



Children producing a movie about the work of craftsmen in Ljubljansko Barje (Slovenian pilot area) Photo: Luka Vidic

## COMMUNICATING LANDSCAPE THROUGH FILM

### NEW APPROACHES USING A “TRADITIONAL” MEDIUM

The history of film as a medium reaches back more than 100 years. Although now an established medium, innovative elements and approaches are constantly being developed, both from a technical standpoint as well as in the social and cultural realm. New means of producing movies using mobile phones and affordable but powerful electronic devices have made it easier for people to document their own environment, e.g. for kids and local people. In addition, the ability to publish these on the internet, on widely-used platforms like YouTube, makes it easier to reach a wider audience.

Since landscape development largely depends on communication processes between politicians, planners and regional stakeholders, “moving

pictures” may play an important role in the decision-making process. Moreover, movies can also help encourage and support the participation of local people in this respect.

In this newsletter we present different approaches by VITAL LANDSCAPES project partners that employ films as a communication tool. You can find the results on [www.vital-landscapes.eu](http://www.vital-landscapes.eu) in the “activities” and “pilot regions” sections and “landscape visualization” and “exchange & education” sub-sections. Further information is also available online.

We hope you find the results as inspiring and encouraging as we do, especially the films made by children – we really enjoyed them!!!

*Jörn Freyer, Burkhardt Kolbmüller (coordinators)*

# LANDSCAPE COMMUNICATION THROUGH FILM

## EXPERIENCES FROM SLOVENIAN MEDIA PROJECTS

For the Slovenian Vital Landscapes project team the task of preparing a promotional film presented an opportunity for experimental research into the vitality of the landscape. Instead of commissioning a professional film producer, we decided to invite a young filmmaker to lead a series of summer workshops for children. The project brought together local craftsmen, children and young designers with a view to investigating traditional and new local products through the medium of film as seen through the eyes of young people as well as a professional. The process encouraged direct communication with craftsmen in the region and served as a vehicle for a genuine journey of discovery. The goal of the summer workshops in the pilot project area Ljubljansko barje was to explore the developmental potential of this wetland landscape, as embodied in its local people, natural resources, activities and customs.

This way of making films has many benefits. For the team, it was essential that the filmmaking involved children and people who live in the pilot area, raising their awareness of the specific value of the landscape and motivating them to actively participate in further project activities. They were involved in the entire process of making the film, starting with fieldwork research, demonstration of handicrafts, participation in workshops and storytelling. The preparatory work was equally im-

portant, requiring children to explore traditional arts and crafts, to make contact with local craftsmen – they found more than one hundred different small businesses in the area – and explore ways of using old crafts and knowledge in a new way.

The workshops were run by a group of craftsmen and young creative supervisors, mostly with local children. Each week, children took part in creative processes such as moulding beeswax lip balm, making hand-made wooden utensils, harvesting herbs and making herbal products and paper from recycled and local natural materials. A professional filmmaker helped the children arrange scenes and make recordings while at the same time shooting sequences for his pilot area documentary. The intention of the film and the workshops is to reveal hidden development possibilities in the pilot area derived from the traditional way of life and work that has shaped the cultural landscape.

While the team was out filming, the information technologists were busy setting up an online platform [www.visitbarje.si](http://www.visitbarje.si). The platform serves as a working tool that brings together different data about the area, including events, activities and businesses in the Ljubljansko barje region. It supports the project activities and showcases results such as the promotional film “Ljubljansko barje – my inspiration” and the children’s films made during the summer workshop.

*Maja Simoneti, Urska Kranic (LUZ d.d.)*



Kids enjoying the outdoors in Ljubljansko Barje, the Slovenian pilot region (photo: Luka Vidic)



# MY LANDSCAPE IS...

## AUSTRIAN PUPILS PRODUCE FILMS ON MOBILE PHONES

The VITAL LANDSCAPES project examines intentional and unintentional changes to the landscape resulting from many different activities. To examine landscape development in the Austrian pilot region – Mühlviertler Kernland – in more depth, and to derive corresponding approaches, aims and potential measures, a variety of project activities were put into action:

**Landscape dialogues** (community workshops) invited the local inhabitants to actively contribute to local visions for the development of the landscape of the Kernland, and to their implementation. A **photographic competition** gave locals the opportunity to present their view of the landscape. Similarly, the project aims to involve youngsters in their landscape and a **school workshop** was initiated to this effect:

The motto for the landscape project with pupils from schools in the region was “**My landscape is...**” Working in groups, the youngsters investigated the many different aspects that make up landscape, developing their interest in the local and regional landscape. Using short video sequences filmed using mobile telephone cameras, films were created that shows the many different forms and uses of the landscape around them. As part of the workshops, the youngsters aged 16-18 learned not only how to use the equipment and cutting and filming skills but also how to develop a script and narrative for their film.



