

Dietwald Gruehn

LANDSCAPE PLANNING IN GERMANY - A CONTRIBUTION TO THE DISCUSSION ON THE EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION?

European Landscape Convention - Goals and current situation in Germany

The European Landscape Convention is well known as an ambitious project which aims

- to promote landscape protection, management and planning of European landscapes and
- to organize European co-operation on landscape issues.

Further goals are

- the recognition of landscapes in law,
- the establishment of procedures for participation,
- the integration of landscape into regional and town planning policies
- and finally,
- to put landscape policies into effect by introducing new instruments.

What's about the current situation in Germany?

At the outset one has to refer to the fact that Germany did not ratify the European Landscape Convention, yet. That leads to the inevitable question: Is this a scandal or a trifle? Or is Germany not any longer a part of Europe? All joking apart - after the author tried several times to get an answer on this issue from the German Ministry for Environment without success, one could tend to say it is a scandal. On the other hand one has to take into account that landscape planning in Germany actually considers both, contents and goals of European Landscape Convention.

So it makes sense to come straight to the point - the German experience concerning landscape planning. Why is this topic so interesting?

The answer is to say as follows: Because of its federal constitution Germany is divided up into 16 federal states. And each state has its own landscape planning system with specific procedures. So, there is not any exaggeration by describing Germany as a laboratory for landscape planning and a paradise for planning scientists.

Tasks, Contents, Instruments, Addressees and Procedures of Landscape Planning in Germany

What are the tasks of landscape planning in accordance with article 13 German Federal Nature Protection Act? It is

- to support the realization of nature conservation goals and principles,
- to draw [graph] requirements and measures of nature conservation and landscape management and
- to give reasons and arguments for requirements and measures of nature conservation and landscape management.

What are the contents of landscape planning in accordance with article 14 German Federal Nature Protection Act?

It is

- a statement on present and expected conditions of nature and landscape,
- to put goals and principles of nature conservation and landscape management into concrete terms,
- an evaluation of present and expected conditions of nature and landscape according to goals and principles of nature conservation and landscape management and
- a drawing [graph] of local (or regional) requirements and measures for nature conservation and landscape management.

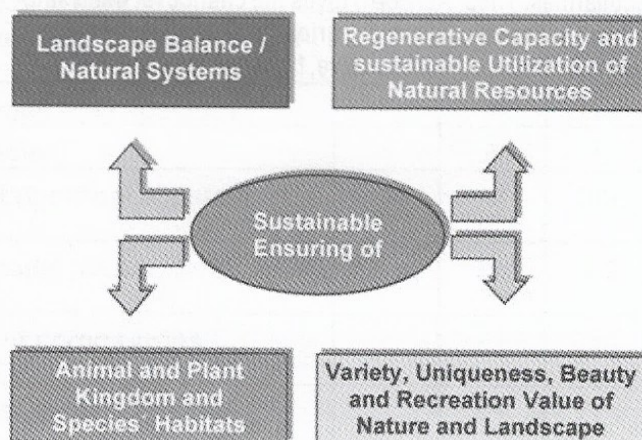


Figure 1:

Goals and Principles of Nature Conservation and Landscape Management according to Article 1 German Federal Nature - Protection Act

As it has been mentioned before, landscape planning has to support the realization of nature conservation goals and principles. What are these goals in detail?

It is the sustainable ensuring of landscape balance respectively natural systems as well as the ensuring of regenerative capacity and sustainable utilization of natural resources, and, not to forget, the animal and plant kingdom



and species' habitats as well as the variety, uniqueness, beauty and recreation value of nature and landscape (figure 1).

The goals and principles of nature conservation and landscape management can be put into concrete terms by means of different methodological approaches. One of the most accurate and innovative is the landscape function assessment [1]. This approach considers up to 15 different landscape functions to be protected as well as developed by means of landscape planning. This approach includes for instance regulation functions of soil, water and climate as well as information functions concerning landscape history [2, 3, 4].

The next topic deals with various instruments of landscape planning (table 1).

Planning Instrument	Spatial Extension	Scale
Landscape Programme	Federal State	1:200,000
Landscape Framework Plan	Region	1:50,000
Landscape Plan	Community	1:10,000
Green Structures Plan	Parts of Community	1:2,000

Table 1: Instruments of Landscape Planning in Germany

On the federal state level there is a small scaled landscape programme. On the regional level landscape framework plans are being worked out. And finally, on the local level there are large scaled landscape plans and green structures plans. Beside this general system one can find in each federal state, of course, some peculiarities, for instance in the city states (Berlin, Hamburg, Bremen) a landscape framework plan is missing.

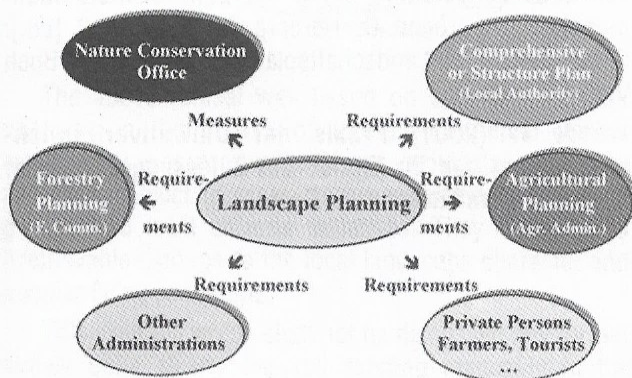


Figure 2: Landscape Planning Addressees

For the discussion on the effects of landscape planning it is quite important to be aware of its different addressees (figure 2). Landscape planning in Germany is not strictly assigned to a specific branch of administration. So its measures and requirements are relevant not only for nature conservation offices, but also for decision making in the

framework of comprehensive or structure plans by local authorities, of agricultural planning, forestry planning and even for private persons.

