



# Hyphen 51

Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux  
association sans but lucratif | spring 2013



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## Hyphen 51

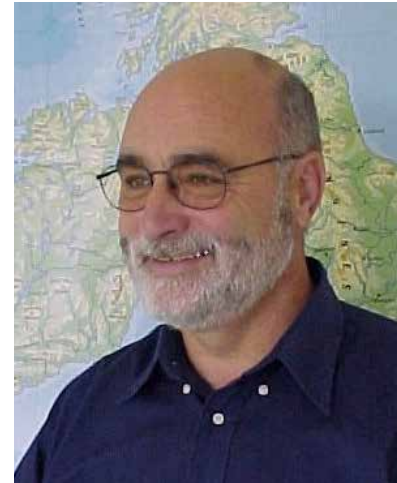
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# The future of our allotment gardens is also through research



**HERVÉ BONNAVAUD**

We are all seeing a renewed interest in gardening in the developed world. Waiting lists continue to grow, and available land is scarce in cities and suburbs that today house almost 80% of the population. Africa is no exception to this phenomenon: in fact it's the continent with the fastest developing demographic, and experts have calculated that in 2020, 24 out of the world's 30 largest cities will be in Africa. This demographic explosion is coupled with an eruption in gardening in all its forms: family gardens, small market gardens, nearby agriculture, the only means of feeding a huge population where more than half of the people barely earn one dollar a day.

You may think that I'm digressing, that I forgot my topic. Why talk to you about Africa when our issues – those of the International Association – are confined to our small continent we call Europe, with the exception of our associate member, Japan?

I can give you a number of good answers to that question:

- Here in Europe, it's more than a century since we lived in a similar situation to people in Africa today. The Schreber Gärten in Germany, the Lemire Priest's vegetable gardens in France and the allotment gardens in England all eased the misery of the workers who fell victim to the industrial revolution.
- At a time of globalisation, the acute problems of a continent as densely populated as Africa – with which most of our countries have a recent history of colonial exploitation, and with which they cooperate today - often have a direct impact on our everyday lives. We notice it in our gardens where the number of foreign people, people of a different race, has increased greatly in recent decades. Dictatorships, but above all poverty, are the biggest drivers of immigration.

- The greenhouse gases that our modern society produces have catastrophic consequences – in the literal sense of the term – on our climate and, in the short term, they threaten to cause famine and the displacement of populations on a scale that is hard to imagine. In our temperate countries we have started to feel the effects of climate change. We are going to have to adapt; change our way of life and our gardening.
- The pollution of soil is a major problem in gardening and agriculture on the outskirts of cities in Africa and many other countries such as China and India. There is no lack of allotment gardens based on ancient tips and old, heavily polluted industrial areas in Europe. Some French overseas territories, mainly banana plantations, have been badly polluted by the use of Chlordecone (a non-biodegradable organochlorine pesticide) used to fight parasites in

bananas. In Martinique, unpolluted soil and source materials are almost non-existent. What vegetables can be cultivated in such an environment? What measures must be taken to create creole gardens? What plants should be primarily grown on these polluted terrains? What training and advice should be given to gardeners?

Undoubtedly my analysis is rather fast and must be developed further. What must be remembered is that in the near future we are going to be confronted by a growing number of issues. We will not be able to overcome them alone. It is unsure whether we

have sufficient resources at the heart of our organisations, amongst our volunteers, to come up with the necessary answers to all of these questions. These questions cover fields of expertise as diverse as adapting to climate change; integrating new populations with cultures, religions and gardening styles that are completely different from that of our traditional gardeners; integrating new generations that have different motivations and interests from their ancestors; and the pollution of land and water.

To have the best chance of success, we must open ourselves up to external help and call out to the expertise

of researchers. It's about a real cultural revolution. We must admit that we don't know the truth and, above all, we should not fear the truth. The truth is always better than hiding it – if we know to understand it and confront it, we will be able to move forwards.

A serious scientific study is also a means of showing local representatives, governments and the wider public all of the benefits of gardening. Without clear support from everybody, we will be unable to respond to the needs of future gardeners knocking at our doors. It is our duty to welcome them in the best conditions.



# Activity report 2012

The executive board has the pleasure to submit the activity report for 2012 to you.

## 1) Internal activities

Since the last statutory meeting the executive board has met on 23rd August, 24th and 25th November 2012 and is going to meet as well on 8th March 2013.

### a) Efficiency of the Office activities

Following the decisions taken in 2011, the agenda of the general assembly has been changed. It has to be especially underlined that the national reports, as they were presented in the past, have been divided in three separate chapters i.e. a report on the positive national events, a report on the negative national points and a discussion on questions that are important for the national federations.

