



Newsletter November 2002

A. EU Research Framework Programme

1. Expression of Interest

In the framework of the EU's 6th Framework Programme, LANDSCAPE EUROPE submitted an Expression of Interest as a Network of Excellence. On May 27th, an introductory session on the main objectives and orientation of the intended submission had been given on the event of a Alterra lunch presentation, providing the opportunity for feedback and comments. The EoI that puts forward a Common Research Programme (promoting integrated research for three main fields of work: assessment, planning and management of landscapes) and is based on the participation of 8 research centres, 8 universities, 1 international treaty and 4 associated networks has been submitted on June 7th. The network proposal makes reference to a number of key Integrated Project proposals such as EUROLUS, FloRiMaS, LAST BIOCEL, SUS-LAND, Multi-Purpose, coordinated by various partner institutes that have committed themselves to future collaboration. The objectives of this EoI was to place LANDSCAPE EUROPE in a good starting position with regard to FP6.

2. Meeting with the DG Research

Already during the preparation for the above EoI, LANDSCAPE EUROPE contacted the European Commission for arranging a meeting with DG Research to explore how the future perspectives for landscape research within the upcoming FP6 can be interpreted. After having postponed an initial date for a visit in order to allow the Commission to advance in the development of FP6 and in screening the incoming FP6, LANDSCAPE EUROPE met up with DG Research. As it turned out, DG Research was in the process of undertaking organisational changes which implied that the topic of landscape was moved from 'Global Change & Ecosystems' towards 'Sustainable Management for Agriculture, Forests and Fisheries' with yet unclear perspective for the role of landscapes. With regard to the EoI there was to recognise a certain shift away from Networks of Excellence towards Integrated Project in terms of funding and priority. This meant that LANDSCAPE EUROPE's EoI for the Network of Excellence was facing a rather undefined future. The overall recommendation of DG Research was to link up stronger with other (competing) networks and to better cover socio-economic topics.

3. Broadening LANDSCAPE EUROPE's orientation

Following own considerations and the advice of DG Research, LANDSCAPE EUROPE reconsidered the strategic approach with regard to the wider cooperation in the field of European landscape research and its relation with other scientific networks. While the initial focus was to strengthen the inner coherence of LANDSCAPE EUROPE and to develop a widely accepted Network Development and Implementation plan that finds the support by strong partners, the dynamic developments around FP6 suggested to re-define the relation with other key networks of project groups. A week after the EU visit, LANDSCAPE EUROPE and Landscape Tomorrow met to discuss possible future cooperation with socio-economic partners. The meeting resulted in a first common draft document for the establishment of a "European Platform for Integrated Research on Multifunctional Land Use". Though not yet fully developed, the European Platform can be considered as a possible structure for wider cooperation with regard to FP6.

4. PEER and LANDSCAPE EUROPE on FP6 Conference in Brussels

Though LANDSCAPE EUROPE did not reach its goal to get a direct placing on the programme of the FP6 Conference in Brussels during November 10th-12th 2002, LANDSCAPE EUROPE partner CEH together with the University of Basel have invited both LANDSCAPE EUROPE as well as Landscape Tomorrow to make formal presentation on the event of the Forum 31 on November 13th. Other coordinating partner of this event is the Environmental Science Centre of Wageningen University. Though the conference can be expected to be difficult venue for concrete objectives (more than 8000 persons

have already subscribed), it is the intention of LANDSCAPE EUROPE and its partners to explore possible future opportunities for wider network cooperations with regard to FP6 research proposals. Also PEER is going to present itself on a 20 square meter stand at the Conference. For this purpose each research pillar will be presented on a poster at the stand as well as on the PEER web pages that will be launched for the same event. It should be noted that PEER has meanwhile extended its network from the original 5 founding members (UFZ, Alterra, CEH, SYKE and NERI) to include Cemagref (France) and JRC-IES located in Ispra/Italy.

