plan – The plans development can be characterised as a bottom-up process, in which islanders effectively created a greater role for themselves in the process. This process allowed for compromise to be reached in terms of priority areas. There is now a rare level of awareness and information now exists within the community about its heritage, as does broad agreement concerning its protection. The island now has a framework through which to achieve a more planned and less incremental and ad hoc approach to heritage conservation than previously.

³http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/Landscape/Proposals_for_Irelands_Landscape_main.pdf

⁴Walsh, J 2009 'The Bere Island Conservation Plan 2000 – 2009' in The Irish National Landscape Conference: Looking around looking ahead. Tullamore Co.Offaly. October 2009. Pp. 186 – 192.

http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/fileadmin/user_upload/Events/Landscape_Events/conferencepapers/The_Bere_Island_Conservation_Plan.pdf

⁵*Ibid*

Presentations on the Conservation Plan were also made to other islands in Ireland and in Europe. The Conservation Plan was also instrumental in the establishment of the West Cork Community Council. It has also been instrumental in the marketing of the West Cork Islands.

14. Public participation

Bere Island Conservation Plan Methodology

Prior to the Bere Island Conservation plan development on the Island was led by individual entrepreneurs and community initiatives. This approach lacked a strategic approach to the development of the Island. The plan was developed in partnership between the island community, The Heritage Council and Cork County Council in conjunction with a consultant (MC O'Sullivan) using a communicative approach to public participation. A communicative approach aims to encourage participation of groups which currently have very little influence over decision making. The process works from the bottom up encouraging involvement at grassroots level. In the case of Bere Island the process commenced with an audit of the island's heritage and landscape features by the consultants who suggested policies and strategies to best capitalise on these assets for discussion. Based on these suggestions a questionnaire was distributed among all households on the island asking for their input. In addition four working groups were set up, by the islanders, to collect information relating to different aspects of island life on behalf of the consultants. This was based on their earlier experiences working on the Bantry Bay Coastal Charter. This allowed for a more thorough discussion on behalf of the islanders resulting in more robust feedback. The draft plan was then open to further consultation with islanders, state departments and agencies before final adoption and launch. The project timeline is summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Timeline

Time	Event
Autumn 2000/01	consultation with islanders, and other stakeholders
Spring 2001	selection of consultants (MC O'Sullivan)
Summer 2001	fieldwork, research, and consultation
Winter 2001/02	final draft report
Spring 2002	consultation with the islanders (ongoing)

June 2002 consultation with other stakeholders

Winter 2002 finalisation and adoption of plan

Summer 2003 launch of plan

Island Council

It was recognised that in order for the Conservation Plan to successfully meet its stated aims and objectives it must be fully adopted by the islanders. In order to facilitate this process the plan recommended the establishment of an Island Representative Body / Island Council. A feasibility study on the formation of such a body concluded that the constitution of the existing Bere Island Project group be amended to allow members (10 in total) to be elected by secret ballot for a 3 year term. This organisational structure, put into action in 2007, was recognised as best practice and adopted by the West Cork Islands Community Council under the aegis of Cork County Council and has been working successfully since.

Conservation Plan and Development Worker

As recommended in the Conservation Plan section 6.1.3 a development worker, funded by the Heritage Council since 2003, is currently in place to assist with the plan's implementation. The role of the development worker includes working closely with the community to achieve goals in line of the Conservation Plan, liaise with interest groups and stakeholders. In practice the Development Worker acts as a conduit between the steering group and individual thematic working groups and other Island groups including young people.

Is the project in line with the wider policies implemented by national, regional or local authorities?

Yes. The Bere Island Conservation Plan process has been recognized and adopted by the West Cork Integrated Islands Development Strategy as best practice in terms of public participation.

Cork Co. Council has integrated the Bere Island Conservation Plan into the 2003 West Cork Local Area Plan.

The Heritage Council has used the Bere Island Conservation Plan to demonstrate the effectiveness and the benefits of the landscape approach to heritage as evidenced by John Walsh's intervention at the National Landscape Conference, 2009 within the Community Case Study session⁶.

15. Awareness-raising

The Bere Island Conservation Plan has demonstrated the benefits of the European Landscape Convention's integrated approach to the management of the landscape, one that gives equal weighting to its economic, social and natural values, and recognises the interplay and symbiosis of these different agents. The actions below are examples of the same.

The Island hosts European student interns as part of the ERASMUS and DAVINCI education exchange programmes.

Islander's wellbeing – expansion of available social and cultural activities as demonstrated by the success of the Heritage Centre.

Consolidated services

Population stabilisation (187 inhabitants 2006 census, 216 inhabitants 2011 census) Increased access to landscape and heritage sites on the Island through expansion of walking trails.

Negotiations are ongoing with the Irish Army for access to Lonehort Fort. Plans to promote the island's significant military history.

Waste management programme

Expansion of economic activity through aquaculture co-op. Future plans to create a unique Bere Island brand in order to market island agriculture and aqua culture products. Recognition nationally and internationally as an example of best practice.

⁶ Walsh, J 2009 '*The Bere Island Conservation Plan 2000 – 2009*' in The Irish National Landscape Conference: Looking around looking ahead. Tullamore Co.Offaly. October 2009. pp. 186 - 192

7. THE REBIRTH OF ALTO BELICE CORLEONESE FROM THE RECOVERY OF LAND CONFISCATED FROM THE MAFFIA ORGANISATIONS, LIBERA ASSOCIAZIONI NOMI E NUMERI CONTRO LE MAFIE, ITALY

I. STATE CONCERNED AND APPLICANT

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II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECT

3. Name of the Project

The rebirth of Alto Belice Corleonese from the
recovery of land confiscated from the mafia
organisations

**4. Location of
the Project**

Palermo District, including several
municipalities, as Corleone, Piana degli
Albanesi, San Giuseppe Jato, San Cipirello,
Roccamena, Monreale, Altofonte e Camporeale.
The intervention represents a “specific focus”,
as part of the larger and more ambitious project
“Libera Terra”, extended to the Italian regions
where mafia's presence is stronger (Sicilia,

5. Summary of the Project

Referring to the Art. 11 – Landscape award of the Convention of European Landscape – presenting the objectives of Chapter II.

Libera Terra's mission is to re-value the lands confiscated from mafia organizations starting from the creation and empowerment of social, independent and rural cooperatives, located on these lands, enabled to sustainably manage their business activities thus also contributing to the creation of induced employment as well as the spreading of a virtuous economic system. This Project determines the valorization of landscape, culture, local identity, material and immaterial heritage based on legality, social justice and responsible and sustainable tourism. First Libera Terra's experience was in Alto Belice Corleonese regarding the "Placido Rizzotto-Libera Terra Cooperative". This project concerned the recovery of an area of more than 500 hectares confiscated from mafia organizations and abandoned for many years, as well as rural buildings and historically relevant manor farms. So Libera has promoted a recovery and re-qualification action on the aforesaid assets, focusing particularly on the enhancement in terms of nature maintenance and protection and rural and landscape recovery.

6. Photo representing the Project



III. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 7. Start of the Project | month 11 year <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 10px; display: inline-block;">2001</div> |
| 8. Partners | Municipality of Corleone, Municipality of San Giuseppe Jato, Municipality of San Cipirello, Municipality of Roccamena, Municipality of Piana degli Albanesi, Municipality of Alto Fonte, Municipality of Camporeale, Prefecture of Palermo, Consortium <i>Sviluppo e Legalità, Italia Lavoro</i> Agency, University of Palermo, State Forestry Corps, <i>Cooperare con Libera Terra</i> Agency, <i>Lega delle cooperative</i> , <i>Sviluppo e Italia</i> Agency, <i>Alce Nero</i> , |
| 9. Financing bodies | Italian Home Office (<i>PON Sicurezza</i> Programme), <i>Con il Sud</i> Foundation, Regione Sicilia. |

10. Central aims of the Project

- Recovery of landscape, rural artefacts' renovation and limitation of the settlements' abandonment: The social cooperative Placido Rizzotto.

- Libera Terra was founded in 2011 thanks to the Libera Terra Project, promoted by the Association Libera and the Prefecture of Palermo. The confiscated land from mafia bosses from "Corleonese" area, for years in condition of lands' abandonment and degradation, have been restored to their original functions. Part of these lands, once used as illegal dumps, has been improved. Ancient local economies have been rehabilitated as well as the rural typical traditions of the settlements' communities where the project was implemented and the areas nearby. The Cooperative acts on the lands of the Consortium of Municipalities "Development and Legality" ("Sviluppo e Legalità") promoting work inclusion of **disadvantaged** people by creating job opportunities inspired to solidarity and legality principles.

From its inception the cultivation's method adopted is organic and the products are homemade, in order to guarantee products' quality, preserving the flavour of the ancient Sicilian tradition. The main objectives of the project are:

- Raise awareness on the human values of democracy, legality and social sharing.
- Make public opinion aware on problems and benefits – both in socio-economic and occupational terms – that the management of confiscated assets can generate in the "Corleonese" area, defining the execution plan;
- Analyse the current situation of the confiscated assets on the "Corleonese" territory in terms of creation of new employment opportunities and territory's valorization;
- Create job opportunities on the territory, particularly addressed to **disadvantaged** people with disabilities or in condition of social exclusion, carrying out inclusion processes;
- Stimulate the effective involvement of the local institutions;
- Evaluate the specific aspects related to the associative environment and social organization already active in the territory and their potential possibility of development;
- Activate territorial initiatives designed to promote knowledge and information on the opportunities offered by a good management of confiscated assets;
- Organization of educational training aimed at the acquirement of expertise/skills in confiscated assets management;
- Carry out activities of start-up consulting through specific programs such as: services for long-term unemployed people, orientation, assessment, selection and training, entrepreneurship training, mentoring;
- Promote experiences and value the cooperative's products.

The presented objectives represent a very important step in the fight against criminality in order to contribute to the development of a new civil awareness based on individual dignity and bond with belonging territory. As a matter of fact our lands are a cultural value to be protected and enhanced, in the awareness of the opportunities that these assets can generate in terms of employment and economic growth of the area.

11. Outcome

Main results obtained through the projects are: - the manufacturing upswing and social rehabilitation of the confiscated assets from mafia organisations and abandoned after the confiscation. – community involvement, commitment of the public, a broader awareness of the law 109/96 for a correct and wider management of confiscated assets, creation of a network that has engaged and still engages local and national associations; - generation of new employment. Creation of a social cooperative that promotes the re-use of the confiscated assets from mafias committed to projects for the enhancement of the local territory and community living in those areas. – Creation of alternative development systems transferable to other regions. New job opportunities for unemployed youngsters willing to invest in the Southern Italy regions. Valorization of the territory. The economic and social impact of the activities on the territory has also fostered on: - creation of a social capital oriented to local development with programs of legality educational (through the creation of synergies and constitution of network composed by institutional subjects and third sector); - Promotion of productive systems and eco-sustainable and organic products; - Development of social and responsible tourism; Improvement of policies to contrast organised crime; The project promotes a model for contrasting organized crime, in the first place in those territories of high mafia density. As a matter of fact it has been claimed that apart from the activity of the magistrates and security force, a State effort is necessary to realize a prevention strategy against widespread illegality instances and to contrast mafia organisations. That is to say, restore legality through programs of local development.

IV. RESPECT OF THE CRITERIA OF THE ATTRIBUTION OF THE AWARD

12. Sustainable territorial development

The intervention concerns the restoration of an area of more than 500 hectares confiscated from mafias and abandoned for many years, rural buildings and historical farms (“masserie”). Before the intervention, some areas were degraded to illegal dumps or always available for mafia’s families, others presented abandoned cultivations. The rural areas are cultivated with organic farming methods, restoring existing fields and re-introducing native farms, also with traditional technologies. In some cases saving energies techniques have been introduced, using renewable energies. Furthermore, technologies to foster biodiversity and safeguard the local fauna have been introduced. Productive activities also involve other local farmers to spread organic cultivation methods, to protect the territory and to reduce the environmental impact of agricultural activity. It has also fostered the economic sustainability activity, pledging a fair’s income for farmers, also to contrast the abandoned lands. Productive activities have also involved local workers in the agricultural sector enhancing and recovering homemade activities (wines, durum wheat pasta production) and special attention was given to work placement of disadvantaged people. The activities aimed at restoring rural local traditions to be transmitted to the future generations with the recovery of artisanal hand-crafts and the lands of typical Sicilian landscape, have produced an increasing pride of belonging, along with the will of exporting – also on an international level- not only the products from the land, but also the history of the island and its capability of tracing a new historical path.

13. Exemplary value

The “corleonese” experience has already been tested in its transferability. Confiscated assets from mafia organisations are present nationally, in particular in the South of Italy, where it is possible to invest, like in Alto Belice Corleonese, in re-used goods. In that way, the model of Cooperative “Placido Rizzotto” allowed, and is going to allow to implement new similar projects in other contexts as in Calabria, Campania and Puglia. This layout foresees: - confiscated assets identification and its subsistence and wherewithal evaluation to create a new social cooperative able to find economic and business sustainability; - project management and an institutional path that leads to the publication of a public notice for the selection of partners for the new cooperative; - preparatory training activity for the constitution of the cooperative; - the cooperative constitution and the appointment of the confiscated assets from local authorities interested in; - activity to engage producers and social subjects on a local level.

14. Public participation

The Alto Belice Corleonese Project, in a framework of territorial programme, has taken into account the policies of the area, such as: PSR Sicilia, APQ Regione Sicilia “Carlo Alberto Dalla Chiesa”, Pon Sicurezza – Home Office. The establishment of the Cooperative Placido Rizzotto – Libera Terra, after the selection and training of the partner through a public notice, allowed a wide public participation. The public notice was open to citizens and in particular to disadvantaged people and/or unemployed workers and/or jobless people, who were called for expression of interest and to be available for a training course and selection aimed at the constitution and management of a cooperative, in accordance with the law 109/96, regarding confiscated assets from mafias. The whole project had a wide public participation thanks to social networks, websites, informative brochures, etc. It has been organized also public assemblies, seminars, round tables and actions for a participatory democracy. Yearly, Libera organizes volunteer camps on confiscated lands, and it’s one of the major forms of public participation. Every year more than 5000 youngsters mostly from Italy, but not only are involved in these projects. Many young people choose a volunteer experience and citizenship trainings on confiscated lands organised by the social cooperatives of Libera Terra. This represents a spread will to be “protagonists” and to translate this commitment in to a concrete action of co-responsibility. The main objective of the volunteer camps is to widespread a culture based on legality and social justice, capable to contrast efficiently a culture of violence, privileges and extortions. It is thus to build a new social and economic reality based on active citizenship and solidarity. Main feature of the work camps is the in-depth analysis about organized crime through the discussion with victim’s mafia relatives, institutions and actors of social cooperatives. The volunteer camp experience offers diversified activities: the farm work or the activity of property renovation, training and meetings with the local community and its land. The camps are also the more effective representation of memory that becomes commitment, tangible sign of the necessary change that needed contrast the “cultural and material mafia” spreading across our territories.

15. Awareness-raising

The intervention foresees several communication actions set up in order to encourage direct participation of citizens for processing and putting into effect theories of re-use of public goods as confiscated assets from mafia organisations. Publications and informative material have been predisposed to inform and involve people web sites. There has been a large number of initiatives in

schools and targeted at young people, thanks to the volunteer camps and not only, to promote the cultural value of the contrast to organized crime through carrying out economic virtuous activities. Several initiatives involved citizens thanks to: art expressions as theatre, literature, cinema and sport. There have been promoted actions enhancing responsible tourism through few-days tour in “corleonese”, stopping in “Portella della Ginestra” farm resort, near the “Memoriale della strage del 1° Maggio 1947”, visiting the “Bottega dei Saperi e dei Saperi della legalità” the small store where it is possible to buy Libera’s products (produced in the confiscated assets) in the heart of Corleone, travelling through the vineyards looked after by the cooperative and eventually arriving at the “Centopassi” cellar in San Cipirello. The education and communication activities care about the increasing awareness of dangerous mafia’s economy, the importance of democratic participation and the power of memory, the will to protect environment as universal heritage, the importance for respect and workers’ rights. Thanks to FLARE (the European network of Libera), it was possible to spread at an European level the themes concerning the confiscation of properties from mafia organisations, that led the EU institutions to take up the issue and put great efforts in the dissemination and implementation of these issues among in the member states.

8. DZINTARI FOREST PARK, JURMALA CITY COUNCIL, LATVIA

I. STATE CONCERNED AND APPLICANT

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2. Applicant	Jurmala City Council
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II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJET

3. Name of the Project	Dzintari forest park
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4. Location of the Project	Jurmala City
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5. Summary of the Project

Jūrmalas forest park is unique with locations, because its thirteen hectares wide natural area is located in centre of Jūrmala City. The park greatest values are 200 years old pine tree grove and habitats, which are preserved intact till the present day, notwithstanding the rapid development of surrounding areas. Intensive development of public and living object construction around the nature territory increased significantly the number of visitors before the construction of the park. That could degrade park landscape in city centre. For that reason the idea was to arrange nature landscape according with new situation and includes nature into system of city infrastructure and save natural and different of the territory.

Dzintari forest park with wilderness values is vacation and recreation place for all family. The infrastructure objects in the park are evenly distributed along all park territory. The infrastructure objects interconnects above the ground elevated wooden planks walkway. The most important active recreation element is roller blade rout, which is located in centre of the park. The skaters and pedestrians are separated by pedestrian bridge. In the park territory are skateboard, streetball, sightseeing tower and children's playgrounds also.

6. Photo representing the Project



III. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

7. **Start of the Project** month year

8. **Partners**

9. **Financing bodies**

Municipality budget

10. **Central aims of the Project**

To protect and to preserve natural values rich landscape in the city centre, adapted it to the rapid development of infrastructure and urban life, to avoid natural landscape degradation by human activities.

11. **Outcome**

1. Preserve natural landscape in the city centre.
 2. Avoided natural territory degradation, adapting it to the urban life and making it available to everyone.
 3. The infrastructure in the park is built considering the natural ground protection and infrastructure building from natural materials.
 4. Find the compromise between the functions of city infrastructure and existing natural landscape.
 5. Created beautiful holiday place for all family.

IV. RESPECT OF THE CRITERIA OF THE ATTRIBUTION OF THE AWARD

12. **Sustainable territorial development**

Natural landscape with sea and dune pine is one of the municipal biggest richness. Dzintari forest park is sustainable solution how to preserve existing natural landscape, avoid from degradation and destruction by constructions and other human actions. Sustainable of the forest park is based on open and available territory for everyone, not to close the territory for saving it.

The project contribute to the enhancement of environment, social and culture values at the public, because Dzintari forest park is the place, where people can go together with all family to enjoy nature, to do something active or culture events.

The management and building main aim was protect natural landscape in the city centre from damage and urban blight.

13. Exemplary value

The Project showed that there is possible to find compromise between nature and city develop environment. Project is the example of the good practice, because during the implementation of the project are found the solution how “to import” nature into the city life, without any damages and make nature available for everybody.

Good practices:

1. Save the natural landscape in the city centre, while territory around it developing public and living objects building.
2. Make natural landscape available for everyone and at the same time protecting natural landscape from damage and human negative effect.
3. Infrastructure objects which were use to building and to improvement the park territory were built bypassing and respecting protected natural forms and grounds, and using materials, which are including into natural landscape.

14. Public participation

During the park designing and building public were informed and public opinions and recommendations were taking into account, in the law fixed form, by public consultation at the municipality.

Dzintari forest park main aim – to protect and to preserve natural landscape in the city centre, line with Jurmala city development strategy 2010. – 2030., which is main local politics and development planning document and European Landscape Convention which says, that Each Party undertake a to recognise landscapes in law as an essential component of people’s surroundings, an expression of the diversity of their shared cultural and natural heritage, and a foundation of their identity.

15. Awareness-raising

Dzintari forest park is the place, where people can recreate from urban life, a place, where everyone can appreciate nature landscapes.

Dzintari forest park gives opportunity to feel natural importance in cities, provides holiday place for people, and gives grow up collective and individual well-being with its unique landscape.

9. U-PARKS. U-TURN WE LOVE, UTENA DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, LITHUANIA

I. STATE CONCERNED AND APPLICANT

1. State

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2. Applicant

	Utena district Municipality
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II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJET

3. Name of the Project

U-parks. U-turn we love.

4. Location of the Project

Utena town parks

5. Summary of the Project

Utena is the 10th largest Lithuanian town with the population of 34 000 (2012). In 1960-1990 industrial town enlarged in the expressive landscape preserving Nature frame (system of rivers, lakes, their valleys) in the area of 140 ha. Continues system of natural areas preserved as ecologically important, but their aesthetic and recreational functions were not recognized. In 1990-1998 the processes of private property restoration and land privatisation proceeded in whole country. The municipality made great efforts to save these areas as public spaces. Combining the protection and management of the unique landscape gaining the recreational potential of the area, Utena District Municipality developed City Gardens in the town centre (2005), the Krašuona River riverside in the in the densely build up residential area (2009), Dauniškis (2005) and Vyžuona (2010) parks as central recreational areas (total area 50 ha).

6. Photo representing the Project



Utena Town Gardens. 2010. Photo: Adolfas Sinkevičius

III. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

7. **Start of the Project** month year

8. **Partners**

9. **Financing bodies**

10. Central aims of the Project

The long lasting continues actions of landscape protection, management and new values creation was undertaken in Utena town.

The main aims of the Project were:

to protect general structure of the landscape and the ecological network in the town;

to enhance aesthetical and recreational potential of the natural landscape and create high quality recreational areas;

to sustain accessibility to the main landscape values for all citizens and visitors;

to improve quality of water;

to build new connections and enhance better communication between the different parts of the city and the people;

to raise the quality of living spaces;

to improve the image of the town and the general climate for investment.

11. Outcome

4 landscape planning documents were prepared and implemented in 50 ha area in 2002-2010.

Preserving general structure of the landscape, the recreational infrastructure was created:

in 11 ha Dauniškis park: 2 km of new lightening paths, paths for bicycles, 1 bridge, 3 playgrounds, 1 sports areas, 3 parkings, 2 swimming places, musical fountain, WC installed, 50 trees planted;

in 2,65 ha City Gardens: 1 km of new lightening paths, 2 bridges; water treatment installations; 50 trees, 1000 shrubs, 1300 m² parterres planted;

in 1 ha Krašuona River riverside: 0,7 km paths, 2 bridges; 100 m² of shrubs area;

in 35 ha Vyžuona park: 4,5 km of new lightening paths, 2,5 km paths for roller-skates, bicycles, 7 new bridges, 2 ponds cleaned, drainage system installed in 10 ha.