So for example the problem concerning the loss of members and the reduction of the members' readiness to take part in board work has been discussed on proposal of the Finnish federation.

This is a problem that is as well relevant for other federations. A written summary of these discussions and of the proposals for solutions presented by different federations have been sent to all the federations.

### b) Representation of the Office at the occasion of national events

This year the Office has been represented at national celebrations more than ever before.

C. ZIJDEVELD represented the Office at the occasion of celebrations in Germany as well as at the congresses in Great-Britain, Belgium and Denmark.

M. WEIRICH represented the Office during the congress in Luxembourg and at the occasion of the federal opening for the Day of the Garden in Berlin.

W. WOHATSCHK and C. ZIJDEVELD represented the Office at the extraordinary congress of the Polish allotment gardeners in Warsaw on 6th October 2012.

### c) Internet

In order to increase the Office's visibility, a new homepage was created. This work was done by the specialist of the Austrian federation and the homepage was put at the disposal of the Office free of charge.

Many thanks go to the Austrian federation for this nice homepage and the renewed precious support, which we all appreciate.

Both the old and the new homepage could be updated at regular intervals.

A discussion forum was installed and four first subjects have been put online.

The federations still have to get used to effectively using this discussion forum, asked for by all the federations.

In order to reach this aim and above all to favour an exchange of experiences and ideas as well as a stronger cooperation between all the member federations three subjects will be put online: the implementation of the Copenhagen congress resolution, the new forms of gardens and the bee action

### d) Innovative projects

The Office has decided to publish a document with innovative projects from the 14 affiliated federations.

The aim of this document is both to stimulate the national allotment gardeners to realise similar projects and to inform the population about the work of the allotment gardeners and the benefit of allotment gardens for all. During his visits in the different countries, C. ZIJDEVELD could visit numerous innovative projects. After his report the executive board has decided to elaborate a specific regulation in order to give them an even greater PR value and to award them with a diploma.

These innovative projects can be realized both in the nature and environment protection area, in the area of a sustainable development, in the area of social activities or in other areas. These innovative projects should be a headline of our movement.

### e) Diplomas

This year a great number of demands for diplomas for an ecological gardening or social activities have once more been presented.

These diplomas have been given to the associations either during a national celebration or at the occasion of the European Day of the Garden. The diplomas should have both an internal and an external effect.

One has to underline that the Finnish federation has now as well started to work out a regulation in order to give diplomas for an ecological gardening to national sites. The aim is to further stimulate the ecological gardening in Finland. Such a national diploma already exists for example in the Netherlands and Sweden.

### f) European Day of the Garden

This year, the European Day of the Garden was celebrated in Zürich in connection with the study session.

The European Day of the Garden should sensitize the population in the country where it is celebrated both for the national and international movement and highlight the value of the allotment gardens for the population.

It is important that media and authorities are present at the occasion of this celebration. This year the celebration took place in Zürich in the allotment garden site Käferberg, member of the association of Wipkingen, which received as well the diploma for an ecological gardening.

At the occasion of this celebration diplomas for an ecological gardening were given to the associations of:

- Bern –South (CH)
- Wipkingen, site Käferberg (CH)
- Abstede, Utrecht (NL)
- De Boerderij, Rotterdam (NL)
- Seilbahn, Leipzig (D)
- Piccardthof, Groningen (NL)
- Tuinwijck, Groningen (NL)

The diplomas for social activities were given to:

- The allotment garden federation of Geneva for its plots for disabled people
- The association Bern-East for its plots for disabled people and their numerous social activities
- The association Slotenkouter in Sint Amandsberg for its efforts to create allotment gardens on the Philippines

During this celebration a discussion forum between the leaders of the workshops and the lecturers took place.

This initiative was very interesting and resulted in good discussions, an example to imitate wherever possible.

### g) Hyphen

Two interesting issues of the Hyphen could be published this year.

The number of the federations, who send articles, is increasing. This increases the quality of the magazine and its use for the readers.

Therefore, the federations are once more requested to send more and more articles.

If the range of national articles is bigger and more varied, then the coming Hyphens will become more and more interesting.

### h) Support of federations/ associations

This year the Office has again had to react in order to support the allotment gardeners in Poland in their fight to safeguard their allotment gardens.

On July 11th, 2012 the Constitutional Court declared half of the Polish allotment garden law invalid. The allotment gardeners have 18 months in order to see a new law adopted in Parliament. If this will not be so, they will have no more legal protection and the allotment gardens and the federation are threatened to disappear.

