

## LANDSCAPE AND TRANSFRONTIER COOPERATION IN LAPLAND

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Finland, Sweden, Norway and Russia have vast, common transfrontier landscapes in Lapland. The area is also Sami area, meaning that Europe's only indigenous nation, Sami people, live mainly in northern Lapland. Countries differ from each other in many ways; they have different national legislation and administration, but still many international conventions combine them together. Furthermore, they share the same kind of nature, landscape, culture and livelihoods based on reindeer herding and fishing. The similarities have made transborder cooperation natural and the area's history has been extremely colorful and international for hundreds of years. Today we have borders, but it is important to know that until 1852 the borders were open, so that reindeer herders pastured for the summertime to the seaside and came back to mountain areas for wintertime. This was practical way to avoid mosquitos and for the sustainable use of pastures. Nowadays pastures are limited to areas of each country and restricted also by the other land use forms and we have serious problems with worn out pastures.

### Valuable landscapes elsewhere in Finland and in the Sami area

Nationally valuable landscapes were first time inventoried in Finland 1986-1992. In recent years they have been re-inventoried and completed. Valuable landscapes in Finland mainly represent cultural landscapes in rural areas. Value of these areas is based on culturally significant natural diversity, on well-managed cultivated agricultural landscape and on traditional architecture and land use.

In the Sami area the landscape is mainly vast wilderness including also sparsely build environment. The build environment is concentrated in villages. In addition, the old reindeer hearing fences, Sami summer pasture villages and herding huts, traditional pathways and sacred Sami places are remarkable and exceptional parts of the landscape.

Nationally valuable landscapes have been inventoried in Finnish Lapland 2011-2014. One of the typical characteristics in Lapland are large, natural border rivers Tornionjoki on Swedish, Tenojoki on Norwegian border and Paatsjoki flowing from Lake Inari through Norwegian and Russian border to the Arctic Ocean. The inventories of nationally valuable landscapes in Sami area were made by Eija Ojanlatva and Päivi Magga, representing indigenous Sami people and their conception of valuable landscapes. We have noticed that Sami and Finnish people have different conception of landscapes. For example in the northernmost areas where Finnish see only a vast wilderness, they Sami might see a long tradition of reindeer pasturing with human made structures that are not easily recognized. Where a strangers see a natural flowing river, Sami see traditional salmon fishing places belonging to certain Sami families. The information we got from inventories of nationally valuable landscapes in Sami area is remarkably important for land use planning and it is very valuable because of its comprehensiveness. I want to point out that Rio Janeiro Biodiversity Convention its' Article 8j requires to safeguard the indigenous peoples' knowledge of nature and include them in decision making. It is absolutely important to bear that in mind while implementing European Landscape Convention, too.

Landscape is strongly connected to individual mind and memories. It is also connected to family and culture. An individual learns what kind of landscape is good, beautiful, useful and what kind of landscape is bad, hostile or must be managed. This explains why we have national differences in how we view the landscape.

## Layers of landscape form a living view

The landscape can be considered to be formed of several overlapping layers (variants) and can be analyzed in details for example by laser scanning. The basic layers are geological and hydrological layers determining the ecosystem. The biological layer describes vegetation and animals. Then comes archeological and historical layer, indicating where and what kind of land use can be identified. Finally today's cultural and land use layer can be added. What we then see is the landscape.

However, landscape is not a stable picture. It has been changing and it changes all the time. Geological and hydrological changes formulate the landscape. Land use by animals and humans change landscape.

## Trilateral cooperation in Inari-Pasvik

Trilateral cooperation with Finland, Norway and Russia started almost more than 30 years ago in nature conservation cooperation. There are different types of conservation areas along the border in each country. At first national and regional authorities met in yearly meetings to report each other about inventories, management and land use. Then we started to think why we do all work alone, when we could be much more effective by cooperating? After Finland joined to EU, it came possible to apply EU financing from Kolarctic ENPI instrument. Now we have had several projects where we have done joint inventories of nature, geology, and archeology. We have also made management plans and their implementation together. We have learned a lot from each other, for example Russians are very good in practical nature education for children, Norwegians are experts in phenology and Finnish quality is project management. Years of cooperation were celebrated in 2012 when Europark certificate was given to Inari-Pasvik cooperation.

