



SCANDINAVIAN LANDSCAPE FORUM

A successful arena for a multi-stakeholder dialogue



Rapport 2013:2

BIOSFÄROMRÅDE VÄNERSKÄRGÅRDEN MED KINNEKULLE
Patrizia Garzena, Civilscape 2013



**The conference was part of the project Implementing the European Landscape
Convention in a Biosphere Reserve”**

Project manager: Ove Ringsby, Biosphere office

Author of conference report: Patrizia Garzena, Civilscape 2013

Layout: Johanna Olsson, Biosphere office

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What could bring together a fisherman, a National Heritage Board officer, a 10-years-old schoolchild, a regional planner, an 86-years-old painter, an expert in sustainable development? What do they have in common to share with each other? Which word can they all use to trigger a dialogue?

Landscape is the final answer for a vast array of needs, it is the ultimate arena where different interests and visions meet, merge and interact in a unique, generative way.

The first Scandinavian Landscape Forum, held in Mariestad (Sweden) from September the 12th to the 14th 2013, brought successfully together different voices and experiences stretching from the international debate to the very local talks, from the abstract concept of participatory democracy to the very tangible action of a bunch of teachers and pupils that proudly managed to save their island's school from the side effects of effectiveness and budget cuts.

The Forum was promoted by two of our Swedish member organizations the Unesco Biosphere Reserve Lake Vänern Archipelago-Mount Kinnekulle and the Swedish Local Heritage Movement in partnership with the Swedish National Heritage Board, Västra Götalandsregionen Cultural Affairs Secretariat, Västra Götaland County Administrative Board and Gothenburg University. The three-days conference, as the CivilScape president Inge Gotzmann, pointed out in her speech, was the first of a series of Landscape Forum that CivilScape is setting up across Europe in order to increase dialogue between civil society, regional and national authorities on landscape planning and participatory processes.



Johanna MacTaggart, Biosphere Reserve Lake Vänern Archipelago-Mount Kinnekulle and Maguelonne Dejeant Pons, Council of Europe



Pere Sala i Martí, Catalonia Landscape Observatory coordinator



Katja Bonnevier, Archipelago Sea Biosphere Reserve

The two indoor sections on Thursday the 12th and on Saturday the 14th brought together experiences and point of views from different national, regional and local stakeholders whereas on Friday the 13th two field trips to the Mount Kinnekulle and to the Vänern archipelago were arranged to provide an insight on what working for sustainable development and for landscape awareness-rising means in practise. Besides several contributors from Swedish national agencies, administrative and educational bodies and civil society organizations, the Forum hosted some international guests as Maguelonne Dejeant Pons for the Council of Europe, Pere Sala i Martí the Catalonia Landscape Observatory coordinator, Inge and Dirk Gotzmann president and director at CivilScape, Katja Bonnevier for the Finnish Archipelago Biosphere Reserve.

“I would like to thanks the Forum organisers” Maguelonne Dejeant Pons told soon after the conference “because they have successfully contributed to fostering a multiple voices dialogue on landscape. Under these very interesting and amazing days we have seen experts and actors, who normally use to work in different disciplines and sectors, exchanging perspectives and visions. During the field trip we have had the



Pia Sander, Skånes Hembygdsförbund



Dirk Gotzmann, Civilscape



Anders Hedlund, Swedish National Heritage Board



Magnus Ljung, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU)

unique opportunity to get plenty of information and insights from local inhabitants of all ages who are actually working to shape the future of their landscape. Sometimes they might even think that landscape is just a quite abstract word, far from the usual routine of their daily life but what all of them – I mean the fisherman, the tourist guide, the pupils, the teachers, the artist we met - are doing is really just this: fighting to live in a place that is meaningful, caring for the memories that places bear and struggling to give them a sustainable future. I would also like to give credit to the enormous job the Biosphere Reserve Lake Vänern Archipelago-Mount Kinnekulle is doing and particularly to its highly committed staff. Sometimes is just amazing to see how the “right” people can really make a difference for a territory in revealing its hidden potential to the local community”.



The Forum ended on the Saturday afternoon with a panel discussion in which all the participants got involved. These are some insights that have emerged from this final section:

- Landscape can be seen and used as a socialising factor, as an integration tools in migrants policies.
- The globalization dynamics impart rapidity and complexity to the landscape changes. Local authorities and administrative bodies should speed up the way they react to external inputs. Planning processes have to become more flexible, more open, more cross-sectors oriented and faster to tackle the new challenges of a globalized world.
- Policy-makers, officers, executives and experts should aim to create an arena for dialogue where even those who are not involved directly in dealing with landscape can feel themselves welcomed, listened to and motivated. A holistic view on landscape processes should be promoted instead of proceeding with sectoralisation at all levels.

