



# Hyphen 43

Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux  
association sans but lucratif | spring 2009





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# The allotment garden – a garden for everyone

Lars OSCARSON

President of the Swedish allotment federation



**Lars OSCARSON**

What a winter we have had – or rather have not had here up in the far north! Snowdrops and crocus have appeared in the midst of what normally would have been snow and freezing cold. The lilac bushes are in bud, and would like to become green and beautiful. There are different theories as to what causes this mild weather. Within the allotment-movement however, we can be proud of the fact that we are not excessively contributing to global warming. With an energy-saving and environment friendly growing and with, in most cases, the allotment garden in close proximity, we can walk or ride our bike there without bad conscience for emission of hydrocarbon.

The growing of wholesomeness and beauty is something that we should safeguard and make known to various decision-makers. We can quite rightly boast and justly claim that we are pioneers when it comes to using the earth's resources in a careful and renewable way. Long before the accessory hysteria when it comes to composting had seriously begun, we

and our forerunners have made sure we have taken good care of our composts.

Non-toxic growing has always had its advocates and practisers within the allotment-movement. The fact that this later has spread to other groups in society through the International Allotment Society does not make it any worse.

Composting, non-toxic growing and short transport distances are just some examples of how we contribute to a preserved and renewable world. There are other ways as well; it's just a matter of making them visible and known. Let's all help out in this process.

In order to reach out with our message in a credible way, it is important that we have a strong allotment-movement. To maintain and develop this movement is all of our responsibility. I would claim that the allotment-movement is practical democracy. By attending meetings, be part of decision making processes and ac-

cepting positions of trust, we are part of an important process. An insight and knowledge of how decisions are formed, implemented and executed gives invaluable knowledge about how society works.

It is now during the winter and the spring when most of the meetings in our federations – on local, regional and national level – take place. Be there and do not hesitate to accept a task in the allotment movement. It is an obligation both for you and the movement.

Together we are strong partners in the European Union and when we are united we can put the allotment movement even stronger 'on the map'.

And finally as we say in Sweden 'the allotment garden – a garden for everyone'.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of two stylized, overlapping loops.





## Activity report 2008

The executive board is happy to submit the activity report of the year 2008 to you.

### 1) Internal affairs

Since the last statutory meeting the executive board has met on March 7th, August 27th, November 22nd and 23rd 2008 as well as on March 13th, 2009.

The executive board has continued to discuss the problem of how to make our movement better known by the public and the members in its meetings. It discussed among others a common lobbying and a common presentation on internet.

The executive board has finished its discussions and the preparation in order to adapt, after a period of ten years, the affiliation fees to the new number of national memberships and to guarantee a good functioning of the Office over the next years. These new affiliation fees could be adopted with one no vote during the last statutory general assembly.

After receiving the notification by the Czech federation in the year 2007, that it planned to quit the Office by December 31st, 2008, the Office has tried several times to discuss the situation and the problems with the Czech allotment gardeners. It has however to be said that there was no readiness from the Czech side to have talks with the Office that could have clarified the situation. In violation of the statutes and after several reminders, the federation did not pay its affiliation fee for 2008 either.

After having made the lay-out of the Hyphen during five years the new executive board of the German federation informed the Office in 2007, that it did not want to continue this work. Thanks to the Austrian federation the production of the Hyphen could be continued. Very hearty thanks go to Mr. HAUKE and his employees for the quick and nice lay-out of the last two numbers of the Hyphen. The same thanks go to Thomas GINDL who has as well as in the past, quickly updated the Office Home-Page in a competent way.





In addition to the distribution of the Hyphen per email, we have started this year to publish the Hyphen on the Office Home-page. This enables a larger number of allotment gardeners to directly reach this source of information. The Office Home-Page can be directly visited under: [www.jardins-familiaux.org](http://www.jardins-familiaux.org) respectively via the Home-pages of the national federations having created a link to the Office.

With this increased accessibility of the Hyphen it is desirable that the national federations put more articles at the Office disposal so that all the allotment gardeners can learn from the experiences made by their colleagues.

The Office Home-Page will probably be renewed next year in order to become a more modern and efficient instrument.

## 2) Congress

This year the international congress was organised in Cracow (Poland) from August 28th till August 31st. The subject was the future of the allotment gardens. This subject was dealt with under different aspects: The role of the allotment garden federation, the future generation of allotment gardeners, the contribution to people's health and the health of society as well as the necessary integration of the allotment gardens in the town planning schemes. This congress subject will as well be dealt with over the next years. In fact without an adequate lobbying and an increased sensitization of politicians, authorities and population for the values of the allotment gardens in the urban area on one hand and the adaptation to the actual necessities and a increased real effort to make the allotment gardens attractive for all groups of the society on the other hand, we can no more defend everywhere the necessary presence of the allotment gardens in the urban area.

During the congress it was decided that the Office should send the resolution to those national institutions that should be indicated by the national federations. The federation of Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland and Slovakia seized this opportunity.

Besides the interesting lectures and the good technical discussions the delegates could get to know the worries and the situation of the Polish allotment gardeners and could admire the impressive historic monuments of the town of Cracow. The programme offered by the Polish federation was impressive and very hearty thanks go to the federation, its members and the allotment gardeners for the good organization and the successful congress. We will for a long time remember our stay in Cracow.

## 3) Co-operation with the federations

During the statutory general assembly in 2008 a large exchange of information and discussions on the problems, experiences and successes of the national federations took place again.

The Office and the national federations were represented at the congress of the hundredth anniversary of the Danish federation. The Office was as well represented by its secretary general during the congress of the Luxemburg-

ish federation as well as the general assembly and the congress of the French federation in Dijon.

#### 4) International organisations

##### Council of Europe

The Office took part in the meetings organised for the NGOs. The re-organisation of the NGOs at the Council of Europe has now come to its end. Since October the Office takes part:

- in the commission on a sustainable territorial development dealing with the problems on environment protection, land and urban development urbanism, transport, energy and water resources, climate changes etc.
- in the commission on social cohesion and eradication of poverty as well as
- in a transversal grouping on Europe and the global challenges.

The European urban charter was revised for a third time. It is now a declaration for a new urban life and no more a catalogue of good technical practice, which also listed the allotment gardens.

The problems of an unhealthy living, the right for a healthy environment, the protection of water resources etc. were dealt with among others in the works of the NGOs.

It has to be mentioned that there exists a project for declaring 2011 the year as European Year of voluntary work.

##### European Union

Jan OLSEN had proposed during the study session that the Office should establish contacts with the economic and social Council of the European Union. This possibility was analysed and it seems that according to the working programme of the Council, this is not possible for the moment.

As it was suggested by the chief of cabinet of Mrs. Viviane REDING, member of the European Commission, the Office has taken position to the Health check of the European Union in the framework of the redefinition of the common agriculture policy. Thanks to the help of the German federation a position could be worked out which the Office could, after inclusion of several national examples, send to the European Union with its requests. We asked the European Union to take into consideration the necessities of the allotment garden movement besides the interests of the professional agriculture in the chapter dealing with the rural development. We asked for measures to stop the climate changes and to safeguard biodiversity. We requested a budget for the rural development allowing the allotment gardeners to cooperate successfully for the

solution of problems concerning the whole society.

We have to wait and see if this memorandum will open up a new possibility for a co-operation with the European Union.

According to the resolution of the 35th international congress we will try to continue our lobbying at the European Commission and the European Parliament. This aim was already put into practice. The Office directly sent the congress resolution to the Luxembourgish members of the European Parliament (a collective distributions is impossible) and to different members of the European Commission.

One Member of Parliament, Claude TURMES (green party) immediately contacted the Office. It was considered to work out a written declaration and to open it for the signature of the members of the European Parliament. Aim was to ask the Commission to take actions. After discussions and reflections it was decided to first address a parliamentary question to the Commission. On basis of its answer a written declaration could – if possible – be opened to the signature of the members of Parliament.

The Commission in its answer has recognized the value of the allotment gardens but has first of all underlined the Member States' competence in this area due to the principle of subsidiarity. The Commission has then emphasized that the States have the possibility to present projects that could be co-financed according to the rules of the social cohesion policy.

#### 5) Contacts with the federations that are not member of the Office

During the international congress in Cracow a meeting and an exchange of information was organized with the Japanese allotment gardeners. The Japanese allotment gardeners informed us that since the signature of the co-operation agreement the number of the affiliated allotment gardeners increase but that the interest of the authorities remains low. The Office informed on the European problems and the efforts made to better present the movement on an external basis and this via internet and a common lobbying.

