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Comparing landscape planning in England, Germany and the Netherlands

Policy contexts and three case study plans

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Rob Schröder, Dirk Wascher, Simon Odell and Chris Smith

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Germany and the Netherlands

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Comparing landscape planning in England, Germany and the Netherlands

Policy contexts and three case study plans

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- 1 Alterra
- 2 Natural England

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Abstract

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This comparative study of landscape planning, within three case-studies in England, Germany and the Netherlands, has the proposed outcomes to create a mutually understood model for 'landscape planning', a catalogue of key concepts on space, landscape and planning and a proposal for further European exchange of experiences on landscape plans. The comparison of contexts and contents of landscape plans has revealed significant parallels in the purposes for which landscape planning is used and their structure and context, but with significant diversity in the practical approaches, especially in objective setting and mapping. The European Landscape Convention appears to offer valuable tools for comparing landscape planning approaches in Europe.

Keywords: landscape planning, Landschaftsplanung, landschapontwikkelingsplannen, space, landscape, green infrastructure, planning, national & regional policy context, methodology, practical approaches, European Landscape Convention, European exchange.

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Samenvatting

Vergelijking van landschapsplanning in Engeland, Duitsland en Nederland met behulp van de Europese Landschapsconventie. Beleidscontexten en drie case-studies.

De praktijk van natuurbescherming, ontwikkeling van cultuurlandschappen en ruimtelijke planning heeft in het Noordwesten van Europa een lange geschiedenis van ongeveer 100 jaar. Desondanks lopen de beleidsverhalen en theorieën in meerdere Europese landen nogal uiteen. Op internationale bijeenkomsten komt men regelmatig misverstanden tegen over basale begrippen en benaderingen.

Dit rapport is een vergelijkende studie van 'landschapsplanning' via drie casestudies in Engeland, Duitsland en Nederland. Dit onderzoek is uitgevoerd in opdracht van Natural England, een Engelse overheidsdienst. De beoogde resultaten waren:

- een begrijpelijk model van landschapsplanning of 'systeem van plannen' over ruimte en landschap;
- een catalogus van begrippen en concepten over ruimte, landschap, planning, beheer e.d. in drie talen;
- een voorstel voor verdere Europese uitwisseling van ervaringen met 'landschapsplannen'.

In deze studie wordt een eenvoudig denkmodel gebruikt van de 'systemen' van landschappelijke en ruimtelijke plannen in de drie landen (figuur 1), dat de beleidscontext representeert. Verder is een bestaand conceptueel model van de planningscyclus aangepast om de cases van landschapsplannen te vergelijken (figuur 4).

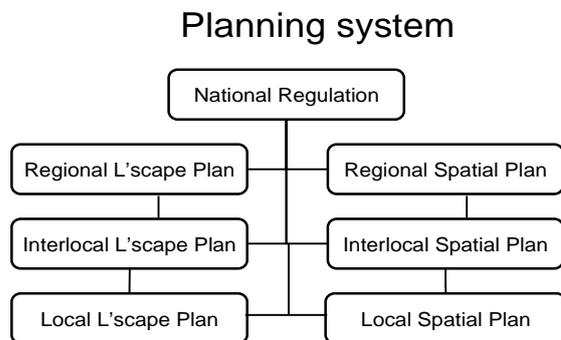


Figure 1
System of landscape and spatial plans.

Comparing plans

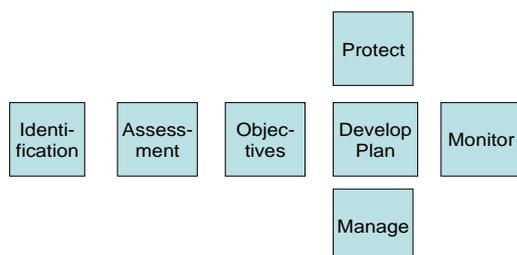


Figure 4

Key words for comparing plans (Dower, 2008).

Beide denkmodellen zijn bruikbaar gebleken. Het gebruik van het model van de planningscyclus heeft zijn beperkingen, omdat de elementen 'waardering' en 'doelstellingen' in de praktijk niet altijd scherp te onderscheiden zijn. Ook de 'actie-elementen' bescherming, ontwikkeling en beheer zijn niet altijd keurig terug te vinden.

Enkele sleutelbegrippen en centrale concepten van landschap en planning zijn duidelijk gedefinieerd met het oog op de vergelijking, wat zelfs binnen deze korte studie zeer nuttig bleek te zijn.

- De definitie van 'landschap' (*landscape, Landschaft*) in de Europese Landschapsconventie (ELC) als 'een gebied zoals mensen dit waarnemen' is zeer breed en bijna het zelfde als 'ruimte' (*space, Raum*). Er worden meer definities gebruikt in praktijk en theorie, zelfs binnen de ELC, zoals 'culturele waarde' en 'waarneembaar gebied' of 'uitzicht' (*view, Aussicht*). Hoewel de ELC zowel landelijke als urbane gebieden omvat, wordt landschap vaak geïnterpreteerd als 'platteland' en 'groene ruimte'.
- De definitie van 'planning' (*planning, Planung*) in de ELC als een 'sterk vooruitziende actie' dekt niet de visie op planning als 'combinatie van denken en doen voor het publieke domein'. In de laatste opvatting is planning de complete cyclus van het maken van een overheidsplan, de acties om het plan uit te voeren en de herziening van het plan. Deze definitie wordt vaak gehanteerd in het ruimtelijk en het milieukundig beleid.
- De dienst Natural England hanteert de term 'landmanagement', die geïnterpreteerd kan worden als 'combinatie van denken en handelen van een landbeheerder' of als 'beheer van landschappen'. De tweede definitie komt dicht bij het ruimtelijk beleid van beheer (*management, Pflege*) van zowel het private land als de publieke ruimte.

De toepassing van beide modellen (van zowel context als inhoud van 'landschapsplannen') en van de sleutelbegrippen leidt tot conclusies en aanbevelingen. Er zijn opvallende parallellen in de doelstellingen, waartoe landschapsplannen worden toegepast en in de structuur van de plannen (de inhoudsopgave van het document), maar er zijn ook opvallende verschillen in praktische benadering van 'het plannen maken', vooral in de sfeer van formulering van doelstellingen en van gebruik van kaarten.

Vanwege de vele overeenkomsten wordt aanbevolen via professionele uitwisseling tot een Europese standaardisering te komen van de 'identificatie / inventarisatie' van landschappen en van de systematiek van 'actieplannen'. Vanwege de verschillen in benadering wordt aanbevolen om verdergaand onderzoek en Europese uitwisseling op te zetten in de sfeer van de 'sprong van waardering naar doelstellingen' en naar de rol van kaarten bij het maken van strategische en uitvoeringsgerichte plannen. Dit met het doel 'best practice' te ontwikkelen. Een eerste stap in deze richting kan worden gezet in een workshop, waartoe ook de professionele makers van de casestudie plannen uit deze studie worden uitgenodigd.

In Engeland worden ook technieken van landschapsplanning toegepast, maar zonder erkenning van en verwijzing naar gevestigde en geformaliseerde 'planningsystemen' in andere landen in Europa. Deze studie heeft een focus op het nut van kennisuitwisseling en geeft aanwijzingen dat het Engels planningsstelsel kan profiteren van verder onderzoek en kan leren van Europese ervaringen.

Een algemene conclusie kan zijn dat de ELC niet alleen zorgt voor beter begrip van de planning van landschappen, maar ook waardevolle instrumenten levert voor het vergelijken van diverse benaderingen van landschapsplanning in Europa.

Executive summary

The practice of nature conservation, development of cultural landscapes and spatial planning has a long tradition of around 100 years. However, the policies and theories in several European countries are rather different. At the occasion of international meetings frequent misunderstandings regarding basic definitions and approaches were encountered.

This is a comparative study of landscape planning within three case-studies in England, Germany and the Netherlands. The proposed outcomes from this were to create :

- A mutually understood model for landscape planning or 'systems of plans' on space and landscape;
- Catalogue of key terms / concepts on space, landscape, planning, management, etc in three languages;
- Proposal for further European exchange of experiences on 'landscape plans'.

All of these outcomes were achieved.

A proposal is made for a simple representation of the planning systems within the three lands (Figure 1) and an existing conceptual model is adapted to make comparison between landscape plans (Figure 4).

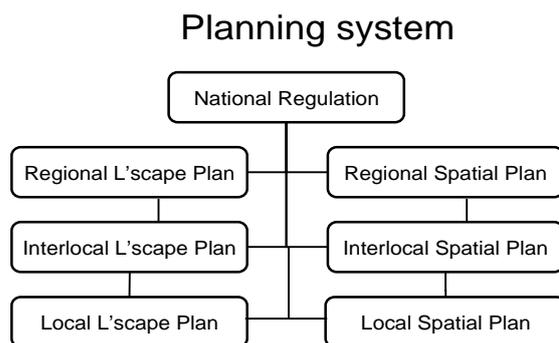


Figure 1
System of landscape and spatial plans.