The quality of water was improved: the water sewage system renewed, 80 homesteads were connected to the central sewage system.

The accessibility of landscape values grew. New bridges and paths system enhanced better communication between the different parts of the city, forced new lifestyles. Parks were adapted for disabled people.

Created new aesthetics, comfort for all social groups and different activities have raised the quality of the living environment, substantially improved the image of the town.

Parks and the illuminated musical fountain have become the most visited sights of the town, a part of town cultural life.

The information system was introduced in all parks: stands represent the parks facilities and the values of landscape. The special information about parks was put on the official website of the Utena district Municipality: <http://www.utena.lt/?q=lt/node/5894>.

The seminars for the landscape specialists from other municipalities and open discussions for the public "Green spaces" were organized in 2007 and 2010 with support of Lithuanian Association of landscape architects.

Parks have become a learning space for young landscape architects, landscape designers from Utena Landscape higher school.

IV. RESPECT OF THE CRITERIA OF THE ATTRIBUTION OF THE AWARD

12. Sustainable territorial development

The project is a part of a sustainable development policy of the Utena town: the decision to develop parks was made right after the regaining Lithuanian independence in the General plan of the town (1993), Special plan of Utena town Green areas system (1999). Parks borders were fixed by the Plan of the Central part of Utena. By this document parks were legitimated as public spaces – that prevented parcelation of parks areas into individual plots.

The main task of the landscape preservation is designated in the recent General plan of the town (2008) too. Among the main goals of this document are: to provide measures and restrictions to ensure rational use of natural resources, ecological balance of the landscape, formation of the Natural framework, preservation of the natural and cultural heritage values, to improve the urban spatial composition of built-up areas, the quality of life and the environment forming the general system of municipal parks. By this document Utena is going to save its Natural framework and the most natural spaces, strengthening the Utena as the Green town image, preserve expressive natural landscape, to establish new parks in the new urbanised areas.

Project contributes to the enhancement of environmental, social, economic, cultural or aesthetic values of the landscape.

Because of cleaning the garbage, in some places – abundant bushes and water vegetation, water sewage control, the water quality in the small rivers and lakes was upgraded. New facilities and casual maintenance of the parks prevent wasting as well. New social functions will allow saving these areas as green corridors, preserving the natural character of the urban landscape and biodiversity in the future.

Development of parks had a huge social effect. After Lithuania regained its independence in 1990, the understanding of quality of life has changed. As quality of the living environment became more important, the need for attractive rest and recreation areas was emerged too. Privatisation of the previously common used land, partition it into small plots – growing fragmentation and fencing of landscape – raised the social value of common shared places and the communities' creation.

New bridges, safe, lightened paths system enhance better communication, forced new healthier lifestyles among all social groups of citizens. The everyday routes passed near the streets were changed into pleasant walking through the parks shortening the way to the work, school. There was created access to main landscape values for disabled. Young people have a place to spend their leisure time with their friends. The green areas are popular among mothers with small children and elderly people, athletes and sports enthusiasts. Sports professionals hold physical therapy exercises in Dauniškis Park. Parks are full of Nordic Walking enthusiasts, joggers, skaters, cyclists and volleyball fans. Young Utena football players and athletes also practice there.

15 new working places were created, during the busiest season up to 25 people are working.

Parks became a part of town cultural life, they play host to rides, concerts and other entertainment. An illuminated musical fountain built on Lake Dauniškis has become one of the most popular city attractions. The culture of park management, professional solutions of greenery was transmitted to the surrounding areas and had influence on the management of individual plots.

The most obvious are the aesthetic changes of the landscape. The most of green plots were “nobodies” land without any management for many years. Totally grown up expressive valleys of small natural meandering rivers and their waterfronts were not perceivable and not accessible. The most important task was to reveal and open the natural meanders and confluences of the small rivers.

Management of Dauniškis lake shore and its new installations recreate panoramas of the town. All parks were planned in a manner to maintain and strengthening natural features of the expressive landscape, preserving natural continuity, the most important natural ecotypes and accommodating new plants due to different ecological conditions. The Utena parks distinguish with the plenitude of water bodies, perennial flowers in the background of characteristic for the whole region woods vegetation.

13. Exemplary value

The Project can be considered of exemplary value because of its scale, complexity and continuity. The actions of Utena district Municipality are very important for Lithuania as State and could be considered as example for other States.

Utena district Municipality could be considered as official institution who declares the importance of landscape for the town identity and life quality of the citizens. Started from the small park reconstruction architectural contest in 2002, using only short municipal budget for it implementation, now Utena has 50 ha of developed parks and is planning 2 new parks – the actions are long lasting and covers whole town area.

The lost of green public spaces in the privatisation process is very common in Lithuania. Utena proves that the green network (in Lithuania – Natural frame) can be successfully preserved in the industrial town and fulfil both the environmental and social needs (local communities strengthening) as well.

Paradigm of landscape as territorial complex, consideration of the area as a whole. It is very important to evaluate, maintain and develop all functions of landscape. Together with the landscape management planning, water sewage system, some places – drainage was developed, functional and visual connections with other urban structures, accents were analysed and assessed in Utena too.

Based on long professional and public discussions and even hot debates, the actions of Utena district Municipality were very considered, professionally oriented to the public needs and the preservation of landscape features as a part of common good.

The experience of each project had benefit for the others: the professionals, officials, commercials, wide public passed the difficult way from misunderstanding, fear, jealous, individual needs to the regard, trust, respect... This evolution shows importance of long lasting landscape management programmes or policies, need for integration of landscape issues to the main spatial plans of the cities.

14. Public participation

The project is the good example of recent changes and the democracy development in Lithuania. First decades after regaining the independence (1990) were marked with radical political, social, economical changes, reflected on landscape as well. The restitution of land property, transformation of economy dramatically changed whole country, especially urban spaces. Towns and cities started to build up more intensively, lost a lot of previous natural spaces, recreational areas, the residential areas expanded into suburbia and the most expressive landscape areas. Not public, but private and individual interests prevailed. The control of land management was a challenge for municipalities.

In 2002 Utena district Municipality took on the ambitious programme of parks development.

The Law on Territorial planning states main framework on the public participation and its role in the decision making. Despite of that, planning the first parks (City Gardens, Dauniškis) Utena district Municipality faced with the difficulties communicating with the private land owners and interest groups. The consistent decisions with the respect of public interest were made by City Council

pursuing the valid spatial planning documents and based on the professional attitude. Plenty of information about the projects in local media and official website <http://www.utena.lt> was spread.

After the development of first parks the most citizens satisfy with results, more respect and confidence with specialists of the Municipality administration appear. Public became more open for further discussions and started to react in the same direction.

The public met the Krašuona riverside and Vyžuona park landscape planning documents with interest and supported them actively. In the Krašuona riverside case individual residential land plots are in very close contact and interaction with the public riverside. The concrete landscaping of the both – public and private – land was actively negotiated, consensus was found.

With the changes of landscape, change of culture of participation in the decision making process changed too. The new parks (Vyžuonaičio and Krašuona) development projects were initiated in 2010 by the residents of surrounding areas; they are active participators in the process of planning and designing.

The project fulfils requirements and actively implements the National landscape policy of Lithuania (2004), The Law on Green plots (2006), Regulation on the Nature Frame (2007), other legal acts and territorial planning documents.

15. Awareness-raising

The project effectively increased the public's awareness of the importance of landscape in terms of human development, individual and collective well-being.

Awareness rising was one of the most important and necessary task of the project. The processes of ideas generating, planning, implementation and management are public. In order to have the support of public broad information company was organized.

Information about the architectural contests, planning and implementation was spread in the local media, official websites of Utena district Municipality, Lithuanian Association of landscape architects.

After implementation, special discussions and events for citizens were organised, information stands with information about parks authors, facilities, landscape values in all parks were installed.

Special place in the community awareness rising had the seminars "Green spaces", which were held in Utena in 2007 and 2010. In these seminars, organised with the Lithuanian Association of Landscape architects, specialists together with the Utena district Municipality administration and the wide public were discussed the main parks landscaping ideas and their realisation. The seminars took place directly in the parks, where citizens laid out their understanding about landscape changes in past and future, the problems, needs and appreciations, had possibility to discuss it with the authors of parks plans.

Parks became a learning space for young landscape architects, landscape designers from Utena Landscape higher school. Utena district Municipality shared its experience with other municipalities of Lithuania and other countries (Estonia).

Utena district Municipality was awarded by Lithuanian Landscape Award 2012.

Special interviews showed that Utena citizens recognized the importance of landscape management in their individual and collective well-being, the parks development had the positive effect on their everyday life, community building, understanding of their town as good place to live in.

10. PLANNING POLICY FOR CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF 20 NATIONAL LANDSCAPES IN THE NETHERLANDS, STICHTING NATIONALE LANDSCHAPPEN (NGO), NETHERLANDS

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II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJET

3. Name of the Project	Planning policy for conservation and sustainable development of 20 National Landscapes in the Netherlands
4. Location of the Project	The 20 National Landscapes are situated in different parts of the Netherlands and cover up to 20% of national land area

5. Summary of the Project

Since 2006 local and regional organisations have joined forces to protect landscape qualities and stimulate sustainable development in the twenty most valuable cultural landscapes in the Netherlands. Much has been invested in improving recreational facilities and accessibility and in raising public awareness. Introduced and financially supported in the first years by national government, recently a new non-governmental organisation has been formed to secure protection and management in the future and improve cooperation of all parties involved, including local and regional authorities and private investors. This organisation is a non-profit foundation (Stichting Nationale Landschappen) with an executive office of its own (Servicenet Nationale Landschappen). New projects are being set up and new ways of financing are being organised.

6. Photo representing the Project



III. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

7. **Start of the Project** month January year 2006

8. **Partners**

Local and regional organisations in all national landscapes, ANWB, Nationaal Groenfonds, Samenwerkingsverband Nationale Parken, NBTC, Landelijk Fietsplatform, Wandelnet, KNHS

9. **Financing bodies**

Provinces, regional organisations, Nationaal Groenfonds, ANWB

10. Central aims of the Project

National Landscapes are outstanding examples of typical Dutch landscapes. They are designated to ensure cultural and spatial diversity of the Dutch landscape as a whole and to improve recreational accessibility and sustainable management. Servicenet Nationale Landschappen seeks to improve cooperation of all parties involved and to develop new forms of public participation and financial management. Furthermore Servicenet facilitates common promotion, marketing and knowledge exchange. National government has given more responsibilities to civil and private organisations in managing landscape. Servicenet is a response to this.

11. Outcome

Since 2006 many projects have been carried out, special organisations have been set up and much has been invested in promotion and education. National landscapes have become a well known 'brand'. Although national government has cut down spending, all provinces continue to recognise the importance of the national landscapes and support the work of Servicenet Nationale Landschappen. Local and regional organisations in all national landscape contribute to and participate in Servicenet. Thus Servicenet has managed to keep the national landscapes on the political agenda and to ensure the organisational base of these important cultural landscapes. Furthermore Servicenet is working on strengthening the economical base, by involving private investors and setting up a national fund, in cooperation with Nationaal Groenfonds. Together with the national office for tourism and congresses (NBTC) Servicenet is working out a national and international promotion campaign.

IV. RESPECT OF THE CRITERIA OF THE ATTRIBUTION OF THE AWARD

12. Sustainable territorial development

Since the beginning national landscape policy was not only aimed at conservation, but also on combining new environmental developments with the core qualities of the landscape. Extra care has been given to the design of housing, infrastructure and recreational projects and to the promotion of nature management by farmers. Servicenet continues this approach and sees the national landscape as prime example areas for sustainable development. Servicenet is involved in regional and thematic projects on sustainable recreational landscapes, energy landscapes and new forms of agriculture and food production. Sustainable development is one of the three pillars of the activities of Servicenet, next to marketing and communication and cooperation and knowledge exchange. An important part of this is to organise new ways of financing landscape management, by involving private investors and setting up a national fund. When governmental funding is falling short, this is the only way to ensure the future of the national landscapes.

13. Exemplary value

Servicenet Nationale Landschappen is of exemplary value for two reasons:

1. it shows that landscape conservation can very well be combined with giving space for new ways of land use and that innovative design solutions for this combination are in fact conditional for sustainable development;
2. it shows how civil and commercial parties can take up new responsibilities for managing and developing valuable cultural landscapes and how new financial and organisational models can be put in practice: less government, more public and private involvement.

14. Public participation

As an NGO Servicenet Nationale Landschappen in itself is a form of public participation in landscape policy on a national scale. The members of the foundation are chosen for their individual vision and knowledge. Servicenet works closely together with other national NGO's, such as ANWB, Landelijk Fietsplatform, Wandelnet and KNHS. On a regional and local scale Servicenet works together with regional and local public organisations and commercial parties. We are involved in several projects to enhance the involvement of the public in landscape management and sustainable development. These projects are partly financed by governmental organisations, because they are in line with national and provincial policies to given more responsibilities to local public organisations and commercial parties.

15. Awareness-raising

Although there are big differences between the different national landscapes, in general policy for these areas has highly contributed to raising public awareness of the cultural, ecological, social and economical importance of these landscapes. Many promotional and educational campaigns have been set up that have made the national landscapes into a popular brand. Servicenet wants to further develop this brand and help to promote national landscapes nationally and internationally as 'cultural icons of the Netherlands'. Together with NBTC a tourist promotion campaign is being worked out. Through the website www.nationalelandschappen.nl and several publications extra attention is paid for the national landscapes.

11. PRESERVING ECOLOGICAL VALUE IN THE LANDSCAPE OF THE SZPROTAWA RIVER VALLEY, LOWER SILESIAN ASSOCIATION OF LANDSCAPE PARKS, POLAND

I. STATE CONCERNED AND APPLICANT

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2.	Applicant	Lower Silesian Association of Landscape Parks
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II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECT

3.	Name of the Project	„Preserving ecological value in the landscape of the Szprotawa river valley”
4.	Location of the Project	Przemków commune, Gaworzyce, Radwanice, Polkowice Township and Gromadka, Bolesławiec Township, Lower Silesian Voivodeship – Przemkowski Wetlands Ecological Area in the Przemkowski Landscape Park and NATURA 2000 Przemkowski Ponds Special Protection Area

5. Summary of the Project

Conservation of plant communities classified as *Molinion* and *Arrhenatherion elatioris*
 Conversion of former Soviet airbase into wetland meadows covering 500 hectares.
 Implementation of measures to raise and maintain groundwater level at the protected site.
 Preservation of traditional land management practices on the protected site: polder.
 Re-establishment of nesting grounds for aquatic and wetland birds. Removal of Soviet military earthworks.
 Interruption of succession by willow trees. Eco-agricultural program and grazing by cattle, sheep and horses.
 Re-establishment of the use of meadows for pasturage to preserve low peat bogs.
 Long-term vocational activation among the Gypsy population to counter poverty and exclusion.
 Preservation of bird sanctuaries European importance E052 species listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive, also from the Polish Red Book.
 Conversion of the heating system from traditional coal-based to eco-friendly biomass-based in the headquarters of the Lower Silesian Association of Landscape parks and in the village of Wysoka.

4. Photo representing the Project



III. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

7. **Start of the Project** month May year 1999

8. **Partners**

1. RDOŚ Wrocław: nature conservation.
2. Local governments of Przemków and Gaworzyce.
3. Individual farmers.
4. Agricultural facility „CEBER” partnership, pasturage, mowing,
5. Agricultural facility Piątkowscy, Szczecin.
6. Association of Gypsies in Przemków.

9. Financing bodies

Internal funding by the Lower Silesian Association of Landscape Parks, Wrocław. EFRROW and budget of the government of the Lower Silesian Voivodeship under the RPO for the voivodeship from 2007 to 2013.

10. Central aims of the Project

The goals of this long-term project were achieved from 1999 to 2009. An original, innovative and long-term program was implemented to actively conserve the natural assets of the site while allowing sustainable development. The site was in the Przemkowski Landscape Park, and included the Przemkowski Wetlands Ecological Area and Przemkowski Ponds Special Protection Area belonging to the European Ecological Network under NATURA 2000. The project depends on the successive completion of complex stages that represent crucial changes in the way the environment is tended. The landscape of the Szprotawa river valley in the Bóbr watershed and associated wetlands are continuously being shaped and conserved. This involves both the protected area and the surrounding agricultural land. Funding from eco-agricultural programs are being used for free educational activities on nature-related topics for children and young people in Lower Silesia, as well as for active nature conservation.

The next goal of the project is to activate an ethnic minority, the gypsies of Przemków, thereby reducing their marginalization and exclusion.

The project relies on the cooperation of the local population, especially farmers and landowners, to carry out the eco-agricultural programs that have a direct effect on the preservation of landscape value in the Przemkowski Landscape Park.

11. Outcome

The following results were achieved:

1. Ecological effect: direct reduction of threats to biodiversity and preservation of landscape value.
2. Social effect: activation of the local population, job-creation, propagation of useful practices among local farmers by implementing an eco-agricultural program, increasing acceptance and respect for areas protected by Natura 2000, including the Przemkowski Ponds (OSO, code PLB 020003, Type A), the Przemkowski Heath (SOO, code PLH 020015, Type B), and the Lower Silesian Woodlands (OSO, code PLB020005).
3. Material effect: purchase of agricultural equipment to carry out the eco-agricultural program and to actively protect the landscape. Conversion of heating system from traditional coal-based to biomass-based. Annual harvest of biomass. Preservation of habitats falling under Natura 2000, which allowed the beekeepers of Lower Silesia to obtain a European certificate for heather honey from the Lower Silesian Woodlands.
4. Educational effect: Annual and year-long instruction in topics related to nature. From the first day of the project, the Lower Silesian Association of Landscape Parks conducted instruction involving more than 186,000 children and young people in Lower Silesia. Each year, the Association educated 20,000 to 22,000 people at a cost of 300,000 to 330,000 PLN, at an average cost of 13 to 15 PLN per person.

5. Effect on sustainable use of the landscape: Long-term preservation of the character of the landscape of the river valley while maintaining the value of the area, biodiversity, and on-going protection of habitats and plant and animal species.

IV. RESPECT OF THE CRITERIA OF THE ATTRIBUTION OF THE AWARD

12. Sustainable territorial development

YES. The project is part of a policy for sustainable development, as set out by the Commission of the European Union. The activities of the Lower Silesian Association of Landscape Parks in Wrocław promoted sustainable development by implementing and propagating an innovative and ecologically sound program for agricultural development while, at the same time, preserving natural value. Furthermore, they are a model of applying the best solutions to problems associated with preserving biodiversity, counteracting ecosystem degradation, and converting the heating systems of public buildings from traditional coal-based heating to eco-friendly heating based on biomass obtained during the active conservation of protected natural areas in the Przemkowski Landscape Park.

YES. The project contributes to the ecological, social, economic and esthetic value of the landscape. The natural value of the environment in this project should be considered synonymous with the landscape itself. The activities of the Lower Silesian Association of Landscape Parks, both in connection with this project and otherwise, fulfill the requirements of Article 16.1. of the Law of April 16, 2004, on Nature Conservation. They make possible the maintenance of high landscape value, ensure their permanence, and, most of all, make possible the re-establishment of the natural characteristics of the environment of the Przemkowski Wetlands.

The Przemkowski Wetlands Ecological Area was included in the European Ecological Network under NATURA 2000 and was designated as the Przemkowski Ponds Special Protection Area, code PLB 020003, Type A, with a total area of 4592.70 hectares.

Social value was improved by increasing acceptance and respect for preserved landscape among children, young people and individual tourists using the nature trails laid out as part of the project. Needs related to the education of tourists were met by installing an 850-meter-long didactic boardwalk through reed stands in the Przemkowski Wetlands Ecological Area. The project does not allow any urban development in the area, and preserves its historic character. Before the First and Second World Wars, the area was also significant for the education of tourists.

Economic value consists exclusively in the value of the preserved environment and its exploitation, both in monetary terms and in terms of its inestimable natural value.

The project preserved the natural functioning of the environment while making it possible to derive tangible income in the form of funding by EFRROW, in addition to its precious natural, landscape and historical value that serves as the basis for educating the population of Lower Silesia.

The landscape represents a valuable ecological area that is not found elsewhere in Europe. The project was able to accomplish its goals in tandem with concurrent local economic goals because of the innovative ways in which the natural environment was managed.

Esthetic value was enhanced by the project's inclusion of a strategy for sustainable development, which preserved the natural value of the Szprotawa river valley and the area covered under Natura 2000.

YES. The project substantially improved damage to the environment caused by the use of the area as a Soviet airbase after the Second World War.

During the course of the project, all of the abandoned military structures were dismantled. This

corrected hydrological conditions in the area and allowed the reconstruction of necessary hydrotechnical structures.

13. Exemplary value

The activities of the Lower Silesian Association of Landscape Parks in Wrocław meet many of the challenges set out in the renewed strategy for sustainable development of the European Union, including: changing energy sources, protecting, managing and restoring natural resources, and social integration by activating an ethnic minority, thereby reducing exclusion and poverty.

YES. The project can serve as a model for good landscape practices.

All activities related to agriculture (including the promotion and implementation of extensive agriculture) and to active nature conservation are environment-friendly, and promoted sustainable development by permitting the harvest of biomass, controlling and maintaining the groundwater level, regulating flooding by the Szprotawa river in the Bóbr watershed, reestablishing normal peat bog development, and preserving unaltered landscape.

The project was carried out in the Przemkowski Wetlands Ecological Area, which covers a total of 1696.78 hectares.

Practices used in the project include:

1. Mowing of permanent grassland and pasture for cattle, sheep and horses in accordance with the eco-agricultural program.

Package 3. Extensive permanent grassland, 3.1.1. Extensive management of meadows and pasture.

Mowing from June 1 to September 30, no more than twice a year, to a height of 5 to 15 cm, leaving 5 to 10% of the site unmown. Removal or stacking of cut biomass within two weeks of mowing. Grazing from May 1 to October 15 at a load of 0.5 to 1.0 pieces per hectare.