In one of the latest projects a LiDar-Scanning was made to whole Valley of River Paatsjoki. LiDar means Light Detection and Ranging: 3D Scanning, which is made from helicopter. It finds out archeological remains through vegetation. It was fascinating to find out that large ancient hunting pit systems could be seen and they went through Russia, Norway and Finland. So, the Stone Age hunters used the landscape without borders. It is stimulating to notice that people living in the area have common history.

We have noticed that we have basic differences how we describe and study nature and landscape in different countries. At the beginning of cooperation it is useful to standardize methods and descriptions and also to understand the differences in legislation in each country. For example, landscape inventories and landscape protection is understood differently in these countries. Both Norway and Finland have landscape areas on the border, but their legal status is on different level. Russia has made a landscape survey on the border area, but it is more like habitat survey in Finland. Luckily Norway and Finland are quite active in implementing European Landscape Convention and we are waiting for Russia to join us. This forms a fruitful ground for landscape cooperation.

## Trilateral work with Norway, Sweden and Finland

An very interesting area situates in the North-West Lapland. The area is strongly characterized by Sami culture. More than half of the population living there represent Sami people. Few years ago a preliminary landscape study was made in the area: A landscape across borders by Arjan Conijn (2013 unpubl.). The area is unique in all landscape layers, but there are also several problems that should be solved. For example traditional reindeer herding is struggling with pressures caused by tourism and snowmobile traffic. Growth of tourism on that geologically demanding narrow area is difficult to plan and control. Nature is in some areas worn out and some species and habitats suffer already from climate change. In Finland and Norway the area is alive and active, and a main road from south to the harbors of Arctic sea passes it, but in Sweden the

border area is mainly wilderness with only reindeer pastures and occasional hiking tourists. Pressures from Finland and Norway cause problems to Sweden as well, like unauthorized and illegal snowmobile traffic. In addition, wounds in the landscape on Finnish side are visible from Sweden.

### Landscape areas in Finland

The areas that are nationally valuable landscapes in Finland are taken special care in land use planning. The authorities and planners will maintain and strengthen the characteristics and strengths of these areas. For example building and land use are coordinated with the historical, geological and ecological points of view. Authorities can target and provide subsidies for landscape management and conservation of traditional buildings to the area.

It is also possible to design Landscape Management Areas under Finland's Nature Conservation Act. This gives a good quality status to the village. The areas are designed to preserve and manage natural and cultural landscapes and the historical features particular to these regions. The initiative for establishing an landscape area is always taken by the local people. The values of the landscape are identified together with local people and management plans are drawn for the area. Villages with the status of Landscape Management Area are encouraging examples for other villages. Two Landscape Management Areas have been established in Lapland. The other is Kairala-Luiro in the municipality of Pelkosenniemi and the other is Saija in the municipality of Salla. The planning of a new Landscape Management Area in the municipality of Simo is ready and the area is waiting for the decision signature of our Minister of Environment and grand opening ceremony. Ministry of the Environment supports with financing the practical landscape management work through village associations. The role of regional authorities, like ELY Centre is to give advices and encourage the municipalities, village associations and farmers to apply financing for landscape management and restorations of cultural environment. Management planning is done together with the villagers. Management work is made through joint voluntary effort or by land owner and farmers themselves. Village associations operate as responsible actors on many levels. It has been nice to notice that local children and youngsters have been active in taking care of the landscape. They have been participating in building fences and the other constructions and they have been very delighted to have animals to take care in their neighborhood. Restoration of old buildings is an important part of landscape work. Lapland ELY Centre, Ministry of Environment and National Board of Antiquities have targeted monetary funds for restoration of old buildings. Nowadays the amount of funding is unfortunately decreasing.

Implementing European Landscape Convention demands from regional authorities' lots of discussions with the other authorities, politicians and local people. National implementation is of course much easier than transfrontier implementation. However, it is very rewarding if you succeed to implement aims of European Landscape Convention in transfrontier cooperation. Maybe our examples of Landscape Management Areas will lead us to establish transfrontier Landscape Management Areas with our neighbouring countries someday.