

Project „Cultural landscapes of mountain and highland river valleys”
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Cultural landscapes as action arenas – problems and opportunities for the regional development of river landscapes

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Cultural landscapes as action arenas

- Cultural landscapes are increasingly understood not merely as something to be protected but also to be developed
- Opportunities for cooperative regional development (ESDP, ELC)

Cultural landscapes as action arenas are characterised by

- **Identity-based approach** on cultural landscape
- Definition of **cultural landscape boundaries**
- Long term **regional management**
- Broad **involvement of regional actors**
- Development of **cultural landscape potentials** (identity-establishing projects, regional products, tourist development)
- **Examples for action arenas:** regional parks, large-scale reserves, regions of rural development (LEADER), inter-municipal spaces of cooperation, other networks and projects.



Challenges of river landscapes as action arenas

- This strategic understanding of cultural landscapes can also be applied to **river landscapes**; however, they are facing numerous challenges
- Rivers in cultural landscapes are mostly **shaped by human activities**
- Common ground of river landscapes: the dealing with the **risk of floods**
- Rivers offer **identity-establishing effects**
- The **landscape quality of rivers** has been detected in recent years in rural areas as well as in urban areas (waterfront development, cycle paths along rivers)
- **Difference** between large streams (e.g. Vistula, Odra, Rhine) and smaller rivers (Raba):
 - **Smaller rivers** are often the core element of cultural landscapes
 - **Large streams** can **link cultural landscapes** along the stream course; but they can also be a **physical barrier** between the both sides of the river



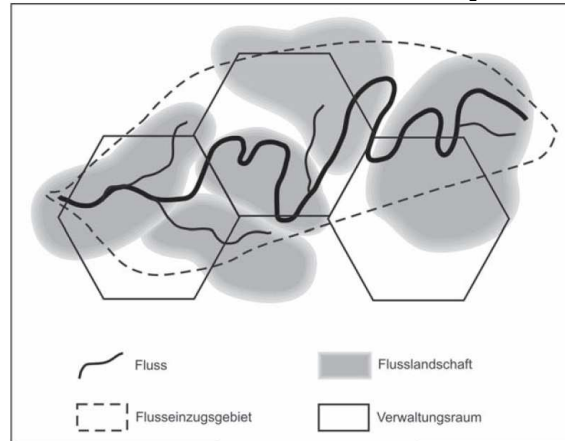
Institutional context of river landscapes

- **River landscape management** is not only the addition of land management and river management
- River landscapes are shaped by different **overlapping institutional regimes** with **different degrees of institutionalisation**
 - the highly formalised implementation of the Water Framework Directive and precautionary flood protection and
 - the informal nature of initiatives to develop cultural landscapes
- **Regional actors in river landscapes have to deal with**
 - **problems of interplay** between different policy fields
 - **different logics of action**
- **High complexity of river landscape projects**



Spatial context of river landscapes

- **problems of spatial fit** between river basins, river landscapes and administrative territories



Source: Flusslandschaftsgestaltung. MORO-Informationen 6/1, p. 9



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Conclusion

- In the future **“river landscape”** should be used as a strategic term to connect perspectives
 - for identity based **action arenas of cultural landscapes** with
 - **river basin management** and **precautionary flood protection**



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