Package 5. Protection of threatened bird species and natural habitats in areas under Natura 2000.

2. Protection of nesting grounds.
Mowing from August 1 to September 30 to a height of 5 to 15 cm, leaving 5 to 10% of the site unmown. Removal or stacking of cut biomass within two weeks of mowing. Grazing from May 1 to October 15.
3. Interruption of succession by cutting trees of alien origin such as Pennsylvania ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*) and shrubby forms of willow (*Salix sp.*)
4. Implementing measures to actively preserve the natural functioning of the environment and protect plant and animal species, especially aquatic and wetland birds.
5. Continuous monitoring of the state of hydrotechnical structures.
6. Continuing free education on nature-related topics for children, young people, farmers and employees of local governments.

14. Public participation

For many years, the project has been encouraging the active participation of members of the community, and in particular farmers, beekeepers, Gypsies, children and young people.

Farmers accept and value the benefits of managing protected areas. They willingly help implement eco-agricultural programs, and approve of extensive agricultural practices.

Beekeepers from several voivodeships place their hives in the protected areas of the Przemkowski Landscape Park, including the Przemkowski Wetlands Ecological Area.

Education provided by the Lower Silesian Association of Landscape Parks in Wrocław, together with the support of farmers, has led to the promotion of beekeeping products originating in the park. A European certificate was issued for honey from the park. The Lower Silesian Honey Fair in Przemków was organized, and is now in its thirteenth year, with participants from all over Poland.

Gypsies cooperate every year in active conservation measures by helping to interrupt unwanted succession, shaping and establishing the protected landscape. They also benefit by collecting fuel for winter heating. Gypsies participate in vocational activation, forming a proper citizen base, which is one of the most effective ways to combat poverty and marginalization in this social group.

Children and young people take advantage of free education on nature-related topics provided by the Lower Silesian Association of Landscape Parks. This program reaches 22,000 children and young people each year, and focuses on the natural value of the landscape. The education provided will doubtlessly encourage the recipients to make environment-friendly decisions in the future.

The project is consistent with policies and plans at the following levels:

National: the activities are compatible with:

1. The Program for Ecological Education for Lower Silesia, two of whose co-authors are employees of the applicant for this project, the Lower Silesian Association of Landscape Parks in Wrocław.
2. The National Strategy for Ecological Education, which identifies and prioritizes the leading goals of ecological education and provides guidance in achieving those goals.
3. The Low Retention Program, in cooperation with which hydrological testing was carried out in the Przemkowskie Wetlands Ecological Area.
4. Long-term activation of the Gypsy community in work related to active conservation of areas included in the European Ecological Network under NATURA 2000: the Przemkowski Ponds Special Protection Area, Stage I, July 18/19, 2006 in Przemków.
5. participation in the program "Aid for the Gypsy Community in Poland".

Regional:

1. The Land Management Plan for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship.
2. Programs to limit emissions and to prevent climate change: "Modernization of the heating system in the school in the village of Wysoka using biomass from valuable natural areas", November, 2005.
3. „Romano drom pe fedyr dzipen: project for social integration and vocational activation of the Gypsy community in Kamienna Góra, Legnica and Przemków", partly financed by the European Union under the European Social Fund.

Local:

1. The local land management plan for the commune and municipality of Przemków and the commune of Gaworzyce.
2. The Strategy for Ecological Development for the commune and municipality of Przemków.

15. Awareness-raising

The project raises public awareness about the significance of the environment in the following contexts:

1. Human development: awareness increased significantly among farmers, government workers and other social groups due to long-term educational and practical measures by the Lower Silesian Association of Landscape Parks to present the benefits of sustainable land management, and to convey a proper sense of the natural value of landscapes.
2. European identity was reinforced among participating farmers, beekeepers and Gypsies. They were made aware of the fact that European principles directly affect their every day lives , and not merely in an abstract way.
3. Individual and community well-being were advanced. The activities of the applicant convinced individuals to positively respect protected areas, especially those falling under Natura 2000, as worth preserving in and of themselves.

**12. FURNAS LANDSCAPE LABORATORY (FURNAS LANDLAB), AZORES
REGIONAL DIRECTORATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT (DIREÇÃO
REGIONAL DO AMBIENTE), PORTUGAL**

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II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJET

3. Name of the Project

Furnas Landscape Laboratory
(*Furnas LandLab*)

4. Location of the Project

Furnas, São Miguel Island, Azores

5. Summary of the Project

The intensification of dairy farms in the last decades has lead to the eutrophication of Furnas Lake. Therefore, to restore its water quality a legally binding *Furnas Watershed Plan* took place, aiming at a major change of the soil use. It was a turning point in the landscape management and economic activities of the last decades. Since 2007 about 300 ha of agricultural land within the watershed were bought by the Azorean Government, which enabled the management team to implement an ambitious plan. *Furnas Landscape Laboratory*, a future *multifunctional forest landscape* was created to act as a large experimental ground, pioneer in Azores, to implement new ecological restoration techniques, economical activities and management practices, promoting a wide spread public involvement, to achieve sustainability at all levels (ecologic, economic, social, cultural and aesthetic). Although much has already been achieved and finished since 2007, the project is ongoing with no conclusion date.

6. Photo representing the Project



III. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

7. Start of the Project

month

Sept

year

2007

8. Partners

Several public institutions; Army; Schools;
Nonprofit Associations; Sport clubs; Scouts;
Local Entrepreneurs, Regional Corporations;
Regional, National and European Universities
and Research Centers;

9. Financing bodies

Regional Government of the Azores;
 7th EU Framework Programme (2007-2013);
 Partners and Sponsors;
 Self revenues;

10. Central aims of the Project

Furnas Watershed Plan, published in 2005 to restore Furnas Lake, consisted of six main goals:

- ✓ Reduce the flow of nutrients to the lake;
- ✓ Increase biodiversity;
- ✓ Safeguard income sustainability;
- ✓ Diversify and consolidate the basis of local economy;
- ✓ Promote local values;
- ✓ Minimize geotechnical risks.

Later, in 2008 the classification of *Furnas Protected Landscape*, complemented the previous policies of *Furnas Watershed Plan*, with the overall objective to “Promote and conserve the existing natural values, as well as maintaining cultural values, in the perspective of a balanced and sustainable socio-economic development”.

The specific objectives of this classification were to:

- ✓ Preserve and add value to the volcanic hot springs, and other geological heritage;
- ✓ Preserve and enhance the quality and diversity of the existing hydrological resources;
- ✓ Assure the conservation and restoration of fauna and flora natural communities;
- ✓ Ensure and increase the existing landscape uniqueness, scenic and aesthetic values;
- ✓ Preserve and enhance the unique character of the historical and cultural heritage, specifically botanical and architectural;
- ✓ Promote the population socio-economic development, through the preservation and valorization of traditions, old ways and local products;
- ✓ Promote the area as a regional example of sustainable development, searching for the population's life quality improvement;
- ✓ Promote the area as a regional and international centre of scientific and pedagogical research;

Furnas Landscape Laboratory aims to create and restore a landscape that is in continuous transformation, hence appealing to: the local community, biodiversity, tourism, nature sports, artists, investors, entrepreneurs, science and education. It is innovative, interactive and in a constant sustainable evolution throughout time. It must continue to be dynamic and adaptive, as this is a long term project that will never be finished and which concepts will be extrapolated to new sites.

11. Outcome

A successful and proactive landscape restoration with a large public involvement through the many partnerships and events created to establish a strong relationship with the local community, and a feeling of belonging and ownership by the general public.

Some of the facts and figures, that contribute to a better landscape quality, to highlight are:

Environmental & Aesthetical and Spatial & Biodiversity

- About 300 ha of mainly pastureland and some forest were acquired from private owners;
- Removal of dozens of tons of polluting residues, from plastics and chemical packages to junk;
- Removal of over 500 cattle heads from Furnas lake watershed basin;
- Consultation and support to local land owners;
- 220 ha (160 ha public + 60 ha private) of pastures with previous semi intensive agriculture no longer have fertilisations or cow dung;
- 6500 bales of grass silage produced on acquired pastures, being exported from Furnas Lake watershed, equivalent to the removal of 4.500 tons of grass and it's nutrients;
- Invasive flora control and eradication across 160 ha of mainly pastureland;
- Production of over 10.000 endangered herbaceous native plants at project nursery;
- Public plantation of over 115.000 trees and shrubs of nearly 50 species, on 45 ha of former degraded and invaded pastureland; plus approximately 34 ha of production forest planted by private owners;
- Reintroduction of six native flora species previously extinct at *Furnas Protected Landscape*;
- Plantation of 2500 meters of buffer zones with endemic and native species along streams;
- Restitution of ponds and wetland areas, to retain water and reduce hydrological torrential regime;
- Erosion control and native flora plantation, of eight erosion gullies with a total area of two hectares;
- Construction of six retention basins on stream beds, where each year about 20.000 m³ of soil is removed in order to prevent it from reaching the lake;

Cultural & Public Engagement & Socio-Economical & Innovation & Education and Research

- Installation of wicker collection along 400 m of previously degraded and weed invaded stream bank, in order to prevent erosion and revitalize traditional basketry art;
- Restoration of three hectares of traditional fruit orchard with ancient cultivars, collections of different fruit trees and demonstration of new sustainable concepts and techniques, opening soon to public visits, educational programmes and culinary workshops will follow;
- Establishment of new fruit orchards, with ancient apple cultivars (1 ha) and experimental orchards for native blueberries (1 ha), among other species smaller trials;
- Plantation of seed orchards for native woody species, in order for future restoration projects not to harvest seeds and grafts in the wild;
- Installation of several research experiments, including native trees genetic and forestry trial plots;
- Study of flora evolution, through pollen deposition analyses on soil samples down to 10 m;
- Establishment of many successful partnerships with local community, entrepreneurs, companies, research institutions, associations, army and other public institutions;

- Plantation of several thematic areas with partners using endemic species;
- Over ten annual field trips with organized groups (partners, university students, journalists, active citizens, general public on open days, politicians and other decision makers) to the field work interventions undertaken on the acquired public areas;
- Involvement of university, schools and scouts in sub-projects implementation;
- Over ten training periods provided at the project for students from the local university and technical schools;
- About 100 young military servicemen participated in field work, increasing their environmental awareness and extending their skills;
- Requalification of 35 ha of degraded lake margins, with the replacement of a wide invasive vegetation cover by over 3000 native trees and shrubs, as well as the recycling of decayed hotel ruins;
- Construction of combined management and visitor centre building (Furnas Monitoring and Research Centre – CMIF), and four temporary residences available for periods of stay for researchers, students, artists, volunteers and project partners;
- Environmental education through exhibition guided visits and activities to over 6000 visitors in 2012 alone, at Furnas Monitoring and Research Centre;
- Vehicle restriction to 2 km of lake margin, returning it to pedestrian and cycle users;
- Annual event of chainsaw wood carving of dead or invasive trees at the lake margins;
- 10 new permanent jobs created directly at the local community;
- Occupation of 24 unemployed workers, on social benefits, in *Furnas LandLab* field work;
- Creation of a Park Carpentry to build biodiversity promotion and outdoor equipments;
- New trails for hikers enabling circular routes and scenic landscapes with new support equipments;
- New trails for other sports such as DownHill biking, and promotion of new nature activities;
- Volcanic activity tourism hotspot safety increment with new fencing around boiling waters;

IV. RESPECT OF THE CRITERIA OF THE ATTRIBUTION OF THE AWARD

12. Sustainable territorial development

As mentioned previously (point 10), since the year 2000 there has been the development of an environmental policy by the Regional Government of the Azores. First there was the acknowledgement that environmental policies were needed to restore the eutrophicated lakes of São Miguel island resulting in *Furnas Lake Watershed Plan* being published in 2005, after a large public consultation and involvement of numerous entities that lasted for the five years of its elaboration. Soon after there was also the need to distinguish the many values of Furnas Landscape so the classification of *Furnas Protected Landscape* took place in 2008. More recently a legally binding general *Management Plan for Furnas Protected Landscape* was published by the Regional Ministry of Environment.

All these policies dictate that Furnas lake and landscape restoration must ensure an integrated and multisectorial approach, which can guarantee a sustainable development of the landscape and its community. The *Furnas LandLab* is a combination of these several policies and aims.

Over several decades of agriculture and forestry sectors intensification, there had been a specialisation in both fields, to the point of having vast areas occupied by continuous monocultures. In agriculture the focus had been on dairy farms with heavy fertilisations and huge manure management problems, and forestry was monopolised by one single species production, the Japanese cedar (*Cryptomeria japonica*). At Furnas Lake watershed, the result was a very visible degradation and division on the landscape in two mono-specific land covers through hundreds of acres each; the irregular and diverse patch occupancy had been lost. On the flatter areas, Northwest, a large congregation of pastureland, and on the Southeast a concentration of large continuous stands of even aged *Cryptomeria*, a species which production stands have scarce understory and biodiversity, and are explored by large clear cuts in the steep irregular sites.

It has been a major concern that the several dairy farms that were removed from Furnas landscape, which had a negative impact on the ecology and landscape but a positive impact on the economy, are replaced by other land uses which will take into consideration the “green concerns” while also providing for economical subsistence to the local population.

Furnas has a tradition on landscape experimentation, this was done by the *gentleman farmer* José do Canto in the 19th century, among others, who tested and installed new timber species and diverse fruits and other agricultural crops (eg. pineapple, tea, tobacco, beetroot, etc..) . Because to see it is to believe it, just like José do Canto in its time, *Furnas LandLab* is establishing full scale plots of diverse alternative land uses. There, the general public can visit real scale interventions and production experimental plots, in order to assess its viability to be repeated in Furnas or elsewhere in ecologically or landscape sensitive areas, and understand new management techniques and models.

Furnas LandLab through the planning of the landscape as a whole, where sustainability is a main focus, has added value to the landscape with a mosaic of different land uses. These refer to cultural values which can also economically support the project area management, by direct production and trough Ecotourism and recreational activities on the landscape. Traditional productions such as wicker, fruit orchards, melliferous plants and native species have been reintroduced to the landscape, blending in and enhancing the landscape quality of what used to be a monotonous grassland or *Cryptomeria* forest stand.

The new economical activities are meant to respect and enhance biodiversity, environment, landscape and cultural values, and consequently enhance socio-economic values.

The strong contribution to enhance the environmental values are notably related to the removal of a huge amount of polluting residues across the landscape, along with an invasive species and soil erosion control, which together have resulted in an extensive recovery of the landscape, both environmentally and aesthetically, but also more importantly the main focus being to revert the eutrophication of Furnas lake. Although the eutrophication of Furnas Lake took several decades to reach the decayed situation it came to, at a certain point, the last five years of the project many of the eutrophication causes have been halted. As a result chemical water quality already presents some improvement, which in due time should show considerable improvements in the overall water quality and aesthetics.

13. Exemplary value

The project has a holistic approach to the problems and potential solutions for Furnas landscape. There is a multisectorial approach, not only focused on ecological issues, but having an authentic implementation of the European Landscape convention at all levels. Focusing solely on ecology and ignoring other relevant needs of the landscape, its users and cultural values could save Furnas Lake in the medium term, but not the landscape and its population well being on the long run.

The Azores islands Furnas landscape restoration is one of the very first and few ecological and landscape restoration projects, and certainly unique if considered its large scale, multisectorial approach and number of dedicated partners. This project exemplifies a different approach, from the traditional view on ecological issues, and set the standard for future restoration projects soon to take place at other lakes and sites across this insular region.

With the experienced gained at *Furnas LandLab*, through its many trials, the management team has already started to intervene at other protected areas across São Miguel.

Also from the several experimental plots already installed, and the many more to be installed as this is a ongoing plan with no conclusion date, there is the expectation that at least a handful of examples will be successful and acknowledged to be valuable and worthy of repetition or inspiring similar projects at other landscape or ecologically sensitive areas. Therefore assuring the ecological and aesthetical values of those targeted landscapes but also assuring the economical subsistence of its populations, who very often are the landowners, and should be the main actors benefiting from landscapes protection and restoration.

Furnas LandLab full scale trial examples are already being visited by other technical staff of the Azores public administration. It has also been regularly visited by local university students, on field trips, as well as foreign countries regarding diverse subjects, from Biology to Landscape Architecture and Architecture. The centre headquarters has also accommodated international meetings from the *European Forest Institute* and the *European Union Outermost Regions Council*. The decision makers have seen the approach and achievements made by the *Furnas LandLab* and view them as good practices possibly to be replicated.

A point worthy of mention, is that for the first four years of the project about 60% of all our field management expenses with plants, equipments, machinery, consumables, and maintenances (apart from land acquisition and staff wages) were covered by self-generated revenues, partners donations, sponsorships, approved research projects and EU 7th Framework approved funds. This has proven that even in small rural communities it is possible to imaginatively create revenues to support this type of landscape restoration projects, something of extreme importance given the current economical situation across Europe.

The project has been awarded the *Portuguese National Landscape Award 2012*. Previously it has also been awarded the *National Award for Defence and Environment 2009*, due to its unique involvement of the army in Furnas landscape restoration. It has also been awarded the *European Chart for Sustainable Tourism*, by being a relevant partner of Terras do Priolo (Azorean Bullfinch Lands) application, which represented the eastern part of the island protected areas. Several other awards have been credited to the architectural and landscaping intervention along the south margin of the lake.

The concepts and landscape restoration of the *Furnas LandLab* have been highlighted many times in Regional and National media as innovative and dynamic, with valuable examples to the community.

Regarding implemented good practices there are several examples already listed in the outcome (point 11), however another short example of how much difference one good practise has had. Something as simple as using individual protective tubes for native seedlings has allowed a significant increase of survival rates to nearly 90%. Previously seedlings could not compete with surrounding herbaceous cover and rabbit predation, having extremely high mortality rates. The use of individual protective tubes has proved that, contrary to what was stated in the past, nature restoration with endemic species in Azores is viable. This is now wide spread across some areas of Azores.

14. Public participation

From the beginning of the outline of the policies in the *Furnas Lake Watershed Plan* there was a large public consultation with public meetings and presentations. Also each stage of the Plan was presented to the appraisal of the stakeholders who were part of the evaluation committee (landowners, different public administration entities, municipal authorities, farmers union, environmental associations, regional university, etc.).

Currently, through the involvement of many partners in the project and relationships with different local stakeholders, the public is being strongly encouraged to get involved in the project and directly influence the decision making process.

It is often stated to the public, that Furnas Landscape restoration is not an obligation of the government, a public company or a couple of engineers and a small field work team alone, but ultimately of the entire society.

The project management team has been actively creative in ways to involve the local community, by contacting and organizing visits and events on the landscape open to public, or for groups such as school children and teens, university students, scouts, elderly homes, environmental NGO's, sports clubs and corporations employees among others.

These successful events taking place in the landscape have proved to be the best way to encourage public participation. At these occasions people have been observing the change of the landscape and coming up with their own suggestions on how or what is important and what can be improved upon, while brainstorming solutions and suggestions for the next step. It also creates an informal opportunity for people to express their opinions and thoughts directly to the management team, more privately or among colleagues, which is not so likely to happen at public hearings and presentations.

There has also been a successful initiative which entitles interested partners, together with the management team, to create their own projects and shape a piece of land at *Furnas LandLab*. This creates a very direct opportunity to influence decision making, and also creates a large feeling of ownership for the entire project to restore Furnas lake and landscape by those involved.

There was also a decision to make land available for innovative ideas and projects, so entrepreneurs, MSc or PhD students and university professors can actually try real scale examples of their business models or test scientific theories. One such example is the MIT Green Islands experimental plots, which studies green energy production through biomass.

Other ways for the general public to influence the decision making process are offered through public

enquires and leaving feedback opinions in the guest book at the visitor centre.

The management office is located at Furnas Monitoring and Research Centre, enabling the public and visitors of the centre to address the management team directly. At the centre, the management team also has an open door policy at the office, which allows curious tourists or proactive citizens to easily establish contact with the team for questions or suggestions.

The project exists due to the implementation of regional policies, transposed from national and European laws. The project implementation is undertaken by a public company directly dependent on the Regional Directorate of the Environment. This close contact ensures all efforts are fine tuned into the same policies and decisions regarding landscape needs.

15. Awareness-raising

A lot of work has been done to reach the wide public and raise awareness regarding the relevance of all landscape values, mainly assuring people acknowledge Furnas landscape as humanized and dynamic instead of categorize it as nature which cannot be touched.

The local economy in the Azores and Furnas is a subsistence economy. In order to increase public awareness of the importance and value of Furnas landscape in terms of human development and collective well being means also explaining and proving to people that our landscape is an asset for its intrinsic value, but also for its outstanding potential to develop the society and support a competitive economy through the increase of existing tourism activities, local products and crafts.

This has been a priority focus of the *Furnas LandLab*.

Effectively increasing the public's awareness of the importance of the landscape has been achieved in a variety of ways

- Guided visits for decision makers, students, visitors and tourists at Furnas Monitoring and Research Centre exhibition room and its 15 min. documentary screening in the auditorium;
- Public presentations at local and regional related congresses and seminars;
- Open days with interpretative guided trail walks;
- Development of diverse activities from tree planting, to sport and art events;
- News and interviews to newspapers, regional TV station and onboard regional airline flight magazine regarding the project and its approach to the landscape as a whole;
- Azores Natural Parks newsletter;
- Partnerships with national and international entities;
- Publication of handbooks where the different values of Furnas landscape are addressed, and why and how several of the restoration interventions and projects took place;
- Collaboration with prominent national Landscape Architecture Offices, photographer;
- Many informal talks;

13. ADEPT – AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN TRANSYLVANIA, ADEPT FOUNDATION, NGO, ROMANIA

I. STATE CONCERNED AND APPLICANT

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II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECT

3. Name of the Project

ADEPT – Agricultural Development & Environmental Protection
in Transylvania

4. Location of the Project

The project was initiated and implemented in South-East rural Transylvania, in an ethnographic area known as Târnava Mare. The landscape targeted by the project occupies an area of 85,000 hectares and is inhabited by approximately 25.000 people (8 communes), of which the vast majority are farmers.