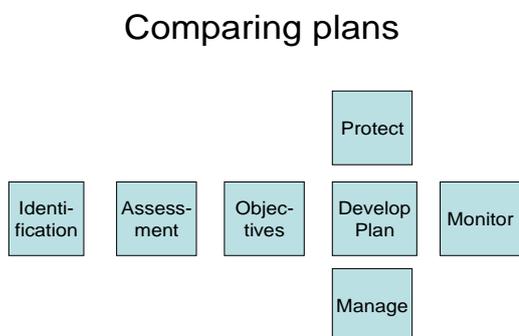


Figure 4
Key words for comparing plans (Dower, 2008).

Both of these are helpful, although there appears potential limitations in the use of Figure 4 i.e. that the assessment and objectives elements are frequently blurred together and that the action elements do not neatly correspond.

Key terms and concepts in the area have been clearly defined within this work (Table 1) and their utility has been obvious, even during this brief study.

Table 1
Terms and definitions

Term	Definitions
Landscape <i>Landschaft</i> <i>Landschap</i>	The definition of 'landscape' in the European Landscape Convention (ELC) as 'an area as perceived by people' is a very 'broad' one and is almost the same as 'space' (Raum, ruimte). But more definitions are used in practice and theory, even inside the ELC, such as 'cultural value' and 'visible area' or 'view' (Aussicht, uitzicht). Although the ELC covers rural and urban areas, often landscape is interpreted as 'countryside' or 'green space'.
Planning <i>Planung</i> <i>Planning</i>	The definition of 'planning' in the ELC as 'strong forward-looking action' does not cover the vision on planning as 'combination of thinking and acting in favour of the public domain'. Here planning is the complete cycle of making a governmental plan, action to implement this plan and revision of the plan. This definition is often used in spatial and environmental policy making.
Landmanagement <i>Landschaftspflege</i> <i>Landschapsbeheer</i>	Natural England uses the term 'land management', which can be interpreted as 'combination of thinking and acting' of a land manager or as 'management of landscapes'. The second interpretation is very close to the spatial policy of sustaining or regular upkeep (Pflege, beheer) of private land and public space.

The application, both of the models for context and contents of landscape plans and of the key terms and concepts, has revealed significant parallels in the purposes for which landscape planning is used and their structure and context, but with significant diversity in the practical approaches, especially in objective setting and mapping.

Landscape planning techniques are being used within English policies, but without an explicit recognition of the parallels with very well-established and formalised European systems. Therefore, although this study has focused upon the need for exchange of knowledge, there seem to be positive gains for the English planning system in further investigations as to the European experience.

In final conclusion therefore the European Landscape Convention appears to not only help coordinate collaboration in understanding and planning for valuable landscapes, but also offers a valuable tool for comparing landscape planning approaches in Europe.

1 Introduction

1.1 Problem statement

This study is about 'landscape planning' as introduced by the European Landscape Convention (ELC). It is written following a commission of Natural England to promote European exchange.

Given the many different interpretations across Europe and by different disciplines, the word 'planning' can sometimes be ambiguous. We use it here in the meaning of policy making. It is about a government making a plan (with objectives about the future), implementing actions and (after a while) evaluating the plan. The resulting 'planning cycle' is also addressing societal learning, because a democratic government involves stakeholders and citizens in the planning. This study focuses on the first steps: the making of a plan.

England has signed the ELC and has committed itself to integrate landscape in the spatial planning (Article 5) and to take part in trans-boundary cooperation (Article 9). The recommendations from the Council of Europe for implementation of the ELC (2008, appendix 1) mention two possibilities to reach a 'systematic landscape planning':

- To integrate landscape into spatial planning by 'landscape studies' or
- To set up a system of autonomous 'landscape plans'.

However, in the UK and many other signature countries, it remains unclear how to exactly implement these articles of the ELC and how to follow the recommendations. The concept of 'landscape plans' appears to require further clarifications, especially in England. Are there opportunities for new forms of spatial or landscape planning in England? Should such new kind of 'landscape plan' take the role of either implementation or of building visions and formulating (new) objectives?

The alternatives shown by existing approaches in Germany and the Netherlands in the field of landscape plans ('Landschaftspläne' 'landschapsplannen') at the local and inter-local level seem to be inspiring for professionals in Natural England and for local planners in East of England. But before one would consider introducing such plans, it is necessary to gain a better understanding on central concepts and approaches around planning of space and landscapes in England and the reference countries.

1.2 Methodology

This study is a 'pragmatic' one and its main focus is to look at good practices and to compare cases of 'landscape plans' in England, Germany and the Netherlands, using the ELC as a model. The following cases were chosen:

- a. Green Infrastructure Plan 'Harlow Area' (East of England Region)
- b. Landschaftsplan 'Fulda' (Hessen, Land of Germany)
- c. Landschapsontwikkelingsplan 'Groene Driehoek' (South West Utrecht, the Netherlands)

The plans from Hessen and the Netherlands were already presented on an international workshop (Marschall a.o., 2008)

These landscape plans are made on local or inter-local level, meaning they were made by a local government or a cooperation / joint working group of local governments. This level represents the lowest level prior to direct landscape management by landowners and public services.

To understand the policy context we also look at the 'system of landscape and spatial planning'. A simple model for this is set out in Figure 1 below. String 1 (left) is based upon the Council of Europe recommendations on Article 5 of the ELC. String 2 (right) is based upon the 'normal' spatial planning system. For comparison of the policy contexts we use the scales of local, interlocal and regional level. We investigate what kind of plans exists in England, Germany (Hessen) and the Netherlands.

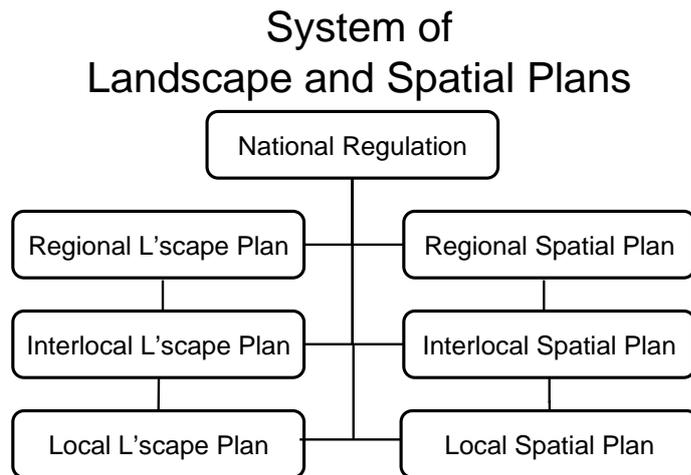


Figure 1
System of landscape and spatial plans.

This study has been implemented in a short period of time and is mainly based on a field visit to England (Hertfordshire) and on targeted literature review in England, Germany and the Netherlands. It is also a 'pragmatic' study, relying on professional skills of researchers with experience in the Netherlands and Germany, with only limited insight into the English 'planning system'.

The comparison of the three case study plans focuses on following research questions:

- What is the basic content of a catalogue of terms for spatial and landscape planning in England, Germany and the Netherlands, for better understanding between professionals?
- What is the 'planning context' of landscape plans? What is their place in the system of planning documents?
- What is the content of 'landscape plans' in the countries, as encountered in the three case-study plans?
- What are the essential methodological approaches for developing landscape plans with special attention to analysing of landscapes, phrasing of objectives and programming of actions?
- Which examples can serve as sources of inspiration for better 'landscape planning' in (East of) England? Is there a need for introducing new plans or studies?
- What are recommendations for further research and further European exchange and cooperation?

1.3 Expected results

Outcomes of the comparison are:

- a. mutually understood model for 'systems of plans' on space and landscape;
- b. a reference catalogue for key terms and concepts on landscape and spatial planning in three languages;
- c. overview on conceptual and practical approaches for developing landscape and spatial plans on the bases of the three cases;
- d. pproposals for further European exchange of experiences on 'landscape plans'.

2 ELC key concepts

The practice of nature conservation, development of cultural landscapes and spatial planning has a long tradition of around 100 years. However, the policies and theories in several European countries are rather different. At the occasion of international meetings we encounter frequent misunderstandings regarding basic definitions and approaches. The European Landscape Convention (ELC) is a relative new attempt to reach more unity on European level.

In this chapter we use the ELC to get more clarity on key concepts and definitions. Other initiatives such as Landscape Europe - an expert network which has been partially involved in this study - has been established for the very reason of overcoming difficulties in terminologies, definitions, methods and concepts within the field of landscape. This project must be considered as another step towards reaching these objectives.