The national federations have, as in the past, continued their contacts with other national federations and allotment garden organisations.

The Office continued this year as well to give information on allotment gardens to students writing dissertations and PHD studies.

#### *Luxembourg, November 2008*

##### *The executive board*



# Decision protocol of the general assembly held in Luxembourg on March 13th and 14th, 2009

Were represented: the federations of Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great-Britain, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden and Switzerland

Were absent: the federations of Norway and Slovakia

- 1) The international president welcomes all the delegates.
- 2) The agenda is adopted with unanimity after agreement on some modifications
- 3) The reports of the general assembly held in Krakow are adopted with unanimity.
- 4) The activity report of the executive board is adopted with unanimity after one modification.
- 5) It is acknowledged that the Czech federation has not contacted the Austrian federation to fix the date and place for the planned meeting. The delegates decide to write a last letter to the Czech allotment gardeners.
- 6) The delegates analyze the lobbying made after the congress in Krakow. This lobbying is generally speaking positive.

- 7) The French federation is invited to present a written draft of its project on the revenue of an allotment garden together with a draft budget before the next general assembly in Gent. In Gent it will be decided if this project will be financially supported by the Office.

- 8) The flyer of the German brochure on biodiversity has to be translated into French, English and Polish and sent to the federations together with the brochure.

The federations are invited to inform the Office if this flyer is suitable for them or which amendments are necessary. They should as well inform the Office if they are prepared to make the same survey on the criteria worked out by the German federation.

- 9) The Dutch study on "Health and allotment gardens" is not yet ready.
- 10) The questionnaire elaborated by M. ROINILA should be put at the disposal of the associations. The answers should be returned directly to the Finnish federation.
- 11) A. FRIEDRICH will elaborate a questionnaire that can be answered directly by the federa-

tions. Aim of it is to collect all the up-to-date and characteristic data of the federations as well as to collect all innovative projects. The answers should form the basis for a new Office-brochure.

- 12) The presentation of the national movements in the German review "Der Kleingärtner" has been postponed by the editor.

- 13) It is decided to revive the European Day of the Garden.

This European Day of the garden will be celebrated in Bremen on June 12th and 13th, 2010.

The documents of the German federation showing the local associations how to organize best this celebration in order to inform and sensitize as many people as possible have been given to the Office and can be sent by the Office to every interested federation.

- 14) The programme of the seminar in Gent is presented and the lecturers and subjects are confirmed. The delegates get the necessary information.

The inscription documents will be sent in a very near future.



**Newly elected executive board of the International Office**

**Together with Office President (DK) (5th from the left) and Malou WEIRICH, secretary general (L) (4th from the left)**

**Hervé BONNAVAUD (F) Member, (1st from the left)**

**Wilhelm WOHAUSCHEK (A) President of the executive board, (2nd from the left)**

**Lars OSCARSON (S) Member, (3rd from the left)**

**Achim FRIEDRICH (D) Member, (6th from the left)**

**Jean KIEFFER (L) treasurer, (7th from the left)**

15) The contributions will be linked to the Luxemburgish salary index. The maximum reserves are fixed to 450.000 €. If the reserves are higher than this fixed amount, the indexation will be stopped.

16) M. WEIRICH gives explanations on the report concerning the cooperation with the international organizations.

17) The treasurer J. KIEFFER presents the financial report and gives the necessary explanations.

18) The auditors inform that they did not find a mistake. They ask the financial report to be adopted and discharge to be granted to the executive board.

19) The financial report of 2008 is adopted with unanimity and discharge is granted with unanimity to the executive board.

20) The draft budget for 2009 is adopted with unanimity after explanation and discussion.

21) After explanation the draft budget for the Solidarity Fund for the year 2009 is adopted with unanimity.

22) On request of the German federation and proposal of the executive board, it is decided to grant the diploma for an ecological gardening to the allotment garden site "Hinterer Bocksberg" in Suhl. (Germany)

The Swedish and French federation will send the requested demand and the missing documents.

A decision will be taken in Gent.

23) The contents for Hyphen no. 44 and 45 are fixed.

24) H. BONNAVAUD, A. FRIEDRICH, L- OSCARSON, W. WOHAUSCHEK are elected unanimously for a new mandate of 4 years as members of the executive board.

J. KIEFFER is elected unanimously for a new mandate of 4 years as treasurer.

The elected persons accept their mandate.

25) C. ZIJDEVELD, G. STOKES and W. SCHAFFNER are elected as auditors for a mandate of 4 years and accept their mandate.

26) The national federations present their activities and problems and answer the questions of the delegates.

27) The next general assembly will be held in Gent on September 6th, 2009 at 5. p.m. in the hotel Marriott.

The next statutory general assembly will be held in Luxembourg on March 12th and 13th, 2010 in the City Hotel.



# In memoriam

Malou WEIRICH

secretary general of the Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux



Beginning of the year the International Office heart about the passing away of Jacques BOUR, honorary president of the French federation and President of the International Office from 1984 till 1986.

President of the French federation from 1978 till 1988, Jacques BOUR represented during this period the French federation in the International Office.

With much dynamism he worked for the protection and realization of the interests of the French and European allotment gardens. During this period the International Office tried together with the French federation to accredit our movement with the UNESCO.

At the end of his international mandate Jacques BOUR organized together with the French federation an unforgettable congress in Paris.

We will not forget Jacques BOUR's work for the French and European allotment gardeners.

# Denmark:

## Study Session organised by the Nordisk Kolonihaveforbund

Copenhagen-Oslo, September 2007  
 Dr Richard Wiltshire, School of Social Science  
 and Public Policy, King's College London

### 2<sup>nd</sup> part

#### Summary and conclusions from the work of the study groups

The three study groups (two operating in English and one in German) reported their conclusions in plenary session.

**On globalisation**, the German language group came up with perhaps the snappiest key message in English to summarise the contribution of allotments: "We don't get lost". Allotments were seen to have value as small groups of people living together in harmony and with strong roots. Allotments were also seen as parks for everyone, not just the users, with a strong claim to be included in town planning schemes. Both English language groups recognised that globalisation means different things in different countries, but one common

theme in many countries is integration: allotments are a place where recent immigrants can find a place of their own within the host society, so they too can echo the slogan: "We don't get lost".

**On demography**, all three groups emphasised the idea that allotments are (or should be) a place where different generations can come together and respect each other – a melting pot of generations, although concern was voiced about the difficulty of getting people in their 30s involved. On the other hand, it was recognised that allotments are of particular significance and value to older people, who are well integrated into the gardening community but also find allotments a good way to keep healthy and active in later life. The German language group suggested the need to provide plots of different sizes and with appropriate facilities to meet the

needs of people at different stages in the cycle of life. One of the English language groups declared itself ready to fight for the right of older people to access land for gardening, and to convince the politicians that allotment gardening is one of the best ways of enabling older people to stay healthy and active to the end.

**On climate change**, it was recognised by all groups that allotments have a good (and well-documented) track record for ecologically sound practices such as composting and local food growing, and could perhaps play a greater role as local centres for active learning about more sustainable ways of life – sharing the knowledge the gardeners have with others. "I saved the planet – I took on an allotment" would look good on a T-shirt.

**On governance**, the German language group stressed the need to work with





politicians from all parties to ensure greater protection for allotments and to implement minimum standards across the European Union. The English language groups found this a difficult issue to address, though the need to bring national organisations with different stakes in gardening together to speak from strength to government was stressed: the plenary heard in detail how this is being achieved in France.

In concluding the study session, the following points were made:

- On the negative side, very little had been said by any of the groups about how their concerns relate to the key issues identified as important by European policy-makers. Much of the discussion had been about what allotment gardeners and federations want – but as had been pointed out with reference to Jan Olsson's presentation, concern about one's own needs was not enough to gain recognition for them. It was good to be able to recognise this weakness, so that the allotment movement in Europe can move beyond

it to increase the effectiveness of its arguments.

- On the positive side, some general areas of strength had been identified which did relate to European policy concerns. The contribution that allotments can make to social integration (particularly of recent immigrants) in a globalising world was captured in a slogan that symbolised the value of allotments as a place where people can find each other – though it was recognised that the potential for contributing to policy delivery in this area varies from place to place. Integration of older people into the community was also stressed, but under the demography heading there was also strong support for championing the role of allotments in enabling older people to keep healthy and active for as long as possible, a key European priority. The slogan "Crop till you drop" may be a little crude to capture this value, but it does highlight the strength that the allotment movement has to address an issue that society as a whole prefers to shy away from, and to do so with authority

and dignity. The environmental record is also a strength – though this might be exploited more effectively at the local level, in encouraging others to tread more lightly on the Earth.

