Heritage Master Plan

A new participative planning instrument for heritage and landscape in Flanders

Nineteenth Council of Europe Meeting of the Workshops for the Implementation of the European Landscape Convention

Workshop 4: Local democracy for the landscape: participation and commitment

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Content

1. Heritage Master Plan and Action Programme
   1. Legal framework
   2. Methodology

2. Pilot projects
   1. Traditional orchards in the region of Haspengouw
   2. Historical limestone quarries and mines in the town of Riemst

3. Conclusion
1. The Heritage Master Plan and Action Programme
Legal Framework

- Immovable Heritage Decree 12/7/2013

- Evolution of limited participation to cross-sectoral consensus to landscape democracy

- Heritage Master Plan = new instrument
  - integrated landscape approach
  - general landscape care
  - participation on governmental level but also with all stakeholders, including local communities and land owners
  - not legally binding but an agreement: Action Programme
What does the Decree say?

- Thematic or geographic
- Heritage values as starting point
- Vision on future development
- Implementation by an Action Programme and a broad range of instruments (not only heritage instruments)
- Approval of the vision by the Flemish Government, revisable at any time
- Sectoral proposal for spatial planning and land development

**Aim:**

- more participation and transparency in decision-making
- generate supported solutions for more complex challenges
Methodology

- **Challenges:**
  - General methodology for all Heritage Master Plans but allowing for enough flexibility to adapt the approach to specific needs (themes/areas)
  - Involvement of stakeholders early in the process
  - **transparency**

- **Validation by the minister in October 2016**
How to draw up a HMP?

**INITIATION**

- Stakeholder analysis
- declaration of commitment

**EXPLORATION**

- Define project scope together with primary partners
- project plan + communication plan + participation plan

**PLANNING**

- sectoral research intensive consultation of all stakeholders
- research rapport + process note V.1

**RESEARCH**

- Making choices together with all stakeholders
- draft HMP/AP + process note V.2

**VISIONING**

- Validation by primary partners and Flemish government
- approved HMP/AP + process note V.3

**VALIDATION**

- Evaluation of the process
- final report

**EVALUATION**

- Execution of Action Programme

**EXECUTION**

- Flanders State of the Art
2. Pilot projects
When will we use the Heritage Master Plan?

- Broad interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral approach is paramount
- The landscape is not assigned a purely cultural-historic interpretation
- More complex situations involving different interests and stakeholders and need for innovative solutions
- Two pilot projects
  - Traditional orchards in Haspengouw
  - Limestone quarries and mines in Riemst
Traditional Orchards in Haspengouw
Haspengouw

- Rural Region in the South-East of Flanders (Province of Limburg)
- 17 municipalities
- 868 km²
- Fruit production & Tourism
Landscape evolution

Orchard belts around the villages:
orchard pastures
Landscape evolution

- Agricultural intensification (low-stem)
- Urbanisation
Problems

- Loss of landscape quality
- Shift in appreciation $\rightarrow$ ‘Policy Gap’
- Lack of economic value $\rightarrow$ uneven distribution between benefits and burdens
- Neglection and management problems
- Little Cherry Disease
Initiation

Many stakeholders have different interests

Need for an integrated approach adapted to the specific regional singularity and needs of the traditional orchards

Need for a shared vision

- Heritage
- Nature
- Agriculture
- Tourism
- Farmers / owners

Need for cross-sectoral actions

Flanders
State of the Art
Exploration: Stakeholder analysis

- Government
- Sectoral Organisations
- Individuals

Initiation → Exploration → Planning → Research → Visioning → Validation → Evaluation → Execution
**Exploration**

- Primary partners: 2 steering committees = decision making
  - Regional committee:
    - Flemish departments, agencies and research institutions of Heritage, Nature and Forest Conservation, Land Management, Agriculture, Spatial planning and Tourism
    - Experts: National Orchards Organization, Regional Landscape Organization of Haspengouw
  - Local Committee
    - Provincial administrations
    - Regional Tourist Organization
    - Local governments (17)
  - Cross-sectoral Research group
    - Heritage Agency
    - Institute of Nature and Forest Research
    - Institute of Agricultural Research
    - ‘flying’ researchers
Declaration of commitment

Scope: “We want to **cherish** the traditional orchards as valuable region-specific landscape elements and work **together** on a **sustainable preservation** of these orchards in a **dynamic landscape**”

Press conference: political commitment
Planning

- the Declaration of Commitment is the kick-off for the communication and participation process

Project Plan:

- **2017**: Research
- **2018**: Visioning and Action Program

Communication Plan and Participation Plan

- not yet developed
- Use communication channels of all partners
- General ideas for participation process:
  - E-platform for all stakeholders
    - Consultation
    - Crowd sourcing
  - offline participation moments with special emphasis on owners
Research

Cross-sectoral Research Group + thesis students + ...

Research topics

- Overall overview of landscape evolution and current situation
- Appreciation of traditional orchards and landscape
  - Sectoral appreciation (Heritage, Nature)
  - Ecosystem Services approach
  - Aspects of traditional orchards
  - Local appreciation of orchards (as part of the traditional landscape)
- Screening of (policy) instruments
  - Evaluation of existing instruments
  - Bench marking
- (Motivational research)
Historical limestone quarries and mines in the town of Riemst
Situation

- Small municipality in the South-East of Flanders
- Only region in Flanders with historical limestone quarries and mines
- Located underneath the houses
The limestone quarries

- Late medieval origin, used as local building stone
- Later uses:
  - refuge in times of war
  - stock food
  - grow mushrooms
The limestone quarries

Values:

→ Mining landscape (historical as well as aesthetic value)
→ Inscriptions and drawings
→ Home for bats: nature!
Problems

- Some parts of the mines are unstable: risk to collapse
  → public safety
- Impact on people when applying for building permit
  → condition of stabilization
- Filling the mines impacts their heritage value and is very expensive
Initiation

- Main goal: Develop a vision that strives for a good balance between stabilisation and preserving heritage at a reasonable cost

- Clarify choices between heritage, nature and public safety
Exploration

- Only two direct partners (governmental level):
  - The council of Riemst
  - Agency of Nature and Forestry (Bat protection)

- Key group
  - Volunteers research of the mines

- Other stakeholders:
  - Stability experts
  - Inhabitants (including owners)
  - Other local groups
Exploration

- Declaration of commitment: december 2016
  - Clear distribution of tasks and agreement of the publication of data
    - Flanders Heritage Agency: Heritage Values
    - Municipality of Riemst: stabilization
  - Agreement on publication

- Agency of Nature and Forestry: habitat value
  - In preparation
Planning

- Project planning
  - Communication- and participation plan:
    - Introduction to public on press conference of book
    - Consultation about values, concerns, expectations
      - Inhabitants (including owners): evening/market
      - Local interest groups: focus groups
      - Stability experts: focus groups
  - Research:
    - Input from consultation phase
    - Heritage, nature and stabilisation
- Visioning phase
  - Workshops with evaluation of different scenario’s
3. Conclusion
Participation and commitment

Great expectations ...

Collaboration on different levels
- Importance of declaration of commitment to get the political level involved (press attention)
- Every actor can use own instruments
- Problem of ‘ownership’ of HMP

Participation of the public
- Societal appreciation and needs

Commitment
- Action Programme is not binding
- No monitoring included in process
Thank you

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