



VISION

Protected areas and regions are connected by more or less degraded landscapes. They are usually neglected and threatened by a multitude of destructive impacts like, for example, traffic infrastructures separating habitats.

The project TransEcoNet deals with strategies of protection and restoration as well as ecologically-sound development of these lost green landscapes and their degraded networks in Central Europe.

Based on spatial information on historical and recent patterns of landscape functionality, strategies for ecological assessment of protection values and threats as well as scenarios for the development of ecological networks will be implemented by the project. Awareness raising and educational initiatives will be set up and will stipulate new dimensions of transnational solidarity in protection and conservation of biodiversity and of natural and cultural heritage in the ecological networks of Central Europe.



To turn this vision into reality 16 partners coming from organisations of nature conservation, research institutions, administrations and information centres of protected areas as well as NGOs working in the field of landscape protection joined the project TransEcoNet. They come from six different Central European countries: Slovenia, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Austria, Poland and Germany.



PROJECT

The main aim of TransEcoNet is the establishment and implementation of methods for the evaluation and analysis of the history, status as well as the deficits and potentials of transnational ecological networks. The activities are sub-divided into several work packages with the following focus:

- Eco-topologies - Inventories of ecological networks
- Histories - History of ecological networks
- Ecologies - Ecosystem services and biodiversity
- Identities and strategies - Raising awareness



Natural Heritage

The initiatives and strategies for raising awareness for the natural heritage will focus on the perception of historical and recent landscape changes. Project activities cover the analysis of time series of historical maps, surveys and interviews with contemporary witnesses as well as the establishment of an archive of historical photography and production of documentary films. Based on inventories of documents the project provides an analysis of thematic varieties and characteristics of the status of and threats to natural heritage. It is based on topographical and ethnological parameters representative for each transnational project area.

Cultural Heritage

A qualitative and quantitative inventory of the rich cultural heritage along the ecological networks will be conducted with special regard to the assessment of the conservation status, threats and values of heritage sites. A focus is on regional identities and transnational heritage policies together with the visualisation of heritage sites in terms of site-specific and landscape-related aspects. This serves as a core input for initiatives of raising awareness and reidentification of people with their cultural heritage.



REGIONS

Ecological networks

Consist of core areas of biodiversity conservation, surrounded by buffer zones and connecting corridors for conservation like:

- linear corridors
- stepping stones like arrays of habitat patches
- interlinked landscapes which are extensively used

An ideal network should be surrounded by sustainably used areas which provide ecosystem services.

Ecosystem services

Humankind benefits from a multitude of resources and processes which are supplied by ecosystems, for example:

- production of food and water,
- control of climate and disease,
- nutrient cycles and crop pollination

In summary all these benefits are referred to as ecosystem services.

Biodiversity

The analysis of distribution ranges of animals and plant species in the ecological networks will help to identify specific target species. The assessment of current activities for transnational conservation of species and habitats will be the basis for recommendations for urgent actions and future management. Therefore the analysed and evaluated biodiversity indices will be integrated into the activities for the set-up of case studies of ecosystem services.





RESULTS

Inventory and analysis of existing ecological networks and recommendations how to preserve their biodiversity. Monitoring and evaluation of gaps in transnational ecological networks.

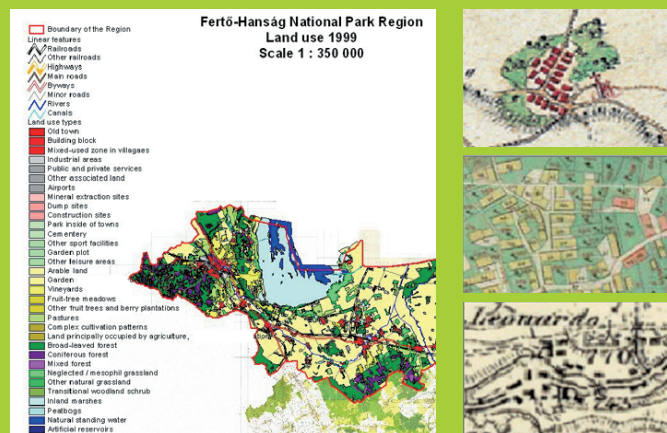
Output: Spatial data base

Visualisation of the landscape history of ecological networks and of selected investigation areas to evaluate the connectivity and fragmentation as well as the historical causes for threats in selected areas.

Output: Time series of digital maps

Ecological assessment and development of operational tools for highlighting protection values and threats. Guidelines for a transnational strategy and a plan of actions for ecologically-sound land use and ecosystem services.

Output: Set of tools to assess ecosystem services



Integrative approaches to raise awareness of natural heritage and ecological planning measures.

Output: Documentary films on the perception of landscape change, travelling exhibitions and events, catalogue of available educational multi-media material

www.transeconet.eu

FACTS

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