- Although some slogans and key messages had emerged from the study groups, surprisingly few specific examples of good practice had been volunteered that might make European policy-makers sit up and pay attention. Yet one of the presentations had specifically demonstrated the value of sharing good practice, and participants in the study groups reported that they had learned a lot simply by getting to know more about how allotments are organised in different countries.
- In moving forward from the study session, therefore, it was suggested that further work might be undertaken not only on linking national and European policy priorities, but also on identifying good practice in key policy areas within the European allotments movement. In his opening presentation, Poul Nyrup Rasmussen had suggested that European gardeners should document their common history. In moving forward, however, the real priority may be to document the very best of the present, as a guide to a better future and to help make it happen.

# Netherlands: Position of Dutch allotment gardeners further improved

Chris Zijdeveld, President of the Dutch allotment garden federation



Programs of shared neighbourhood use and ecological gardening have reinforced the position of many Dutch allotments on the local level.

On several occasions allotment participating in the ecological gardening program could chance a threat of being removed into a position to be protected as ecological valuable.

ments on the importance of allotments and asking attention for the opinion of the parliament.

At the end of last year, when discussing the budget of the same ministry, parliament made money available for improving existing or making new allotments in the largest Dutch cities.

But some years ago and on the national level political and official interest were virtually non existent.

So we started activities to attracting interest on the national level.

The first success came with the discussion of the position paper on physical planning in the Dutch parliament. An impressive majority declared that local governments should be more reluctant in changing allotments into building things and should provide new locations if building was inevitable.

A second success came when the ministry of housing together with our organisation made a brochure, informing local govern-



## RUIMTE VOOR VOLKSTUINEN RAPPEL VOOR DE VOLKSTUINPASSAGE UIT DE NOTA RUIMTE



And last May our Minister of Housing and Ecology opened the new building of our association. In her opening speech she asked attention for the importance of allotments as part of urban surroundings that should not continuously be removed to the outskirts of cities, but instead should be an integral part of the urban grid.

We feel rather proud that in the last years the position of Dutch allotment gardeners has been greatly reinforced.



# Finland: Get on a coach and go! Allotment gardeners from Finland discovering European allotments.

Text and photos by Maija Roinila

*Åse from Norway and Arja from Finland touring Solvagn Allotment Garden in Oslo*

Due to the geographical position of the country as well as the language barrier Finland's co-operation with the rest of Europe up till the integration with the EU was traditionally somewhat less frequent than that with the immediate neighbouring countries. Especially the so-called "common people" who did neither travel professionally nor spend their holidays abroad used to have rare opportunities for visiting foreign countries.

A few decades ago, however, there were allotment gardeners in Finland who pioneered in travelling abroad as a group. In the 1970's for some reason this kind of activity was no longer attractive. A few years ago there came up in the Finnish federation an idea of trying and organizing a couch tour to the south of Sweden to visit local allotment gardens and other interesting

gardening sights. Unfortunately not enough participants booked up.

Finally in the summer of 2004 the time was ripe. There were quite a few who were interested in getting together and finding out how colleagues live on their plots in the rest of Europe. What do they grow? What do their cottages and plots look like? Maybe we can share growing tips. Maybe we can even have seeds to take home. Do we share the problems in growing vegetables and flowers? Do allotment gardening associations in the rest of Europe run smoothly or do they have oppositions and intrigues and trouble makers of their own just like we? It would be interesting to hear what is the situation as far as the future of allotment gardening is concerned. What are the particular characteristics of allotment gardens in each country?

**M. Hervé Bonnavaud, President of the French federation of Allotment Gardeners (front in the middle) and his colleagues guiding the Finnish group at Maisons Alfort.**



**Mr. Hartmut Clemen, Director of the FlorAtrium (in the middle), Mr Joachim Siems (second from the right) and Mrs. Dagmar Clemen (on the right) narrating a tour at FlorAtrium.**





The office of the Finnish federation turned into a temporary travel agency preparing the itinerary and making all the necessary bookings. A bus load of allotment gardeners from all over Finland gathered in the passenger terminal of Turku harbour in order to board m/s Isabella bound for Stockholm, Sweden.

During the three-day tour the group of 45 allotment gardeners were received by two allotment gardens – Tuna and Flora-Linnéa – in Uppsala and treated to a lovely coffee party and site tour. The summer home of Carl von Linné, probably the most famous botanist ever and the father of modern taxonomy was an interesting sight for any garden lover. Lövsta Allotment Garden in Stockholm boasted with a fascinating oasis called “Herb garden for senses”, founded by Arnold Romberg, a local gardener and creative soul. His idea was to offer both allotment gardeners and the rest of the neighbourhood a place with plants and objects stimulating both sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch. Arnold Romberg described his herb garden as a natural space where the human body and soul have a chance to forget about the stress and hectic life and recuperate. Thanks to his idea the allotment garden site was saved by the community.

Encouraged by the positive feedback received from the group after the quick trip to Sweden, the Federation has ventured a little further away each year. Since Sweden, there has been one coach tour each year organized for the members of the member associations by the Federation. Every year there have been people who enjoy travelling and look for new experiences, but do not feel comfortable tramping alone along other than the mainstream paths. In groups we have visited Denmark, Norway, Poland, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg and France. Everywhere we have been met with fellowship and utmost hospitality with local delicacies. We have been impressed by the various kinds of auxiliary activities allotment gardens have in Europe.



**Polish allotment gardeners at ROD Rakowiec fixing pancakes – the best in the world – as a treat to their colleagues from Finland**

School and research gardens, like FlorAtrium in Bremen, the havens for the elderly in Warsaw, a tiny little allotment museum at Solvagn, Oslo, recreational park and allotment garden site for the families of the neighbourhood and an experimental garden for school children, all set up on a former factory site in Maisons Alfort, France. Just to mention a few examples.

In Amstelglorie, Amsterdam allotment gardeners have created plots for growing medicinal herbs and kitchen herbs. In the site there are small areas presenting various environments specified by the type of growth. How inspiring! In the Netherlands, we noticed, allotment gardening is probably more ecologically conscious and gardeners more “eco friendly” than anywhere. The brand new office of the Dutch Federation with its environmentally friendly building materials and functions was sincerely admired.

On top of allotment gardens we have had ample opportunities of visiting other interesting sights. Among the most breathtaking experiences were the unique and immeasurably precious golden hall of the Bremen City

Hall, a UNESCO World Heritage site since 2004, which we had the honour of visiting by the hospitality of our colleagues in Bremen and the world’s most popular garden sight, i.e. Monet’s garden in Giverny, France. Let alone a visit in the European Parliament in Brussels.

Nevertheless, during the drops in hundreds of plots in the countries mentioned above what has been most heart warming have been the features that all allotment gardeners seem to share: love of life, love of nature and its beauty, appreciation of the wonder of growth, learning by doing, community spirit, sharing and caring.

The fine experiences from the rest of Europe encourage us to keep up and further develop and promote allotment gardens and allotment gardening as a modern and urban way of growing food, spending leisure and socializing.

Incidentally, coach travel is ecological, it’s social and fun, it’s slow and enjoyable. Go for it!



# Switzerland: The family garden – a paradise for the whole family

Thérèse Klein

The creativity of the amateur gardener is often limited by rules when he is laying-out his plot. Therefore he is advised to read very carefully his lease contract and the statutes before building a pergola or a terrace. The creation and lay-out of a plot is linked to relatively strict requirements. There are only few possibilities of choice especially because the gardens are mainly of the same size. Often constructions are already on the plot when it has been cultivated before. Additionally the direct neighbours cannot suffer from the lay-out of your plot (compost or high ranking plants). Nevertheless within the limited borders of your plot and within the frame conditions there is much room for one's own ideas and projects. The furnishing of the garden house can be done according to your own taste. The same is true for the repartition and cultivation of the garden. The place to sit down, the pergola, grill and fountain, the play-tools for the children and other elements of your garden can as well be realized largely according to your own conception.

## Children in the garden

In many allotment garden sites there is a common playground in which the children like to be. The garden plots however offer only little space for the children's games. Especially if vegetables as well as fragile ornamental plants are cultivated, playing children risk to be grumbled at. The playing with a ball is then in any case forbidden. And nevertheless children should be looked after and have fun in the garden. Constant prohibitions have a negative effect.