5. Summary of the Project

The Agricultural Development & Environmental Protection (ADEPT) project was implemented by the ADEPT Foundation in the period May 2006-March 2009, financed under the Darwin Initiative and co-financed by Orange Romania and the UK Government (Defra). The project was initiated in the Târnava Mare area as a response to the threats to the semi-natural landscapes in Southern Transylvania, threats stemming both from land abandonment and agriculture intensification as well as from lack of recognition. The goal was to facilitate the conservation and traditional management of the Târnava Mare semi-natural landscape, while increasing local benefits through the sustainable use of ecosystems. The project met its targets and developed a wider significance, with impact on national and EU policy towards High Nature Value Farmland (HNVF) areas.

6. Photo representing the Project



III. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

7. **Start of the Project** month year

8. **Partners**

9. **Financing bodies**

Oxford Brookes University (United Kingdom); University Lucian Blaga, Sibiu, Romania;

University Babes-Bolyai, Cluj- Napoca, Romania; ~~University of Medicine &~~

Pharmacy, Targu

Mures, Romania; Ministry of Environment; Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Rural Development, Romania; Ecotur Sibiu, Romania;

World Wide Fund for Nature, Romania;

Danube Carpathian Programme, Romania; Town Hall Saschiz, Romania.

Darwin Initiative

Orange Romania

United Kingdom Government

10. **Central aims of the Project**

The project was initiated in May 2006 with the purpose of putting a halt to the loss of biodiversity in Southern Transylvania and ensuring the long-term conservation and sustainable valuation of the Târnava Mare landscape.

The goal defined in the project log frame was the *conservation of bio-diversity in a seminatural landscape, linked to benefits for the local population through sustainable use of private forest and grassland ecosystems, which will have local success and act as a model for broader application nationally.*

To this aim, initiators established the following specific objectives:

1. Map and assess the habitats and fauna/flora species of the area;
2. Bespoke GIS database for the area, key tool for flexible management
3. Raise national and local recognition of the landscape, establish protection, and work with the local people in its conservation;
4. Designation of the landscape under Natura 2000 network;
5. Management and monitoring conservation and management prescriptions for habitats and species, using the database developed with local people;
6. Raising awareness and support economic incentives for traditional knowledge and landscape management

11. Outcome

The project outcomes were well achieved in respect of both quality and quantity. There appear to be two separate threads within the outcomes that have together contributed to the achievement of project purpose.

The first, *changes in attitude*, is the result of the awareness raising and public education activities which have resulted in conservation being accepted as having a higher value than the burdens imposed, as for example through application of the NATURA 2000 directive. As a result of the project, locals understood that the use and perpetuation of traditional land management techniques leads to long-term improved economic livelihoods through tourism and produce sales.

The second category of outcomes are directly related to the *results of the field studies and documentation and management system design*, providing the mechanism by which improved conservation can be achieved.

Overall, the outcomes of the project were outstanding:

1. The ADEPT Foundation coordinated field studies and surveys carried out by a team of university and NGO partners with the purpose of creating an inventory and database of habitats and species which are protected under the EU Habitats Directive.

As a result of these research initiatives, the Târnava Mare landscape was recognised as a Natura 2000 site and was designated the largest SCI (Site of Community Interest, Natura 2000 site under EU Habitats Directive) in continental Romania, promoting national recognition of importance of semi-natural landscapes. The SCI includes 85,000 ha of semi-natural meadow landscape, which is now under statutory protection.

This was one of the most important achievements of the project as it ensured that the biodiversity value of the traditionally farmed, semi-natural landscape is recognised by policy makers and researchers as well as by the owners.

2. Innovative GIS software developed and in operation that can be used for biodiversity (habitat/species) mapping, land management, land ownership. The project brought a positive contribution the good state of the HNV farmed landscape, by mapping it and studying it in order to obtain statutory protection, by designing habitat management protocols that are practical for farmers, and by designing monitoring methodologies to measure, and improve, biodiversity conservation results. To maintain biodiversity will be a major success, as the national trend is for abandonment of the main lowland biodiversity hotspots, grasslands.

3. Within the project, ADEPT implemented the first EU agri-environment grassland scheme in Romania bringing 12,000 ha of grassland under sustainable conservation management. Throughout the implementation of the project, ADEPT ensured the functioning of a farmer advisory service, serving 8 communes and helping local farmers with the enrolment (application) in the agri-environment schemes. The advisory office was visited by 80 farmers in 2006, 150 during 2007, and 280 during 2008. In 2007, 190 farmers in project area contracted into the pilot grassland agrienvironment scheme. In 2008, the number of farmers signing up to the main agrienvironment scheme in the area grew to over 1,500. The impact of the pilot scheme was obvious: at the completion of the project, 75% of farmers in the area had been taking up the EU agri-environment scheme (Measure 214 under the National Rural Development Plan) as a result of the promotion activities carried out by ADEPT among farmers in the area, compared with only 30% nationally.

4. Significant input into national agri-environment policy. ADEPT has successfully piloted agri-environment schemes (SAPARD 3.3) in the Târnava Mare, which significantly helped with the design of Romanian agri-environment measures under NRDP (Measure 214). To this aim, ADEPT provided technical support to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Rural Development (MAFRD)

to assist with the preparation of the National Rural Development Programme (NRDP), which establishes the framework for financial assistance available for 2007-2013. A key issue was ensuring that economic and social development measures for rural areas are fully integrated with measures to ensure sustainable landscape use.

5. Increased incomes for farmers from the production and sale of biodiversity-branded local products
Conservation of the biodiversity of this semi-natural, anthropogenic area is only possible by maintaining the area's economic viability. The agricultural economy can have profound effects on HNV landscape conservation. For example, if dairy producers are unable to sell their products at a reasonable price, farmers will no longer raise sheep and cattle. Unless sheep and cattle graze on the local pastures, invasive plant species will soon expand their habitats into semi-natural grasslands, reducing their biodiversity and biological value and thus irreversibly affecting the Târnava Mare landscape.

Within the project, ADEPT implemented a range of measures to create demand for products, and to boost local incomes from agriculture. On long term, these measures financed under the Darwin Initiative will improve the economic viability of small-scale producers and of small-scale farming communities.

6. Courses were held on food hygiene, raising local farmer's awareness of the fact that improved discipline can solve hygiene problems. The courses were followed by the creation of a Food Hygiene Brochure (May 2007- March 2008) which is now considered instrumental in defining Romanian government policy towards small producers – an issue that had been ignored until then.

7. The first farmers' markets in Romania were established in Bucharest and Brasov, providing a market for products linked to biodiversity. The markets led to extensive national coverage on the impact of landscape conservation and management projects on the sustainable development of local communities in Southern Transylvania. Furthermore, each October since 2006, small-scale traditional food producers from the Târnava Mare area attend the international Slow Food festivals, in Turin - Terra Madre and Salone del Gusto. The varieties of jams, honeys, preserves and cheeses brought to the festivals by Târnava Mare producers are a powerful means to promote the local landscape.

A local brand was also developed, locals now being able to market products bearing the "Târnava Mare" label. In fact, as a result of the project, the sale of brand products rose from 500 Euros in 2006 to more than 120,000 in 2008. At the same time, ADEPT registered a 10 fold increase (to 50,000 jars) in local jam sales between 2006 and 2008.

6. Increased visibility of the landscape on the tourism market While continued traditional land management is the key for the survival of the landscape and the biodiversity of the area, additional income for farm households from agro-tourism and nature tourism is very important for the long term viability of the small-scale farming communities. Implicitly, sustainable tourism has a positive impact on the entire landscape, providing local inhabitants an incentive to preserve their traditions, local architecture and economic activities.

ADEPT is active in agro-tourism training and marketing to promote the expansion of the network of bed and breakfast accommodation, and associated activities, in the area. Believing that tourist development is sensitive and relatively small-scale, it need not detract from the special atmosphere and biodiversity of the region, but can actually support it, ADEPT ensured the training of 63 people in guesthouse management and operation.

Furthermore, ADEPT and local partners established the Târnava Mare Tourist Association, promoting responsible tourism across the area. Together with this tourist association, ADEPT manages an online community – www.discoverarnavamare.org - providing information in English and Romanian for people interested in visiting the area and for those interested in acquiring local products.

A Tourist Information Centre was founded in Saschiz (a village with an incredibly rich and diverse cultural heritage, home to a medieval Saxon church now included in the UNESCO World Heritage) to give visitors information on the area and help them to find local accommodation. As a result of the ADEPT project, there is now a wide range of food, culture and walking activities for tourists visiting the Târnava Mare area, available both to independent travellers and through tour operators. The number of visitors at the tourism information centre rose from 350 in 2006 to 1,378 in 2008, while 15 new guest houses opened in Saschiz. In one village alone (Crit), 2 guest houses went from no activity in 2006 to 240 bed nights in 2007.

A series of booklets was also published - *Food and Culture, A Taste of Transylvania, Târnava Mare Walking Trails* (which includes detailed route descriptions, and products/services - as always, linked to the biodiversity image of the local landscape) – in order to increase the number of visitors in the area and to encourage them to buy local products. These can be obtained free from the tourist information centre or downloaded from the publications section on the www.discover tarnavamare.org website.

IV. RESPECT OF THE CRITERIA OF THE ATTRIBUTION OF THE AWARD

12. Sustainable territorial development

The outlook for sustainability is very good, much assisted by the accession of Romania to the EU. The establishment of Târnava Mare protected area as part of the NATURA2000 network is as strong a security for the future as could be wished for. Furthermore, 85,000 ha are now being farmed in accordance with the EU Habitats directive; thus, the project significantly contributed to the enhancement of the environmental values of the landscape.

The active and financially viable livelihoods developed as a result of the project are likely to continue as is the interest generated amongst local communities. The most important legacy is the recognition of the conservation value of the semi-natural farmed landscape and the steps initiated to secure this in perpetuity. At the time the project was initiated in the Târnava Mare area, regional and local authorities had not implemented any sustainable development strategy/policy in the area. However, the results of the project were later used by the ADEPT foundation, in cooperation with local authorities and two other NGOs (the Mihai Eminescu Trust and WWF Romania) to elaborate integrated landscape management plans for the area. Furthermore, the project brought a significant contribution to the creation of a Local Action Group in the Târnava Mare area, as part of the NRDP Leader Scheme. As an active member of this group, the ADEPT Foundation facilitated the adoption, in 2012, of a Local Sustainable Development Strategy.

Last but not least, the implementation team used the experience gained from the piloting of SAPARD agri-environment schemes to provide technical support to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Rural Development (MAFRD) in order to assist with the preparation of the National Rural Development Programme (NRDP), which established the framework for financial assistance available for rural development after Romania's EU accession. The project results were used to ensure that economic and social development measures for rural areas are fully integrated with measures to ensure sustainable natural resource use. *Thus, although the project was not initially part of a local or regional sustainable development policy it later contributed to the adoption of such policies.* By giving local communities greater benefits from the conservation and sustainable use of

the landscape, so that they have an incentive to halt the process of abandonment of the land, the project enhanced the economic development of local communities and implicitly of the entire landscape. Furthermore, the promotion of branded products at national and international trade fairs and the encouragement of tourism activities through training and marketing activities have led to increased incomes for farmers from biodiversity-branded local products. Thus, local farmers and entrepreneurs were stimulated to maintain and value their traditions, gastronomy and local economic activities – such as traditional agriculture and crafts – enhancing the overall cultural and aesthetic value of the Târnava Mare area.

Sustainability stems from the fact that local inhabitants were encouraged to initiate and manage their own individual projects - even businesses, such as guest-houses – ensuring that the social and economic development of the area will continue even after the completion of the project. The population – assisted by the ADEPT advisory office - benefited through the sale of value-added products linked to biodiversity image of the area and the local economy diversified, farmers being now even more motivated to conserve both the natural as well as the cultural components of the local landscape.

Last but not least, although the project was completed in 2009, activities in the field of landscape conservation and management continued, based on the experience gained through the implementation of the ADEPT project. The organisation initiated other projects in biodiversity, agri-environment and sustainable tourism, financed from various sources, such as Innovation Norway, ERDF, Grundtvig, and EU Life. For example, bicycles trails were created in the past two years and an integrated management plan will be elaborated for each protected area in order to maintain the conservation status of the local fauna and flora. We may conclude that the ADEPT project has significantly countered the threat of agriculture intensification and land abandonment in the Târnava Mare area, enhancing longterm landscape conservation and sustainable territorial development.

13. Exemplary value

The project was the first one in Romania to involve the application of an agri-environment SAPARD scheme for grasslands as well as the first one to provide advisory services and counselling on traditional landscape management techniques. Furthermore, the project led to the designation of the Târnava Mare landscape as the largest SCI in continental Romania.

Other best practice examples include:

- The creation of the first rural tourist information centre in Transylvania, which is also the first tourist information centre in the rural environment founded and managed by an NGO. Sustainable tourism has a positive impact on the landscape as it offers locals the resources necessary to care for and maintain biodiversity as well as the cultural heritage;
- The creation and development of a local brand for food products and tourism services, brand which is based on the environmental and cultural values of the local landscape;
- The project had a significant impact as far as the farmers' interest for accessing EU agrienvironment schemes is concerned. Subsidies acted as long-term incentives stimulating farmers to maintain and apply traditional landscape management techniques (grazing, scything), thus contributing to the conservation and restoration of the landscape.

14. Public participation

The project is in line with the National Rural Development Programme and the EU Leader measure, as it encouraged the creation in 2008 of a Local Steering Group (LSG) encompassing over 40 representatives of local authorities and associations, as well as farmers and opinion leaders from the Târnava Mare area. The Local Steering Group (which after the project's completion became the Local Action Group) elaborated the Local Development Strategy for the Târnava Mare area, which is implemented starting with the current year. Furthermore, the ADEPT project facilitated the creation of a local tourist association (The Târnava Mare Tourist Association) which is highly active both at national as well as at European level, promoting the values of the Târnava Mare landscape and encouraging the development of sustainable tourism activities. The association includes local tourism operators and currently manages the www.discover tarnavamare.org website.

As mentioned above, sustainable landscape management can only succeed if local communities see and understand the landscape's crucial role in ensuring the sustainable economic and social development of the area. Various groups were actively involved in the project – farmers benefitting from advisory services, producers participating at food hygiene courses, locals participating at farmers' markets and even school children. In Saschiz school, 45 children are receiving monthly classes on nature, landscape and environment. In addition, a "teach the teachers" programme was implemented so that these nature classes - which are very popular among children - are further replicated within schools in the area, thus ensuring the programme's long term sustainability.

15. Awareness-raising

One of the project outputs was to raise awareness of and support for landscape conservation measures through increased understanding of the economic as well as global importance of the area and its heritage.

To this aim, the ADEPT foundation used various means: the founding of a Visitor Centre, school presentations, village meetings, publications, information boards (one for each village), website. Human behaviour has changed towards landscape conservation and management, and access to assets linked to landscape biodiversity has improved both locally through special school programmes, information campaigns (newspapers, panels around the area, festivals) as well as nationally through the recognition at policy level of the importance of HNV farmed landscapes.

Furthermore, the project raised awareness of the importance of human development in the conservation and management of landscapes. By taking part in the courses organised within the project, locals understood that their improved competences exert a positive impact not only on their family and home, but to the collective well-being of their communities. Last but not least, inhabitants became aware that the public image of the area significantly improved as a consequence of agro-tourism and farmers' markets which the project was a leader in developing at a national level.

Awareness raising activities focused not only on local target groups, but also on external stakeholders. The project focused on publications to support activities in the area and the conservation of the local landscape. An 85-page Guidebook to the area was published both in Romanian as well as in English, covering physical, social and environmental aspects related to the natural and cultural landscape in the Târnava Mare area. The Guidebook meets professional content and printing standards and is also available online, through Amazon.

14. THE GATE OF GORNJE PODUNAVLJE, NGO ‘PODUNAV’ BACKI MONOSTOR, SERBIA

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II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECT

3. Name of the Project	“The Gate of Gornje Podunavlje”
4. Location of the Project	Backi Monostor, Serbia

5. Summary of the Project

Main goal of the project is an sustainable development of whole region thru eco and rural tourism development, which includes engagement of whole local community, causing a social and economic welfare with a nature and landscape preservation.

Connection of local culture and historic heritage in harmony with nature and its promotion as an eco and rural tourist destination provides a social, cultural and aesthetic sustainability. That is also a chance for a new quality development thru new ways of nature preservation, tradition preservation and new jobs for a local community.

The project is a partnership between local and regional institutions, non government and civil sector, including local community.

6. Photo representing the Project



III. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

7. **Start of the Project** month year

8. **Partners**

WWF, IUCN, USAID, Ministry of Natural Resources, Mining and Spatial planning, RTS (Radio-TV Serbia/ educational and scientific program), Vojvodina Province, Municipality of Sombor, Tourist board Sombor

9. **Financing bodies**

USAID, Secretariat for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development of Vojvodina, Municipality of Sombor
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10. Central aims of the Project

- Promotion and preservation of local culture – multiethnic heritage based on people living in harmony with the environment
- Nature and tradition preservation thru eco and rural tourism development
- Protection of significant part of Danube middle flow (Special nature reserve “Gornje Podunavlje”) – wet lands, forests, animal and plant species
- Cross-border cooperation with the neighbours sharing same complex of Danube flood valley (National park “Kopacki Rit” – Croatia and Nature park “Danube – Drava” – Hungary) as a element for regional development
- Promotion of Special nature reserve “Gornje Podunavlje” as a base for sustainable territorial development
- Increasing awareness among civil society and public authorities of the value of landscapes thru education

11. Outcome

- Special Nature Reserve "Gornje Podunavlje" recognized as significant protected area and a part of a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Mura-Drava-Danube
- Increased awareness of local inhabitants about importance of landscape thanks to the Educations and environment protection workshops
- Joint projects with partners from Croatia, relating to cross-border protection and development of eco-tourism
- Educated service providers in rural eco-tourism (hosts of guest houses, caterers, owners of the cottages, craftsman)
- Tourist Information Centre - starting point for any visitor of Backi Monostor
- developed eco-tourism offer of Backi Monostor and its surroundings - the established visiting programs (day trips, weekend deals, multi-day programs ...)
- involved young people in the organization of environmental and recreational events
- Placement of domestic agricultural products
- New jobs
- 50 registered beds for tourists accommodation (12 households)
- two traditional houses that are involved in tourism and receiving guests
- marked bicycle routes – Euro Velo 6 and Via Pacis Panonie
- Marked walking path “ Strbac”
- Registered cottages to accommodate tourists
- registered old craft workshops and souvenir shops
- Events that have assumed a traditional character - are held regularly every year and are of great importance to regional and national level – Bodrog fest, Danube Day
- preserved tradition of all ethnic groups - the dialects, dances, songs
- Young people who are dealing with some of the old craft
- The well-known dishes (noted in all competitions, local and regional levels)
- Hosted several thousand visitors of Backi Monostori (the individual, or groups)
- Backi Monostor marked as a tourist destination on the tourist map of Serbia and the region
- Connected all individuals and institutions involved in eco-tourism offer and between
- Identifying Backi Monostor at fairs, festivals

- leaflets, maps, travel documentary film.

IV. RESPECT OF THE CRITERIA OF THE ATTRIBUTION OF THE AWARD

12. Sustainable territorial development

Special Nature Reserve "Gornje Podunavlje" is one of finest pearls placed along the course of Danube in Serbia. This Reserve comprises remains of former vast inundated Danube areas. It consists of several separate sites: Monoštorski rit (Monoštor marshes), Apatinski rit (Apatin marshes), Štrpce area, Kozara and Karapandža. The reserve represents a complex mosaic of water and land ecosystems. The greater part of the reserve is covered by marshy, inundated forest complexes. This type of preserved indigenous biotopes is very rare both in our country and Europe. It makes up a natural whole with the right bank, an inundated area in Baranja in Croatia, well-known for its Kopački rit (Kopački marshes) and inundated area Karapandža in Hungary.

It is located on an alluvial plateau and terrace of Danube between 80 and 88 metres above sea level. It has a distinct microrelief. The course of Danube, together with its backwaters called 'Dunavci' and inundated areas, left its imprint on the area of Gornje Podunavlje. Its slow and winding course creates backwaters, meanders, and stills. Its floods created marshes, ponds and swamps. SNR 'Gornje Podunavlje' is an important center of biodiversity. The wealth of this biodiversity is reflected in a great number of vegetation types comprising 156 different syntaxonomic units in 14 classes, 18 orders, 32 alliances and 51 plant communities with over 1,000 species of plants. This wealth is also shown by the presence of 55 species of fish, 11 species of amphibians, 9 species of reptiles, 230 species of birds and 51 species of mammals as well as numerous invertebrates, especially butterflies with over 60 species of daytime butterflies.

Owing to its exceptional natural values Gornje Podunavlje was designated as an Important Bird Area in 1989 (IBA); it is also an integral part of potential Biosphere Reserve Drava-Mura and one of Ramsar Site candidate wetlands.

The first designation as a protected area dates back to 1955, when an area of 10 square kilometres (3.9 square miles) was proposed as an important habitat for the White-tailed Eagle and the Black Stork. Since then, the area included and the level of protection has been gradually increased. Gornje Podunavlje was designated as a Special Nature Reserve in 2001; with a total size of 19,648 ha (48,551 acres).

Preservation of Danube biodiversity, together with the cultural heritage is a part of Local action plan for tourism development, Agenda for local development of Sombor Municipality and Master plan of SNR Gornje Podunavlje.

Backi Monostor - small, but picturesque village lies at the outskirts of the Gornje Podunavlje Special Nature Reserve (Serbia), one of the last intact marshy areas in the Danube river basin, and one of the most important floodplains along the Green Belt route. Being an integral part of the transboundary Middle Danube Floodplains spanning neighboring Hungary, Croatia and Serbia, this protected area is renowned not only for its rich biodiversity, but also for preserved tradition and its cultural heritage. Since the inhabitants

of Backi Monostor over many centuries carefully nursed their Croatian, Serbian and Hungarian heritage, which is closely related to the natural richness that surrounds the village, the

initiative for eco and rural tourism articulates the intention of the local community to preserve both the natural and the cultural background that supports the sustainable rural development in the region. Moreover, activities of the Backi Monostor Community fully fit into the goals of the European Landscape Convention, underlining how important it is to integrate local efforts into the broader natural and cultural conservation scope.