2.1 Definitions of landscape

The European Landscape Convention (ELC) gives a definition of landscape as “an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors”. (Article 1a) This is a ‘broad’ definition, which is illustrated by the scope: “this Convention (...) covers natural, rural, urban and peri-urban areas. It includes land, inland water and marine areas. It concerns landscapes that might be considered outstanding as well as everyday or degraded landscapes.” (Article 2) Due to this broad scope the ELC covers the full territorial spectrum of a country and addresses the same level as most spatial planning policies do.

We would therefore state that in the ELC ‘landscape’ is almost the same as ‘space’ in spatial planning. This is confirmed by the statement that landscape also ‘constitutes a resource favourable to economic activity’. (Preamble) This concept of landscape is also very close to ‘territory’ as used in the regional or ‘territorial cohesion’ policy of the European Union.

On the other hand more definitions are used as well inside the ELC. For instance a more ‘narrow or sectoral’ definition of landscape as a cultural value is also used. The ELC refers to landscape as a basic component of “natural and cultural heritage, contributing to human well-being and consolidation of the European identity.” (Preamble)

2.2 Definitions of planning and action

Landscape ‘policy’ in the ELC means ‘the taking of specific measures aimed at the protection, management and planning of landscapes’ by competent public authorities. (Article 1.b)

Landscape ‘planning’ in the ELC ‘means a strong forward-looking action to enhance, restore or create landscapes’. (Article 1f) ‘Planning’ is seen as one of the three governmental measures aimed at the protection, management and planning of landscapes.” (Article 1b) This definition does not cover the complete range of different interpretations in planning practice.

Especially in the tradition of spatial and regional ‘planning’ (as governmental action) the protection / restoration and management / upkeep of space is included in ‘planning’. In the Dutch spatial policy tradition exists a prejudice to creation of landscapes. Here the ELC definition could be interpreted as only

‘development’ of big scale interventions in space. The term development (inrichting) means big physical operations and investments, which are done once in around 20 years: land reallocation, reconstruction of (intensive) agriculture and nature development. In the German tradition the landscape planning is coupled to nature conservation and focuses more on protection, restauration and management of landscapes (Hagen, 2008).

On a more theoretical level we locate landscape planning on the crossroads between spatial and nature planning and between urban and rural planning (see Figure 2).



Figure 2
Concepts of planning (Wascher et al., 2008).

In practice and theory one can find many definitions and concepts of ‘planning’ of space, environment and physical measures. We refer in this study to the complete ‘planning-cycle of thinking and acting’ (see Figure 3):

- Observation / identification / inventory
- Assessment / analysis
- Formulation of goals / objectives
- Actions (ELC: protection, planning / development, management)
- Monitoring
- Evaluation (and feed back).

Planning cycle

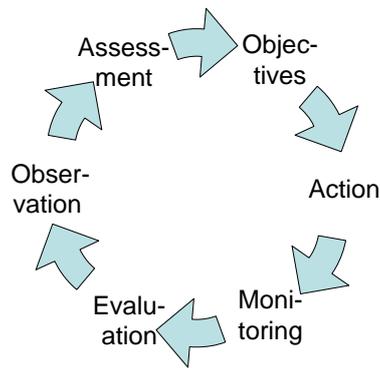


Figure 3
Planning cycle.

This approach from under others Friedman (1989) combines 'thinking and acting in favour of the public domain'. It focuses on complex and long term questions of 'sustainable development'. Under this umbrella fall a lot of planning 'styles' from a technical top-down design towards a reflexive learning process. From this point of view the ELC definition of 'planning' could be seen as more or less technical 'development' of physical measures.

This 'broad' definition of planning cycle as combination of thinking and acting is often used in spatial and regional planning policy. Inside the complete planning-action-cycle the components of 'objectives formulation' and 'action' are often seen as main task of governmental policy. Meanwhile physical actions are not only done by governments; in many cases (especially in rural areas) such actions involve private developers or landowners. So governmental 'action' often takes the role of influencing private actors by means of law, contract, money or communication.

Natural England also uses the term 'landscape management', which can be interpreted in a 'broad' sense as the complete planning cycle or 'narrow' as the daily actions to sustain an area or keep it in a proper state. In the Dutch spatial planning the day to day management ('beheer') is seen as distinguished field of spatial planning. In Germany a 'Pflegeplan' is often the responsibility of sectoral government services like nature conservation.

2.3 Keywords for comparing plans

Dower (2008), one of the founding fathers of the ELC, uses exactly the planning-action-cycle (as given in Figure 3) to define the actions of governments in implementing the ELC, but he defines only a part of the 'actions' inside the cycle as 'planning':

- to identify landscapes, that is to describe their character and the key elements in that character;
- to assess the landscapes, that is to analyse what contributes to, and what detracts from, their quality and distinctiveness;
- to define objectives for landscape quality with involvement of the community;
- these objectives should form the frame for the main process of physical action, embodied in the next three verbs:

- to protect what should be protected;
- to manage what needs management in order to be sustained;
- to plan, in the sense stated in the Convention, namely to take strong forward-looking action to enhance, restore and create landscapes;
- and finally to monitor what is happening to the landscapes, in terms of change and the impact of that change upon the character of the landscapes and upon the achievement or not of the stated objectives.

A visualisation for these components is set out in Figure 4. We will use this figure by Dower to analyse the ‘landscape plans’ in the cases in the next chapter.

Comparing plans

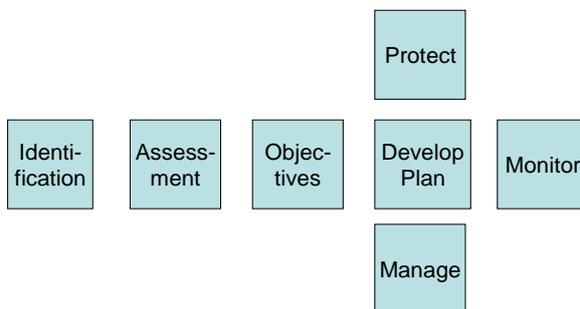


Figure 4

Key words for comparing plans (Dower, 2008).

2.4 Approaches to integrate landscape in the planning

The ELC states that each party undertakes general measures to integrate landscape into its regional and town planning (Article 5.d). The Council of Europe (2008) recommends two approaches for implementation of the ELC:

- a. ‘a proper landscape planning and development system endowed with specific instruments, interconnected at the different administrative levels (landscape plan);
- b. a systematic introduction of the landscape dimension into ordinary planning at different levels (national, regional, local), supplemented by specific studies and instructions (landscape studies). All spatial planning should have a landscape dimension.’

These recommendations take account of the diversity of spatial policy systems in Europe. In our opinion the Council of Europe defines a ‘plan’ as a formalised policy document and a ‘study’ as an informal report, which delivers input for planning decisions. The differences between the documents occur from the procedures of participation and formal decision taking.

In the next chapter we will check whether the case-study documents are a proper landscape ‘plan’ or a ‘study’ which delivers to ordinary spatial plans.

2.5 Catalogue of terms

In Table 1 we give an overview of terms and definitions which can lead to misunderstanding under European professionals.

Table 1

Terms and definitions.

Term	Definitions
Landscape <i>Landschaft</i> <i>Landschap</i>	The definition of 'landscape' in the ELC as 'an area as perceived by people' is a very 'broad' one and is almost the same as 'space' (<i>Raum, ruimte</i>). But more definitions are used in practice and theory, even inside the ELC, such as 'cultural value' and 'visible area' or 'view' (<i>Aussicht, uitzicht</i>). Although the ELC covers rural and urban areas, often landscape is interpreted as 'countryside' or 'green space'.
Planning <i>Planung</i> <i>Planning</i>	The definition of 'planning' in the ELC as 'strong forward-looking action' does not cover the vision on planning as 'combination of thinking and acting in favour of the public domain'. Here planning is the complete cycle of making a governmental plan, action to implement this plan and revision of the plan. This definition is often used in spatial and environmental policy making.
Landmanagement <i>Landschaftspflege</i> <i>Landschapsbeheer</i>	Natural England uses the term 'land management', which can be interpreted as 'combination of thinking and acting' of a land manager or as 'management of landscapes'. The second interpretation is very close to the spatial policy of sustaining or regular upkeep (<i>Pflege, beheer</i>) of private land and public space.
Plan	Following the Council of Europe a 'plan' is a formalised policy document on which a government (administrative or political) has decided.
Study <i>Studie</i>	Following the Council of Europe a 'study' is an informal report, which delivers input for planning decisions.
Inter-local <i>Überlokal</i> <i>Intergemeentelijk</i>	From the policy practice a 'plan' on the level of several local authorities is not well known in England and Germany. But cooperation or joint working in landscape planning is stimulated in i.e. the Netherlands and France.