## How can we solve these problems?

While small children are satisfied by a swing or a sandpit, older children would like to hide themselves and explore the neighbourhood. In order to avoid constant observation they need a small place where they can be on their own. For building a house, a big cartoon box can be sufficient. With paint and big brushes the children can paint their villa themselves. One can as well create tents with fixed poles along which Spanish beans will climb and form quickly a hermetic thicket. With long willow brunches you can create quickly a growing shed. Water has not to be omitted in a garden with children. If you hear on hot days, joyful children laughing and dynamic shouts, you can be certain that they play with water. Even in the smallest basin there is always place for a joyful water battle. This humid pleasure can be created with very simple means. Water pours out of a pipe or a watering can till the children are completely wet. You can as well construct simple scaffolding and fix then an old garden pipe having many holes. Fix this pipe to the tap and the joyful shower pleasure for young and older children can begin. In order that the small children can have space for their activities you are well advised to create a small lawn. If the children are older it is worth to consider creating a garden pond. No other area in the garden is so full of life. Tritons, woodcocks, pond shells, cowherds, dragonfly larva and tadpoles swim and run through the water. Birds and different species of flies, possibly frogs visit the pond. There is always something to look at and to admire.



**Smell, taste, hear and see – a garden has much to offer to develop children's senses.**



**Small gardens seem bigger if they are divided in different areas.**



**A small personal place under the pergola to relax and dream.**

#### Children plots

Children need quick success when they start gardening. Therefore it is important that a plot for children is created in a sunny space. When the children are small very often a garden in a box is sufficient. Or for several more grown up children a round plot would be best. A round garden in fact can be divided in cake portions.

#### A space to dream

An agreeable space under plants where one can read without been disturbed and relax – can be realized very easily with a pergola created in a quiet place of the garden. The thick leaves and flower curtains protect us from the wind and from being seen and still allow us to enjoy nature. On hot days the thick leaves bring cool shadow. A pergola gives in addition the protection from being seen and the shadow an interesting effect to the garden. There is nearly no limit in its creation and planting as there exist so numerous kinds and sorts of adequate plants.

#### Where is the best space for the compost heap?

If you get a plot that has been used before, the compost heap generally has already got its place in the garden. It is important that it is situated in half-shadow. Of course the compost heap has not to disturb the neighbour.

#### The green house

In many Swiss regions it is nearly impossible to cultivate tomatoes in the garden. If the summer is fresh and humid the plants certainly grow better in a greenhouse. But there is no guarantee that the tomatoes will not be attacked by an illness. If you are skilled you can create the greenhouse yourself. Tomatoes can be grown for several years on the same place. Therefore it is important to choose straight away the adequate place. During a visit of my allotment garden site I observed in which direction the greenhouses were built. Most gardeners choose the South, West or North. It is important that

the plants and the fruit receive much sunshine.

#### A flowering paradise on a small space

Even on a small space a green paradise can be created. The conditions for success are as follows: you must limit yourselves to a few key points. This does not mean that the garden has only little to offer! On the contrary: as the time is passing quickly if you have much to do, a small garden seems bigger if you have different things to discover. That means that you could decide not to create a lawn but instead a covered sitting place. This one could be situated in a hidden place. A Clematis flourishing several times fixed to an arch or an obelisk needs less space then a whole flowerbed with roses.

#### Make small gardens appear larger

Some gardens bear something special in themselves: some reflect harmony and quietness, others are full of surprises. Small gardens should appear as big as possible. Therefore you should divide your ground in several different areas which cannot all be seen at the same time. Great effects can be created by view axis. They draw your eyes to a special important point in the garden. In bigger gardens this could be a pavilion or a sculpture. In small gardens a trough for birds or a vase could bring the same effect. Exceptionally nice plants as for example a flowering plant in a pot, an ornamental plant, a tree cut in a special way or a climbing rose plant are adequate for this. Especially in small gardens you are advised to have a clear ordered conception. Important elements are geometric forms and a symmetric construction. For a simple and impressive symmetrical effect you can use trees and ornamental plants with a precise cutting. You see that even in a small garden there are nearly no limits to your fantasy.

**Article published in the Swiss allotment garden review no. 3/2008**



**A small garden needs an ordered, clear concept.**



**Instead of wood kiwi plants climb on stone pillars.**



**A climbing rose can replace a whole rose bed.**



France:

## The example of Tourcoing as far as health is concerned: And this all was initiated already 10 years ago

G rard LEFEBVRE, president of the allotment garden association of Tourcoing

An allotment garden association has to cooperate locally with other associations.

A first example is the partnership with an association for handicapped people called »the white butterfly«.

We have laid out two gardens with a surface of 1.000 m2 in two different sites. A very competent teacher acquaints young mentally handicapped

soil and to plant, they need people to tell them what to do.

I only can report that this experience is very positive. If we are not positively minded we only have to go and visit these boys and girls in order to be again motivated.

We have as well liberated a plot for the "Bethlehem" association.

It is an association that takes care

they can bring the fruit of their work to the seat of their association and share it in common can help to give them again pleasure for working...

A garden plot has as well been given to thick people in a day hospital (in relation with a psychiatric hospital of Arment eres). Life in the fresh air helps them to recover their equilibrium.

I will now try to relate a project that is very far reaching but in which we believe. We hope to be able to realise it next year in partnership with the Bethel Formation and the local authorities of Tourcoing. The aim of the Bethel Formation is the reinsertion of people in society.

This project consists in laying out a site with, in the middle of different gardening plots, a house, with a room to give lectures and small boxes to put the garden tools in.

The aim is to welcome here by groups of twenty people, persons excluded from society and to try via gardening to readapt them to the social and professional life.

It is planned to teach them besides gardening writing and reading, to teach them how to express and communicate, to allow them to get acquainted with different professions and the life in a group, to balance their private life and to learn to manage their financial resources. Readapting somebody to life is a difficult even sometimes impossible mission but we are convinced that being stimulated by an activity in the fresh air, things will be made easier...

persons with gardening in groups of 8 persons. In fact these people present difficulties for a reinsertion in the world of labour. The aim of this activity is to put a small plot at their disposal. This plot is situated near their domicile. Additionally one has to ask allotment gardeners to help them. Even if these young people know how to work the

of young drug addicted persons and tries to give them again a positive approach to live. In this case I would recommend to be careful as far as the size of the surface, put at their disposal, is concerned. In fact these people are very difficult and it is not possible to ask a too important effort from them. Nevertheless the fact that





# Belgium:

## Allotment gardens in Flanders (1<sup>st</sup> part)

Study initiated by the president Alexandre VERCAMER  
and the secretary general Noël GHESQUIERE

### An analysis of the current situation

In July 2007 the University of Ghent's Department of Mobility and Spatial Planning completed a study of allotments in Flanders, commissioned by the Monitoring and Study section of the Flemish Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. The present article is a summary of its most important conclusions. The full text can be downloaded from the website of the Flemish Government.

### The scope of the study

The research conducted focused on the following topics:

- an analysis of the legal and policy context of allotment parks in Flanders.
- a listing of all the allotment parks in Flanders and the Brussels Capital Region and a discussion of the quantitative, qualitative and social differences between them.
- establishing a quantitative guideline to determine allotment requirements.
- a strengths/weaknesses analysis of allotment-related issues from an economic, social and ecological perspective.
- a survey conducted in a representative allotment park in order to arrive at a user profile and to find out why users want to have allotments.
- Formulating policy recommendations.

	No. of parks	No. of allot.	Gross area	%
<i>Province of Antwerp</i>	48	2,395	68.2	50%
<i>Province of East Flanders</i>	21	1,016	29.5	22%
<i>Province of West Flanders</i>	16	383	9.1	7%
<i>Province of Limburg</i>	7	210	8,1	6%
<i>Province of Flemish Brabant + Brussels</i>	22	597	22	16%
<i>Total</i>	114	4,601	136.9	100%

**Table 1: Number of allotments per province**



## Survey

### Number of allotments

Flanders and the Brussels Capital Region together have a total of 4,600 allotments, spread over 114 allotment parks with a total area of 137 ha. Half of the allotments are located in the province of Antwerp and the overwhelming majority of these are in the Greater Antwerp area. West-Flanders and Limburg have the smallest number of allotments. This figure is very low compared to neighbouring countries. By way of comparison, the Netherlands currently has around 250,000 allotments, Berlin has around 80,000 allotments and Amsterdam some 6,000, spread over 40 parks with a total area of approximately 300 ha.

### Quality

Most allotment parks provide a level of amenities ranging from 'low' to 'very low'. Only 14% have a canteen, 7% provide electricity, 9% provide toilets and 5% drinking water. Moreover, 40% of all allotment parks are located in the immediate vicinity of a nuisance-producing noise source (railway line, motorway, road or airport) and 6% have soil pollution problems.