The Office and the national federations have written an open letter to the Polish authorities in order to ask them to take into consideration the needs of the allotment gardeners.

W. WOHATSCHEK and C. ZIJDEVELD have represented the Office at the occasion of the extraordinary congress in Warsaw on October 6th.

It cannot be admitted that the allotment gardens, which make a significant contribution to the wellbeing of the whole population, will simply disappear and that the allotment gardeners will be robbed of their rights due to economic interests.

## 2) Study session

This year the study session took place in Zürich from 23rd till 26th August. The subject was: "Focus on allotment gardens". The discussions were introduced through excellent lectures presented by representatives from Switzerland and the Netherlands. The conclusions were drawn by the general analyst Ton THUIS on basis of the questions elaborated in the workshops.

Now we have to try to find an answer to these questions during the coming seminar in Berlin in 2013.

The aim is to find out how one can bridge the gap between the real image and the value of the allotment gardens and the image which the allotment gardens have among the authorities and the population.

As well the lectures on the subject of how the allotment gardeners should

work in order to be better taken into consideration by the press and the media were of a very high quality and the ideas presented must become the guidelines for the federations in their public relation work.

A great thank you goes once more to the Swiss federation for the excellent organization of this study session.

### 3) International organizations

#### *Council of Europe*

The Office has taken part in the meetings organized for the NGOs. Interesting lectures like, for example on the necessity for NGOs to better present themselves towards the exterior took place. In the workshops subjects like landscape planning as well as climate and human rights were discussed.

The year 2013 will be the “year of the citizen”. We have to see which activities the allotment gardeners can organize in this area.

#### *European Union*

During many contacts with the European authorities M. WEIRICH has elaborated a document on the cooperation possibilities with the authorities in Brussels in the different relevant areas and the existing problems. This document has been presented to the executive board.

During the general assembly the Luxembourgish MP in the European Par-

liament C. TURMES could explain the work of a member of Parliament and lecture on the subject: “Lobbying in Europe: How can INGOs present and defend their interests in Brussels?”. These interesting explanations will certainly be important for us in our future contacts with the European Union.

Thanks to the Dutch federation, contacts could be established with the organization EUROPA NOSTRA. During their meeting in Utrecht the executive board members could meet and have a discussion with a representative of this organization.

The aim of this organization is to seek to enlarge its pan-European network of members and benefactors who are committed, as professionals or volunteers, to the cause of the organization: the safeguard of Europe’s cultural and natural heritage for present and future generations.

Benefits for Member Organizations and Associative Organizations:

- Opportunity to get actively involved in Europa Nostra’s activities (networking, lobbying, celebrating excellence and campaigning to save heritage in danger);
- Opportunity to respond to consultations on European policy issues of relevance to cultural heritage;

After discussion the executive board

decided to recommend to the General Assembly to ask, if possible, for membership in this organization.

### 4) Contacts with the federations that are not member in the Office.

Following the executive board meeting in Vienna, the Austrian federation has kept in touch with the Czech allotment gardeners.

A delegation of the Austrian allotment gardeners visited their Czech colleagues on May 2012 and had contacts with the Russian allotment gardeners.

In July the Austrian federation signed a partnership agreement with the Russian Datcha association. Further meetings with the Russian allotment gardeners are planned.

The French federation as well has contacts with the allotment gardeners of Martinique, Guadeloupe, Réunion, Algeria, Tunisia, Spain and Russia.

The German federation has contacts with allotment gardeners in Bologna.

### 5) Information given to interested people.

This year the Office has as well given information on the allotment gardens to students and to the press.

Luxemburg, December 2012

The executive board

# Decision protocol of the general assembly held in Luxembourg on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2013

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

Was represented: the federation of Switzerland

Were absent: the federations of Norway and Slovakia

- 1) The agenda is adopted with unanimity.
- 2) The decision protocol and the report of the general assembly held in Zürich are adopted with unanimity.
- 3) The activity report is adopted with unanimity.
- 4) Two projects and several subjects are online on our Internet forum. This discussion facility should be used more.

The texts can from now on be inserted in German, French or English and are going to be translated by the Office. An automatic information system via mail should be created in order to inform the federations about new posts.