The term "requirements" means that landscape planning proposals normally are not more than recommendations. So it is up to all various decision makers what will happen with landscape planning measures and requirements, even if the law provides a consideration of landscape planning proposals on a high level. The consequences are: Landscape planning should have good reasons and arguments to succeed. If landscape planning can not persuade its addressees, it will never succeed, at least not in Germany.

Figure 3 points out the relationship of participation procedure and commitment effects of various planning instruments in Germany. The implementation chances of planning proposals increase under conditions of regular participation and strong commitment effects.

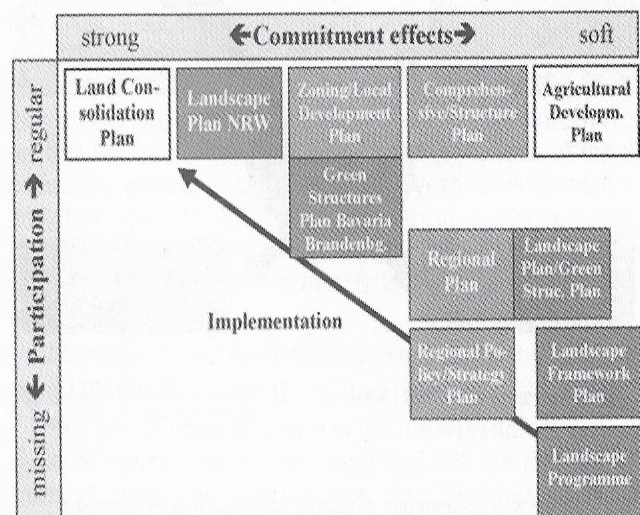


Figure 3: Participation Procedure and Commitment Effects of various Planning Instruments in Germany

In general, landscape planning instruments in Germany can be characterized by a missing participation and soft commitment effects. But, as it can be seen, there are several exceptions from this, for instance the landscape plan in North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), which has to be worked out including a regular participation procedure. As a consequence of this, landscape plans in North Rhine-Westphalia do have rather strong commitment effects. Further, there is a noticeable gap of landscape planning instruments under conditions of regular participation and soft commitment effects. So a landscape planning counterpart to an agricultural development plan is still missing.



Effectiveness of Landscape Planning in Germany

An important question is whether landscape planning has positive effects on decision making processes or not. Some years ago at Berlin University of Technology it became popular to develop methods for the evaluation of planning instruments' effectiveness based on approaches of empirical sciences and statistical methods.

Even it is not possible to go too much into methodological details, the results of several sample surveys carried out in Germany or single federal states, e.g. Rhineland-Palatinate, should be summarized as follows (figure 4).

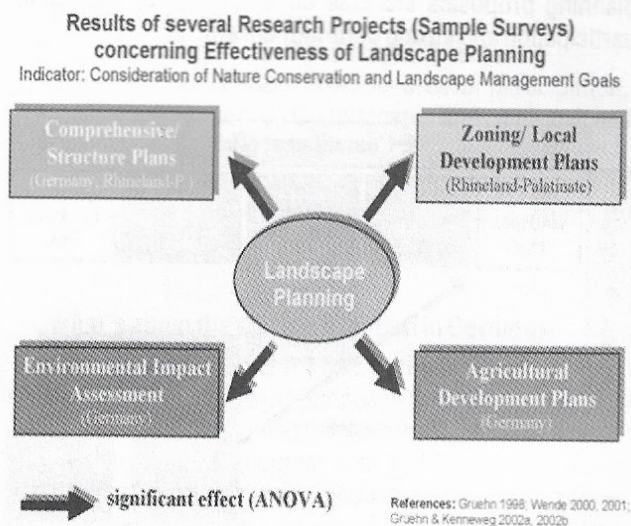


Figure 4: Effectiveness of Landscape Planning in Germany

Landscape planning in Germany actually has significant effects on both, urban and agricultural planning. Landscape plans are not only used as a sound information basis, they also deliver concepts, reasons and arguments to make urban and agricultural planning more sustainable [3, 5, 6]. Furthermore, according to Wende, landscape planning even improves decision making processes in the framework of environmental impact assessment [7, 8].

Conclusion

To come to the conclusion it can be recognized that Landscape planning in Germany seems to be compatible with the European landscape Convention. Actually there is an integration of landscape issues into regional and town planning policies and landscape planning puts landscape policies into significant effects. Whereas the different systems of landscape planning could give a valuable input

for the international discussion, there can be no doubt that the German landscape planning system has to be further developed: Procedures of participation should be established as an obligatory element of planning process not only to be compatible with European Landscape Convention goals, but also for improving its implementation chances.

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