

7. FINAL SUMMARY

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7.1. Background of the CULTURAL LANDSCAPE Project

This monographic volume is a summary of the Project “Protecting Historical Cultural Landscapes to Strengthen Regional Identities and Local Economies (CULTURAL LANDSCAPES)” within the European Union programme Interreg III B CADSES (www.cadses.ar.krakow.pl). This Project aimed at the protection and development of cultural landscapes as the basis for the preservation of CADSES (Central, Adriatic, Danubian and South-Eastern European Space) area (Fig. 80).



Fig. 80. CADSES area (source: Interreg III B CADSES Programme).

The partners of this Project, which lasted since 2006 until 2008, were:

- University of Agriculture in Krakow (PL) – lead partner,
- Municipality of Miechów (PL),
- Municipality of Wiśniowa (PL),
- Erfurt University of Applied Sciences (DE),
- Heritage Association of Thuringia (DE),
- Regional Planning Association East-Thuringia (DE),
- Environment Management Austria (AT),
- Grazing Association Ramsar Site Valley of Lafnitz (AT),
- University “Babeş-Bolyai” Cluj-Napoca, Department of Geography (RO),
- Ethnographic Museum of Transylvania (RO),
- Lviv Polytechnic National University (UA).

Most of the Central European countries have its own peculiar historical cultural landscapes. However, nowadays, the diversity of these cultural landscapes is endangered as a result of neglect in the field of environment protection and conservation, and also as a result of socio-economic processes. Basing on the intersectoral approach, including the protection of nature and heritage as well as the development of rural areas, and on the international research structures, the Project has developed the best examples of the implementation of the European Landscape Convention in practice. Increasing due to international research the knowledge of issues concerning cultural landscapes, for example such as “digital land register” and widely available web portal “Landscape Wikipedia,” must be included into this matter. All these aimed at the integration of landscapes with regional development through pilot projects in the field of agriculture, tourism, regional market and renewable sources of energy. Moreover, the Project was also aimed at the development of integrated strategies for cultural landscapes protection and development on regional, national and CADSES level.

This Project and the monographic volume include the following activities:

- research activities,
- training local experts and local economies.

Research activities

One of the main fields of activities within the CULTURAL LANDSCAPE Project concerned international research, conducted by scientists from the University of Agriculture in Krakow (Poland), Erfurt University of Applied Sciences (Germany), Environment Management Austria (Austria), University “Babeş-Bolyai” Cluj-Napoca (Romania), and Lviv Polytechnic National University (Ukraine). Research activities, accompanied by numerous workshops and conferences, aimed at developing a common methodology of identifying and categorizing

rizing cultural landscapes of the CADSES area as well as surveying innovative research methods and planning tools. Intensive exchange of knowledge, previous experiences, and practices worked out in participating countries and resulted in the creation of an international catalogue of historical cultural landscape elements of the CADSES area. Project results have been presented in two international scientific monographic volumes.

Catalogue of cultural landscape elements with a glossary of terms

International cooperation between Project partners resulted in the development of a systematic register to survey and assess valuable cultural landscapes. The so-called "mapping key" can be used as a methodological instrument. It incorporates cultural landscape elements which are typical for the participating regions or endangered in all these regions in a comparable way. Thanks to a lexicon-like glossary, it will be easy to recognize over 70 selected examples. Glossary entries are listed alphabetically, which will enable the user to find various cultural landscape elements whose descriptions and photographs the glossary contains. Therefore, not only will it be of great use for practical field mapping activities but even more for establishing cultural landscape cadastres.

A multilingual print version (the catalogue has been developed in the following languages: English, German, Polish, Romanian, and Ukrainian) has become a part of the second monographic volume entitled "Cultural Landscapes – Project Results," published by the University of Agriculture in Krakow in 2008.

Landscape Wikipedia

Setting up an Internet platform "Landscape Wikipedia" was yet another significant result of the conducted academic research. This platform, which applies modern computer technologies, was developed by specialists from Erfurt University of Applied Sciences (Kulturlandschaftsportal Thüringen) and makes it possible to integrate wider public into the process of cultural landscape identification and categorization as well as promotes social awareness of the significance and quality of cultural landscapes.

The platform (currently available in the German language) consists of two parts: "Landscape Wikipedia" (glossary of elements, overview maps) and maps and orthophotomaps with a possibility of digitising elements by people having access to the portal.

Curricula

Building social awareness regarding cultural landscape assets and role should also take place through the process of formal education. That is why Project activities have resulted in the development of teaching curricula to be applied at the university level involving cultural landscape and spatial planning issues.

Such curricula have been prepared by the University of Agriculture in Krakow, Erfurt University of Applied Sciences, "Babeş-Bolyai" University Cluj-Napoca, and Lviv Polytechnic National University; some of them have been partly implemented in the academic year of 2007/2008.

Moreover, Environment Management Austria and Heimatbund Thüringen realized intensive training programmes designed for local decision makers and people employed in the tourism industry. These programmes presented examples of good practices for cultural landscape shaping and protection, methods of using the potential of cultural landscapes in tourism. They also encouraged the participants to take an active part in cultural landscape protection.