- 5) Every two weeks new informa-



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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6) The invitations for the international seminar have been sent out. The text of the French and English programmes has still to be adapted in accordance with the definitive German programme.</li> </ol> <p>It is decided with unanimity to plant a tree of community during the European Day of the Garden. A plaque with the 14 logos of the federations is going to be added.</p> | <p>tion should be published on our homepage under the heading "News". Spontaneous contributions are highly welcome.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7) The contents of the Hyphens 52 and 53 are completed.</li> <li>8) An Office Charter is going to be elaborated. The executive board informs that Norbert FRANKE is going to work out questions that should be discussed in the Forum. The answers to these questions and other documents are going to be given to a moderator</li> </ol> <p>Digital photos of the projects that get a diploma have to be sent to the secretary general. They will be shown at the occasion of the remittance of the diploma.</p> |
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as a preparation of the discussions for the elaboration of the Charter.

At the occasion of a general assembly this moderator is going to lead the discussions of the delegates during half a day in order to reach a result.

- 9) The topic concerning the travelling and hotel costs for the members of the executive board to the November meeting is reported to a next meeting.
- 10) The regulation on innovative projects is adopted with unanimity after having removed the words "and visible" results.
- 11) After having received information about the meeting between the members of the executive board and a representative of Europa Nostra in Utrecht the delegates decide with nine positive votes, one negative and two abstentions to apply for membership in this organization.

The federation that will represent the Office in this organization will assume the travelling and hotel expenses.

- 12) After having received information on the Cost-Action it is decided with unanimity to cooperate both on national and European level.
- 13) The Polish representatives give detailed information on the situation after the decision of the Constitutional Court.

It is decided with unanimity to adopt and sign a motion of support for the Polish allotment gardeners and to send it to the Polish authorities.

- 14) W. WOHATSCHEK gives information on the contacts with the Russian allotment gardeners.



There are 60,000,000 allotment gardeners in Russia, who are organized similarly to the Austrian gardeners.

have found no mistake. They ask the delegates to adopt the financial report and to grant discharge to the executive board.

- 15) It is decided with unanimity to take part in the IGA 2017 in Berlin, if we are asked to.
- 16) The treasurer J. KIEFFER presents the financial report and gives the necessary explanations.
- 17) The auditors inform that they
- 18) The general assembly adopts the financial report 2012 with unanimity and grants discharge to the executive board with unanimity.
- 19) The draft budget for 2013 is adopted with unanimity after having been discussed. The presented draft is completed with the expenses decided during the cur-

rent general assembly.

- 20) The draft budget for the solidarity fund 2013 is adopted with unanimity.
- 21) It is decided with unanimity to give the diploma for an ecological gardening to the association "Stadspark" Groningen (NL); to the association "Driehoek" Utrecht (NL); to the association « An der Vils » Amberg (D); and to the association « Neugrabener Moor » Hamburg (D).

- 22) It is decided with unanimity to give the diploma for social activities to the association "Altleuben" Dresden (D), to the association « Sinzheim » Karlsruhe (D) and to the association "Mazargues" of Marseille (F).

- 23) It is provisionally decided to organize the study session in Luxembourg in 2015. The necessary internal decision still has to be taken.

The study session 2015 and the international congress 2016 in Vienna will deal with the subject on the technical gardening education.

- 24) On proposal of the French federation the congress 2019 will take place in France. This proposal is accepted with unanimity. Consequently, the president of the French federation will become vice-president of the Office at the congress in Utrecht.



- 25) One could consider organizing a study session in Finland. The decision can, however, only be taken after the next national congress in August 2013.
- 26) The written report concerning the cooperation with international organizations is additionally commented by Malou WEIRICH.
- 27) For the period 2013 – 2017 have been elected as members of the executive board: Hervé BONNAVAUD, Norbert FRANKE, Wilhelm WOHATSCHEK and Chris ZIJDEVELD.
- 28) For the period 2013 – 2017 Jean KIEFFER has been elected as treasurer.
- 29) For the period 2013 – 2017 have been nominated as auditors: Walter SCHAFFNER, Allan REES and Preben JACOBSEN.
- 30) Lars OSCARSON has been nominated as substitute auditor.
- 31) It is decided with unanimity that the national federation have to create a PowerPoint presentation (10 minutes) about allotment gardening, garden sites and allotment gardens in their federation until the congress in Utrecht.
- 32) The next general assembly will be held in Berlin on 22nd August, 2013 at 5.00 p.m. The next statutory general assembly will be held in the City Hotel in Luxembourg on 28th February and 1st March, 2014.

# In memoriam Anne Bouma



**ANNE BOUMA**

On 2nd December Anne BOUMA (NL) passed away at the age of 87.

For more than 25 years Anne BOUMA had been active in our movement both on national and international level.

In 1988 he became secretary general of the Dutch federation.

In 1990 he became president of the International Office. The period 1990-1992 was a particularly difficult period both for the Dutch federation and the Office. However, the congress in The Hague in 1992 was a milestone for our organization as for the first time not only plenary sessions, but also workshops were organized.