### Allotments and urban planning

Half of all the allotment parks are located in zones where the overall land use designation appears to be roughly compatible with allotment gardening: 36% are situated on park land, 5% on agricultural land, 7% on land set aside for daytime recreation and 2% (in Geraardsbergen) in an area specifically designated as a 'small garden area'. On the other hand, however, 35% of the allotment parks may well disappear in the short or medium term as a consequence of the land use for which the surrounding area has been earmarked, for example, as a residential area, residential area expansion zone or for business premises.

### Sociological aspects

Half of all the allotment holders are pensioners. There is a noticeably higher proportion of allotment hold-

ers of immigrant origin in urban areas than is the case in rural municipalities. In some districts of Antwerp this is as high as 90%. The average distance between home and allotment is 2.83 km, 17% of allotment holders live less than 1 km from their allotments and 68% do not have their own garden at home.

### Allotments in Sint-Amandsberg (Ghent)

#### Management

60% of the allotment parks are located on land belonging to a public authority, 17% of the land is the property of the Belgian national railways' holding company and 20% belongs to private individuals or organizations.

53% of the allotment parks are managed by the non-profit organization vzw De Volkstuin and 3% by the non-profit organization vzw Velt.

#### The social dimension

Allotments clearly meet a real need for green spaces in very densely populated areas. Allotment parks constitute a special component of the green space provision in cities due to their semi-public character

and their dense network of unsealed paths. In this way they are a complementary addition to other public green space amenities such as sports fields, urban parks, natural spaces, etc. Allotments also have a low financial threshold, meaning that, in principle at least, no section of the population is excluded on grounds of lack of financial means. The average rental price per year is 0,14 €/m<sup>2</sup>.

For a 200 m<sup>2</sup> plot (the median size of an allotment plot in Flanders) this comes to 28 € per annum.

Finally, allotment use is not tied to any particular section of the population or age group. Although traditionally retired men constitute the most significant user group for allotment parks, there has been a gradual diversification of user profiles since the 1980s. For women and young people the most important reasons for having an allotment are growing organic vegetable and recreation, while in the case of individuals of immigrant origin important motivations are being able to cultivate vegetables used in the cuisine of their home culture and the desire to be in the open air.



#### The economic dimension

Allotments are an extensive form of spatial use – the revenue per unit of surface area is low –making them vulnerable, given the higher returns which can be obtained from more intensive forms of ground use, if land prices rise. It goes without saying that, in terms of crop yields, production levels from allotments are extremely small when compared to the yields obtained from land used for conventional agriculture<sup>1</sup>.

Be that as it may, allotments can still be regarded as a means of keeping down the cost of managing public parks. The management and maintenance costs of allotment parks are minimal compared to those of other types of public park, as the users of allotments are contractually obliged

to maintain both their own plots and the communal infrastructure. Creating allotments in urban parks can thus make a contribution to reducing the overall cost of public park management. Moreover, practical experience in the Brussels Capital Region reveals that integrating an allotment park into a large land area augments the number of users, broadens the user group and results in a more balanced distribution of visitors over the day, which in turn leads to increased social control.

Furthermore, from the perspective of use and enjoyment value, allotments can also be regarded as having an open space function with a high social return. Social return is calculated by comparing the costs incurred (the initial laying out of the allotments, maintenance, in-

frastructure and management) with the returns secured (number of users, diversity of users, frequency of use, time spent on site and accessibility).

Finally, from a socio-economic perspective allotments can be regarded as a tool for economic correction which ameliorates the shortcomings of the free capitalist market mechanism by reducing dependence on fluctuating food prices by allowing users to grow their own food.

#### To be followed





## National Meetings

### Austria

- Seminar on legal questions, certificat on good practice required by the law on plant protection

### Finland

- August 1 - 2, 2009: National congress in Kouvola

Training session for members of the new executive board to be elected in the next congress

### France

- Organization of several meetings aiming at giving a formation to the executive board members of the affiliated associations.
- Participation in several meetings organized by the Ministry for environment protection on the reduction of the use of pesticides in non agricultural areas.

### Germany

- The central German federation (BDG) organizes 7 seminars ( 3 days each) with approximately 50 participants coming from the national federations affiliated to the central federation on following subjects:
  - Legal questions
  - Specific gardening matters
  - Society and social questions
  - Public relations
  - Environment protection/Health

■ June 14, 2009: Day of the Garden in Reichenbach/Vogtland: Opening session for the whole country. The motto of this public relation event is: „Generation allotment garden - relax, lean, play !“

■ June 4 and 5, 2009: Allotment Garden congress in Potsdam : Information on a specific Internet site under: [www. Kleingärtnerkongress.de](http://www.Kleingärtnerkongress.de)

### The Netherlands

- June 14, 2009: Annual congress in Utrecht
- Several meetings and workshops on the subject „natural gardening“.

### Switzerland

- June 6, 2009: 45th Assemby of delegates in Nottwil

## Documentation

### Denmark

- Book celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Danish federation of Allotment Gardens describing the Federation's history

### France

- Survey presenting the activities made in 2008 by the study bureau of the federation (concerning the creation of gardens at the bottom of flathouses and in quarters laid out according to ecological rules)

### Germany

- Brochure: Gardening according to nature
- Brochure: Biodiversity of cultivated plants in the allotment gardens

- Study „The town planning, ecological and social importance of the allotment garden movement“ ordered by the federal ministry for transport, construction and town development.

- Weekly garden advice by dpa

- Monthly garden advice on Internet

- Monthly newsletter

- The review: Der Fachberater no. 1 -4 /2008

- „Grüne Schriftenreihe“ no. 194 - 199

### **The Netherlands**

- Innovation Network - Leisure gardens as green engine (Dutch)

- City Council of The Hague - Allotment and Leisure Garden Policy

### **Switzerland**

- Information paper on neophytes

## Useful informations

### **Belgium**

- According to the statutes the federation of South Belgium (Wallonia) will propose the president of the national federation for a 3 years' mandate

### **France**

- Beginning of a survey on national level on the production of an allotment garden in partnership with the ministry for agriculture and the firm Viniflor.

- Participation in the creation of an international network on urbanism and nature.

### **The Netherlands**

- In November 2007 the Dutch Parliament decided to make a fund of 4 million Euros available for stimulating the development of new allotment sites. This was proposed and decided by Parliament after an intensive lobbying by the AVVN. In 2008 it helped several city councils to develop plans that could be subsidized. The projects will start in 2009.

- Several activities with the city council of Utrecht concerning the project „Toolkit Ecological Gardening“.

- Development of a new AVVN general website in 2009 and a new AVVN website for children and gardening.

- Results of the research project „Vitamine G3“ on health aspects and allotment gardening

### **Switzerland**

- Important loss of allotment garden sites due to constructions in the city of Basel, Bern, Lausanne and Geneva



## LAW on allotment gardens

### Denmark

- The laws were amended in order to underline that the rules issued by the federation concerning price fixing should always and uniformly apply to sales of allotment garden property

### France

Proposal: Creation of 15.000 allotment garden plots over the 5 coming years situated on 250 - 300 hectares.

The project is estimated to cost 100 million Euros. The numerous beneficial aspects of allotment gardens are the motivation of this proposal:

- Allotment gardens are an area of fellowship and exchange and stimulate the insertion of people.
- They contribute to a landscape creation of quality and allow a good transition between urban areas of different nature.
- Gardening is as well good for the physical and mental health and contributes to the food security.
- The gardeners are citizens with ecological awareness. The allotment gardens are uncomparable reserves of biodiversity in the town areas.
- The gardeners are responsible citizens and work by respecting the environment. Schoolgardens are laid out.
- By numerous different activities the gardeners contribute to the education for a sustainable development.

### Great-Britain

- 10 - 16 August, 2009: National allotment week



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# Cultural landscape as the heritage of Russia

Marina Kuleshova, Russian Research Institute for Natural and Culture Heritage Moscow

*Monastery Novodiewitschi*

Heritage is a system of accepted values and assets, created and preserved by the society with the aim to pass it to the next generation. It absorbs the cultural stratum of the social sphere and is a precondition of its vitality and sustainable development, in analogy to the genetic code of the biological species. Every landscape possesses some heritage assets. However, in heritage conservation practice and land management these are specific outstanding landscapes that acquire the status of protected areas. Every landscape might be identified by reference to the cultural landscape concept. Cultural landscape is an output of the targeted interaction of culture and nature and therefore it serves as an ideal model for solution of the problems between nature and society.