3 Contexts for landscape plans

3.1 National context

For better understanding of the cases of three 'landscape plans' we give here some information on the context. In this short study we cannot make a complete overview of the spatial planning systems in England, Germany and the Netherlands. We do only refer to plans, which are directly related to our cases of (inter)local landscape plans. Therefore we made a quick scan of regional spatial plans and (so far mentioned in the 'lower' plans) of some national regulations and guidance's.

3.1.1 The scale of the 'nations' and the number of governmental layers are different. The United Kingdom and the Federal Republic of Germany are big 'unions' or federations with four layers. The Netherlands are much smaller in surface and inhabitants, have three layers and are comparable with England and 'Land' Hessen (see table 2).

Table 2
Governmental layers.

Nation, Föderation	United Kingdom	Bundes Republik Deutschland	
Kingdom, Land, Koninkrijk	England	Hessen	Nederland
Region, Bezirk, Samenwerking	East of England	Nord Hessen	Randstad
County, Kreis, Provincie	Hertfordshire	Fulda (Kreis)	Utrecht
District, Gemeinde, Gemeente (samenwerking)	East Herts, Harlow	Fulda (Stadt)	Groene Driehoek = Montfoort, Lopik, Oudewater

The lowest governmental layer, the local government is more or less comparable in the three countries: District / Council, Gemeinde, Gemeente. The 'regional' level is much more differentiated in England, Hessen and the Netherlands. We have chosen here the second level above local: County, Kreis and Provincie. Both layers have a political representation and a kind of parliament, which is responsible for the decisions on and implementation of spatial plans. The 'interlocal' level (in between) is not formalised, but consists of pragmatic organised cooperations of local governments on certain targets.

England, Hessen and the Netherlands have an elaborated spatial planning system with spatial strategies, structure plans and land use plans on several levels. In all three cases the District, Gemeinde, Gemeente level of government have a 'land use plan' and a system of permissions for spatial developments. The function and content of such local plans seems very comparable in the three cases.

One level higher (County, Kreis, Provincie) the situation is more differentiated. In England the spatial 'structure plan' of the County has been replaced following national reform of the planning system in 2004, whilst in Germany and the Netherlands the 'Regionalplan' and the 'streekplan / structuurplan' are still important, strategic plans. In England now the most important document is the Regional Spatial Plan or 'Strategy' on one level higher, the relatively new Region East of England.

Looking at the content of landscape policy, the density of population (inhabitants / square kilometer) is an indicator of the kind of landscape problems. England and the Netherlands are more densely populated as Hessen.

Looking at the cases of landscape plans we see that Fulda Stadt and Harlow District (we do not have data of the 'Harlow Area Plan') are densely urbanised areas, whilst the 'Groene Driehoek' is an rural area (see table 3).

Table 3

Some data of 'lands' and 'landscape plan areas'.

Area	Inhabitants	Surface (km²)	Density
England	51.100.000	130.400	392
Hessen	6.100.000	21.100	288
Netherlands	16.500.000	41.500	397
Harlow (District)	78.000	30	2.500
Fulda (Stadt)	64.000	104	616
Groene Driehoek	37.600	158	238

(Based on Wikipedia and websites of local and regional governments.)

3.2 System of landscape plans

In England, the 'landscape plan' (as part of the planning system) is generally unknown, but comparable documents do exist (see Figure 5):

- the Management Plan of a protected landscape: National Park (NP) and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which is a statutory document or compulsory plan (blue colour in the Figure)
- the (development) plan for a 'Community Forest' following a national program for environmental improvements around towns and cities;
- the 'Green Infrastructure Plan', an informal study related to a Regional Spatial Strategy of East of England and a national Planning Policy Statement.

Planning-system England

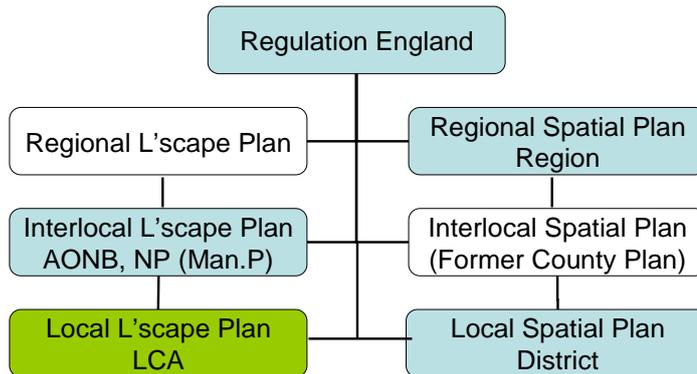


Figure 5

Planning-system England.

(Blue = compulsory, Green = voluntary, White = no regulation)

On local level the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) - related to the Local Plan - is not legally required nor legally binding, but appears to be firmly established as an English planning instrument (green colour in Figure 5). So at first look England seems to have chosen for the systematic integration of landscape into standard spatial planning procedures (see recommendations CoE in chapter 2.4).

Hessen (following federal German directives) has an elaborated system of 'Landschaftspläne' at several levels, which are hierarchically and functionally related to corresponding levels of spatial planning. At the inter-local level no formal document seems to exist (see Figure 6). These documents are compulsory and deliver the 'nature conservation and landscape management' aspects of spatial plans. In Hessen a landscape plan (Landschaftsplan) is a legally required part of each land use plan (Flächennutzungsplan). So Hessen's legislation already complies with the request for a 'proper system of landscape plans' as put forward in the CoE's Recommendations. The 'Landschaftsplan' - politically approved by the local parliament (Gemeinderat) - is technically embedded into the landscape framework plan (Landschaftsrahmenplan) at the next higher level (Landkreis).

Planning-system Hessen

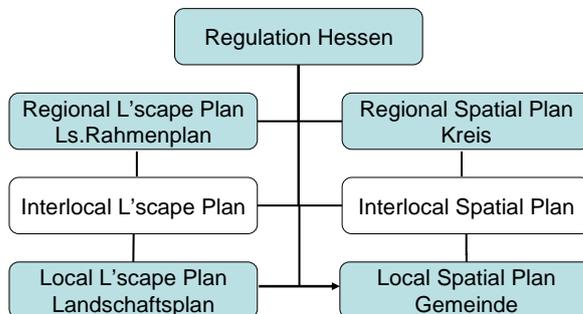


Figure 6

Planning-system Hessen

In the Netherlands landscape is integrated in the ordinary spatial planning, with general principles of landscape quality and 'green' designations in the spatial strategies / plans on national and regional level. Besides the integrated spatial plans, there exist 'landscape plans' on a voluntary basis (see Figure 7). A local government, a cooperation of 'gemeenten' or a 'provincie' can make such a document. They get a subsidy for making a 'landscape development plan' (landschapsontwikkelingsplan), under the condition that much attention is given to new developments and that the plan is approved and formalised by local parliament (gemeenteraad). So in respect to the recommendations of the CoE it seems the Netherlands have established a 'double system'.

Planning-system Netherlands

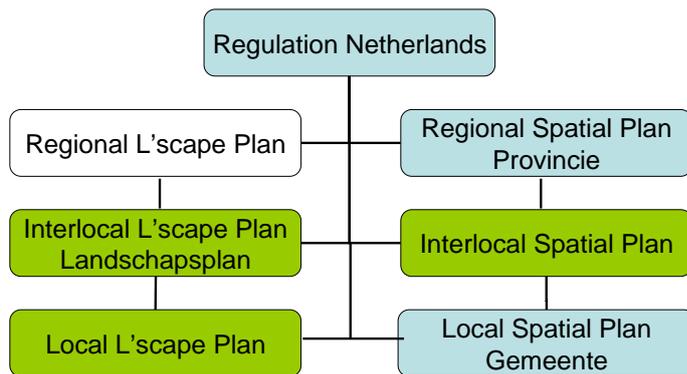


Figure 7

Planning-system Netherlands.

(Blue = compulsory, Green = voluntary, White = no regulation)

3.3 Trends in spatial planning and use of maps

Based on the case study plans (mainly description of policy context in the case documents), the field visit to England and professional skills we found some common trends in the spatial planning in the three 'lands':

- the main objectives of planning develop to integration of space and environment under the core strategy of 'sustainable development';
- more attention is given to development of landscapes (especially around cities) and for execution of plans;
- in the organisation of planning there is a decentralisation of powers to local authorities;
- but the most strategic decisions (especially on new urban developments) stay centralised.

The biggest difference in the case study plans (based on an impression at first sight) is the use of maps on a large scale (inter-local level), which is not very elaborated in England, but a very important instrument of spatial planning in Hessen and the Netherlands. (See Figures 8 - 10.)

The English land use planning, in our impression, seems to be very approximate / rough in localisation of spatial policy: spatial policy works with 'guidance's' and 'policy statements' in words and hardly with maps on regional and interlocal scale. The map of East of England gives only national designations of protected nature and landscapes. Since the demise of the Structure Plan (County level) we did not find a map in between the abstract regional 'spatial strategies' and the precise designations of the 'Local Plan' and the detailed map of the local LCA.