Main goal is an sustainable development of whole region thru eco and rural tourism development, which includes engagement of whole local community, causing a social and economic welfare with a nature and landscape preservation. Connection of local culture and historic heritage in harmony with nature and its promotion as an eco and rural touristic destination provides a social, cultural and aesthetic sustainability. That is also a chance for a new quality development thru new ways of nature preservation, tradition preservation and new jobs for a local community. Presentation of local products to the tourists is a good chance for economic welfare of inhabitants of Backi Monostor.

Recognizing a Backi Monostor as an eco and rural tourist destination helps reduce negative men impact to the environment.

13. Exemplary value

Project and initiatives for the protection of the environment by developing eco-tourism is an excellent example of good practice that can be applied to all similar sites, especially in Vojvodina (talking about Serbia), because it is multi-ethnic and each ethnic group cherish its customs and traditions. It is significant to emphasize the openness and cooperation will of Backi Monostor inhabitants in achieving the objectives of the project.

Connections between all actors in the eco-tourist industry, local residents (owners of accommodation facilities, caterers, Ethno house owners, old crafts, farmers ...), as well as local institutions (manager of SNP “Gornje Podunavlje” - Public Company Vojvodinasume, Municipality of Sombor, Sombor visiting board ...) contributions stable and sustainable development of the region by creating new value. Promotion of natural and ethnological values greatly contributes to their preservation and is an excellent example of good practice.

14. Public participation

The project is based and depends directly on the active participation of local people in each of its segment. This includes participation in the development and of implementing eco-tourism through the involvement of rural population in the formation, implementation and development agenda, as well as direct participation in the touristic offer - the engagement of people at the reception of guests and the good of the local community. Also, participation is present in the joint work to protect and preserve the environment and SNR Gornje Podunavlje, through education, as well as concrete measures of protection. Each ethnic group has a significant role in tradition preservation by promoting it thru festivals, fares, presentations to the tourists...

Project and activities of Touristic association "Podunav" of landscape preservation and rural development are in accordance with a local and regional development plan (Backi Monostor development plan, Master plan of Gornje Podunavlje, development plan for Sombor municipality, Strategy for rural tourism development of Vojvodina, Forestry Development Strategy of Serbian Republic, Policy of sustainable development referred to in the National Investment Plan, as well as other documents that are currently adopted in the Serbian Parliament). Is significant to mention that the activities of the project are a part of international initiatives like WWF and IUCN.

15. Awareness-raising

From the very beginning of the project, all activities are based on sustainable development, which are aware of all the participants in the project - and that is the whole local community. The importance of environmental and ethnological value through sustainable development presented to the public through trainings, seminars, workshops, media, publications (brochures and a documentary about Backi Monostor), as well as concrete examples of the good practice - largely contribute to spreading society awareness about the preservation of the landscape. Development of eco-tourism stopped a migration of young people from village to the urban cities; each young man has found its place in the project, thru the volunteering or new jobs. Through the project, residents of Backi Monostor became aware of their European identity and, unlike many, are proud to promote their village, no matter what it comes to rural areas.

Implementing the local population in the project, there is a raise social consciousness, resulting in the formation of civil associations and non-governmental organizations for youth, women, and association of old crafts, as well as informal groups - clubs, art and craft workshops. Increased engagement of cultural and artistic associations of Roma, Croats (Šokci - ethnic group), Hungarians, because a large part of their activities aimed at promoting Backi Monostor as harmonious multi-ethnic community.

15. SALVAGE, REVIVAL, AND OPERATION OF THE FOREST RAILWAY IN THE LANDSCAPE OF CIERNY BALOG, CIERNOHRONSKA ZELEZNICA NGO, SLOVAK REPUBLIC

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II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJET

3. Name of the Project

Salvage, Revival, and Operation of the Forest Railway in Landscape of Cierny Balog

4. Location of the Project

The Slovak Republic. Banska Bystrica Region. Brezno District. Cierny Hron Valley. Municipalities: Cierny Balog, Podbrezova, Valaska, Hronec.

5. Summary of the Project

The project *Salvage, Revival, and Operation of the Forest Railway in Landscape of Cierny Balog* was awarded by the Landscape Award of the Slovak Republic 2012 for bringing the people back to their landscape through the revival of a technical monument in the landscape, for restoring the identity of Cierny Balog Region and for retaining its cultural heritage. The project is an exemplary model how people can really make a positive change to their decaying landscape element from the bottom up approach. A high number of the enthusiasts and volunteers, local citizens, as well as invited experts - through combining their enthusiasm, wisdom, memory, efforts, time, expertise, money, planning abilities, and management skills have renewed the original vision – the purpose and the operation of the historic forest railway, which was facing the deliberate extinction by the not appropriate official decision from the last century. The people were able to persuade everybody, that the forest railway gives the additional value to their landscape as a main artery of their region. The forest railway, a symbol of the sustainable wood cutting practice of the previous generation in the region, represents today the living historic form of the landscape, which has contributed significantly towards the characteristic appearance, new life opportunities, prosperity, and well known reputation of the Cierny Hron Valley in Slovakia.

6. Photo representing the Project



III. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

7. Start of the Project

month

September

year

2001

State Forestry Administration; Open-Air Forestry Museum in Vydrovska Valley; Municipalities: Cierny Balog Podbrezova, Valaska, Hronec; Rural Development Activity Vydra NGO; Regional Tourist

8. Partners

Organisation; and a number of the local entrepreneurs and companies as long-term donors

9. Financing bodies

Volunteers (cca 1500 volunteers/ year);
Profit generated from the new resume of the railway operation; Donors; advertising partners; donations the National, the International and Cross-border funds:
Slovak-Swiss Counterpart Fund
Phare Programme
HUSK CBC Programme
Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic (Pro Slovakia Fund)
Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic
Fund of Government Office of the Slovak Republic

10. Central aims of the Project

The main aims of the project were to restore, to maintain and to stabilize the landscape features, life and work activities in the region through the preservation, reconstruction and operation of the historic technical monument – the narrow gauge forest railway sensitively positioned in the landscape of the Valley Cierny Hron by fulfilling a step by step the long-term vision:
- to return the forest railway to fully operational usage on a yearly basis as a regular public service and use it again for the transport of the timber.
Additionally, as the follow-up of the presented project, the renewal of further lines and the reconstruction of the surrounding landscape with a total length of 132 km of the original forestry railway network continues.

11. Outcome

The main outcome of the project is the reconstructed and today operational forest railway - the original, and a lively relic of the transport for the whole Cierny Hron Valley. This veritable artery ensures the unique transport service for the area during the summer tourist season, connecting landscape, cultural and technical values and the main attractions - thus contributing as a vital engine towards the sensitive economic and social development of the valley. The salvage, revival, and operation of the railway has preserved not only the landscape character but also a soul of the region - which was strongly connected in the past to the forest management, and so the current regional development is continuously based on the identity, cultural heritage and tradition..

Background - a glance to the history

The stimulus to save and to protect the forest railway derived from the former not appropriate

government decision in the year of 1982 – at that time of the socialist Czechoslovakia - to discontinue the railway operation for good due to the end of the forest management. The first initiators of the idea of the forest railway “renaissance” managed the elaboration of the first spatial-planning documentation – a study concerning the need to preserve the region’s railway, and so they were able to overturn the decision by subscribing it onto the list of The National Cultural Monuments of Slovakia. A subsequent stage of the construction followed where the railway was brought partially back to life. The main motivation for the thousands of volunteers who took part in that stage was to sustain the inestimable value of the railway and bringing it back as the regional landscape element. The first objective was to put into operation individual routes. These routes were restored gradually, the first one in the year of 1992. For the first 10 years the preservation and restoration of the railway was ensured by the volunteers grouped into the nationwide scope association of the youth called The Tree of Life. The tradition of the voluntary camps has been established. This tradition was gradually extended to the other preservation and restoration projects of the cultural monuments across the whole Slovakia, as an active civil association Tree of Life which continues today.

From the year 2001 ongoing

In the year of 2001 the NGO Ciernohoska železnica was established to make sure that the continual work of all volunteers is guaranteed with the tangible outcomes:

- the reconstruction and operation of 3 railway lines of 20km length (Chvatimech – Cierny Balog of 12 km; Cierny Balog – Vydrovo of 4 km; and Cierny Balog – Dobroc of 4 km)
- creation of the museum – positioned in the reconstructed historic building of the current railway station, the interior part of the museum contains preserved and restored railway components, historic and contemporary photographs and descriptions of the tracks; the exterior part of the museum comprises an exhibition of preserved and restored steam locomotives (4 types), 12 open wagons, 10 flat wagons;

The museum is a railway archive within which plans, documentation of operation and the historic photographs are preserved. The museum, however, also assists studies of a technical nature by providing the historic reference material of the documentation (photography) and cinematography (preserved historic sets of trains) with the aim of developing a historic atmosphere of films.

- restoration of 7 steam locomotives, 10 diesel locomotives, 1 motorized carriage unit, 16 passenger carriages, 25 freight carriages and guard’s vans and 4 trolleys – most of which are part of the National Cultural Monuments List.
- reservation of a further 19 valuable historic vehicles from other disused forest railways,
- restoration of 7 listed buildings (2 stations, 3 depots, 1 workshop, 1 lodge),
- the number using the railway exceeds 100,000 a season.

Various characters, roles and potentials of the restored routes.

The line Chvatimech – Cierny Balog Railway (12 km) and line Cierny Balog – Dobroc Railway (4 km) run a daily service in the tourist summer season from May to September. The occasional runs occur during the whole year according to a special requirements connected to the holidays and individual requests. The service is run by the diesel and steam powered locomotives. This route is suitable for the re-introduction of both passenger and the wood transport for all seasons.

The line Cierny Balog – Vydrovská dolina Railway (4 km) is operated by the regular historic steam train and it is targeted especially to the visitors of the Open-Air Forestry Museum in Vydrovská

Valley which was established due to the repaired line provided an access to the museum.

A positive “side effect” of the operation of the renewed forest railway which ensures the transport service in the area of the region is, that at the same time it has brought brand new opportunities for development of the region as well as further sustainable tourism development. For the majority of tourists and visitors to the region the opportunity to use the forest railway ride is the main reason to come. A vast number of the other developmental activities in the area are associated with the railway’s operation such as the opening of the Open-Air Forestry Museum in Vydrovská Valley, the establishment of the Rural Development Activity Vydra NGO, the foundation of a new community centre, several new facilities of the agrotourism, building the cycle paths, walking trails, as well as new Bed&Breakfasts facilities. All these have contributed fundamentally to the improvement of the economic and social situation in the area. The project - the renewed railway created the favourable conditions for initiation of the co-operation among the stakeholders – the local authorities, the State Forestry Administration, the citizens, the different associations and the entrepreneurs.

The project has demonstrated its sustainability and viability by ensuring the continuity of attracting the people’s attention to this landscape which started 30 years ago. The main sustainability guaranties are the people who stand behind this idea as the professionals and volunteers who were able to keep it project going on.

Additionally, every year funding and human resources are guaranteed for the sustainability of the project as follows:

- The profit generated from the railway operation – the income arising from the operation of the railway during the summer season represents 85-90% of the financial requirements for its operation whereby an additional percentage is obtained from the sponsor and partner donations finances required for the investment into the development of the railway are obtained by means of the national and international project funding,
- Activities dedicated to the revitalization and maintenance of the landscape (cleaning up, mowing, the track maintenance, etc.), are undertaken by the regular organisation of the voluntary events and group parties through which the total number of hours of undertaken work is 11 250 hours/ year.

So far the project has been awarded by:

- 2005 The Annual Prize of the cultural heritage magazine "Monuments and Museums"
- 2007, 2008 and 2010 winner of the 7th most favourite public places of the district
- 2011 as the one of the "Seven Wonders of the Banská Bystrica Self-governing Region" Award

IV. RESPECT OF THE CRITERIA OF THE ATTRIBUTION OF THE AWARD

12. Sustainable territorial development

Sustainable development policy

During the project the conceptual land-use plans were gradually and professionally processed. The railway and the vision of its further potential development, that is, the renewal of further lines from the original forest railway network, was subsequently incorporated into all the development plans of the area such as:

- The Tourist Development Strategy in the Slovak Republic (2007)
- The Spatial Plan of the Banska Bystrica Selg-governing Region (amendment in 2004)
- The Integrated Development Strategy of Cierny Hron Region (2008)
- The Economic-Social Development Programme of the Cierny Hron Region and its municipalities for the period of 2007-2013 (for the municipalities: Podbrezová, Valaská, Hronec, Cierny Balog, Osrbliie)

Due to the project, a new Public-Private Partnership has been established in the region through which the long term Co-operation Group consists of:

1. The local authorities – the Cierny Hron Region - municipalities (Podbrezová, Valaská, Hronec, Cierny Balog, Osrbliie)
2. State Forestry Administration
3. Ciernohronska zeleznica NGO
4. Rural Development Activities Vydra NGO

The contribution of the project to the enhancement of the landscape is as follows:

Environmental values

The railway, as an environmentally friendly means of transport, serves as the main communication artery during the summer seasons and positively assists to the volunteer's groups working on continual landscape revitalisation. The maintenance of the landscape quality in the railway area is also ensured by the regular meadows and grasslands mowing. The railway was the stimulus for the creation of new environmental activities in the area. In 2003, due to co-operation with the State Forestry Administration, the Open-Air Forestry Museum in Vydrovska Valley was established. Their aim was to bring together the various environmental, social and economic groups in the region, and reach the agreement on the continuation of the environmentally suitable method of forestry.

Social values

Nowaday the importance of the forest railway operation for the region and its people is considerable. From the social perspective, the preservation of the railway contributed to the continuity of the regional identity, the identity which connects the people and their landscape. The regular service provided by the railway brought new life into the region, ensured better communication between people, prevented the locals from moving away by providing them with the work opportunities as well as created the suitable conditions for the establishment of new social ties. Furthermore, the railway also serves as the inspiration for the creation and organisation of new cultural events in the region which over the time have reached the national/international scale (for example since the year 2001 - the Day of the Tree; the regular opening ceremony of the summer season, and so on.).

Economic values

Not only does the present operation of the railway provides a transport service for the region, but it also brings the further development opportunities especially in the field of tourism – cultural and agrotourism. The project has had a positive effect of jobs creation and has lead to supportive environment for the creation of the small and medium size tourists operators. Tourism and its associate services in this region have a great perspective, as do long term sustainable alternatives of development where availability of jobs is limited. The Ciernohronska zeleznica NGO, in co-operation with the region's villages, employs numerous long-term previously unemployed citizens (on average 9 unemployment people per month per railway operating season) by providing them with various manual jobs (such as clearing of the tracks, spreading grit, minor repairs etc.) thus retaining their working habits.

There have been a various new other economical activities established, inspired by the new life which the operation of the forest railway has brought:

- producing of regional products (cheese, milk, honey production, etc.)
- bed and breakfasts
- new regional development activities (cycle paths, walking trails and routes with features in the area, etc.).

As indirectly associated with the railway's operation all these activities improved the economic and social situation in the area. The railway created the conditions for new and well working co-operation between local entrepreneurs and decision makers as well.

Cultural and aesthetic values

Narrow gauge forest railways were an important phenomenon of the Carpathian landscape. This railway is the last working forest railway in Slovakia. The soul of this region is preserved by the railway, which was originally built in 1908, and serves as a living symbol of wood cutting management in the Cierny Hron Region. It has become a part of Slovakia's cultural heritage - being one of the most characteristic landscape historical features. The project tracks contribute to the enhancement of these values. The utilisation of the area during the summer season contributes towards its sustainable landscape management.

The aesthetic value is visible through the new functions of the beautiful old locomotives, carriages and trolleys which the volunteers were able to save and bring back to the operation.

Remedy

The realisation of the project has prevented the liquidation of the cultural-technical site and devastation all along the lines. The operation of the forest railway changed the original administrative the decision to disallow access to goods transport on various stretches, and a new consensus has been reached with the forestry industry. The historic structure of the landscape was preserved and the railway has become a long-term incentive for a new life and development for the villages in the whole region. The restoration of the lines also required the reconstruction work in the region and numerous issues dealt with, for example the reconstruction of the bridges, gritting, sawing etc. This revitalisation of the abandoned areas of the disused lines being returned gradually to their original state and it has led to their function and the aesthetic appearance return.

13. Exemplary value

The project declares an exemplary value through the volunteers and enthusiasts work for the salvage, revival, and operation of the technical monument in the landscape and their force, their will, their commitment and their dedication, which can reverse the adverse decision of the former government to dissolve and liquidate the forest railway and to ensure its completely new restoration and new operation.

The project presents a successful continuation of the purposeful and ongoing 30-year idea and continues effort to fulfilling the vision of Cierny Balog Railway development, which is now based on the fully professional basis in terms of the operation. It is the most successful example of the rescue and recovery of the National Cultural Monument of the technical character by the volunteer's movement in Slovakia. The consciousness of this landscape value becomes an impulse for the railway salvage and enhancement.

The project is characterized by a high moral credit of unpaid voluntary work (bottom up approach, from the year 2001 there have been working 14 240 volunteers).

14. Public participation

The heart of the project is the volunteer. Without them the forest railway would become forgotten, rusty, lost.

Every year more than 1500 volunteers from all over Slovakia and abroad, join the work camps. The results of the project are present for the public

- by the public presentations
- annual and open door meetings
- the regular presentations given to regional and local authorities (submission of audits, annual reports etc.).

The vision and objectives of the forest railway project are initially consulted with representatives of the municipalities, Slovak State Forestry Administration, Rural Development Activity Vydra NGO. Ciernohronska zeleznica NGO then subsequently discuss all with the general public before incorporating anything into the local and regional development documentations.

The general public is regularly involved in the updating of the elaborated development documentation both in the village and in the region at hearings, thus guaranteeing the public's participation in the decision making processes continues.

The project is in accordance with the national, regional and local policies, strategies and developmental documentation (for example The concept of regional development of the Slovak Republic, Tourist Strategy Development, Slovak Republic, spatial plans of the Banska Bystrica Self-governing Region, microregion and its municipalities, Integrated strategy of the Muránska planina – Cierny Hron development of the (local action group) etc.).

15. Awareness-raising

From the very beginning the objective of the project, was to make sure that the importance of cultural heritage protection and the importance of ensuring the living landscape were in the centre of the attention. During the many different stages of the reconstruction of the forest railway, the project received a lot of publicity which led to an increase number of the visitors. Thanks to the renewal of the operation, the railway's associate activities provided a contact with the past memories and information concerning the history of the railway and its significance for the region during the time of its operation (1908-1982).

During the life time of its existence, Ciernohronska zeleznica NGO has published a number of the guides, leaflets and, among which are the books:

- the Carpathian Rorest Railways (2003)
- the Ciernohronska Forest Railway(2009)

The forest railway has become a popular destination for school trips, study visits, internships etc.

Also from the cultural life point of view the railway is very important for the region. The traditions are kept by the organisation or co-organisation of numerous cultural and community events (Carnivals, Day of the Tree, Ceremonial opening of the summer season, Day of the Disabled, Children's, Father's and Mother's day, Father Christmas sleigh rides etc.) often with thousands of the public attending .

Information about the Ciernohronska zeleznica NGO activities are published and presented by the official NGO web site: www.chz.sk. One can find there a whole package information of the railway history, forest landscape, the technical information, the upcoming activities, photo gallery or all partner's presentations.

Ciernohronska zeleznica NGO cooperates, supports and motivates the local people for their activities. Ciernohosrka zeleznica NGO provides some no fees railway rides for the locals and the locals participate and support NGO during the voluntary camps. The other support comes from the local entrepreneurs in the tourism, who recommend the railway and offer it to their tourists.

Regional support for the Ciernohronska zeleznica NGO comes from the partnership in the Regional Tourist Organisation, which uses a regional tourist card to support partnership organisations.

The Ciernohronska zeleznica NGO presents its activities on a regular basis at the international and national exhibitions: GO Regiontur Brno (Czech Republic), ITF Slovakia Tour, Želrail Vrútky, International Day of the Tree events and several other regional exhibitions.

**16. LANDSCAPE AND WATER-MANAGEMENT RESTORATION OF
ŠKOCJANSKI ZATOK NATURE RESERVE, DOPPS – BIRDLIFE
SLOVENIA (DRUŠTVO ZA OPAZOVANJE IN PROUČEVANJE PTIC
SLOVENIA)**

I. STATE CONCERNED AND APPLICANT

1. State

	SLOVENIA
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2. Applicant

	DOPPS – BirdLife Slovenia (Društvo za opazovanje in proučevanje ptic Slovenije)
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II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECT

3. Name of the Project

Landscape and water-management restoration of Škocjanski zatok Nature Reserve
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4. Location of the Project

Koper, Slovenia

5. Summary of the Project

<p>The project was aiming to recreate the typical coastal wetland landscape of Škocjanski zatok Nature Reserve, the largest brackish wetland in Slovenia, after the past degradation in the 1980s. It's resulting in the restored semi-natural coastal wetland ecosystem, landscape and its natural processes, thus posing remedy to the environmental burdens from the past, in conservation and enhancement of the typical brackish and freshwater habitats supporting fauna and flora of EU and national importance with strong exemplary value, and in the organisation of the wetland centre – nature reserve open to the public. Visitors from Slovenia and elsewhere nowadays enjoy the area for education, recreation and high-quality nature experience. The local community awareness was raised and positive attitude stimulated with public participation throughout the project which also contributed towards better life quality and sustainable development of the Slovenian coast.</p>

6. Photo representing the Project



III. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

7. **Start of the Project** month July year 2001

8. **Partners**

DOPPS – BirdLife Slovenia, Ministry of the Republic of Slovenia of the Environment and Spatial Planning

9. **Financing bodies**

LIFE – EU financial instrument for the environment, state budget of the Republic of Slovenia, Port of Koper

10. **Central aims of the Project**

The project “Landscape and water-management restoration of Škocjanski zatok Nature Reserve” was dealing with recreation of a typical coastal wetland landscape on the Slovenian coast. The principal project objective was to improve, enhance and restore different types of habitats in Škocjanski zatok Nature Reserve (NR) to a favourable conservation state supporting birds and other Natura 2000 species of EU and national importance. The area was degraded back in the 1980s due to urbanisation. In addition to restoration works in the reserve, the project aims include minimising the consequences of the previous pollution, optimising fresh water inflow to the brackish lagoon and improving its ecological conditions as well as the restoration of the landscape character of this unique area, where freshwater and sea marshes combine into the largest brackish wetland in Slovenia. In order to ensure long-term conservation of Škocjanski zatok NR, the project also aimed to improve local awareness and stimulate a positive attitude of local authorities and communities, and also helping to increase the life quality of local people and the visitors who nowadays enjoy the area for education, recreation and high-quality nature experience.