Cultural landscape conservation and management in Russia is based on a system of legalization and management acts on nature conserva-

tion, cultural heritage protection, land and urban constructions regulation. The key heritage laws are the law on Strictly Protected Natural Areas (1994) and the Law on Cultural Heritage Sites (monuments of history and culture) of the Peoples in the Russian Federation (2002).

## Categories for the protected

The Law on Strictly Protected Natural Areas (1994) comprises a continuing list of the categories for protected areas and is aimed at the specification of the legal norms for existing protected areas (zapovedniks, national parks, natural parks, monuments of nature, zakazniks, spas, recreational and medicinal sites botanical gardens and dendrological parks). It is possible to establish new categories of protected natural areas, but their specific legal regulations at the national level are not enforced. Among the mentioned categories national parks play a particular role for cultural landscape

protection. This is due to the fact that their legal establishment objectives include conservation and restoration of historical and cultural objects. It is the national parks where the most viable examples of a harmonious interaction between man and nature are represented in the specific cultural landscape types. Several national parks in Russia have elaborated special programmes on conservation of cultural landscapes.

## Legal recognition of cultural landscapes

The Law on Cultural Heritage Sites (monuments of history and culture) of the Peoples in the Russian Federation regulates the legal norms on tangible heritage sites, subdividing them into individual monuments, ensembles and sites – by analogy with the typology proposed by the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention). In a number of sites the

cultural landscapes are represented – the first and as yet the only example of cultural landscapes having legal status at national level. One of the key notions in this law is the subject for protection – i.e. the list of assets that are not to be destroyed, changed or modified by human activity. Economic activity is limited to ensure that the objects or site are protected. In the Russian legislation there is no such cultural heritage category as the “historical and cultural protected area”. In fact, these territories do exist - they are museum-reserves, established by governmental acts. By their functions and institutional type they are similar to national parks and play a most important role in the conservation of the heritage – estates of the aristocracy, monasteries, urban, rural and archaeological landscapes, and battlefields are represented in the museum-reserves with exceptional diversity.

With regard to immanent values in the landscapes and/or in the environment, there is insufficient legal development, though essential prerequisites for such regulation exist within the system of urban planning and development, as well as in the currently established legal procedures of environmental impact assessment and historical and cultural expert appraisal.

Every society embodies a system of values, where the landscape has its



**Protection of the cultural landscape: Open air museum Tal'cy**



**Rural landscape**



**Aristocratic estates**

own place. Social cataclysms in the twentieth century have destroyed the traditional vision where landscape as a place for living, subsistence and social accomplishment had promised a significant sphere. While traditional community is intrinsically connected to its physical environment, transformed into the cultural landscape, semantically saturated and enriched, and used for cultural self-identification through its historical contents, the modern society is characterized by poor environment perception and segregation from anything beyond individual property. With democratic institutions still poorly developed, the

landscape, subject to general laws and treated as a consumer commodity finds its destiny determined by technocratic decisions and profitable investments. If a society does not perceive its traditional landscape as an intrinsic cultural asset and a basic prerequisite for sustainable development, it has no future. The revelation and clarification of the cultural landscape as a national heritage is a crucial task to be considered and implemented at all levels of territorial management and land use in Russia.

**Article published in the review  
NATUROPA 102/204**



**Immanent values of the landscape**



*Wind mill in Palma*

## In Spain : Different approaches

Margarita Ortega, General Secretariat for Territory and Biodiversity

In Europe the territory is no longer natural. It has been changed fundamentally by the hand of man by building and cultivation. After a long process of transformation, territory becomes a “great construction”, with its own history and its own language, a great focus of culture, a great and complex work of art considering its scale, the fruit of many civilisations. Like all constructions, its language is expressed through signs. This language and its signs are the values that shape its identity. If the language is lost, construction is interrupted. The landscape and the natural and cultural heritage, which we might call the „territorial heritage“, are the language and signs that describe the territory. From a territorial and sustainable angle, these signs acquire a strategic value and explain its history

and its values, but above all they set the rules for its transformation.

This strategic value of the “territorial heritage” was brought to the fore in European thinking on territorial development, mainly in the European Union and the Council of Europe.

### **Innovative guidance**

The thinking has gone beyond the theoretical approach and has taken tangible form as a series of documents (Community Spatial Development Model (EU 1999); Guiding Principles for Sustainable Development of the European Continent (Council of Europe 2002) and European Landscape Convention (Council of Europe 2000) which, despite the fact that they are not binding, form a common and international frame of reference to

define the treatment of heritage and landscape on the basis of this new „territorial dimension“. These documents do not propose new tools, but provide innovative guidance for the better use of conventional heritage and landscape management tools.

The basis is the new “sustainable spatial development” concept, which is defined according to the application of two relatively recent basic principles: the principle of territorial cohesion (combined with economic and social cohesion) and the principle of sustainable development (Ljubljana Declaration, 13th CEMAT, September 2003). Developing these principles calls for the simultaneous study of four aspects in order to understand and apply the policies: environmental, economic, social and



*Landscape on the isle Palma*

cultural. These new criteria alter the traditional sectoral approaches, abolishing the isolation of these policies that has generally been respected up to now in order to tackle heritage and landscape.

In accordance with these principles, one of the territorial aims under consideration for Europe is “creative, innovative and intelligent development of the territorial heritage and the landscape” with a view to highlighting regional identity and preserving diversity as fundamental factors in development.

#### **Landscape and heritage are essential factors in spatial development**

Consequently landscape and heritage are essential factors in spatial development, with special features.

Because they are capable of showing the state of the territory and because they can be objectively described, they are an important tool for standardisation of spatial models. This is one of the aims of the ESPON project. The Role and Spatial Effects of Cultural Heritage and Identity. They are an important factor in citizens' quality of life and environment. Heritage and landscape factors, both urban and rural, become meaningful only in as-

sociation with the use of territory. They are also economic assets and an opportunity for regions and local communities with regard to their pulling power for economic activities other than tourism; hence the importance of increasing the awareness of the population and of its participation in recognising it. The European Rural Heritage Observation Guide, CEMAT 2003 is a good example.

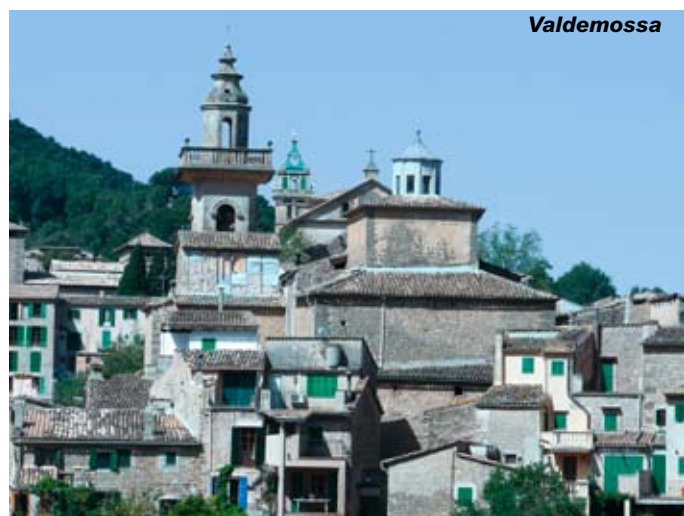
Landscape and heritage are dynamic; in other words, they have been transformed and are transformable, which keeps them from being regarded as “fossils”. They present a dual challenge: conservation and creative management. This involves applying the principle of “active conservation” with new forms of management incorporating the three conventional types of operation protection, conservation and restoration, supplemented by more modern techniques. In addition,

heritage must be regarded as an integral part of the system, like routes or corridors, with regard to the concept of “site” or “monument”, in the context of integrated spatial development strategies.

All these aspects strengthen a new relationship involving heritage, landscape and spatial development.

By way of summary, it is important to emphasise their strategic role for diagnosis and action on the territory and in the city; secondly, their European dimension requiring action on larger spatial scales, such as the interregional or transnational level, and lastly, the need for new forms of management incorporating active participation by citizens.

**Article published in the review  
NATUROPA no. 102/2004**



*Valdemossa*



*Olive trees*



# Landscape and nature

Raymond-Pierre Lebeau, Chairman of Committee for the Activities



## Coast

Landscape results from combinations of many factors, both natural and cultural, which have developed over the course of time in line with individual geographical considerations. These factors continue to shape the landscape though a dynamic process, viewed by man in a variety of ways, depending on whether he is participant or spectator. In Europe, the landscape forms a whole, including both socio-economic and cultural aspects and a natural dimension as the living environment of the flora and fauna. Accordingly, it is not possible to separate the concepts of “cultural landscape” and “natural landscape” as they are both extremely closely interrelated (the terraced approach to farming in the Mediterranean regions, extensively cultivated plains, selection forests).