In the Netherlands the localisation of for instance 'new towns' (concentrations of more than around 500 houses) is much more precise. The Dutch national strategy on 'urban networks' gives rather precise locations, which are co-decisions of national and provincial governors.

In Germany and the Netherlands relatively precise maps on the second level of 'Kreis / provincie' are important instruments of the spatial strategies. In Hessen a strategic map is produced by the 'Landschaftsrahmenplan'. Here for instance large scale ecological connections are shown (Figure 8). In the Netherlands the designation of agrarian landscapes is rather differentiated. In the case of the Utrecht 'streekplan' the map gives designations of not only 'agriculture' but also 'agriculture interwoven with nature and landscape' (Figure 9). Such 'regional' maps give direction to future spatial developments and guidance to the planning of local governments.

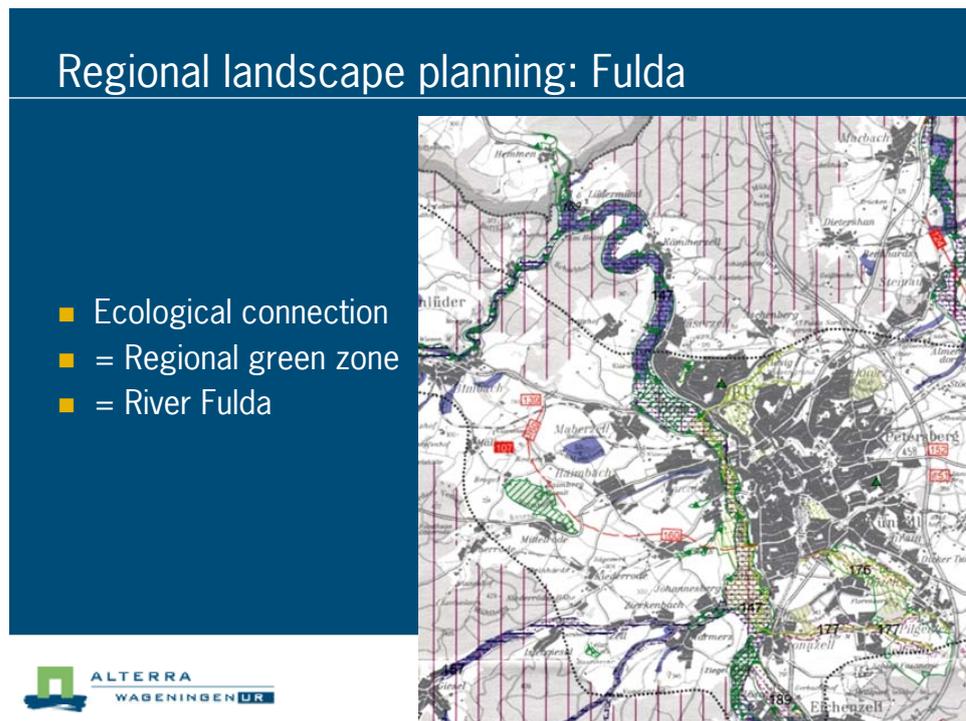


Figure 8
Regional Landscape Plan Fulda.

Case area & regional spatial strategy

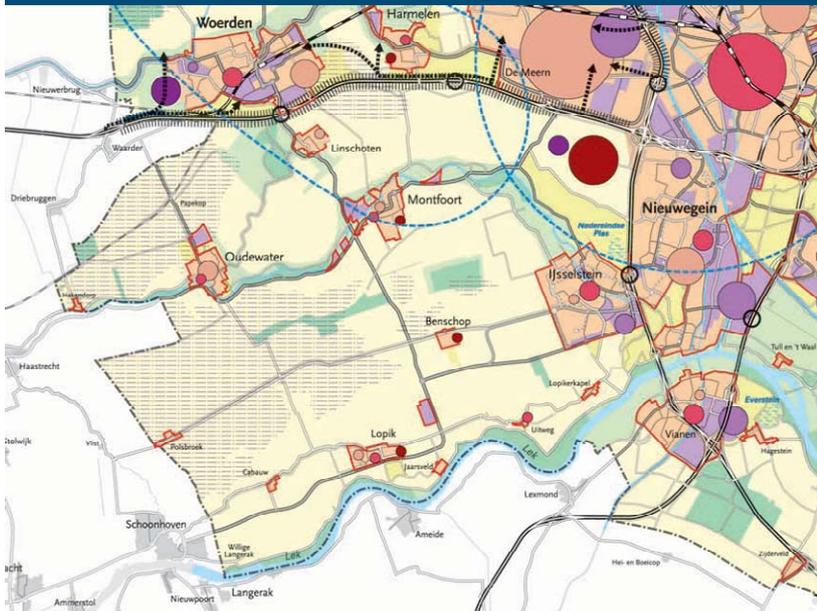
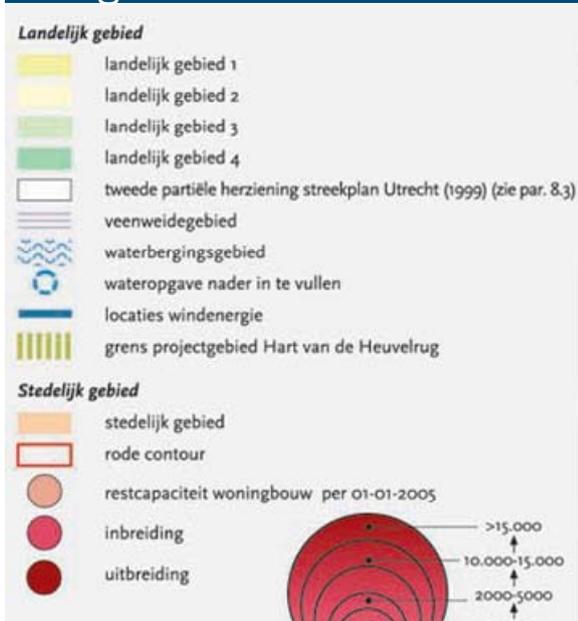


Figure 9

Regional spatial strategy (streekplan) provincie Utrecht.

Legend Utrecht



- Rural space 3 = interwoven functions
- Rural space 4 = main function nature
- Peat meadows = maintenance soil
- Urban space

Figure 10

Key of streekplan Utrecht.

4 Comparison of three case study plans

4.1 Characteristics of the landscape plans

Important aim of this study is to compare the content of three 'landscape plans'. Background is the interest of professionals of Natural England and planners in East of England for European exchange of experiences and 'good practices'. What could professionals in Europe (here England, Hessen and the Netherlands) learn from each other?

Following documents are not representative cases, but the study areas have comparable problems like high population densities and urban pressure on the country side. Moreover these documents were pragmatically chosen because the German and Dutch cases are already involved in international exchange:

- Green Infrastructure Plan 'Harlow Area' (GIP, East of England Region)
- Landschaftsplan 'Fulda' (LPF, Hessen, Land of Germany)
- Landschapsonwikkelingsplan 'Groene Driehoek' (LOP, South West Utrecht, the Netherlands)

All three documents were made by a local authority or a cooperation of local governments. They all were written by commercial advisers in the profession of spatial planning and/or landscape architecture.

The GIP Harlow Area, at the time being, seems to have the status of a landscape study, while the other 2 are formal landscape plans on which the local 'parliaments' have decided. It may be that the GIP Harlow Area could be adopted as a supplementary planning document, which would give it a greater 'materiality'.

Though the formal status is different, the procedures of making a 'landscape plan' are similar. It seems 'good practice' to involve local officers and stakeholders in the making of a plan. In all cases involvement of citizens and local organisations was organised with workshops. In the making of the LOP SW Utrecht also politicians were involved and all citizens were invited to participate with a photographic competition about 'my favourite landscape'.

The motivations for making the plan are different. The 'forewords' of the plans refer to the policy context and the local problems, that were the trigger to make such a plan. The LPF Fulda was a compulsory step to the revision of the local land use plan. The GIP Harlow and LOP SW Utrecht were voluntary plans, made from proactive reasons to develop a spatial strategy. It is striking that in all three areas the main reason was the intention for urban development. In Utrecht and Harlow it was extensive, national plans for urban growth; in Fulda smaller, internal urban growth.

4.2 Landscape versus green infrastructure

The GIP Harlow Area differs from the other examples of plans from Hessen and the Netherlands, not using 'landscape' in the title, but 'green infrastructure'. This term means the network of multi-functional green spaces and linkages in the countryside in and around towns. Green infrastructure can include areas such as parks, gardens, woods, nature reserves and water-bodies with or without public access; linkages include linear features such as off-road paths, highways, rivers, streams or hedgerows, which can provide dispersal corridors for wildlife and connect people to open spaces (GIP p. 2).

While we are aware that other 'landscape plans' may exist in other parts of England, through discussions with our English colleagues we concluded that in Hertfordshire the Green Infrastructure Plan would be comparable with the breadth of matters covered by 'continental' landscape plans.