Training local experts

The work undertaken in the CULTURAL LANDSCAPE Project also focused on promoting the concept of "a cultural landscape" and its significance as well as training local experts and people living in the given region and willing to participate in the conducted cultural landscape research activities. Numerous meetings, seminars, and workshops with local historians, chroniclers, and private people were an opportunity to propagate the results of research on cultural landscapes. The possibilities of the Internet platform were presented during a series of lectures whose participants were encouraged to insert entries into the Landscape Wikipedia. These activities have set out an example of perfect integration of theoretical research conducted by academic units and practical actions aimed at the promotion of landscape issues among the society.

7.2. Transregional development tours

Transregional development tours constituted another element of Project activities aimed at strengthening local identities and presenting examples of cultural landscapes of other participating regions and countries. The participants of development tours included local experts, staff from local administration, university professors, and students. Four such tours were organized during the Project to the following places: St. Pölten in Austria, Cluj-Napoca in Romania, Lviv in Ukraine, and the valley of the Lafnitz River in Austria. The tours were accompanied by seminars presenting local landscape conditions and the current state of activities within the CULTURAL LANDSCAPE Project. Transregional development tours and accompanying seminars also enabled participants from other countries to witness direct examples of approaches to cultural landscape issues and observe how cultural landscapes can be managed and protected in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

Regional markets

Project partners from Germany organized a series of thematic markets in order to present regional products from cultural landscapes. These markets were held with various themes, such as “Everything about bread,” or “Cultural landscapes for the senses.” The small regional Reinstädter Rural Market successfully marked the link between available products and cultural historical landscape, its protection and assets.

Similar activities were undertaken by the Ethnographic Museum of Transylvania, which organized two editions of Folk Craftsmen Market. These two events took place in May and September 2007 and turned out to be very successful among local craftsmen and the visiting public. All dressed in folk costumes, local craftsmen presented the following types of products: musical instruments, icons, pottery, dyed eggs, wood, textiles, furrier’s work, ornaments, beads, knitted items, masks, icons on stone, tools for wood processing, or silver products.

Information Centre

Creation of the museum information centre in the Ethnographic Museum of Transylvania constituted a significant element of activities within the CULTURAL LANDSCAPE Project aiming at strengthening local culture through the promotion of landscape as an important element of national and regional heritage. The new museum information centre possesses a database of Transylvanian cultural landscapes – with a documentary photo archive and a digital catalogue of traditional crafts and craftsmen from the researched area. The museum information centre hosts trans-national multimedia events; it promotes traditional arts and crafts and preserves documentary information related to the cultural landscapes of Transylvania. Various educational activities with the use of modern media technologies are also held in this centre. As a part of Project activities, one part of the building in the Ethnographical National Park “Romulus Vuia” from Cluj-Napoca was restored and extended. The building contains conference rooms, reading rooms, offices, archives, and other facilities for visitors.

7.3. Local economies

Centre for renewable energies

Cereal growing is a significant element of the cultural landscape in the Municipality of Miechów. Its arable lands are characterized by picturesque field patterns, woodlots, field boundaries, and high biodiversity, typical for the region of Malopolska. Searching for new solutions and alternative opportunities on the job market which would take into consideration local landscape characteristics, the

Municipality of Miechów started to promote and implement solutions based on renewable energy sources. Planned as an element of Project activities, Miechów created the Centre for Renewable Energies. The Centre is equipped with machines and demo plants for the production of inexpensive and clean biomass energy. It also has a conference room and lecture rooms. The Centre for Renewable Energies in Miechów has an opportunity to become an international centre for exchanging theoretical and practical knowledge on renewable energy sources in rural areas, taking into consideration the development of agriculture and historical rural landscapes.

Watertourism

Attractive landscape, the proximity of the agglomeration of Krakow as well as rich cultural traditions – all these create favourable conditions for the development of agrotourism in Wiśniowa, which has now become the most significant element of its local economy.

As an element of Project activities, the Municipality of Wiśniowa prepared indispensable documentation and restored a small historical retention basin significant in terms of historical and cultural heritage as well as local landscape assets at the site of the former rubble basin, created in the 1960s, which by the end of the 20th century had completely silted up as a result of numerous floods. At the moment, it was possible to reconstruct the basin in the form of a shallow reservoir, changing its functional role; as it will now be used for the needs of recreation and tourism.

Another significant aspect here is the restoration of proper water management in the area, that is water storage for the needs of agriculture and fire protection. Moreover, the reconstruction of the water basin helps to restore local ichthyofauna, mainly the disappearing fish species, and reinstates fishing traditions.

The realization of project activities created foundations for further development of the Municipality, taking into consideration its culture, monuments, and landscape.