As both the natural habitat for wildlife and the setting for economic,

social and cultural development, the landscape forms spatial units which have developed in line with individual natural conditions and historical factors, all of which continue to evolve in accordance with specific dynamic processes.

### An immense diversity

One of the things that make Europe so different from other continents is the immense diversity of landscapes within short distances. One of the reasons put forward to explain the natural aspect of this uniqueness is that Europe is the only continent where vast plains at low altitude, formerly rich in vegetation, were covered by glaciers, which subsequently retreated forming extremely diversified natural ecosystems.

The areas not covered by the glaciers then became home to more xerophilous species, and continue

to serve as a habitat for these rarest and most endangered species, such as the endemics (the laurel forests of the Azores, the fresh-water sponges of Lake Ohrid (“the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”), vestiges of the species living in the Tertiary period in Europe).

These diverse landscapes have, of course, also given rise to diverse approaches to farming, and human ingenuity has adapted to the specific natural conditions of each region in order to turn to account its economic potential and development, in turn transforming the surrounding landscape.

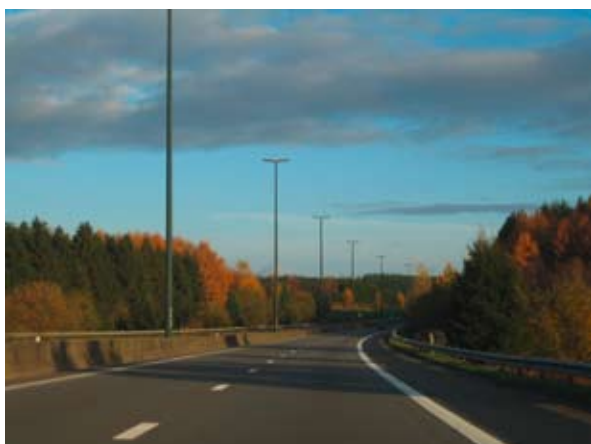
This economic “dynamism”, profitable for man though it may be, has unfortunately in recent decades been excessive and has radically changed the natural and semi-natural landscapes, divesting them of all their



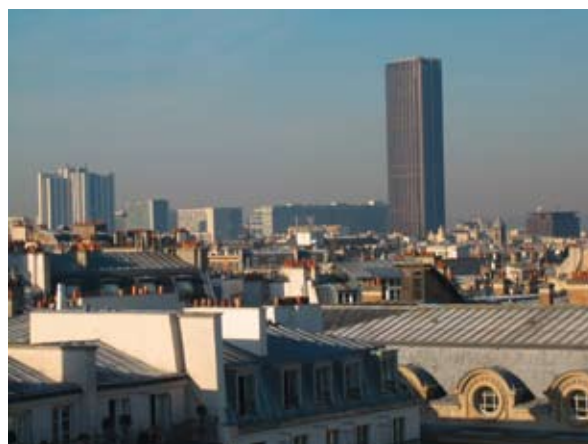
***Terraced approach in Palma***



***Industry zone near Dijon***



***The areas are dividing up the territory, destroying the links between the habitats necessary for the flora and fauna or creating impenetrable barriers.***



***Roofs of Paris***

originality. As a result, there has been a considerable loss of an extraordinary age-old heritage.

While the disappearance of landscapes close to the natural state may be viewed as an early warning sign of the receding biological and landscape diversity of an area, the blame cannot be attributed solely to intensive farming or unorthodox forestry.

Today, high among the factors contributing to the deterioration of the landscape are urban development and the fragmentation of a region by transport infrastructure.

#### **Deterioration factors**

In Switzerland, over a twelve-year period (1978-1989), on average almost one square metre (0,86 m<sup>2</sup>) per second of nature disappeared as a result of urban development. This is

the equivalent of ten football pitches per day.

In addition to the exponential growth in urban development, there has been increased fragmentation of “residual” areas, dividing up the territory, destroying the links between the habitats necessary for the flora and fauna or creating impenetrable barriers.

This is why quite rightly, the landscape as such has become a major political issue, involving all European citizens. In this context, the adoption by the Council of Europe member states of the European Landscape Convention is of such significance, aiming as it does to perpetuate the heritage of our cultures and natural resources, which are so much a feature of the pan-European landscape. All the work carried out by the Committee for the Activities of the Coun-

cil of Europe in the field of Biological and Landscape Diversity (CO-DBP) help highlight the landscape dimension in the various fields of the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy. The ultimate aim of the Pan-European Ecological Network (PEEN) is to secure the links between the flora and fauna habitats of Europe, thereby compensating for the fragmentation of landscapes observed in certain parts of Europe. A further objective of the strategy is to promote a sustainable use of landscapes in carrying out sectoral economic activities, through the incorporation of nature and landscape conservation and management requirements. This is a practical approach to achieving the objective of sustainable development.

***Article published in the review  
NATUROPA no. 98/2003***



# History landscape and landscape history

Serge Grappin, Official responsible for "Heritage" with the Dijon Education Authority



The heritage concept, which used to be confined to the transmission of the "patrimony", has been extended considerably recently, with the landscape taking on increasing importance in our heritage education programmes.

At the same time, the growing interest in the environment has been reflected in a boom in historic and archaeological research into the formation and transformation of the heritage.

The convergence of these two trends has prompted the education authorities to discuss environmental education, a debate which we might illustrate with an extract from a charter produced by the Dijon Education Authority's Environmental Commission (France):

"One of the aims of environmental education is to combat selfish attitudes to the environment and attempt to change social behaviour. The emphasis must be on the environmentalist conception, bearing in mind that while human beings have rights they also have duties vis-à-vis nature. This conception, prescribes reasonable

and reasoned management of the planet, a sensitive and national approach...."

One of the primary means of attaining this objective is through environmental classes, enable pupils to "discover the importance of the environment, starting with local natural milieus and then gradually extending the exploration to other areas". These classes could be run in accordance with four principles: transplantation, integration in the school curricula, interdisciplinarity and restitution.

## The first European environmental class

A further dimension has been added to this action through implementation of these principles, particularly transplantation, and the will to develop environmental education in Europe: from 3 to 8 June 2002 the first European environmental class involving both French and German schoolchildren was held in the village of Saint-Romain, Burgundy, France, a listed site and also an area providing special protection for the urban architectural and landscape heritage.

Two environmental education facilities known as "Life" and "Natura 2000" also illustrate the importance of the animal and vegetable species that can be encountered in this particularly rich and diversified area, which was identified by an educational team.

The title "regards croisés" (looking at each other) stressed the importance attached to both the interdisciplinary approach to the environment and to respect for the points of view of schoolchildren of different nationalities and from a wide variety of socio-

cultural backgrounds.

The children were first of all involved in a landscape interpretation prioritising the sensory approach, which showed them that the landscape is not a frozen, "sacrosanct" image but rather results from a complex history combining the "natural" development of the environment with human intervention.

This understanding of the dynamics behind the formation of landscapes helped the pupils to get their spatio-temporal and societal bearings. A number of historians and archaeologists, together with a technician from the National Forestry Office, an official responsible for amenities and an artist, explained their specific approaches to the pupils and initiated discussions which highlighted the complementarity of viewpoints and the need to involve local populations in environmental management through information, consultation and democratic decision-making. The first European environmental class demonstrated the correspondence between natural and cultural heritage and the importance of developing education and the responsibility of each individual. This extension of the landscape concept has therefore helped reinforce citizenship, particularly at the European level.

The success of this activity stemmed not only from the conviction and competence of the teachers and cultural operators involved, but also from the steadfast financial backing of the authorities.

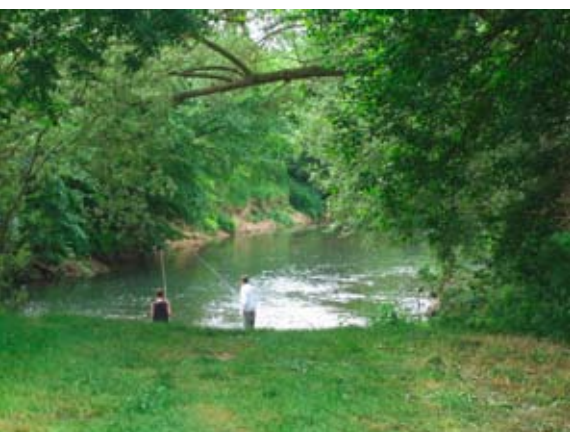
**Article published in the review  
NATUROPA no. 98/2003**

# Water and health - Need for concerted action

Alán Pintér



**Seafront by Cala Figuera (Palma)**



**The River "Ouche" near Dijon (France)**

Adequate supply of safe and healthy water is essential for human life. Lack of safe water is the cause of diseases and ill health in many places of the world. To ensure the supply of healthy water requires a harmonised approach in all respects of water management: protection of water resources, adequate water treatment and distribution, adequate sanitation and sustainable use.