Is Green Infrastructure the same as Landscape? Looking at the forewords and contents of the three plans, we found many similarities. We can state the concepts of landscape (in the 'broad' sense) and green infrastructure are almost the same:

- green, multifunctional space in the countryside and in towns and
- physical environment as 'intrinsic' value and as quality of life of people.

But the concept of green infrastructure differs because of emphasis on:

- developing 'infrastructure' (and not 'space' as such) as a governmental responsibility;
- physical connections and access to the countryside (from an urban viewpoint) and
- peri-urban spaces and urban fringes.

Following the Natural England Guidance (2009) the concept 'also relates to rural environment. In the wider countryside green infrastructure is often viewed at a larger scale, encompassing large country or regional parks (...) and major landscape features (...) green infrastructure at this scale can provide the wider framework and context.'

So the concepts are very similar, but Green Infrastructure seems to be more focused on technical developments and urban interests.

4.3 Method of comparison of plan documents

As introduced in chapter 2.3 we use the 'Dower scheme' for comparing the plans. But these key-words are used as 'hanger' for analysing the documents. Often the plans use other, but similar terms. In the next sections we distinguish the following key-words:

1. Identification / inventory
2. Assessment / analysis
3. Objectives / vision
4. Actions: delivery / projects (divided into protection, development and management)

The complete planning cycle also contains monitoring and evaluation (see chapter 2.2). We will pay no attention to monitoring because:

- none of the case plans contains a section on monitoring (which indeed could be seen as an important lack);
- normally the evaluation of a plan is done some years after its implementation and
- in this study was no time to research the impact of the plans.

4.4 Identification / inventory

All plans have some chapters of identification or inventory of the area. Dower (2008) describes this phase in actions of public bodies as 'to identify landscapes, that is to describe their character and the key elements in that character'. The 'continental' plans call it a description of the space in several dimensions (see Figure 11).

Comparing plans

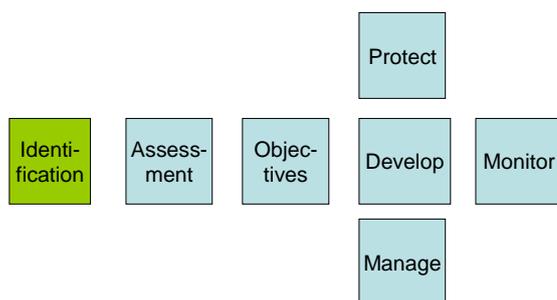


Figure 11

Identification in the plans.

Looking at the topics in the identification / inventory of the plans we see a lot of similarities. There seems to be a common view on landscape or space with following 'layers', described in terms of:

- abiotic conditions or geo-morphology;
- living nature or ecology;
- culture and scenery (landscape in the 'narrow' sense);
- settlement (towns, villages) and
- functions of space / designation (agriculture, housing, recreation, transport, etc).

Some differences occur on following items:

- The term 'character' seems to be typically English and is not used in Hessen and the Netherlands. Also the 'generic' method of LCA (see section 4.5.2.) is not well known on the continent. The method in the other plans is more the simple integration / addition of the several layers, often by use of maps as methodology.
- Morphology and elevated views in the hilly landscapes of Harlow and Fulda differs from the open, flat landscape of Utrecht. In a hilly landscape the 'vistas' are important. In a flat landscape (near densely build up cities) the 'open space' (wide views over agrarian meadows) is seen as valuable.
- In Harlow and Fulda the planners pay attention to micro climate and air pollution and the plantation of trees. In the flat and windy landscape of Utrecht this topics gets no attention, although the air pollution by motorways could be a local problem.

4.5 Assessment / analysis

Dower describes the phase after the identification as "to assess the landscapes, that is to analyse what contributes to and what detracts from, their quality and distinctiveness". This, in our opinion, is a 'value judgment' on the condition of a landscape, which in the continental plans is done by an 'analysis', which results in a list of objectives or a 'vision', which itself is the next phase in the comparison (see Figure 12).

Comparing plans

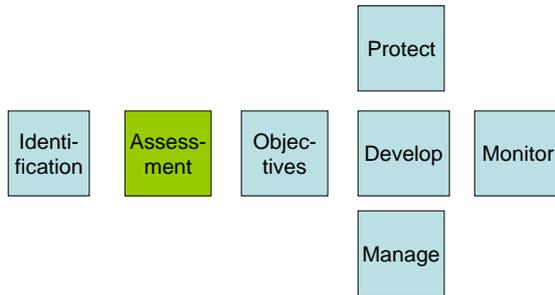


Figure 12

Assessment in the plans.

In England there is yet no formal regulation to the content of Green Infrastructure plans, but there exists a national methodology of Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) to determine the ‘sense of place’ and the distinctiveness from other places. It yields a typology with a degree of standardisation and evaluation of ‘strength of character and condition’. Such a methodology does not exist in Hessen and the Netherlands. In these latter cases the landscape typology is determined by the professional skill of the planners / landscape architects who made the plans. However also in these cases attention is paid to the ‘identity’ of the landscapes and their strengths and weaknesses, but not based on a generic methodology.

We reconstruct the steps the planners have made from identification towards objectives; see table 4. The objectives are the result of the analysis. We found out following steps in the assessment / analysis:

- The method in England is based on a local translation of the LCA method to the Harlow Area (step 1 in the table). Per Character Area (a small unit) the ‘condition’ of the landscape and the ‘strength of character’ are assessed. Result is a rather detailed map with a detailed description. (This LCA, step 2, is an earlier, independent study, which have been taken over in the GIP.) Step 3 is to interpret the ‘strategic’ opportunities of all Character Areas and to make a list of strategic projects, which forms the core of the objectives.
- The method in Hessen is based on the goals which have been formulated in spatial plans and landscape programme from ‘Kreis’ level (step 1). With these attention points an assessment of rather small ‘landscape units’ is made. Judgement of the ‘beauty’ of the unit is based on ecological and visual values and on access (step 2, see Figures 13, 14). Result is a very detailed ‘vision map’.
- The method in the Netherlands is also based on objectives from higher level, the ‘streekplan’ (regional spatial strategy) Utrecht (step 1). With an analysis of opportunities and threats a map is made of ‘high quality’ areas (step 2, see Figure 15). The future development of landscapes and the wishes for projects are scouted by scenarios. Three scenarios were made, with different priorities for agriculture or for recreation (step 3). Result is a rather rough ‘vision map’.

Table 4. Reconstruction of assessment / analysis

Method	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Result = Objectives
	Context input	Analysis 1	Analysis 2	Searching goals	Setting goals
Eng: Ls. Character Ass.	Translation national method	LC Areas: condition and strength	Strategic opportunities	Workshop stakeholders	Strategic projects
D: Judgement per area	Policy objectives (Kreis)	Assessment per unit		Participation stakeholders	Vision per area = detailed map
NL: Qualities and Threats	Policy objectives (provincie)	High quality areas	Scenarios: agriculture vs. recreation	Participation stakeholders and politicians	Total vision = rough map

Assessment method Fulda

- Policy goals
- Judgement: how beautiful is this area? ('unit' of cultural landscape)
 - Spatial structure (low-high, water, plants)
 - Important visual elements (cultural)
 - View axis
 - Pathways
 - Dynamics / dislocations
 - Disturbance (pollution)



Figure 13
Assessment Fulda 1.

Assessment 'unit' River Fulda South

- Good structure (natural river)
- Old bridge as visual element
- Views to the old city centre: towers
- Cycle paths
- No new elements
- Noise (high speed train)



Figure 14

Assessment Fulda 2.

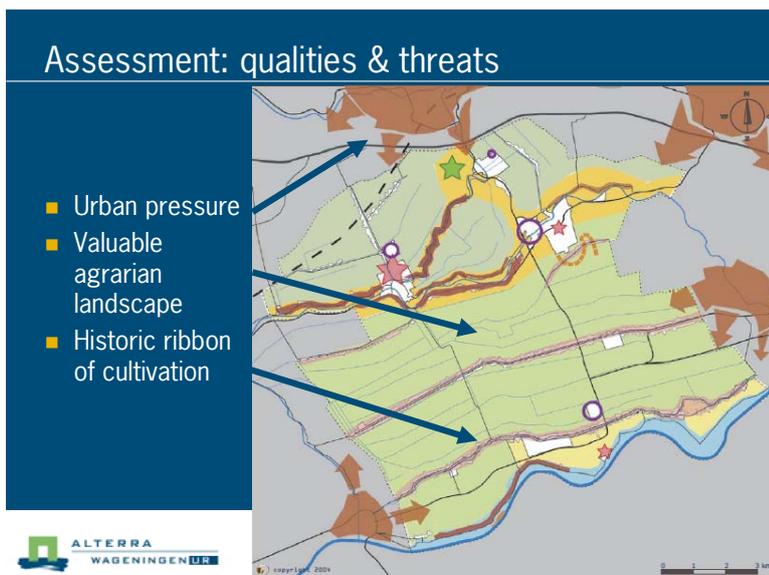


Figure 15

Assessment SW Utrecht.