- Wiki applications, smart-technologies and social media are a formidable resource still to be fully explored and exploited in landscape-related initiatives.
- In Sweden but also in other European countries there is still a need to rethink the meaning of the word “landscape” to make it suitable for contemporary policies. Landscape can be an “old” word to create “new” forms of understanding among stakeholders, experts and civil society.

Thanks to the many successful talks with member organizations and partners, CivilScape announced at the very end of the conference that a second edition of the Scandinavian Landscape Forum is already in the pipeline and that it will cover the issue on forestry and landscape.



Visiting local farming initiative at Lassegårdens Trädgårdar



Final dinner at Residenset Marieholm

EXCURSIONS

Excursion I -A sustainable destination where the landscape gives new conditions. Planning, conservation and development of landscape with mount Kinnekulle as an example.

The day began with a joint train trip from Mariestad to Hällekis. On historic conference center of Falkängen we were told about how the Biosphere Reserve contribute to the development of sustainable tourism in the area, and how the initiative was born and carried out. Initially Maria Thorell, Calluna AB, described how ecotourism combined with sustainable transportations was formed within the frame of the regional landscape strategy, to a development plan. There was in this matter great emphasis on local support and broad participation from different actors. This strategy founded the base for the project Ecotourism in BR Lake Vänern Archipelago and Mount Kinnekulle, where the ideas of the ecotourism development plan was turned into real infrastructure investments. The project focus was to enhance sustainability on the sector of tourism, with a holistic approach. It engaged a wide range of stakeholders, private companies, NGOs as well as public sector. The project ended in 2012 and is followed by a new aim; to qualify the Biosphere Reserve as one of the Swedish “Export ready destinations”. Sustainability and landscape focus are the core values in this effort.



Presentation of the project "Kinnekulle Plateau Mountain – Restoration and conservation".

After a discussion about possibilities and challenges in combining enhancing landscape values with touristic development, the group set off for a walk along the Biosphere hiking trail towards lunch at Hellekis Manor. During the walk we stopped at Djurgården nature reserve, where Ulf Wiktander gave a presentation of the project "Kinnekulle Plateau Mountain – Restoration and conservation", funded by the EU



Lunch at Hellekis Manor

fond LIFE Nature. This is one of the major projects in Sweden for restoring and ensuring biologically valuable habitats. Kinnekulle is an area valuable for many endangered species. Within this project, pastures were restored in combination with other efforts to improve biodiversity.

After lunch we visited the mill stone quarry of Lugnås, where two volunteers presented the activities at this museum. The museum is managed by a local association, in an effort to bring life to local history and traditions. The area is also valuable to rare species, for example bats.

Next stop was at the homestead of “Persgården” in Karleby, one of few remaining “round villages” in the region of Västra Götaland and therefore of special interest for cultural history. A member of the board informed about the work of the local association, with special focus on conservation of the landscape.



The mill stone quarry of Lugnås

The homestead of “Persgården” in Karleby

Excursion 2 - Involving civil society in landscape planning and development

The first stop was at Torsö skärgårdsskola (the school of Torsö archipelago). We were guided by young pupils of the school. They told us about their education and how it is directly related to the island resources. The school is run by a local association, created when the municipality closed the school down. The parents are very involved in the school since they have a firm belief that it is essential for the survival of the island.

Next stop was at the seaport of Laxhall where a biosphere reserve ambassador told us about the challenges of maintaining activities in the island, and a professional fisherman told us about how to making a living out of fishing, as well as the importance of keeping a healthy fish stock in Lake Vänern. Part of his catch is served locally at the restaurant of Laxhall, right at shore where he keeps his fishing boat. It's hard to imagine a more fresh delivery than this!

Both the school and the fishing are examples of local efforts for rural development. A representative for the island natives told about the effort to create new opportunities in general and how the island inhabitants interact with the municipality.



Torsö skärgårdsskola (the school of Torsö archipelago)



Excursion to Rövarsand, Brommö



On the ferry to Brommö



Discussing local development in Laxhall, Torsö

A short trip with the ferryboat took us to the next island of Brommö. The island once had a population of about 500 people, but now there are only one family still living there all through the year. Here, a local artist told us the interesting history of a former glass industry on the island, which has now transformed into a leisure paradise.



Local artist: Kjell Fristedt and Dirk Gotzmann, Civilscape,



Excursion participants visiting Torsö homestead museum



- BIOSFÄROMRÅDE VÄNERSKÄRGÅRDEN MED KINNEKULLE
- Biosfärkontoret, Box 77, 542 21 Mariestad
- info@vanerkulle.se, www.vanerkulle.se