5. Research Working Programme

On October 10th 2002, the latest version of the Informal Draft Workprogramme of FP6 had been released, providing insights into possible research perspectives for LANDSCAPE EUROPE. As it turns out, a possible target for participating at a first call (17.12.2002) related to Programme Area VIII on cross-cutting issues:

- VIII.1.c) (T.I.) Harmonising and sharing of methods and data in environmental and health valuation and externalities.
- VIII.2.b) (T.I.) Sharing and harmonising databases and statistics and building consensus on indicators to be used to monitor progress towards Sustainable Development at different geographical levels, in particular the regional one.

As well as to Area I on Impact and mechanisms of greenhouse gas emissions and atmospheric pollutants on climate, ozone depletion and carbon sinks:

- I.6.a) (T.I.) Adaptation and mitigation strategies. Adaptation and mitigation strategies in particular focusing on the recommendations of the IPCC Third Assessment Report.
- I.7.a) (T.I.) International Assessments. Scientific underpinning of international conventions and assessments;

Explicit landscape topics are addressed in the second call (2003) in Area V on Strategies for sustainable land management, including coastal zones, agricultural land and forests:

- V.1.1.a) Sustainable regional development: development and implementation of strategies for and transition towards sustainable systems of regional innovation in Europe, including sensitive areas such as mountains, coastal zones and islands.
- V.1.1.b) (T.I.) Land-use modelling and the creation of relevant databases taking into account the management of materials, energy and land-use and the development of tools for integrated assessment, indicators, multi-level strategies and instruments.
- V.1.1.c) (T.I.) Development of new concepts, strategies and tools for sustainable land-use and landscape management through a multi-functional approach. Integrated framework for decision-support in land-use, including the identification of thresholds of sustainability, cost-effectiveness options and other economic methods and policy tools.

However, during a recent telephone conversation DG Research stressed that the Informal Draft Workprogramme is subject to continuous changes and should be considered as preliminary until its very official publication in the middle of November.

B. Project development and upstart

1. Project Proposal for Accompanying Measure on European Landscapes Character Assessment Initiative (ELCAI) approved

The EU's "Consensus Report" assigns 4.5 point ratings for each of the 5 blocks – with a total score (after the weighting) of 89.0 points. Under Block 5, the report appreciates explicitly that "Many partners are already working together in the LANDSCAPE EUROPE initiative". Given the ongoing process on the Expression of Interest under FP6, an approval of ELCAI provides LANDSCAPE EUROPE with a strong basis for profiling us as a Network of Excellence. The Commission has already indicated their interest in discussing these matters with a delegation of LANDSCAPE EUROPE in late Summer. The contract negotiation took place during most of October and after having fulfilled most formal requirement, project coordinator Dirk Wascher is awaiting the official launch of the € 400,000 project with 15 partners for December 2002 / January 2003.

2. BioPress, Transhumount, BioHab.

Several other projects are currently running which have close relationships to the mission of LANDSCAPE EUROPE and where a considerable part of the participants are LANDSCAPE EUROPE members. Internal co-ordination is encouraged and appears to be increasingly effective. For Transhumount the contract will be signed in November and it will start in January 2003. Also BioHab and BioPress will soon start officially.

3. ESPON Tender 2002 – 2006

With deadline of August 16th 2002, Alterra submitted an Expression of Interest to the ESPON secretariat on ESPON action 1.3.2 - 2002/S 135-105871 for 'Territorial trends in the management of natural heritage'. The EoI which involved LANDSCAPE EUROPE partners NERI, CEH, IMAR, WSL, UFZ and INB was approved and shortlisted for a restricted call for tender on the same topic. Project Coordinator Dirk Wascher and Project Secretary Irene Bouwma prepared the proposal Indicators and Scenarios for Conflict Assessment between Spatial Development and Natural Heritage (**InScene**) with additional partners. National Environment Research Council (NERC), Swiss Federal Research Institute (WSL), Ufz-Umweltforschungszentrum Leipzig-Halle GmbH (UFZ), National Environmental Institute (NERI), Danish Forest And Landscape Research Institute (FSL), Instituut Voor Natuurbehoud (INB) Imar-Coimbra Interdisciplinary Centre (IMAR), Instituto Superior De Estatística E Gestão De Informação (ISEGI) and University Of Alcalá De Henares (UAH).. The volume of this tender is € 420.000 and a decision is expected for November 20th 2002.

