

## VITAL LANDSCAPES

### WP3: Development of tools and procedures to visualise and moderate landscape development scenarios

#### *Basic terms and concepts*

The aim of WP3 is to implement different tools to visualise and to moderate landscape changes. Based on a given situation in concrete regions (actual and historical landscape images) they will demonstrate different **development scenarios**. The tools will be tested in pilot regions and used as a base for participatory discussion processes to agree on regional development scenarios, using modern moderation techniques and involving different regional stakeholders. In this regard, the Project will use experiences from regional development processes (Agenda 21 approach).

To include existing approaches and advanced knowledge, WP3 starts with an analysis of existing experiences and the joint definition of **CE landscape quality objectives**, with special focus on the participatory Agenda 21 approach – not as an academic exercise but to build a solid ground for the Project activities.

#### **Vital landscape**

Vital landscapes as topics of the project comprise a holistic view according to the definition of the ELC: “Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.” Therefore, the following issues are addressed in VITAL LANDSCAPES:

- rural landscapes, urban landscapes, nature reserves, human abandoned land
- cultural landscapes, cultivated and transformed over centuries
- society / societies living in and shaping the landscapes
- networks of actors / actor groups who influence landscapes
- different perceptions and values e.g. by different stakeholder groups, scientists etc.
- sustainable regional development

#### **Landscape development scenarios:**

Landscape (like nature in general) is no static subject. Moreover, nearly all landscapes in Central Europe are the result of human activities (cultural landscapes). Thus, development/change has always been (and will be in future) an essential characteristic of landscapes. However, the actual losses and damages of CE cultural landscapes by insensitive, fast and irreversible developments have raised the question, which landscapes do we want, and who decides about preservation, change and development of landscapes?

Although being meanwhile a serious European topic (amongst others covered by the European Landscape Convention), there are no general answers - these questions have to be discussed and agreed locally. Therefore, designing landscape development scenarios on local and regional level is an essential precondition. Suitable/innovative

visualisation and moderation techniques are important tools to support processes to achieve these landscape development scenarios.

VITAL LANDSCAPES intends to contribute to the sensitive and sustainable development of CE landscapes by designing and implementing suitable landscape development scenarios, based on / supported by professional regional management. In addition and different to existing practices, these scenarios mainly focus on **integrative** and **participatory** approaches.

a) **integrative:**

- integration of economic, ecological, social, environmental, cultural factors/aspects;
- involvement of actors and decision makers from different political sectors (nature and heritage protection, economy, agriculture, ...)
- cross-sectoral communication (horizontal and vertical) of problems, activities, aims...
- visualisation and communication of landscape values (and damages)

b) **participatory:**

- active involvement of different stakeholders, equal involvement of the local population („local experts“, „action research“);
- enable and motivate local people to organise their own regional development
- support regional networks of stakeholders and local people, linking of key actors (e.g. by professional regional management)
- sharing of landscape perception, knowledge and special approaches/backgrounds of scientists, politicians and local people

### **Landscape quality objectives:**

An important precondition on the way to design and agree on landscape development scenarios is the (joint) definition of landscape quality objectives: Which landscape do we want to have in future? What are the core elements of our future natural, cultural and social environment? What are indicators of sustainability/sustainable development?

Landscape quality objectives have to be defined in a cross-sectoral and participatory process. Insofar, quality objectives may/will differ from region to region. However, VITAL LANDSCAPES mainly stresses and supports the following aspects in order to achieve “vital landscapes”:

- Satisfied people (living in the landscape)
- High diversity (of nature, landscape, culture, tradition, economic approaches, living conditions, development scenarios, different societies living there...)
- Functioning infrastructure (technical, social, cultural...), above all in regions concerned by the demographic change
- Regional economy (e.g. in energy and food supply, regional economic cycles, social networks...)
- Support of sustainability (responsible use of the environment, small CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, low pollution of soil, water and air...)

- Preservation of historic cultural landscapes and landscape elements (as part of our common memory and identity), nature/landscape/heritage protection
- Balanced development (of urban, sub-urban and rural regions), link between the protection and development
- Improvement of landscape quality, reduction of risks and damage (avoiding fragmentation/disappearance of landscape)
- Capitalising of regional resources (creating of regional products/branding, cultural tourism, regional knowledge)
- Bottom-up and long-term approaches.

### **Local / regional knowledge management and communication**

The knowledge (academic, legends, emotions) about landscapes determines people's awareness to preserve, manage and develop "their" landscapes. Passing knowledge between different stakeholder groups and generations is an important feature for a long-term sustainable development of natural, aesthetic, economic, social and cultural dimensions of landscapes. VITAL LANDSCAPES addresses the following aspects:

- cross-sectoral communication, equal involvement of local people / stakeholders
- aims of knowledge management = identity
- identity, image and PR of regions (internal – external)
- horizontal and vertical communication
- professional regional management
- includes also formal structures
- sharing knowledge and info within social structures and regions

### **Relevant national/regional policies and documents**

Though landscape development largely depends on local/regional activities, it is also determined by European, national and regional policies. These policies are setting the legal framework of activities and decisions concerning landscape and regional development (e.g. nature protection laws, planning procedures...) Moreover, they initiate and support (but sometimes hinder or degrade) landscape development by funding programmes and subsidies.

VITAL LANDSCAPES intends to improve relevant policies on different levels with regard to the sustainable development of landscapes by providing and communicating findings, results and best practices. The Project mainly targets at the following:

#### **Relevant subjects of public administration:**

- State administration: Central and regional (Government, Ministries/Agencies)
- Self-governments: Regional and local

#### **Relevant documents:**

- **Central level** (legal frameworks influencing landscapes development on national level in different policy sectors)
  - Laws/acts (e.g. on territorial planning, on support of regional development, on cultural heritage, on nature and landscape protection, etc.)

- Developmental strategies/policies/programmes (governmental/national, ministerial/sectoral) (e.g. State Environmental Policy, National Sustainable Development Strategy, National Development Plan, Conception of the Territorial Development, etc.)
- **Regional level** (legal frameworks influencing landscapes development on regional level in different policy sectors)
  - Laws/acts (e.g. on territorial planning, on support of regional development, on cultural heritage, on nature and landscape protection, etc.)
  - Territorial plans (spatial plans)
  - Programmes of economic and social development - national/regional Operational Programmes (Note: precondition for "euromoney")
- **Others**
  - Relevant EU policies, e.g. Common Agriculture Policy CAP
  - EU structural funds ERDF, ELER and ESF
  - LEADER approach
  - Additional national and regional funding programmes