## Current trends

The WHO European Region – with its 51 countries – comprises 870 million people, out of which several million

people suffer from the adverse effects of lack of adequate water supply. Human health hazards mainly come from the risk of infection with micro-biological, parasitic or other biological agents. Diarrhoeal diseases, such as typhoid, cholera, bacillar and amoebic dysentery, and also hepatitis A, are the most common ones. Although the Newly Independent States (NIS) are particularly affected, outbreaks of hepatitis A have been reported in Hungary, Spain, and Albania. Cryptosporidium, a protozoon which is highly resistant to disinfectants, causes diseases all over Europe – for example, several thousand cases of Cryptosporidiosis have been reported from the United Kingdom alone.

Economic deprivation and consequent disconnection to water supply has resulted in increased incidence of hepatitis A and shigellosis, even in the United Kingdom. In some countries, especially in NIS and other countries with economic transition, this economically driven, voluntary restriction on use of water creates the risk and sometimes the real disease.

A recent survey, carried out in Hungary within the framework of the National Environmental Health Action Programme (NEHAP), has clearly shown that economic constraints (dramatic increase of water price) led to the reopening of old wells which had not been used for many years.



Water from 56% of the wells studied proved to be inadequate for human consumption, mainly because of high nitrate concentration.

Chemical contamination of drinking water is increasing. Inorganic toxic metals (lead, copper), arsenic and fluor (sometimes of geological origin and not contamination), nitrate and nitrite pesticides are due to industrial and agricultural activity and might cause diseases. High nitrate levels have been recorded in many eastern and western European countries. Sewage-contaminated surface waters have frequently been shown to be a significant source of gastroenteric and other disorders for people using them for recreation. However plausible, the possible adverse health effects are rarely the driving force to improve the situation.

The lack of effective surveillance systems in many countries prevents the full assessment of the risk of infectious diseases – outbreaks are not

even recorded in many countries.

#### A binding instrument

When the WHO Regional Office for Europe-EURO, in preparation for the Third Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health, reviewed the priority environmental health problems, not surprisingly the water-related adverse health effects, diseases and outbreaks were identified as high priorities. Water and health were consequently put in the centre of the London Ministerial Conference. More than 40 countries of the WHO-EURO and the UN/ECE countries decided to establish an international instrument, binding in nature, which addresses the water management issues from the human health point of view.

#### Aims of the Protocol

The Water and Health Protocol to the 1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, to be signed in London by the Ministers of Health and Environment, will provide a framework for taking effective measures for prevention, control and reduction of water-related diseases.

The scope of the Protocol will apply to surface freshwater, groundwater, estuaries, coastal waters, enclosed waters available for swimming, water in the course of abstraction, transport, treatment or supply, waste water throughout the course of collection, transport, treatment and discharge or reuse.

The main provisions of the Protocol aim for a holistic approach in combating water-related diseases. These concern:

- adequate supply of wholesome drinking water;
- adequate sanitation of a standard which sufficiently protects human health and the environment;
- effective protection of water resources ; and
- protection from adverse health effects through use of recreational waters.



**Mountain River near Innsbruck (Austria)**



**Stagnant water in Palma**



**Fountain in Dissentis (Switzerland)**

#### Essentials partnerships

The Ministerial Conference in London will focus on actions in partnership. Prevention of water-related diseases by implementing the Protocol requires active participation and strong collaboration by national and international agencies, governmental and intergovernmental bodies and the public at large.

Although not yet accepted and signed, several countries are planning to establish pilot projects for implementation of the provisions of the Protocol. This is a clear sign of the determination and will of the countries for action. If this determination is supported by financial institutions for those countries in greatest need, Europe will witness a significant improvement on water-related health.

**Article published in the review  
NATUROPA no. 90/1999**

# Climate change – What consequences for health?

Roberto Bertollini and Bettina Menne,  
WHO Regional Office for Europe



**The flooding does not stop in front of the allotment garden sites  
for example (Bern)**

European temperature has increased by 0.8 ° C since 1890. An overall increase in average annual temperatures is projected for the next decades. Changes in the precipitation patterns have been observed, although precipitation trends show complicated patterns in time and space. Additionally, above Europe, the amount of ozone in the atmosphere fell by 5 % between 1975 and 1995, allowing more UV-B radiation to enter the lower atmosphere and reach the earth's surface.

Hippocrates has already described the regional differences in climate and their relationship to states of health. Climate change is likely to have wide-ranging and serious health consequences for the European populations. Although human beings have

a great capacity to adapt to varied climates, there are still some special vulnerable groups, such as refugees, children and the elderly, which are particularly sensitive to climate variability and change.

## Rising temperatures

Warmer temperatures, altered patterns of precipitation and air masses directly affect human well-being. Outside the comfortable range of human tolerance, as temperature increases, thermal stress leads progressively to greater discomfort. During heat waves in cities in Greece, Germany and the Netherlands, death rates increased over 50 % above normal baseline levels. Elderly people are the most vulnerable to the effects of thermal stress.

In cold and temperate locations, daily deaths increase as daily wintertime temperature decreases. However, this rate of increase appears to be considerably less steep than the relationship between mortality and increasing temperature in the summer. Social and behavioural adaptations to cold play an important role in preventing winter deaths in high latitude countries.

The spread and concentration of air pollutants are very dependent on prevailing weather conditions, air currents, temperature variations, humidity and precipitation. Large, slowly moving anticyclones may cover an area for several days and allow particles and gases to accumulate.

## Floods

There are indications that the frequency of extreme weather events may have increased. Recent floods in Poland, the Czech Republic and Italy have caused hundreds of deaths. Little is known about other physical and psychosocial health effects of floods. Observations of the consequences of the floods in the Czech Republic have shown an increase of infectious diseases.

Most health effects are not directly related to climatic determinants but might be related to complex ecological changes, such as land-use changes, forced migration (due to sea level rise, for instance), material loss, loss of shelter and livelihoods.

A change in the distribution of infectious agents and their carriers may be among the first signs of those ecological changes and synergisms.

## Increase in parasites



Some vector organisms (anopheles, aedes, ticks) are dependent on climate conditions, as are the life-cycle stages of the infecting parasite within the vector. There is some evidence that the distribution of some vectors has already changed within Europe. The distribution of ticks in Sweden has expanded between 1980 and 1994. Data show that changes in distribution and density over time are correlated with changes in seasonal daily minimum temperatures within a complex set of ecological relationships. Ticks might transmit Lyme's disease and tick-borne encephalitis (TBE). An increase in incidence of Lyme's disease and TBE has been reported from some countries.

Climate directly influences the reproductive and biting rates of the malaria vector, anopheles. Temperature influences the development stages of the malaria agent (plasmodium) within the mosquito. Malaria is resurgent in Europe and is endemic in Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and Turkey. It is difficult to predict the future extension of malaria, as it depends on a lot of factors such as population sensitivity, control measures and health care systems preparedness.

#### The "food" vector

A seasonal pattern is often observed with cases of food-borne diseases, peaking in the summer months.

Warmer springs and summers and warmer winters, in combination with inappropriate food behaviour, may contribute to the increase of the inci-

dence of food-borne diseases.

#### Harmful effects of UV radiation

The effect of increased UV radiation on human health is well known. Harmful effects will be on the skin (e.g. skin cancer and photo-ageing), on the eyes (e.g. photokeratitis, acute solar retinopathy and cataract) and on the immune system, with an increased susceptibility to infection.

There is some evidence that the human population is exposed to some degree of climate change and increased ultraviolet irradiation, therefore prevention, mitigation and adaptation strategies are required to be implemented by all countries.

*Article published in the review  
NATUROPA no. 90/1999*



**Selhofen**



**Bern**

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HYPHEN is published semi-annually by the Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux a.s.b.l.

**Editor:** Malou WEIRICH, Office International

**Distribution:** E-Mail by the Office International

**Concept and realization:** Zentralverband der Kleingärtner und Siedler Österreichs

**Layout/DTP:** Werbegrafik-Design Karin Mayerhofer, BeSch, Ing. Beate Scherer

**Source of pictures:**

Marie-Therese Klein, the federations from Sweden, the Netherlands, Finland, Switzerland, Belgium and Office International

**Date:** April 2009