Škocjanski zatok is the largest brackish wetland in Slovenia. Together with its surrounding areas, the wetland is an ecosystem and landscape of great value to the country, its uniqueness deriving from proximity to the sea, Mediterranean climate and submediterranean vegetation, as well as the fact, that it is one of the last remaining natural landscapes on short and mainly urbanised Slovenian coast. Though being designated a nature reserve in 1998, the consequences of the past degradation upon the municipal plans to completely urbanise this area had to be eliminated and the typical landscapes and ecosystem restored.

The project is resulting in the restored semi-natural coastal wetland ecosystem, landscape and its natural processes, conservation and enhancement of the typical wetland brackish and freshwater habitats and the organisation of the nature reserve for the visitors, enabling education, recreation and nature experience. With the completion of this project, Škocjanski zatok regained its importance as a natural landscape – an oasis on the doorstep of Koper – contributing towards life quality and sustainable development of the city of Koper and Slovenian coast in general.

11. Outcome

All the project objectives were achieved by the end of 2007 and operating permit was issued in May 2008. Key outputs and deliverables of the project were as follows:

1. The freshwater marsh, consisting of 13 hectares of wet meadows and 13,5 hectares of open water areas with reed bed and nesting islets was created within the project area. The area was organised as a substitute habitat for the surrounding freshwater marshes lost in the urbanisation of Koper and its adjacency and with the landscape character of the typical north-mediterranean river estuaries and marshes. Many birds returned to nest in the newly established area, including important conservation species such as Little Bittern (*Ixobrychus minutus*), Great Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*), Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*) and Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*). The area was restored to support important populations of wintering ducks and geese as well.
2. Approximately 225,000 cubic meters of mud were dredged from the lagoon: 185.000 cubic meters of organically polluted mud were removed to the disposal site which resulted in reducing the eutrophication and organic pollution, enable water circulation inside the lagoon and increase of bioproduction, which all contributed towards improved ecological conditions in the lagoon and substantially reduced risk of botulism.
3. The remaining 40.000 cubic meters of non-polluted mud was used to create 20 ha of mudflats and nesting islets in order to create conditions for the habitat types, listed on Annex I of the EU Habitat Directive as well as create the landscape of north-Adriatic lagoons and provide breeding and feeding grounds for endangered breeding birds, such as Kentish Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*), Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*), Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*), Little Tern (*Sterna albifrons*). The abundant growth of the typical halophytic vegetation started immediately after the completion of the restoration works in 2007, providing a typical landscape feature of the brackish part of the nature reserve.
4. The brackish lagoon of over 71 ha has been restored into a diverse mixture of already existing or developing Natura 2000 habitat types: Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide (Natura 2000 code 1140), Salicornia and other annuals colonizing mud and sand (Natura 2000 code 1310), Mediterranean salt meadows (*Juncetalia maritimi*) (Natura 2000 code 1410), Mediterranean and thermo-Atlantic halophilous scrubs (*Sarcocornetea fruticosi*) (Natura 2000 code 1420) and Coastal lagoons (Natura 2000 code 1150*). Additionally, the Ara mouth area has a good potential to develop into the habitat type Estuaries (Natura 2000 code 1130).
5. An important added value from the landscape point of view was the creation of over two-kilometer-long circular education trail which was constructed at the same time, laid out along the border of the freshwater part of the reserve, offering the visitors a nice view over freshwater and brackish landscapes. Ponds of various sizes and forms were created along the trail, which are now already inhabited by invertebrates and amphibians to help the visitors get a closer view to the life in the marsh. The screening embankments were constructed along the newly formed education trail, preventing disturbance of wildlife caused by visitors. Within 2 later project also co-financed by EU funds, the observation points were created along the trails and equipped with interpretation boards, thus enabling a high-quality nature experience in the restored landscapes of Škocjanski zatok NR.
6. Water inflow improved upon several activities, including two most important ones: cleaning of the Rižana river left discharging channel Ara outlet and riverbed (Ara is the only freshwater source for the reserve) and mounting of the sluice system at the sea channel, which enables sustainable and full water level control after the completion of the works.
7. The educational and awareness-raising activities within this project have brought the future functions of the reserve near the local people. Many of them have managed to recognize its real value

from nature and landscape conservation point of view and have become the active holders of the part of the responsibility for their conservation in their adjacency.

8. Firm and successful partnership between DOPPS – BirdLife Slovenia and the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning, which is quite unique in the field of co-operation between governmental and non-governmental sectors in Slovenia, was one of the bases of the project success. That's how we managed to implement a pilot project, which doubtlessly ranks among top ten nature and landscape restoration projects of degraded areas in the Mediterranean part of Europe. On the other hand, existing BirdLife partnership and newly established Adriawet network, where the beneficiary actively participated brought additional value-added to the project through knowledge and expertise gained.

9. Reserve Management Plan for the period 2007-11 was the most crucial document for the future of the reserve, as it guaranteed sustainability and continuation of this project. On 30.8.2007, it was adopted by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia in a form of a legal act – a Decree on Program of conservation and development of Škocjanski zatok Nature Reserve for the period 2007-11 (Odlok o programu varstva in razvoja naravnega rezervata Škocjanski zatok za obdobje 2007-2011). The governmental adoption of the management plan is the best guarantee that the plan will be implemented and budget funding available for that.

IV. RESPECT OF THE CRITERIA OF THE ATTRIBUTION OF THE AWARD

12. Sustainable territorial development

The project is certainly part of a sustainable development policy – the state environmental policy including the protection and enhancement of the important natural landscapes and areas. The Act on Škocjanski zatok Nature Reserve (Off. Bulletin of the Republic of Slovenia, no. 20/1998) with its implementing regulation was a basis to protect and restore Škocjanski zatok area after the degradation of the site back in the 1980s due to industrialisation and urbanisation of the Slovenian coastline. Also the National program of the Environmental Protection (Off. Bulletin of the Republic of Slovenia, no. 83/1999) has involved the restoration of Škocjanski zatok as an important task among the activities in the field of biodiversity and genetic pool protection.

The project was intrinsically focused on the enhancement of the environmental, social, economic, cultural and aesthetic values of the landscape. As a natural landscape restoration project with strong nature conservation orientation it fulfils the environmental component of the landscape value. Through the restoration of the natural habitats of plants as well as bird and other animal species, the complete coastal wetland landscape was restored as a semi-natural ecosystem which is able to function with the support of human management. In the very urban surroundings it has a substantial aesthetic value for the local people and visitors – the recent identification of the ecosystem services of the nature reserve revealed that the real estate with a view over the reserve can have up to 20% higher sales value comparing to the ones without the view. From the reserve, the view to the karstic hills and valley in the hinterland is offered and also the “veduta” to the city of Koper, showing its island character, which is unfortunately nearly lost due to the urbanisation of the area between the old town and the reserve where huge shopping areas were built, closing the ancient view over the old town. Socio-economic and cultural value of the Škocjanski zatok landscapes is enhanced by the fact that the reserve is open to the public since its designation in 1998. After the completion of this project in 2008, it's offering the local people and visitors the possibility of an excellent nature experience using

the observation points around the education trail which allow people to get very close to the nature, landscape, protected plants and animals nearby. The ponds along the trail share the same function, serving to the visitors as live models of the marshes. The recreated landscapes of Škocjanski zatok therefore serve as an education and research ground as well as a place of quiet recreation and for development of the nature tourism.

The project itself was focused on posing remedy to the old environmental burdens left behind after the past degradation of the site. The situation in the early 1990s was quite serious: over 280,000 cubic meters of mud were disposed to the brackish lagoon thus destroying the original bottom and its biodiversity, causing eutrophication and organic pollution of the lagoon, which at the same time was left without the inflow of the rivers being diverted to other direction. Also the low oxygen levels contributed to the very poor ecological conditions of the lagoon. The water circulation was very poor. The freshwater marshes which used to stretch along the old river mouths were completely lost during urbanisation.

The principal objective of the project to restore, enhance and conserve habitats of endangered animal and plant species and thus the landscapes of the Škocjanski zatok Nature Reserve after the industrial degradation in the 1980s was achieved through successful completion of restoration actions in 2007. Suitable conditions for the protection of birds, ranging from the breeding species listed on Annex I of the Birds Directive to the nationally endangered migratory and other birds were created, particularly through creating and enhancing suitable habitats for breeding and feeding of endangered birds species and thus their favourable conservation status in the long term ensured.

The consequences of existing environmental burdens mostly due to past pollution and degradation of the area were eliminated through removal of organically polluted mud which resulted in reduced eutrophication and organic pollution, increased bioproduction of the lagoon, increased fresh and sea water inflow to the lagoon and the related improvement of its ecological conditions. The freshwater marsh was recreated in the abandoned agricultural land of Bertoška bonifika. The organization of the reserve enables that the wildlife is not disturbed by human presence. The project raised environmental awareness of the local people and strengthened the positive public image of the reserve as well as sustainable development of Koper and its surroundings.

13. Exemplary value

The project has an exceptional exemplary (demonstration) value. The restoration of the Škocjanski zatok Nature Reserve, that is its water management and landscape regulation, is a pilot project in Slovenia – no comparable experience had been available on such activities and preceding procedures prior to the beginning of the project. It doubtlessly ranks among top ten restoration projects of degraded natural areas in the Mediterranean part of Europe. As such, it offers a unique reference for potential further restoration projects in the country (for those, also the restoration preparation stage can be referred to) and at the international level. Its demonstration and innovation value arises from the following success and lessons learned during the project implementation:

1. Its model value and high price of restoration, which amounted to 3.1 million euros, reminds the Slovenian public of the importance of nature and landscape conservation in the future. At the same time it remains a reminder promoting avoidance of further natural landscape degradation not only in Slovenia, but throughout Europe.
2. It is a lesson in elaborate and wise treatment of space, nature and landscape and promotes the importance of good Environmental Impact Assessments to avoid the degradation of natural environment (preventive approach).
3. The ecosystem approach was used during the planning, designing and implementing the restoration activities, which is a direct *in-situ* implementation of CBD as well as EU Bird and

Habitat Directives. The approach can be directly adopted by other similar projects in protected or high-value nature areas.

4. The Škocjanski zatok restoration is one of the best examples of successful co-operation among governmental and non-governmental sectors in Slovenia, particularly in the nature conservation field – without good, regular and active co-operation within this partnership, the success story never happened.
5. Additional value of partnership and its importance in project success has shown through sharing of knowledge and experience from existing BirdLife International partnership and newly establish informal network of North-Adriatic wetlands' managers – Adriawet. Both networks also serve as excellent examples on how important it is to share the knowledge and expertise and work together, because due to the synergies, much better results can be achieved comparing to the individual efforts!
6. The importance of nature protection control by reserve wardens has proved throughout the restoration works – they contributed towards nature-friendly implementation of works, finding of simple and innovative solutions and therefore to the maximal restoration success from the nature and landscape conservation point of view.
7. The adoption of the management plan by the national government was the best guarantee the project results to be maintained and up-graded with the regular reserve management and its functioning as wetland centre. This point was ranged into demonstration value category due to the fact that such projects are rare and the future beneficiaries should try to work out sustainable projects which will live independently after the completion of EU (LIFE) or other funding.
8. The story how the project came into being shows that civil society can play a crucial role in sustainable development and nature conservation with environmentally-aware individuals acting as advocates of natural landscapes.
9. The restored Škocjanski zatok, which will be soon organised as wetland centre – classroom in the nature – educates about the importance of wetlands and their preservation by itself: in the field of nature and landscape conservation, we should rather strive towards long-term values such as love for nature and respect for other living beings on this planet as well as the preservation of natural landscapes for future generations!

14. Public participation

The project preparation phase included public participation in the decision making process. First of all, it was the civil society which back in the beginning of 1990s demanded the protection of this area being at the time more and more degraded through the urbanisation of the city of Koper. Upon the public promotion and campaign, led by DOPPS – BirdLife Slovenia, it was the civil society which managed to achieve first temporary legal protection of the site in 1993 and its permanent protection as nature reserve in 1998 upon the Act on Škocjanski zatok Nature Reserve, adopted by the Slovene Parliament.

In the period from 2000-2002, the reserve spatial plan was being prepared, focusing on the planning of spatial organisation of the area, its habitats and landscapes after the restoration as well as harmonising the border areas with other spatial plans. The reserve itself is located in an urban area, therefore also the process of taking into account the surroundings was important and at the same time trying to educate the preparators of these plans to plan more carefully in the adjacency of the endangered and sensible landscapes of Škocjanski zatok. When the proposal of the spatial plan was finished, it was put to a public display and debate together with the Environmental Impact

Assessment prepared at the same time. In this process also a publication was prepared by DOPPS – BirdLife Slovenia, the reserve manager, with simple and clear presentation of how the landscapes of the degraded protected area of Škocjanski zatok should be recreated in order to achieve the most favourable results in the field of nature and landscape conservation as well as public education and well-being. After passing the public display and debate and including the comments from the (mainly local) public into the plan, it was adopted by the Government in the end of 2002 and thus the basis was prepared for the planning of the restoration and construction works.

As stated before, landscapes such as coastal wetlands are a rarity at Slovenian short and steep coastline. Consequently, their national importance is very high as is the need for their long-term conservation and management, especially because all wetland areas – Škocjanski zatok and Sečovlje and Strunjan Salina – have been adversely affected by man since the distant past. Just in time, Slovenia took over responsibility for protecting its national natural values and designated all of them as protected areas. The first two listed coastal wetlands were proposed as Natura 2000 sites (as Special Protected Areas) by DOPPS – BirdLife Slovenia and received their designation in 2004.

The implementation of this project has substantially contributed towards establishing a favourable conservation status of habitats and birds in Škocjanski zatok. As a project result, the habitats which are recognized as rare and endangered on the national as well as EU levels, have been restored and enhanced, thereby ensuring favourable conditions for the increase in the number of species and populations of birds in the reserve, which are again nationally or EU important.

Škocjanski zatok has been designated a *Natura 2000 site (Special Protected Area – id. no. SI5000008)* with the Decree on Natura 2000 sites (Official Bulletin of the RS, no. 49/04, 110/04 and 59/07), adopted by the Slovenian Government in April 2004 before the accession to the EU.

On national level, the Škocjanski zatok area is designated a state nature reserve (open to the public), natural value and ecologically important area. With the implementation of the reserve restoration, the national conservation goals were achieved as well.

15. Awareness-raising

The Škocjanski zatok Nature Reserve's natural landscape is located within a dense urban environment, which gave it its popular name "Oasis on the Doorstep of Koper". The residents of the town of Koper, which is developing from a predominantly trading town to a university centre, need green areas and space for relaxation and recreation. Before the project started, the majority of residents were in favour of the idea of reserve restoration, but also sceptical because of the duration of the project preparation. We can assume that the promotional and awareness-raising activities within this project have brought the future functions of the reserve closer to the local people. Many of them have recognized its real value and become active holders of part of the responsibility for the nature conservation on their doorstep.

For the Municipality of Koper, the designation of Škocjanski zatok as a state nature reserve certainly was unacceptable in the beginning due to the fact that they lost the foreseen area for urbanisation. In the course of preparations for the reserve restoration, however, the attitude of the Municipality has improved significantly, thanks to the on-going co-operation of the reserve manager and the competent ministry. Nowadays, the City Municipality of Koper started to support the reserve and understand it as an advantage in its future development. During project duration, we co-operated with the Municipality in re-introducing the autochthonous Istrian cattle breed.

Restoration of habitats coincided with the completion of the first phase of visitor infrastructure: a circular educational trail with four observation spots was laid out around the freshwater marsh in the Bertoška bonifika area. The visitor centre, observation hides and other structures designed to enhance

visitors' experience of nature will have been built and in use by the end of 2014. The reserve is proud to meet all equal opportunity standards, as its organisation and programmes are fully adapted to target groups, including special needs groups.

Today, Škocjanski zatok is one of the centres of sustainable development of Koper and its surroundings. In addition to taking the settlement culture of the city to a higher level and contributing to better quality of life of the local people, the Škocjanski zatok Nature Reserve has increased the added value of Koper from the spatial point of view – locating a natural landscape so close to the settlements. Nearing its final form, the reserve is becoming a new destination of quickly developing nature tourism, attracting more responsible and environmentally aware tourists.

**17. REVITALISATION DURABLE DU PAYSAGE PROTEGE DE LA GERIA,
CONSORTIUM POUR LA DEFENSE ET LA PROMOTION DE L'ESPACE
DE LA GERIA, SPAIN**

I. ETAT CONCERNE ET CANDIDAT

1. Etat

ESPAGNE

Représenté par

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2. Candidat

Consortium pour la Défense et la Promotion
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II. PRESENTATION DU PROJET

3. Nom du Project

« Revitalisation durable du Paysage Protégé
de la Geria »

4. Localisation du Project

île de Lanzarote, Communauté Autonome des
Canaries, Espagne.

5. Résumé du Project

La Geria est un espace agricole volcanique exceptionnel pour ses valeurs paysagistes et patrimoniales. Exemple dans la combinaison intervention humaine et durabilité environnementale, cette zone est entrée en déclin à la fin du XX siècle en raison de la tertiarisation de l'économie de Lanzarote qui a affecté négativement l'agriculture. Pour inverser cette tendance, les agents publics et privés se sont efforcés de créer un nouveau cadre de travail et de mettre en place des actions pour parvenir à une nouvelle appréciation de sa singulière histoire et de ses possibilités économiques. Dynamisation du patrimoine, campagne de sensibilisation, innovation oenogastronomique, tourisme actif ou réhabilitation territoriale sont autant de réponses à la préservation et conservation d'un système agricole unique au monde.

6. Photo représentant le Projet



III. CONTENU DU PROJET

7. Début du projet

2006

8. Partenaires

Conseil Insulaire de Lanzarote, Chambre de Commerce de Lanzarote, Association d'entreprises touristiques (EATUR), association insulaire d'entreprises hôtelières et appartements de Lanzarote (ASOLAN), Conseil Régulateur des Vins DO Lanzarote et Lanzarote cuisine.

9. Organismes de financement

Ministère de l'Environnement, Ministère du Tourisme, Gouvernement des Canaries, Conseil de Lanzarote et mairies de Tías, Tinajo, Yaiza, San Bartolomé et Teguise, caves el Grifo, caves Status, caves Rubicón et Développement Agricole Lanzarote SARL.

10. Principaux objectifs du Projet

- Mettre en activité le Paysage Protégé de la Geria.
- Développer des propositions économiques qui facilitent la préservation de cette forme de culture artisanale et respectueuse de son environnement naturel, en gardant comme objectif la durabilité dans le temps et, pour ce, miser sur la revalorisation de l'activité vitivinicole, l'innovation dans le secteur primaire et union stratégique avec le tourisme actif.
- Mettre en route de nouveaux outils administratifs de gestion :
Elaborer une normative claire et précise à partir de laquelle puissent s'établir des systèmes efficaces pour la prise de décisions collectives où sont présents les administrations publiques, les secteurs patronaux, les associations et représentants civils.
- Créer une expérience pilote vulgarisatrice de conservation écologique réussie, où l'exploitation agricole et la diffusion de la culture locale se tournent vers un tourisme de premier ordre. De ce fait, s'améliore l'image de Lanzarote qui réussit à en faire prendre conscience aux plus des deux millions de visiteurs européens qui visitent l'île chaque année.
- Sensibiliser la population locale, en commençant par les résidents de la Geria pour qu'ils se sentent fiers de vivre et travailler dans ce paysage particulier où sont cultivés des produits oenogastronomiques de valeur, lesquels ont un sens historique et sont un potentiel économique pour Lanzarote.

11. Résultats obtenus

- Changement dans la tendance économique : de l'abandon à la mise en valeur de la Geria. Les statistiques du Conseil Régulateur DO Lanzarote montrent que le prix du raisin « malvasía volcanique », principale variété de la zone, est passé de 1,15 euros en 2009 à 1,60 en 2012 et que l'exportation de vin a réussi à passer de 30% en 2009 à 50% en 2012. Les plans de dynamisation économique ont favorisé la hausse de la production vitivinicole, le renouvellement de l'offre oenogastronomique dérivé des paysages de la Geria ainsi que le renforcement des activités touristiques durables. Ces actions ont permis de créer de nouveaux postes de travail qualifiés, d'améliorer la marque touristique de Lanzarote, d'impulser la diversification économique et les produits propres de l'île. En définitif, on a réussi à freiner la tendance à l'abandon agricole en insufflant une autre dynamique de revitalisation et de revalorisation de la Geria et de ses alentours.
- Gestion intégrale et participative de la Geria : ensembles, les administrations régionales et locales ont mis en marche des plans et programmes de démarches. Y ont participé : les secteurs vitivinicoles et aussi les représentants touristiques jusqu'alors éloignés de la gestion de la Geria. En outre, comme espace vivant, on compte avec la participation d'associations et de groupes sociaux qui se réunissent périodiquement.
- Croissance de l'offre touristique oenogastronomique liée à la réhabilitation et revalorisation du paysage : le nombre de visiteurs et d'activités de loisir ont augmenté à la Geria (restauration, musées, sentiers, activités culturelles et sportives...) sans pour autant surcharger le territoire et en faisant de sorte que les bénéfices dérivés du tourisme soient réinvestis en vue de maintenir ou regagner les éléments naturels, agricoles et culturels qui structurent ce paysage.
- Création d'un modèle de durabilité vif pour la population locale et les visiteurs. La société insulaire a commencé à redécouvrir la valeur de sa gastronomie et viticulture, se rendant massivement aux activités organisées à la Geria et aux événements de vulgarisation oenogastronomique. Aux travers d'actions régulières et concrètes, on est parvenu à une meilleure connaissance de sa valeur en tant

qu'espace intégrateur exemplaire pour l'agriculture, la culture, le tourisme et le patrimoine naturel de Lanzarote.

La Geria se convertit ainsi en un exemple de tourisme durable pour les millions de visiteurs qui la voient chaque année.