In the steps of the assessment / analysis we see important differences:

- The LCA in Harlow gives a more or less 'neutral' description of the sense of place, whilst in Fulda and SW Utrecht the 'political' objectives from higher levels are an important input. The continental analysis give explicit value judgements.
- In Harlow and Fulda the assessment is made per 'character area' or 'unit', whilst in SW Utrecht the analysis is made on the whole study area.
- The analysis in Harlow and SW Utrecht include a look in the future by thinking about 'strategic opportunities' and 'scenarios' of societal developments. In Fulda this is not mentioned.

We see also similarities:

- The assessment methods in England and Hessen have similarities. The items of analysis are comparable: physical structure, cultural influences, visual elements, accessibility, dynamics and disturbances. In both plans the landscape units seem to be rather small. In Utrecht the method seems to be much rougher and the units bigger.
- The last step in the assessment toward objectives / vision in the three plans are made with involvement of local experts and stakeholders (see section 4.1.4). We see similarities in the procedures of making a plan, based on step 4 from analysis to objectives setting, which we call here ‘searching goals’.

4.6 Objectives / vision

Dower describes the next phase as ‘to define objectives for landscape quality with involvement of the community’. (The involvement in making the plan is dealt with in the chapter above.) The scope of the three case plans seems to be wider than landscape quality. The chapters in the plans on ‘vision’ and ‘desirable future’ includes also the demand on land use for housing, recreation etc and other new developments.

Comparing plans

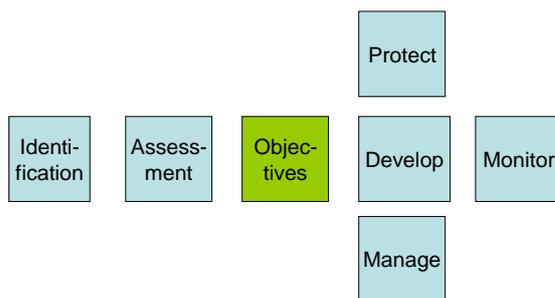


Figure 16

Objectives / vision

Whilst the Harlow plan focuses on a list of ‘strategic projects’ as most important result of the planning process, the continental plans focus on ‘spatial structures’ and designations on ‘strategic maps’. The levels of detail in the maps are different, but the map is seen as an important instrument of communication. In England, it seems, a prescriptive map is seen as less appropriate.

Besides the maps the ‘vision’ is also presented in form of objectives, principles and concepts. All three plans give general, over all principles and also goals / perspectives per subarea of the plan.

Local Landscape Plan Fulda

- Town and countryside of *Gemeinde Fulda*
- Vision and designations

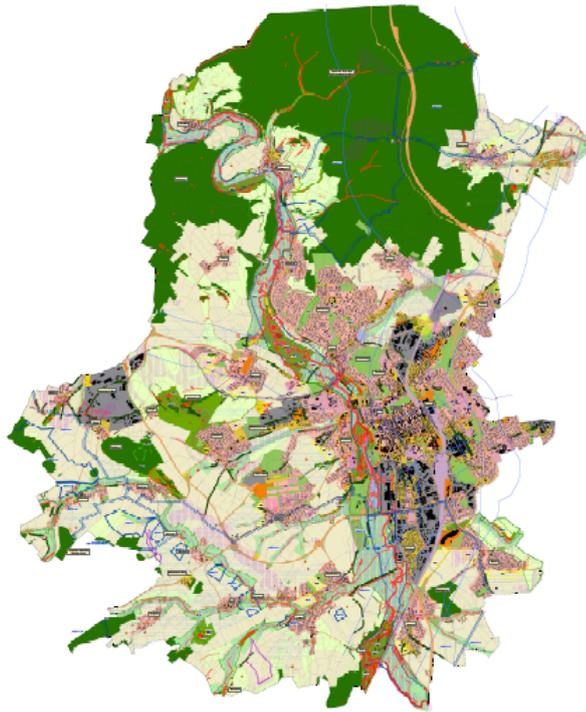


Figure 17
Map Fulda

Vision map LOP SW Utrecht

- More detailed than assessment

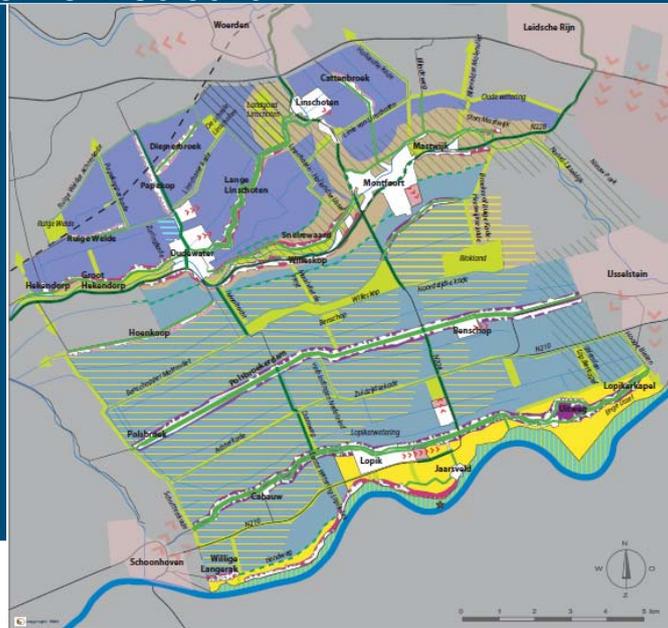


Figure 18
Map SW Utrecht.

4.7 Actions: delivery / projects

Dower refers to “physical action as to protect, to manage and to plan, in the sense of strong forward-looking action to enhance, restore and create landscapes”. In the case plans this division, coming from the ELC, can be reconstructed, but it is not the system in which the documents are built up. From the tables of content of the three documents we can interpret certain parts as ‘action plan’ or ‘delivery’.

Comparing plans

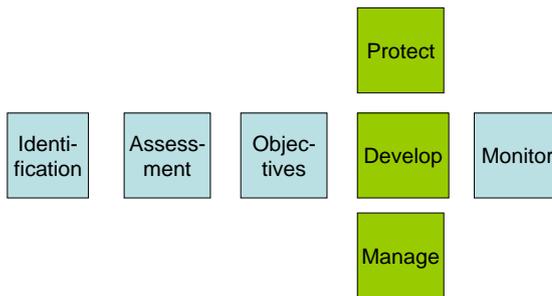


Figure 19

Actions in the plans .

In the ‘action plans’ of the three cases we found out a lot of similarities. The LOP SW Utrecht has a separated ‘action plan’; the LP Fulda has a summary with actions (‘pin points’) per area and the GIP Harlow has a chapter with ‘delivering’ (see Table 5). It seems the thinking about developing measures and projects has many parallels:

- (In prolongation of objectives) Overview of tasks & instruments of local governments
- (Here in the cases the division in protection - development - management can be reconstructed.)
- A list of projects
- (Including an estimation of costs and financing possibilities.)
- Priorities and ‘strategic’ projects
- An overview of projects per unit of the plan area

Table 5*Reconstruction of 'actions' in the plan documents.*

Chapter	Sub Chapter	GIP Harlow	LP Fulda	LOP SW Utr
Objectives		Principles of protection, enhancement and creation	Development concept: goals (total area and per unit)	Vision: goals
Actions:		Delivering: projects and priorities	Development concept: measures and pin points	Action plan
Projects	1.	General	Protection	Tasks of local government
	2.	Strategic projects (7 areas)	Management	Projects (list)
	3.	Next steps	Guidance of land use	Priorities
	4.		Execution of the plan	Costs
	5.		Policy across the borders	Instruments
	6.			Financing
	7.			Execution
Actions:		Guidelines for developments	Pinpoints (summary) per area unit	
Guidelines				

Looking at 'protection - development - management' we see a strong bias in the three case plans towards development. Only the Landscape Plan Fulda mentions protection, by developing sites for nature- and landscape protection, because this is one of the legal assignments as preparation of the land use plan. In Harlow and SW Utrecht the plans are strongly directed to guiding new developments. Management and upkeep of landscape are rarely mentioned under instruments and guidelines

Each plan has also 'typical' issues and strong points in guiding the actions of local governments:

- The English plan delivers 'guidelines for developers and planners' with a lot of practical tips for design and execution;
- The German plan pays attention to compensation of environmental impact of urban development;
- The Dutch plan proposes the function of a 'landscape coordinator' within the local government for the execution of the plan.