Saale Valley

In cooperation with the city of Jena (central Germany) and the Saale-Holzland district, a detailed project of regional development has been elaborated within the CULTURAL LANDSCAPE Project. The project “Middle Saale Valley” aimed for a dynamic overall development concept as a basis for sustainable development with the focus on the attractiveness and efficiency of local cultural landscape. The development concept embraced the Saale Valley between Kahla in the south and Camburg in the north (35 km) as well as adjoining valleys.

Landscape architects, urban planners and communication experts analysed essential strengths, weaknesses and divergence of the area, which later helped to develop the overall concept and general approaches.

The parallel development of a communication concept aimed at establishing a public dialogue and winning actors to implement the measures and to suggest flexible communication instruments. This was important for the implementation of the concept which, in the long term, will be carried on by regional stakeholders (mayors, entrepreneurs, tourist agencies, associations, etc.).

An advisory board discusses all steps of the overall concept and suggests measures and pilot projects, such as:

- exposing the historic sight of the town of Kahla,
- enhancing the industrial area “Göschwitz” with a connection to the Saale River floodplain,
- general marketing concept of manor houses and castles in the north of Jena,
- “Saale Floodplain Park” stretching throughout the Middle Saale Valley.

At the end of the project, all riparian municipalities were invited to a common bicycle tour along the “river Saale path” to Camburg. The joint signature of the “Charta of Camburg” for the protection and development of the Middle Saale Valley was the final highlight of the project in May.

Agrotourism in the region of Skhidnytsya

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE Project also involved integrated activities aiming at the development of agrotourism in the region of Skhidnytsya in Ukraine, based on rich resources of medicinal waters. These activities were conducted on the basis of collected historic and contemporary cartographic materials, which made it possible to mark out the border between recreation zones and monitor changes in landscape, particularly in cultural landscape. Significant elements of this project involved the creation of a geoinformation system for tourism (GIS Skhidnytsya) as well as footpaths, horse and bicycle trails, based upon local landscape assets. All these activities helped to develop agrotourism in the area. In cooperation with the Municipality of Miechów, experienced within renewable energy sources, local specialists were conducting research on the use of wind power stations in the region of Skhidnytsya and promoting such ecological solution in Ukraine.

7.4. Conclusions

It is obvious that cultural landscapes generate regional identities and rich potentials of natural and cultural heritage. But it seems that in many rural regions, as well as in other ones, these potentials are often not so obvious to the local actors, as the decay of a great number of rural districts shows. Currently, it is a challenge to produce an awareness for the importance of cultural landscapes.

Therefore, the CULTURAL LANDSCAPE Project, the lead partner of this Project is the University of Agriculture in Krakow, aimed at strengthening the quality of life by integrating natural and cultural heritage potentials into economic development processes. The Project partners from Poland, Germany, Austria, Romania and Ukraine supported activities dedicated to the renovation and development of villages, agricultural diversification, sustainable tourism, environmental protection, planning and rehabilitation of landscapes. These fields of activities should support the implementation of the European Landscape Convention. Despite the fact that the European Landscape Convention was adopted by the European Council on October 20, 2000, in Florence, it was put into effect only in 2004 after its ratification by 10 member states.

An enhanced knowledge about and awareness of cultural landscapes in civil society, private organisations and local authorities could be reached by a range of publications, web-based information and pilot actions. Two feasibility studies “Cultural landscapes and regional development” and one catalogue of valuable cultural landscapes in the CADSES area show how to integrate landscape protection and regional economic development. As online information resource the “cultural landscape portal Thuringia” was established by the Erfurt University of Applied Sciences. The web-portal serves a “Cultural Landscape Wikipedia” (www.kulturlandschaft.fh-erfurt.de) in German language, which contains a detailed glossary of landscape elements from A as Ackerterrasse to Z as Ziegelei. In a register the elements are further arranged systematically dedicated to their spatial, economic or cultural functions. For example, a church can be classified both under “settlement” and “religion,” while an alley can belong to the functions “traffic and transport” as well as “authority and representation.” Mixed orchards in turn could be ranged in the function of “agriculture”. An integrated “mapping key” illustrates the landscape elements in a cartographic manner.

The results of the pilot actions contributed to new approaches of economic development in the participating regions. The Polish Municipality of Miechów established an education centre for the use of renewable energies, including two demonstration plants for the generation of pellets and briquettes. Therewith the biomass production could be extended for the whole South-eastern Poland. Within another pilot action the Heritage Association East-Thuringia organised so called “rural regional markets,” for example the annual Christmas market in Reinstaedt. These activities of regional marketing should inform, educate and rise people’s awareness of cultural traditions and products extracted from sustainable agriculture and landscape conservation. The “Romanian Review of Regional Studies,” a journal of the Centre for Regional Geography of the University of Cluj-Napoca, published an issue about cultural landscapes and their growing importance for European regional development. The issue contains scientific articles written by Polish, German and Romanian project partners of the CULTURAL LANDSCAPE Project. With those publications and pilot activities they strove for an improved legislation and political agreement dedicated to the protection of cultural landscapes. Primarily spatial planners should more consider the preservation of cultural landscapes within their work and planning concepts.