IV. RESPECT DES CRITERES D'ATTRIBUTION DU PRIX

12. Développement territorial durable

Lanzarote dispose d'un bagage important et reconnu au niveau international quant à l'instauration de politiques de développement durable. Et la Geria a été un des attributs les plus appréciés dans cette réussite étant donné qu'elle a contribué à ce que Lanzarote soit désignée Réserve de la Biosphère en 1993. Cette récompense de l'UNESCO a renforcé les politiques d'une île qui déjà en 1995 organisait le Congrès Mondial du Tourisme Durable et qui n'a cessé de travailler de nouvelles mesures de conservation, spécialement quant à l'aménagement territorial.

L'objectif de ce projet est d'utiliser le patrimoine culturel et naturel de la Geria comme générateur de richesse à travers sa préservation et conservation, de telle manière que les ressources engendrées se réinvestissent dans la majorité des éléments qui constituent le Paysage Protégé de la Geria.

Cette stratégie et modèle de gestion permettent d'agir de façon dirigée et autonome vers la conservation et l'accroissement des valeurs esthétiques du paysage de la Geria et de son écosystème, en s'appuyant sur la méthode d'exploitation agricole traditionnelle – élément crucial de la protection du paysage- et sur les politiques de mobilité durable et de conservation du territoire. Tout ceci a contribué à ce que, à l'heure actuelle, l'abandon des exploitations ait été freiné, voire, comme dans le cas qui nous intéresse, que la réhabilitation « parfaite » de zones en désuétude ait été possible.

La remise en état de nouvelles exploitations et éléments patrimoniaux va de pair avec une augmentation de l'offre de loisirs et de la production vitivinicole. En définitif, un cercle « vertueux » qui est la manifestation du meilleur résultat de durabilité possible.

D'un point de vue social, ce projet, longuement débattu ces dernières dix années - ce n'est pas en vain : sur son territoire vivent 7 noyaux de populations, 6 caves et des dizaines d'entreprises de tourisme et d'oenogastronomie – a renforcé et rassemblé la conscience sociale en direction d'une mise en valeur de ce territoire comme instrument qui en garanti la durabilité. On est parvenu à passer de politiques passives (subventions) à des actions concrètes, telles les campagnes de vulgarisation basées sur les attributs d'authenticité et d'originalité du projet présenté. Cette approche a contribué, avec des éléments qualitatifs, à différencier Lanzarote comme destination touristique et comme espace pour une économie primaire moderne, parvenant à la création de nouvelles entreprises et postes de travail ainsi qu'une meilleure sensibilisation de la population résidente.

13. Exemplarité

Nombreuses sont les figures de protection du territoire qui existent en Espagne, et plus particulièrement aux Canaries, mais peu sont celles qui, de fait, envisagent un système de gestion qui

permette de développer et maintenir ces figures qui ont été légiférées. La Geria se veut, en plus de ce qu'elle représente en soi, un exemple de développement territorial durable, où ce soit justement cela qui contribue à générer de la richesse et à une intégration sociale complète. La présentation et le développement de ce projet fait en sorte que la vision des acteurs qui interviennent dans ce territoire se dirige vers la préservation des valeurs de son patrimoine naturel, paysagiste et culturel. Plus que n'importe quelles autres actions particulières, notons au passage, que c'est ce qui lui rapporte le plus. Par conséquent, nous pensons que de parvenir à accélérer et maintenir le « cercle positif » qui a eu lieu à la Geria depuis l'exécution de ce projet, nous donnera une preuve convaincante des politiques et actions qui doivent se dérouler pour que se réalise un modèle de gestion applicable à n'importe quel espace ou paysage qu'on prétend conserver. Il s'agit d'utiliser les politiques actives et intelligibles qui servent de complément et de principe amiable pour comprendre et appliquer la législation coercitive qu'implique normalement toute protection territoriale.

Les mécanismes qui se sont mis en place dans ce projet pour regrouper et faire participer les agents publics et privés concernés directement par cette démarche ont été une des réussites les plus importantes du plan de développement. C'est ainsi que, actuellement, des figures de participation et de rencontre se sont structurées et consolidées, qui sont autant de preuves claires de ce que l'on devrait développer, depuis les administrations publiques, parmi toutes les propositions où l'on remarque la nécessité d'entamer un travail similaire à celui que nous présentons ici.

Lier le territoire et le secteur primaire à l'activité touristique, d'une façon ordonnée et durable, est l'axe sur lequel repose ce plan. C'est aussi un exemple clair du chemin à parcourir sur notre territoire pour qu'une industrie « invasive », comme on a coutume de considérer le tourisme, devienne une activité qui aide, collabore et soit un moteur de la revitalisation du paysage.

Il vaut également la peine de mentionner la stratégie que, depuis le début, ce projet a suivi dans sa manière d'aborder la solution de la Geria, à savoir d'avoir recours à l'analyse et à l'intégration de toutes les thématiques qui affectent le paysage : culture, environnement, tourisme, mobilité, agriculture, ethnographie...

Et si nous tenons en compte que Lanzarote est visitée par plus de deux millions de touristes par an, dont plus de 95% sont d'origine européenne, il ne fait pas de doute que le résultat de ce que nous exposons ici, pourrait être considéré comme une expérience pilote de conservation du paysage. Et étant donnée que ce volume de visiteurs européens est un des véhicules de transmission le plus direct, cette expérience est sujette à projection dans d'autres pays de notre communauté.

14. Participation du public

Les projets réalisés jusqu'à présent à la Geria ont compté avec la participation des citoyens dans toutes ses étapes, en commençant par la gestation même du cadre législatif. Les cinq mairies concernées ont organisé des cercles de conférences pour donner à connaître la conception du plan portant sur la Geria aux riverains et l'information a été longuement exposée publiquement, ce qui a conduit à des allégations, des consultations et des apports de toutes sortes. En plus de l'implication des administrations locales et régionales compétentes, le rôle de la société s'est également reflété dans la contribution des associations comme la Chambre de Commerce, le Conseil Régulateur DO du vin de Lanzarote, les patronaux touristiques ou une grande quantité de groupes.

Parmi les mesures adoptées, ont été incorporées des actions telles qu'une série d'interviews ethnographiques auprès de plus de 150 personnes liées historiquement et personnellement aux cultures de la Geria.

Les plans pour la Geria concordent avec la grande tradition de conservation environnementale de Lanzarote, déjà reconnue dans son affectation comme Réserve de la Biosphère et aussi, plus récemment, avec la proposition de la multinationale TUI Travel d'inclure Lanzarote dans l'expérience pilote Destination durable du Monde, initiative du Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC). Cette entité est affectée aux Nations Unies qui est le leader de ce projet et a choisi cinq autres endroits sur la planète qui ont su valoriser et apprécier l'impact positif qu'engendre le tourisme. Avant son élection, Lanzarote a été évaluée par une consultante externe contractée par le GSTC.

Lanzarote a également été un des membres fondateurs du programme national de tourisme oenogastronomique Savoureuse Espagne. À côté de ces deux phénomènes ponctuels, des dizaines d'actions ont été réalisées ces dernières décennies, tenant toujours compte de l'aspect intégrateur qui considère l'île comme un écosystème insulaire dans lequel toute intervention affecte à la globalité.

15. Sensibilisation

Dans une île comptant un nombre annuel de visiteurs supérieur aux deux millions de touristes européens et ayant une population liée pour sa majorité au secteur du tourisme, la nature (climat, géologie, biodiversité...) est conçue comme un facteur clé dans le développement social et économique. Le paysage, et tout particulièrement le paysage volcanique, est un des meilleurs signes d'identités de Lanzarote.

Si l'habitant de Lanzarote est déjà hautement sensibilisé sur ce thème, l'espace de la Geria ajoute en plus des valeurs historiques qui l'unissent encore davantage à l'identité culturelle de l'insulaire.

C'est sur cette pierre angulaire que le projet que nous présentons a mis en marche des actions pour améliorer la connaissance du territoire dans toute ses facettes : gastronomie, nature, archéologie, faune, ethnographie, économie, tourisme, tradition...

**17. THE SUSTAINABLE REVITALISATION OF THE PROTECTED
LANDSCAPE OF GERIA, CONSORTIUM FOR THE DEFENSE AND
PROMOTION OF THE GERIA LANDSCAPE, SPAIN**

(Original French – English Translation)

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II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECT

3. Name of the Project

The Sustainable Revitalisation of the Protected Landscape of Geria
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4. Location of the Project

Lanzarote, Autonomous Community of Canary Islands, Spain
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5. Summary of the Project

<p>Geria is an exceptional volcanic farmland for its outstanding landscape and heritage values. It is exemplary for the combination of human intervention and environmental sustainability. The area went into decline in the late twentieth century due to the expansion of the service economy that has adversely affected agriculture on Lanzarote. To reverse this trend, public and private agents have tried to create a new framework and have implemented actions to achieve a new appreciation of its unique history and its economic opportunities. Revitalisation of a heritage awareness campaign, food and wine innovation, active tourism or land rehabilitation are the answers to the preservation and conservation of a unique agricultural system in the world.</p>

6. Photo representing the Project



III. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

7. **Start of the Project** month year

8. **Partners**

9. **Financing bodies**

<p>Insular Council of Lanzarote, Lanzarote Chamber of Commerce, Association of Tourism Businesses (EATUR), Island Hotel Association of Businesses and Apartments in Lanzarote, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Tourism, Government of the Canary Islands, Council and Municipalities of Lanzarote: Tias Tinajo Yaiza, and San Bartolomé Teguise, cellars el Grifo, cellars Status, cellars Rubicon and Agricultural Development Lanzarote SARL.</p>
<p>Lanzarote (Asolan) Wine Control Board DO Lanzarote and Lanzarote cuisine</p>

10. **Central aims of the Project**

- Set-up activities for the Protected Geria Landscape
- Develop economic proposals that facilitate the preservation of this form of traditional landscape and be respectful towards the natural environment and culture, while maintaining the aim of sustainability, and for this, focus on the appreciation of the wine business, innovation of the primary sector and combine it strategically with active tourism.
- Activate new administrative management tools:
- Develop clear and precise normative forms which are able to establish effective systems for collective decision-making between the present government, employers sectors, associations and civil society representatives.
- Create a successful ecological conservation pilot, where the farm and the spread of local culture are turned towards tourism. This image shows that Lanzarote succeeded in raising awareness among more than two million European visitors who visit the island annually.
- To raise awareness among the local population, starting with Geria residents to make them feel proud of their lives and work in this particular landscape where they grow food and wine products which have historical significance and which create economic potential for Lanzarote.

11. Outcome

- Changed the economic trend of abandoning the development of Geria. Board Statistics Regulator DO Lanzarote shows that the price of grapes “volcanic malvasía” the main variety of the area has risen from €1.15 in 2009 to €1.60 in 2012 and the export of wine managed to go from 30% in 2009 to 50% in 2012. Plans for economic revitalisation favored the increase of wine production, renewing the food and wine derived landscapes of Geria and strengthened their sustainable tourism. These actions helped to create new jobs and improved the tourism brand of Lanzarote that boosts economic diversification and clean products of the island. We have definitely managed to curb the trend of agricultural abandonment by dynamic revitalisation and the upgrading of Geria and its surroundings.
- Geria’s inclusive and participatory-management by regional and local governments has set in motion action plans and programs which are implemented by wine and tourism representatives. In addition, associations and social groups meet regularly.
- Growth of food and wine tourism offerings related to the rehabilitation and upgrading of the landscape: the number of visitors and leisure activities increased in Geria (restaurants, museums, trails, cultural and sporting activities...) without overburdening the territory and making sure that the benefits derived from tourism are reinvested to maintain or regain natural agricultural and cultural elements that shape the landscape.
- Created a strong sustainability model for the local population and visitors. Island society began to rediscover the value of its food and wine, which is strongly focused on during popular food and wine events. Through regular and concrete actions, we came to a better understanding of its value as an area for integrating agriculture, culture, tourism and natural heritage of Lanzarote. Geria is an example of sustainable tourism for the millions of visitors who see it every year.

IV. RESPECT OF THE CRITERIA OF THE ATTRIBUTION OF THE AWARD

12. Sustainable territorial development

Lanzarote has a rich background and is internationally recognised as an important player in the introduction of sustainable development policies. Geria is one of the most popular attributors to this success because it has contributed to Lanzarote being designated as a Biosphere Reserve in 1993. The UNESCO award has strengthened the policies of an island that already in 1995 organised the World Conference on Sustainable Tourism, which has not stopped working on new conservation measures, especially with regard to land use planning.

The objective of this project is to use the natural and cultural heritage of Geria to generate wealth through its preservation and conservation, so that the resources generated are reinvested in the majority of elements that constitute the Protected landscape of Geria.

This strategy and business model allows acting independently to the conservation and enhancement of the aesthetic values of the Geria landscape and its ecosystem, relying on the traditional method of farming – crucial protection of the landscape, and policies for sustainable mobility and land conservation. All of this has contributed to land conservation and at present, the abandonment of

farms has been slowed down or even, as in the case before us, the “perfect” rehabilitation areas were saved from possible uselessness.

Reclamation of new farms and heritage elements is associated with an increase in the supply of leisure and wine production. It is a “virtuous” circle which is a manifestation of the best sustainability result possible.

From a social point of view, this project, discussed at length over the past decade – is not worked on in vain. In its territory exist 7 population nuclei, 6 wineries and dozens of tourism, food and wine companies that strengthened and collected social consciousness towards the development of this area and function as an instrument that guarantees durability. We managed to go from passive policies (subsidies) to concrete actions, such as outreach campaigns based on the attributes of authenticity and originality.

This approach has contributed to the differentiation of Lanzarote as a tourist destination and as a place for a modern primary economy, managing the creation of new businesses and jobs and raise a stronger awareness among the resident population.

13. Exemplary value

Many land protection projects exist in Spain, especially on the Canary Islands, but few, in fact, use a legalised management system that allows to develop and maintain these projects. Geria wants, in addition to what it represents in itself: an example of sustainable territorial development, where it is precisely this that helps to generate wealth and full social integration. The presentation and the development of this project is linked to the preservation of its natural heritage values, and cultural landscape. This is the most important action, more important than any other particular actions.

Therefore, we believe that to achieve and maintain the “Positive cycle” which took place in Geria from the implementation of this project, one must adhere to Geria’s management model. Geria gives strong evidence of policies and actions that show a management model that may be applicable to any space or landscape that is claimed to be endangered.

It is the active use and understandable policies that complement the project and the mutual principles which are understood and applied by law enforcement who are also involved in territorial protection.

Mechanisms that are implemented in this project that gather and engage public and private stakeholders directly have been one of the most important achievements of the development plan. Currently, participation projects and meetings were organised and consolidated, all of which are clear evidence that we should develop similar works.

Linking the country and the primary sector to the tourism industry in an orderly and sustainable manner is at the core of this plan. It is also a clear example on how to tackle the “invasive” industry in our territory. Tourism becomes an activity that aids works and functions as an engine for revitalisation of the landscape.

It is also worth mentioning that from the beginning, the strategy used in its analysis and integration all themes that affect the landscape: culture, environment, tourism, mobility, agriculture, ethnography ...

And if we take into account that Lanzarote is visited by over two million tourists a year, more than 95% are of European origin, there is no doubt that the result of what we presented here, might be considered as a pilot for landscape conservation. And given that the volume of European visitors is one of the vehicles with the most direct transmission, this experiment is subject to be implemented in other countries.

14. Public participation

The project so far counted on the participation of citizens in all of its stages, starting with the legislative framework. The five councils involved have organised conferences to show the design plan for Geria to the residents and all information has been publicly exhibited which has led to many consultations and inputs from all different kinds. In addition to the involvement of competent local and regional governments, the role of civil society is also reflected in the contribution of associations such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Wine Control Board DO, the Lanzarote Tourist Employer and a large amount of other groups. Among the measures adopted were actions such as series of ethnographic interviews with more than 150 people who linked historical and cultural cultures to Geria.

Plans for Geria are consistent with the great tradition of environmental conservation. Lanzarote, is already recognised as a Biosphere Reserve and, more recently, a proposal was put forward to include multinational TUI Travel Lanzarote in the pilot called Destination Sustainable World, an initiative of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC). This entity is assigned to the United Nations who is the leader of this project and chose five other places on the planet that acknowledge and appreciate the value and positive impact of tourism. Before its election, Lanzarote was evaluated by an external Consultant contracted by the GSTC.

Lanzarote was also a founding member of the national program of food and wine tourism, called Tasty Spain. Besides these two time events, dozens of actions have been set-up in recent decades, always considering the integrator aspect that considers the island as an ecosystem in which any intervention affects the whole environment.

15. Awareness-raising

On an island with a vast population, mostly due to the high annual number of European visitors, nature (climate, geology, biodiversity...) is designed as a key factor in social development and the economy. The landscape, especially the volcanic landscape is one of Lanzarote's best identity features.

If the inhabitants of Lanzarote are better educated on the subject, Geria may create more historical values that further unite the cultural identity of the island.

It is on this foundation that the project presented here has started actions to improve knowledge of the territory in all its facets: gastronomy, nature, archeology, wildlife, ethnography, economy, tourism, tradition...

18. SOUTH PENNINES WATERSHED LANDSCAPE PROJECT, PENNINE PROSPECTS, UNITED KINGDOM

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II. PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECT

3. Name of the Project	South Pennines Watershed Landscape Project
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4. Location of the Project	Just over 50,000 hectares of the uplands in the South Pennines between the conurbations of Leeds and Manchester in northern England.
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5. Summary of the Project

The South Pennines Watershed Landscape Project seeks to tell the story of the landscape in terms of both the historic and natural environment. Located between Leeds and Manchester, more than a million people live in or around the South Pennine uplands yet they can still feel remote, wild and exhilarating. This unique landscape has been an inspiration to artists and writers from the Brontës to Ted Hughes. There are significant pressures, e.g. our peat resources are in the front line of our battle to mitigate climate change. Engaging local communities through projects based on science, archaeology and creative arts has improved understanding of the value of the landscape. Managed by Pennine Prospects (a rural regeneration non-Government organisation), working with volunteers and providing training has enabled more people to be directly involved in caring for and managing this fragile landscape.

6. Photo representing the Project



III. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

7. **Start of the Project** month year

8. Partners

The South Pennines Watershed Landscape Partnership is a broad partnership, managed by a rural regeneration organisation, Pennine Prospects. The Watershed Landscape area represents a distinctive landscape type within the wider Southern Pennines National Character Area that is both internationally important but also very vulnerable.

Pennine Prospects was established in 2005 to protect, enhance and promote the natural and heritage assets of the South Pennines. It builds on the work carried out for more than 30 years by the Standing Conference of South Pennine Authorities (SCOSPA). Pennine Prospects works across sectors on a landscape-scale, with a board comprising :

- Six local authorities: City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council , Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council, Kirklees Metropolitan District Council (West Yorkshire); Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council and Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (Greater

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Manchester) and Lancashire County Council;• Private sector utility companies which own significant land in the area : United Utilities, Yorkshire Water Services and Northern Rail;• Membership organisations: National Farmers Union and the National Trust;• Non-Departmental Public Bodies: Natural England• Third sector representatives including the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the National Trust and Groundwork Trusts. |
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9. Financing bodies

Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Landscape Partnership Scheme award of € 2.25 million: Heritage Lottery Fund's Landscape Partnership Schemes help to bring together members of the community as well as local, regional and national organisations to deliver schemes which benefit some of the UK's most outstanding landscapes and rural communities. ¹

South Pennine LEADER award of € 500,000: LEADER is a community-led rural development programme which aims to improve the quality of life and prosperity in rural communities through locally driven rural development initiatives and projects. European LEADER funding has been used across the South Pennines for a wide range of economic and social purposes.

Local authority and third party contributions to the total € 848,000: ²

¹ HLF require to see programmes and projects that reflect the four strategic outcomes of the Landscape Partnership Programme:

- Conserving or restoring the built and natural features that create the historic landscape character.
- Increasing community participation in local heritage.
- Increasing access to and learning about the landscape and its heritage.
- Increasing training opportunities in local heritage skills.

² From the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council , Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council, Kirklees Metropolitan District Council (West Yorkshire); Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council and Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (Greater Manchester) and Lancashire County Council : Natural England , United Utilities and Yorkshire Water.

10. Central aims of the Project

The South Pennines Watershed Landscape Project is a landscape restoration programme that aims to bring together all those with an interest in the moorlands that straddle so many regional and local boundaries. It works with authorities, volunteers and community groups to tell the story of the uplands through creative arts, inspiring learning resources and wide ranging projects that conserve the built and natural environment.

The Project will improve understanding amongst local communities and wider urban populations of the role that the moorlands have played in providing resources (peat, water, coal, stone, grazing) for society in the past, and their current and future roles (which now include retaining terrestrial carbon stores) through engaging and inspiring people.

In support of this, the project's further aims are:

- To engage communities in the protection of this unique landscape by promoting a sense of ownership and pride;
- To ensure the retention and enhancement of the uplands, which have international status and wildlife value , notably blanket bog, upland heath and upland oak woodlands;
- To protect and restore the vulnerable populations of twite, the Pennine Finch, through creating and managing species rich grasslands;³
- To enhance local landscape character by restoring traditional features in the landscape including boundary walls, sheepfolds and selected historic features;
- To protect internationally significant historic features: from the prehistoric rock art on Rombalds Moor to the remains of mining and quarrying of the industrial revolution through to the memories of those who worked and continue to work the landscape today.

11. Outcome

'It's brought about a different approach to connecting people with the landscape – taking the landscape to them and not people to the landscape, in a way that's more long lasting and a two way rural-urban process.' Watershed Landscape Evaluation Report, Resources for Change, 2011

A landscape-scale restoration such as the South Pennines Watershed Landscape has had impacts in addressing biodiversity, social and cultural issues across the South Pennine uplands as well as links to the local economy. For example:

- The historic environment: A volunteer led project to record the internationally important prehistoric rock art of Rombalds Moor has seen local groups working together to increase the knowledge and awareness of these carved cup and ring rocks. . Using new technology to carry out detailed surveys has ultimately increased understanding and will lead to more informed conservation.
- Haymeadow restoration: Initially focused on a species recovery programme to stabilise and increase the number of breeding pairs of twite, known locally as the Pennine Finch, the Project has

³ The twite was once found across twelve English counties - now the last 100 pairs are found exclusively in the South Pennines

broadened into a landscape-scale restoration changing the culture of land management. Working with over 40 landowners and farmers restoring 181 Pennine fields [or 128 hectares] has introduced a hay meadow regime and culture where none previously existed. There is now a pool of farmers, landowners and agricultural contractors with the skills needed to manage the meadows as well as an expanding local seed source for future projects.