4.8 Summary of comparison

Table 5 gives an short overview of the results of comparison of methods of the three landscape plans. We can state:

- There are similarities in the ‘identification / inventory’ of landscapes and in the ‘action plans’. By means of further professional exchange one could work on a standardisation of approaches in making a ‘good’ landscape plan.
- There are differences in the ‘assessment / analysis’ (e.g. the value judgements) and in ‘objectives / vision’ (especially the use of ‘strategic’ maps). By means of further European professional exchange one could work on a deeper analysis and comparison of approaches to make a plan. This could result in ‘best practices’ in assessment of landscapes and setting of objectives for future landscapes.

Table 6

Summary of comparison

Key-words	Outcome of comparison
Identification / inventory	Similarities
Assessment / analysis	Differences
Objectives / vision	Differences
Actions: delivery / projects	Similarities

5 Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Definitions and catalogue of terms

For better understanding between professionals in England, Germany and the Netherlands we have pointed on some crucial terms in which different definitions occur:

- 'landscape' could be seen as 'broad / integrated' and then means almost the same as 'space', or as 'narrow / sectoral' meaning visible area or 'view';
- 'planning' could be seen as a complete planning-cycle with 'combination of thinking and acting in the public domain' or more action-oriented as 'development of physical actions';
- 'land management' could be seen as 'spatial planning' of governments or as 'regular upkeep' of a piece of land by the landowner.

Such definitions are not always clear in the ELC. We have tried to show the different interpretations. Definitions of landscape, planning and land management (and other terms) are the first steps towards a catalogue of terms for spatial planners and landscape architects in Europe.

5.2 Policy context of landscape plans

The recommendation from the CoE for a systematic landscape planning we tried to clarify by a simple figure with 'strings' of spatial (integrally) plans and landscape plans; which we call the 'planning system'.

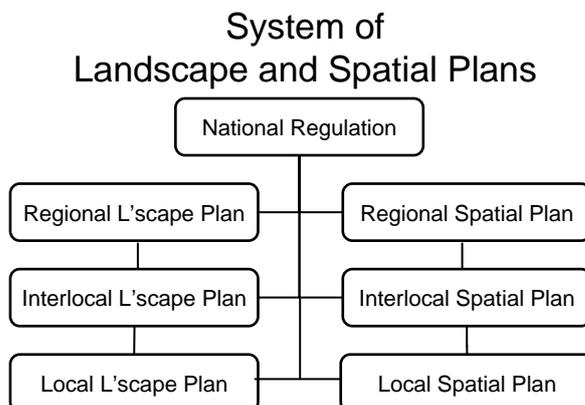


Figure 20
System of landscape and spatial plans

With this figure the place of a plan in a 'planning system' can be illustrated from the scale. The chosen case-study landscape plans are from local or interlocal level.

Moreover it is important to know if the 'landscape plan' (from the national regulations) is:

- an informal 'study' (commissioned by officers) or a formal 'plan' (on which is decided by an authority or parliament);
- a compulsory (statutory) plan or a voluntary document of an authority.

5.3 Content of landscape plans

The content of the three case landscape plans we have compared by using key-words of 'landscape planning actions' related to the ELC (see Figure 21).

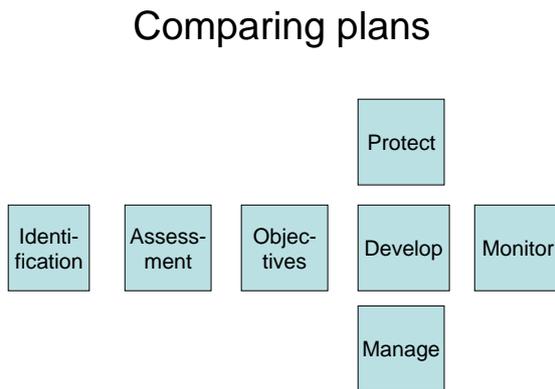


Figure 21

Keywords for comparing plans (Dower 2008).

These key-words, not interpreted literally, but used as a framework are useful for comparing the case study landscape plans.

5.4 Approaches in making a landscape plan

Some methods and approaches of making a landscape plan could be derived from these cases.

We saw similarities in the 'identification / inventory' of landscapes. A common view on landscape / space can be described with following 'layers':

- abiotic conditions or geo-morphology;
- living nature or ecology;
- culture and scenery (landscape in the 'narrow' sense);
- settlement (towns, villages) and
- functions of space or designations (agriculture, housing, recreation, transport, etc).

We saw also similarities in the 'action plans'. A common content table on measures and projects could be:

- Overview of tasks and instruments of local governments (referring to the ELC terms protection - development - management)
- List of projects
- Priorities and 'strategic' projects
- Overview of projects per unit of the plan area

There are differences in the 'assessment / analysis' of the landscapes:

- More or less 'neutral' description of the sense of place (the local application of the English LCA method) versus explicit value judgements based on 'political' objectives, coming from the 'regional' spatial plans in Hessen and the Netherlands.
- Assessment per 'character area / unit' (as done in the Harlow and Fulda case) versus rough, large scale analysis of the whole study area (as done in the case of SW Utrecht).
- Analysis of future developments by thinking about 'strategic opportunities' (e.g. foreseen urban growth in Harlow) versus 'scenarios' of societal developments (e.g. possible agricultural developments in SW Utrecht).

We saw also differences in 'objectives / vision': the 'continental' plans focus on 'spatial structures' and 'strategic maps'. Here the map is seen as an important instrument of policy making and communication (see e.g. the spatial strategy of the province of Utrecht in Figure 9). In England, it seems, the map has a less important role. Here focus lays on planning statements and guidelines.

5.5 Inspirations for England

What are inspirations for better 'landscape planning' in (East of) England?

In the following we give some statements and recommendations from the view of a 'continental outsider' on what we found remarkable in the English planning practice (see also Appendix 2).

1. It seems England implements the ELC by integrating landscape into ordinary spatial planning. This is done by 'studies' on LCA, which is stimulated by a national planning policy guidance (PPG7), which points on a comprehensive approach of all landscapes and not just the protected areas.
2. We recommend to consider a compulsory local LCA as part of the Local Plan, as is done in Hessen (and other German Länder), which leads to a clear and broad integration of landscape in spatial and environmental planning.
3. We found out differences in methods of assessment. Whilst England has a central method (which is practiced in Harlow), in Hessen and the Netherlands exist a variety of approaches of assessment. We recommend to consider a profound professional exchange on methodologies. In Fulda the approach seems rather comparable with the English LCA. Maybe these cases are 'best practice' in NW Europe. In the Netherlands the analysing of landscapes seems rather different; here the political and professional debate focuses on 'spatial quality' in rural and urban areas, but here exists no professional method for 'high' quality. In an European exchange of methodology all participants could learn from each other, because each method has its 'pros and cons'.
4. Looking at the spatial planning system in (East of) England from a 'continental' point of view we see a lack of planning strategies on a level in between the (rather big) Region and the (rather small) local authority. We recommend to consider the introduction of a voluntary 'strategic landscape plan' on inter-local level. This plan could be made in commission of a cooperation of local governments, with the aim to develop 'medium scale' objectives, instruments and projects for the next 5 to 10 years.
5. We have seen big differences in use of maps and in 'localisation' of spatial strategies. In our impression in England maps are mostly used on local scale and are rather precise. In Hessen (Landesentwicklungsplan, Landschaftsrahmenplan) and in the Netherlands (national strategy, provincial structure plans) maps are also used to represent rather abstract goals and strategies, like ecological connections and directions of urban expansion. Especially in the Netherlands the use of large scale and abstract categories of keys of maps is widely applied.

5.6 Further European exchange

Recommendations for further research and further European exchange and cooperation:

1. By means of further professional exchange one could work on a standardisation of methods in the field of 'identification / inventory' and on the making of 'action plans'.
2. By means of further professional exchange one could work on a deeper exchange of methodologies and 'best practices' on 'assessment / analysis' of landscapes and on the role of maps in deriving objectives and 'visions'.
3. Next step could be the organising of a workshop by Natural England on 'assessment' of landscapes and on 'strategic maps' with professionals involved in the landscape plans in Harlow, Fulda and SW Utrecht.
4. Second step could be the involvement of Natural England and other English professionals in the project proposal 'Planning for liveable landscapes' in Appendix 7.

5.7 Final remarks

Are inter-local landscape plans useful? Such a plan should be 'problem driven' by spatial and environmental developments of inter-local scale. We think on following:

- development of high scale ecological connections (as we have seen in the case study in Fulda);
- anticipation on high scale and big urban developments (as we have seen in the case studies Harlow and SW Utrecht);
- harmonising policies on scattered settlements of small amounts of houses;
- development of infrastructure for public access in rural spaces under urban influence (as we have seen in the case studies Harlow and Fulda);
- development of sustainable tourism in 'deep rural' regions;
- anticipation on medium term changes in agriculture, like the decrease of traditional cattle and increase of domestic horses.

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