C. Policy support

1. Expert advise on implementation of the European Landscape Convention

Since the presentation of an invited paper on Public Awareness, Education and Training on the first Conference on the European Landscape Convention in Strassbourg November 2001, Bas Pedroli has been appointed Expert to the Council of Europe in this matter. Also in the second conference in November 2003, a substantial contribution is prepared, leading to a CoE publication.

2. Character Assessment of European Transfrontier Landscapes

In special support of the Council of Europe, LANDSCAPE EUROPE initiated the project "Character Assessment of European Transfrontier Landscapes" with funding by the NL Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries as a contribution-in-kind to the launching of the European Landscape Convention. The project has a volume of € 55,000.- and involves numerous LANDSCAPE EUROPE partners for cross-boundary research on landscapes during 2002-2003.

3. Contribution to Millinium Assessment: Chapter 19 on cultural landscapes

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) is an international process designed to meet the needs of decision makers and the public for scientific information concerning the consequences of ecosystem change for human well-being and options for responding to those changes. Leading scientists from more than 100 nations will conduct the assessment, with oversight by a Board comprised of representatives of four international conventions, five United Nations agencies, international scientific organizations, and leaders from the private sector, NGOs, and indigenous groups. The MA is a "multiscale" assessment, consisting of interlinked assessments undertaken at local, watershed, national, regional and global scales.

Following a strategic workshop on the Dutch role in the implementation of MA at RIVM, Dirk Wascher has been appointed by Chapter Author Dolf de Groot as Co-Author on Cultural Landscapes in cooperation with Mechthild Rössler (UNESCO).

D. Conferences & Workshop review

1. FRONTIS – LANDSCAPE EUROPE workshop on New European Landscapes (Wageningen 10-12 June 2002)

This Workshop organised by Frontis and LANDSCAPE EUROPE brought together international experts on landscape science, and provided for ample opportunity for fundamental discussion between policy makers (o.a. OECD, IUCN) and research. The proceedings will soon be published (Rob Jongman)

2. Permanent Conference on the Study of the Rural Landscapes “Past Processes and Future Strategies” (Tartu, 25 – 30 August 2002)

The conference brought together almost 100 landscape scientists, architects, geographers and planners from Europe, for the first time also offering opportunity for a wider exchange between landscape ecologists and geographers. The workshops covered a wide range from topics throughout various themes and topics. Dirk Wascher presented a paper on “Landscape Character Assessment – Lessons from the Dutch Approach”, introducing LANDSCAPE EUROPE and the ELCAI project. Gary Fry, Bärbel and Günter Tress presented a paper in preparation of the November 2002 workshop on integrated European research. Other LANDSCAPE EUROPE partners included conference organiser Hannes Palang and Teresa Pinoto-Correia. A last work session brought together Joep Dirx, Chris de Bont, Jelier Vervloet and Dirk Wascher with representatives from Russia and other countries to discuss a common strategic approach for a future map on European landscapes.

3. Bioforum Meeting IV (Helsinki, 23 – 25 September 2002)

Like previous Bioforum events, this meeting was again organised by LANDSCAPE EUROPE members CEH (Allan Watt) and ECNC (Peter Nowicki). Among the 30 participants were also Klaus Henle from UFZ, Tor-Björn Larson from EEA and Angheluta Vadineanu from the University of Bucharest who has been invited to participate in the data contribution on the SEO project on a landscape handbook. The main objective was to advance with the writing of the project report and to discuss conflict assessment strategies for a Finnish Natura 2000 site threatened by a re-location of the Helsinki harbour. Contact and methodologies provided insights for the development of the project InScene under ESPON (see above).

4. IUCN Symposium Environmental connectivity for protected areas in the mediterranean context (Málaga, 26 - 28 September 2002)

The meeting was organised by the IUCN Mediterranean Office in Málaga, Spain, as a preparation meeting for the big World Parks Congress in Durban, S-Africa, 8 – 17 September 2003. Since the theme of this Congress is Benefits Beyond Boundaries, at least part of the attention will be devoted to linking protected areas through ecological networks. The IUCN Mediterranean Office (director: Jamie Skinner) will contribute to this theme through expert reports. For this purpose two preparatory meetings are organised, this one in Málaga, and the next one – more related to the policy context – in March in Murcia (also Spain). About 30 participants were present, most of which Spanish, and further 3 Italians, 1 French, 1 Belgian, 1 Dutch, 1 Turkish, 1 Algerian.