- **Understanding:** Alongside a far-reaching series of workshops led by experts, the project has helped improve understanding about this landscape using innovative interpretation attracting new audiences and raising the profile of previously overlooked features such as geology : the rocks beneath our feet which shaped the very landscape in which we still live and work. The West Yorkshire Geology Trust and Todmorden Moor Restoration Trust have developed new interpretation at a number of sites. Working with artists and writers across a range of disciplines from ecologists through to archaeologists, from water scientists to youth workers. This has been one of the more innovative examples of interpretation employed by the Project.
- **Improve the quality and range of heathland habitats by bringing moorland back into favourable condition:** The Project has worked with major landowners such as Yorkshire Water and United Utilities to restore over 2,500 hectares of upland blanket bog whether by controlling invasive species such as rhododendron or bracken or planting cotton grass on bare peat. This restoration work has a direct impact on the ability of the habitat to meet the challenges of climate change, retain terrestrial carbon stores and protect water quality.

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12. Sustainable territorial development

Sustainability:

Policy context

“A vision of progress that integrates immediate and longer-term objectives, local and global action, and regards social, economic and environmental issues as inseparable and interdependent components of human progress” [European Union Sustainable Development Strategy, 2009]

Sustainable development guides Pennine Prospects work in general and the South Pennines Watershed Landscape Project specifically. In 2001 the ‘Heritage Strategy for the Southern Pennines’ outlined a vision for the “future management and enhancement of heritage assets to ensure that they contribute to the social, economic and environmental wealth of the area”. This approach has probably never been more relevant than it is today. In taking a large landscape-scale approach, the Project is guided by the European Landscape Convention (ELC) adopted by the Council of Europe in 2000. The Project has sought not just to recognise the need to conserve moorlands but also bring them to a wider audience.

Environmental sustainability

Our upland areas are nationally important landscape assets not just in terms of their unique sense of place and inspiration but for the range of public goods and services they supply : water quality, biodiversity and recreation. However today’s upland environment is under threat – its natural resources have been used beyond its limits through wildfire and overgrazing: managed across various administrative boundaries they lack a coherent vision. Climate change is negatively affecting the

uplands. Peat itself is lost in erosion caused by wind, rain and recreational use:

- The Project has worked to propagate cotton grass plugs planted on moorland sites to stabilise peat and improve its role as a terrestrial store of carbon.
- The Project has carried out improvements to the Pennine Way National Trail by laying causeway paving. Placing this type of pathway, made from former mill stone, will ensure that fragile peat habitats on these well-used routes are protected from further erosion as well as dramatically reducing the disturbance to ground-nesting birds such as golden plover.
- Volunteers have worked to remove invasive and alien species to conserve important blanket bog habitats from over 50 hectares of land. Bracken and rhododendron can change the delicate balance of moorland ecosystems.
- The restoration of hay meadows with their rich mix of flowering plants is vital to conserve and enhance the numbers of breeding pairs of the seed-eating twite. Embedding these traditional skills within the community of farmers and landowners will have a legacy across the South Pennines .

Economic sustainability

As a wilderness area surrounded by large urban populations, the South Pennines Watershed Landscape is ideally placed to act as a ‘test-bed’ for the development of new approaches to economic development and the concept of a ‘green economy’. It is not just the value of landscape restoration that has been carried out that is important - it is how the Project has sought to carry out these works. For example, ensuring that projects include training, apprenticeships and supporting small agricultural contractors⁴. Our work in propagating cotton grass in a local community-based nursery is an exemplar of supporting training and community enterprise.

Cultural sustainability

A landscape that has been influenced by the hand of man, the Watershed Landscape has been an inspiration for artists and writers from the Brontës to Ted Hughes, from Barbara Hepworth to Henry Moore. As such it is a strong cultural landscape. Less well-known but equally important is that the South Pennines are home to rich but important archaeological remains from the earliest period of human activity to the extractive industries that fuelled and built the Industrial Revolution.

The Project has raised awareness to make a positive impact on the conservation and protection of the cultural heritage of the South Pennines uplands. By engaging and directly involving people with the upland environment, it is hoped that individuals become more educated about the fascinating life histories of these locations, promoting a sense of place, and in turn fostering a desire to protect the wealth of heritage assets for future generations⁵.

Examples of this work include:

- Dedicated volunteers have recorded at least 400 Neolithic and Bronze Age carved stones [dating from 4,000 years ago] in their landscape context on Rombalds Moor. This work will create a digital database of each carved stone that will be publicly available through the England’s Rock Art database. This will help to increase our understanding of the rocks, and protect them for future generations, as many are now under threat.

⁴ Over 350 people have attended 50 training days.

⁵ Amongst the 2,000 plus residents who have benefited from the Project are included over 600 schoolchildren plus over 40 community groups including those working with families and the elderly.

- Research has been carried out into the history of mining and mineral extraction in the Pennines from medieval times to the present day and how it has formed our landscape.
- The Project has restored historic features: abandoned farmsteads, archaeological features, drystone walls – to ensure their long term conservation, including the iconic Top Withins [a possible influence on Emily Brontë novel Wuthering Heights].
- Castleshaw Roman fort in Saddleworth has new interpretation panels and access that respects this Scheduled Ancient Monument.

Repairing past damage

At the height of the 19th century, the rapid industrial development to east and west created some of the world's worst atmospheric pollution. The legacy of this sulphurous rain has left areas of blanket bog without vegetation, even the carved stones on Ilkley Moor may have been a victim to this toxic legacy. To be robust, and to continue providing the many benefits of clean water and carbon capture, the vegetative cover needs to be restored and managed. At Worsthorne and Marsden Moors the Watershed Landscape Project has supported landowners by growing and planting cotton grass transplants, erecting fencing to reduce grazing pressure and reseeded with heather on over 60 hectares of moorland to re-vegetate areas of bare peat. Much of this work has been carried out by volunteers.

13. Exemplary value

There are a number of levels in which the Project has been bold and innovative; in delivery and in communication

Community engagement: Taking the story of our landscape into our towns to residents whom rarely visit the Watershed Landscape has been key. Working with over six hundred school children ; pupils learnt about moorland management, peat and the water cycle and even created a mini peat bog to take home.

Restoration of traditional hay meadows: The restoration of hay meadows is a landscape scale approach that has significant benefits for biodiversity in general and the twite in particular. This diminutive bird has captured the imagination of communities throughout the area - from school children to farmers and landowners. The restoration of hay meadows with their rich mix of flowering plants is vital to conserve these last breeding pairs. These new skills and change in working practices has mirrored the work to engage residents to take up the cause of the twite which has included shop front displays, a giant papier-mâché twite and its own beer brewed in a local brewery: The Light Twite!

Inspired by Landscape : In the creative arts strand of the Project writers and artists have been reaching out to a variety of groups to help new audiences experience the moors in unusual ways including: writing words on kites and flying them, sketching in the sunshine and recording soundscapes on the moors. Artist, Char March commented on the work she did with Thorn Park School for Deaf Children: *'Very few of the deaf children (who were all 14 years old) had been out of Bradford, let alone been out on the moors. They were blown away by the wildness of it all, and their teachers told me that they were all still signing away about their day up on Ovenden Moor months later! They demanded that the school took them back up there – so the school organised their own trip up there, and lots of the children were determined to get their whole families out there too.'*⁶

⁶ The work and video from the school features on the website [www.watershedlandscape.co.uk].

Training : Engaging volunteers and providing training have been critical to the success of the Watershed Landscape Project. In Burnley a community-based horticulture project has used trainees to grow moorland species such as cotton grass which have then been planted by trainees. Going from strength to strength, trainees are now supplying commercially to United Utilities to enable the restoration of their estates.

Historic Environment: Engaging new audiences in understanding our landscape from its geodiversity through to how it has managed and sustained previous cultures has been key. The Project has enabled people who have never had the chance to get into archaeology to be involved in real research, delivering important results which will help to protect these nationally significant prehistoric carved stones for future generations.

14. Public participation

Public participation:

Above and beyond the statutory consultation required, the Project has sought to engage people in managing their landscape whether through training for habitat survey work or through restoration of features such as drystone walls that are typical of the area. However the Project has sought to go wider with this work actively taking the value of this landscape deep into cities and involving people more actively. For example, the recently formed Todmorden Moor Restoration Trust has been supported to enable residents to survey the landscape on their doorstep, construct trails and deliver guided walks.

Engaging people is one thing but true participation puts people at the centre of managing the resource and conflict resolution. Management Plans are the main vehicle for resolving tensions on a site by site basis, for example, the proposals on Ilkley Moor are guided by the Management Plan. The Watershed Landscape Project along with Bradford Metropolitan Council, owner of Ilkley Moor, have sought to bring different users together through the Rombalds Moor Forum. Facilitated by Community Accord, who are trained in conflict resolution, this is a ground-breaking initiative to seek common ground, bringing together landowners, tenants, shooting interests, local residents, birdwatchers, horse riders, archaeologists and many others with an interest in Rombalds Moor. The approach has paid dividends, in reducing the conflict between cyclists, horse riders and shooting interests and in ensuring access proposals take account of the unique prehistoric remains.

15. Awareness raising

'valuing and protecting is about changing attitudes, it's another step'

Watershed Landscape Evaluation Report, Resources for Change, 2011.

The Project has sought to raise awareness on a number of different levels, improving physical access to the landscape as well as getting people to think differently about their landscape.

- Over 600 school children have taken part in landscape-based activities from poetry writing to geocaching to building their own mini peat bog;
- More than 40 community groups have been involved in workshops and excursions into the landscape;
- The Project has delivered over 60 funded events with our partners from guided art walks to volunteer led tree planting and cotton grass planting;

- Seven exhibitions have been held in museums, galleries, visitor centres and a shop window;
- New interpretation materials have been developed including a new upland discovery room , education resources and downloadable resources;
- Eight easy access Reservoir Trails have been developed using interpretation, podscrolls and car park improvements;
- A schools and a youth theatre workshop programme have brought the story of the reservoirs, and the communities who built them, to life;
- The South Pennine Walk & Ride Festival attracted over 5000 participants to over 100 events in 2012;
- West Yorkshire Geology Trust have produced management plans for six Local Geology Sites and a series of seminars. Not only has this introduced over 200 people to how the landscape has been formed but has ensured that an organisation doing vital work in terms of geodiversity has a new and thriving membership going forward into the future.

Putting a value on Landscape?

Results of focus groups held during the Project were illuminating. Many referred to the landscape as being “*part of them*” or that it was “*in the blood*”. Whether a person had lived in the area all their life or not, the concept of ‘ownership’ of the landscape was strong, as was their perception that they belonged to the land and it belongs to them. The feeling of escape provided by open areas was central to people’s lives and the moorland element in particular provided an ‘emptiness’ or clear space that was highly valued for the fact that it is almost featureless.

“I come here for the solitude. Occasionally you don’t want to see anyone else. It is escapism, time to think. It is like freedom somehow.”

“My wife asks me, ‘What do you think about when you are up there?’ and I say ‘nothing’, that’s the point!”

Lasting change

The legacy of the Project can be measured through the physical outputs mentioned previously but more importantly through the development of new skills within the local communities, landowners and volunteers

- The Project will help prevent the local extinction of the twite which will be a major achievement. The work will inform local landowners and farmers in relation to the long term management of peripheral hay meadows adjacent to open moorland. Local seed sources will now exist throughout the South Pennines to assist with future re-seeding programmes.
- The archaeological research will enhance the Historic Environment Record.
- Through face to face contact the Project has reached out to new audiences and recruited new champions.
- Learning resources have been produced relating to museums, schools and colleges. Skills within local interest groups in survey and research techniques, information technology, project management and preparation of interpretive material, will mean that they are better equipped to carry out future projects. For example, the work carried out by geologists and archaeologists will continue long after Project funding ceases.
- By involving residents in training and the decision-making relating to local environments and heritage.

The Future

The diverse administrative structures create a challenge in terms of co-ordination of landscape-scale initiatives. As a single landscape straddling many regional and local administrative boundaries, Pennine Prospects has brought partners together from both sides of the Pennines and the three city-regions to focus on one landscape. New organisations have been recruited for specific skills. The Partnership that came together to work on the Watershed Landscape Project has stayed together. There is an appetite to work on a landscape scale: this has seen DEFRA recently endorse the formation of a South Pennine Local Nature Partnership to carry on elements of the Project. A local distinctiveness project has been recently launched using the unique landscape of the South Pennines to engage local tourist businesses, as local information points, raising their awareness of the significance of the uplands.

ANNEXE

RESOLUTION CM/RES(2008)3 SUR LE REGLEMENT RELATIF AU PRIX DU PAYSAGE DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

*(adoptée par le Comité des Ministres le 20 février 2008, lors de la 1018^e réunion
des Délégués des Ministres)*

Le Comité des Ministres,

Rappelant que l'article 11 de la Convention européenne du paysage (STE n° 176) (ci-après dénommée « la Convention »), adoptée par le Comité des Ministres du Conseil de l'Europe en date du 19 juillet 2000 et ouverte à la signature à Florence le 20 octobre 2000, institue le Prix du paysage du Conseil de l'Europe (ci-après dénommé « le prix ») ;

Considérant que cet article prévoit que le Comité des Ministres définit et publie les critères d'attribution du prix, adopte son règlement et décerne le prix ;

Considérant que le prix vise à récompenser des initiatives concrètes et exemplaires pour la réalisation d'objectifs de qualité paysagère sur le territoire des Parties à la Convention (ci-après dénommées « les Parties ») ;

Estimant que le prix s'inscrit dans la lignée du travail accompli par le Conseil de l'Europe en faveur des droits de l'homme, de la démocratie et du développement durable, et qu'il met en valeur la dimension territoriale des droits de l'homme et de la démocratie, en reconnaissant l'importance des mesures prises pour améliorer les caractéristiques paysagères du cadre de vie des populations ;

Convaincu que le prix est de nature à accroître la sensibilisation de la société civile à la valeur des paysages, à leur rôle et à leur transformation,

Décide :

- I. Il est adopté le règlement relatif au Prix du paysage du Conseil de l'Europe selon les modalités précisées dans l'annexe à la présente résolution.
- II. Les critères d'attribution du Prix du paysage du Conseil de l'Europe figurent en annexe audit règlement.
- III. Les Parties sont invitées à traduire dans leur(s) langue(s) nationale(s) et à promouvoir le Règlement relatif au Prix du paysage du Conseil de l'Europe. Elles sont également invitées à encourager la couverture médiatique du prix afin de sensibiliser le public à l'importance du paysage.

Annexe à la Résolution CM/Res(2008)3

Règlement relatif au Prix du paysage du Conseil de l'Europe

Article 1 – Objectif

a. Le prix représente la reconnaissance honorifique de la mise en œuvre d'une politique ou de mesures prises par des collectivités locales et régionales, ou leurs groupements, ou d'une contribution particulièrement remarquable apportée par des organisations non gouvernementales, visant la

protection, la gestion et/ou l'aménagement durables des paysages. Cette reconnaissance s'exprime par la remise d'un diplôme. Des mentions spéciales peuvent être également accordées.

b. Le prix récompense un processus de mise en œuvre de la Convention aux niveaux national ou transnational, se traduisant par une réalisation effective et mesurable.

c. Le prix contribue également à sensibiliser les populations à l'importance des paysages pour l'épanouissement des êtres humains, la consolidation de l'identité européenne et le bien-être individuel et de la société dans son ensemble. Il favorise la participation du public au processus décisionnel des politiques du paysage.

Article 2 – Qualification des candidats

Conformément à l'article 11, paragraphe 1, de la Convention, peuvent être candidats au prix les collectivités locales et régionales et leurs groupements qui, dans le cadre de la politique relative au paysage d'une Partie à la présente Convention, ont mis en œuvre une politique ou des mesures visant la protection, la gestion et/ou l'aménagement de leurs paysages, faisant la preuve d'une efficacité durable et pouvant ainsi servir d'exemple aux autres collectivités territoriales européennes. Les organisations non gouvernementales qui ont fait preuve d'une contribution particulièrement remarquable à la protection, à la gestion ou à l'aménagement du paysage peuvent également être candidates.

Conformément au paragraphe 2 de l'article précité, les collectivités locales et régionales transfrontalières et les groupements de collectivités locales ou régionales concernés peuvent être candidats, à la condition qu'ils gèrent ensemble le paysage en question.

Article 3 – Procédure

La procédure se déroule en trois phases :

Phase 1 – Présentation des candidatures

Chaque Partie présente une candidature au Secrétariat Général du Conseil de l'Europe. Les candidatures peuvent résulter d'un concours organisé par chaque Partie en tenant compte des critères d'attribution du prix, tels qu'ils figurent dans l'annexe au présent règlement.

Le dossier de candidature, présenté dans l'une des deux langues officielles du Conseil de l'Europe (français ou anglais), comprend :

- la présentation du candidat (trois pages maximum) ;
- la présentation d'une réalisation visant la protection, la gestion et/ou l'aménagement d'un paysage, amenant la preuve d'une efficacité durable et pouvant servir d'exemple. Il sera fait mention de la disposition de la Convention concernée.

La présentation se fera sous forme d'un document papier d'une vingtaine de pages et sera accompagné de sa copie numérique au format pdf sur CD-ROM et de posters. Une vidéo d'environ cinq minutes pourra compléter le dossier. Les matériels remis devront être libres de droits pour leur utilisation par le Conseil de l'Europe en vue de la communication de la promotion du prix ou de toute autre publication ou action liée à la Convention. Le Conseil de l'Europe s'engage à mentionner le nom des auteurs.

Les dossiers incomplets ou ne respectant pas le règlement ne seront pas admis à concourir.

Le prix est décerné en principe tous les deux ans. Les dossiers de candidature doivent parvenir au Secrétariat Général du Conseil de l'Europe au plus tard le 31 décembre de l'année précédant la remise du prix.

Phase 2 – Examen des candidatures

Un jury international constitué en tant qu'organe subordonné des comités d'experts visés à l'article 10 de la Convention⁷ examine les candidatures et se prononce sur leur admissibilité. Ce jury est composé de :

- un membre du (chacun des) comité(s) d'experts chargé(s) du suivi de la Convention, désigné par ce(s) comité(s) ;
- un membre du Congrès des pouvoirs locaux et régionaux du Conseil de l'Europe, désigné par le Congrès ;
- un représentant d'une organisation non gouvernementale internationale, désigné par le Secrétaire Général sur proposition du Regroupement des OING ayant le statut participatif auprès du Conseil de l'Europe ;
- trois spécialistes éminents en matière de paysage, désignés par le (la) Secrétaire Général(e) du Conseil de l'Europe.

Le jury désigne un ou une président(e).

Le jury propose, parmi les candidats admis, un lauréat pour le prix.

Les propositions du jury sont prises à la majorité absolue des votants au premier tour de scrutin et à la majorité relative au tour suivant, sur la base des critères d'attribution du Prix figurant à l'annexe au présent règlement. En cas d'égalité des voix, la voix du (de la) président(e) du jury est prépondérante.

Les motifs des choix opérés sont expliqués.

Le jury peut proposer d'attribuer une ou des mentions spéciales.

Les comités d'experts visés à l'article 10 de la Convention¹ examinent les propositions du jury et adressent leurs propositions quant au lauréat du prix, et, le cas échéant, les mentions spéciales, au Comité des Ministres.

Phase 3 – Décernement et remise du prix et des mentions spéciales

Au vu des propositions des comités d'experts visés à l'article 10 de la Convention¹, le Comité des Ministres décerne le prix et les mentions spéciales éventuelles.

Le prix et les mentions spéciales sont remis par le (la) Secrétaire Général(e) du Conseil de l'Europe ou son (sa) représentant(e) à l'occasion d'une cérémonie publique.

⁷ Le 30 janvier 2008, le Comité des Ministres a décidé de confier cette tâche au seul Comité directeur du patrimoine culturel et du paysage (CDPATEP) [remplacé le 1^{er} janvier 2012 par le Comité directeur de la culture, du patrimoine culturel et du paysage (CDCPP)].

Annexe au Règlement

Critères d'attribution du Prix du paysage du Conseil de l'Europe

Critère 1 – Développement territorial durable

Les réalisations présentées devront être l'expression concrète de la protection, de la gestion et/ou de l'aménagement des paysages. Par expression concrète, on entend une réalisation achevée et ouverte au public depuis au moins trois ans au moment de la présentation de la candidature.

Elles doivent en outre :

- s'inscrire dans une politique de développement durable et s'intégrer harmonieusement dans l'organisation du territoire concerné ;
- faire preuve de qualités environnementales, sociales, économiques, culturelles et esthétiques durables ;
- s'opposer ou remédier aux destructurations du paysage ;
- contribuer à valoriser et à enrichir le paysage et à développer de nouvelles qualités.

Critère 2 – Exemplarité

La mise en œuvre de la politique ou les mesures prises qui ont contribué à renforcer la protection, la gestion et/ou l'aménagement des paysages concernés devront avoir une valeur exemplaire de bonne pratique, dont d'autres acteurs pourraient s'inspirer.

Critère 3 – Participation du public

La mise en œuvre de la politique ou des mesures prises en vue de la protection, de la gestion et/ou de l'aménagement des paysages concernés devront impliquer une étroite participation du public, des autorités locales et régionales et des autres acteurs concernés, et devraient refléter clairement les objectifs de qualité paysagère.

Le public devrait pouvoir participer simultanément de deux manières :

- au moyen de dialogues et d'échanges entre les membres de la société (réunions publiques, débats, procédures de participation et de consultation sur le terrain, par exemple) ;
- au moyen de procédures de participation et d'intervention du public dans les politiques du paysage mises en œuvre par les autorités nationales, régionales ou locales.

Critère 4 – Sensibilisation

L'article 6.A de la Convention prévoit que « chaque Partie s'engage à accroître la sensibilisation de la société civile, des organisations privées et des autorités publiques à la valeur des paysages, à leur rôle et à leur transformation ». Les actions en ce sens mises en œuvre dans le cadre de la réalisation concernée seront évaluées.

* * *