School workshop in the Technical School for Agriculture in Freistadt  
(photo: Roman Zebisch)



Julia Wagner and Miriam Schlägl presenting their approach to the VITAL LANDSCAPES project partners (photo: Jörn Freyer)

An especially interesting aspect of the project is the quite different approaches that were adopted. For example, in the preparatory workshop it quickly became apparent that pupils from an agricultural college – who already deal with landscape in their studies – have a different view of the landscape to those from a trade and commerce college who use the landscape primarily for recreation.

The finished films were screened on the regional TV channel dorv.tv and also presented as part of the photographic exhibition. Pupils from the agricultural college also had the opportunity to present the project as part of their final examination.

The youngster's views expressed in the videos were examined by the project partner and also contribute to the formulation of aims for the landscape development of the pilot region and the Central European area in general.

*Gernot Stöglehner, Georg Neugebauer  
(BOKU Vienna)*

## PROJECT NEWS

### Landscape, Visualisation and Participation

The next open trans-national project event will take place on 4-6 June 2012 in Budapest/HU and is organised by PP6. The meeting will present and discuss further project outputs related to the practical use of innovative visualisation techniques to encourage the participation of local people and regional stakeholders.

On 4 June the event is open for external participants. On 5 June an excursion will explore the pilot area Nagyberek Region.

### CENTRAL EUROPE annual event

The next annual CENTRAL EUROPE Programme event will be on 22-23 May 2012 in Halle, Germany. We are especially pleased that the JTS elected to hold this event in Saxony-Anhalt where the VITAL LANDSCAPES lead partner is based.



[www.vital-landscapes.eu](http://www.vital-landscapes.eu)

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# PP4: INSTITUTE OF GEOGRAPHY

SLOVAK ACADEMY OF SCIENCE (SAS)

The Institute of Geography, SAS, is a scientific institution with long-term experience in multidisciplinary research in all fields of physical and human geography and landscape ecology. Most of its members of staff are involved in several national or international projects concerning nature protection, landscape planning and sustainable development. This background know-how and experience contributes to work on the VITAL LANDSCAPES project.

One of the primary research areas undertaken by PP4 concerns natural and socio-economic (human) systems, their spatial structure, processes and interactions between them and their integrated and sustainable management on regional and national levels. Cultural landscape is an example of the landscape formed by mutual natural and human impacts and as such is a traditional research area for geographers.

The main area of activity within the VITAL LANDSCAPES project focuses on establishing scenarios for the landscape / regional development of the Podmalokarpatský (Small Carpathian region) based on principles of sustainability and integrated landscape management, with particular focus on traditional cultural elements (viniculture landscapes, traditional architecture).

The Podmalokarpatský region is a transitional zone between the Western Carpathian mountain system and the lowlands of the Western Pannonian basin and exhibits different types of cultural landscape (urban, suburban and rural) with various types of human activities (viniculture, agriculture, forestry, tourism, industry, nature and culture heritage). Some 93,000 inhabitants live in the 22 municipalities and 2 peripheral wards of Bratislava City (Rača and Vajnory) that cover an area of 518 km<sup>2</sup>. The main problems facing this area are urban sprawl from Bratislava, land-cover changes and the transformation of landscape, changing demographic structure and lifestyle, re/establishment of local self-government and the low efficiency of local and regional planning policy.

PP4's further activities include organising an exhibition of historical photos from the region ("My region in time"), establishing contacts with local stakeholders and publishing a guide to the Podmalokarpatský region.

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Typical triad: Vineyards, village and wooded hills in the Podmalokarpatský Region (photo: IG SAS)