An (invited) presentation was given by Bas Pedrol on our experiences on designing and evaluating concrete ecological networks with the help of the LARCH model was much appreciated as a valuable tool both in retrospective and in prospective analysis (scenario and strategy analysis). The motto “Benefits Beyond Boundaries” is taken serious within the IUCN and in fact testifies a clear change in nature conservation policy from strict protection to an integrated system approach on the landscape level. Although the concept of landscape was often mentioned, it is not yet accepted as a unifying concept. Instead, connectivity, networks and governance are key-words. Providing good experiences of working example studies and projects within this perspective is a challenge for the scientific community.

5. OECD Workshop on Landscape Indicators for Agricultural Landscapes (Oslo, 6 – 9 October 2002).

Organised by LANDSCAPE EUROPE partner institute NIJOS, the workshop was following up the results of the OECD Stocktaking Report (2000) which summarised the results and finding of the international workshop on agri-environmental indicators in York (1998). Beginning in this time period, OECD had taken a rather high-profile role in the development of landscape indicators. The workshop in Oslo

brought together a wide and familiar range of landscape scientists and policy experts from most OECD countries. The presented papers and discussions were of high quality. Dirk Wascher presented a plenary paper with an overview on landscape indicator work in OECD countries during the opening session. Other LANDSCAPE EUROPE participants included Ulli Stachow (ZALF), Philippe Girardin (INRA), Thomas Wrba (University of Vienna), Teresa Pinto-Correia (University of Évora), Roy-Haines Young (CEH), Ben Delbaere (ECNC) and of course organisers Wenche Dramstad, Wendy Fjellstad and Oskar Puschmann (NIJOS). Bärbel and Günter Tress presented a paper on scenarios as communication tools in landscape planning and decision making. From the policy point of view, the meeting was of high relevance: besides Kevin Parris and Wilfrid Legg (OECD), Lucia Spini (UNESCO), Ybele Hoogeveen (EEA), Claude Vidal (Eurostat) and Rüdiger Altpeter (DG Agriculture) were actively present. At the end, the participants agreed to form a European working group for the further development of landscape indicators with the participation of LANDSCAPE EUROPE.

6. Coming up: IALE Conference Darwin 2003

Bas Pedrolí and Teresa Pinto Correia have taken the initiative to organise a Landscape Europe symposium on the IALE World Congress, July 2003, in Darwin, Australia. Most authors of the invited papers are already working on their contributions, which will cover predominantly international research approaches. The papers will be peer-reviewed in advance and published still in 2003 in a special issue of the international journal Landscape Ecology.

E. Organisational aspects of LANDSCAPE EUROPE

1. Registration as a Foundation

On 4 October 2002 Landscape Europe's statutes have been passed at the notary in Wageningen, and the registration in the Handelsregister of the Chamber of Commerce has taken place 30 October. Next step will be the opening of a bank account so that fees can be received. Also, regulations have to be established to detail the composition of the executive board and the function of the general assembly.

2. Executive Board

The executive board consists of:

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- UFZ: Rudolf Krönert (treasurer)
- Alterra: Bas Pedrolí (general secretary)
- CEH: Les Firbank
- NERI: Jesper Fredshavn
- Charles University Prague: Zdenek Lipsky

The next executive board meeting will be in Brussels on 16 November 2002. Points to be discussed are:

- composition of the executive board (function of chair; Pinto Correia has to withdraw)
- regulations on membership etc.
- research strategy towards FP6, including the Platform idea with Landscape Tomorrow
- General Assembly January 2003
- web-site development, newsletters and PR
- educational plan

3. General Assembly

17 – 19 January 2003 a General Assembly will be held at CEH in Grange over Sands. Main topics are preparing for the 6th FP calls and the network development.

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