For many years Anne Bouma represented the Dutch federation in our general assembly and participated in our congresses and seminars.

Both his colleagues and myself appreciated Anne's enthusiasm for our allotment garden movement, his joviality and his readiness to help.

Even if in the past years we had fewer opportunities to meet him, he did not stop offering a great and efficient help to the Dutch federation by assuming the function of "ambassador"

We owe him many thanks for his tireless commitment

Malou WEIRICH, secretary general of the International Office





# The German allotment gardeners present themselves

## Structure

20 German country (Länder) federations approx.  
350 Regional federations, 15.000 associations, 1 million members

## Allotment gardens

1 million allotment gardens, with an average size of 370sq metres, exclusively on leased land

## Administration

Mainly voluntary and a few paid employees

## Ownership

77 % communal landowners,  
23 % private

The Bundesverband Deutscher Gartenfreunde e.V. (BDG) is based in D - 14050 Berlin, Platanenallee 37. It has 20 independent federations at Länder level, with around 350 urban/regional federations, which in turn represent 15,000 allotment garden associations. The organisation as a whole includes 1 million allotment gardens. The average allotment size is 370 sq metres, and the overall total of allotment gardens is some 46,000 hectares.





Each allotment is connected to a water supply, and electricity is partly available, usually through a communal supply. The average yearly rent is 17 cents per sq metre and can vary between 1 cent and 1 euro per sq metre. The annual contribution to the central federation is 1.20 € per allotment garden.

The Bundesverband is a member of the German national horticultural society (Deutsche Gartenbaugesellschaft), the environment committee of the central federation on horticulture (Zentralverband Gartenbau ZVG) and the school gardens' federal group (Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft „Schulgarten BAGS). It works closely with the German federation for the protection of nature (Naturschutzbund Deutschland – NABU) and the federation for the environment and the protection of nature (Bund für Umwelt- und Naturschutz BUND).

At federal government level, the allotment gardens fall within the remit of the Minister for Transport, Construction and Urban Development. They also have close ties with the Minister for Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection. The federal government encourages Bundesverband activities with the help of financial aid for certain projects (seminars, state competitions).

The Bundesverband holds 6 to 8 seminars a year for its members, on topics

in the fields of law, technical consultations, society or social issues, the environment and public relations.

Allotment gardens are only found on leased land, with 77 % owned by local authorities and 23 % by private landlords. At the end of the lease itself, the new tenant must pay their predecessor an average handover fee of 1,900 Euros, which can be between 1,000 and 7,000 €. The use of the land as allotment gardens is obligatory. The land is set aside for the cultivation of horticultural produce and recreational purposes, although the latter should never predominate. It follows that one third of the garden should be used to grow fruit and vegetables.

Any work for the federation is done on a voluntary basis. The Länder/urban/regional federations with many affiliated members also have offices with paid employees.

The allotment gardens can be equipped with rustic cabins with a maximum surface area of 24 sq metres. They must not be used as a permanent dwelling, with the exception of occasional overnight stays. 72 % of the huts are connected to electricity, 37 % are connected to drinking water and 33 % have a toilet. 20 % are connected to the sewage system; whilst the others place waste water into a communal soak way. In addition, there are biological toilets (25 %), chemical toilets (34 %) and communal toilets (8 %).

On communal land, more important buildings for the allotment garden community (meeting rooms, offices, restaurants, communal toilets) can be built. Since 1983 there has been a federal law on allotment gardens (Bundeskleingartengesetz – BKleingG). This law is dedicated to the protection in the sense of limiting lease prices, protection against breach of contracts, the conclusion of unlimited lease contracts, rules of compensation and the availability of replacement land in the case of any requisition of allotment garden land for public use.

The central federation invests large sums in an efficient manner into public awareness, which has contributed to a positive change in its brand image. It has created leaflets on the integration of immigrants, the diversity of species (bio-diversity) and ecological gardening in allotment gardens.

The federation members organise numerous social projects. These include, amongst others, gardens aimed at providing for those in need, school gardens, gardens for children, the disabled and the elderly, educational and learning gardens as well as training and meeting areas for the users of allotment gardens and non member amateur gardeners. An extensive insight (a publication) on these projects is currently being prepared.





# The Finnish allotment gardeners present themselves

## Structure

1 national federation,  
38 local associations

## Allotment gardens

4,400 allotment gardens with an average of 300 sq metres mainly on leased land

## Administration

Voluntary work, one employee in the office

## Ownership

95% communal landowners,  
5% private

Suomen Siirtolapuutarhaliitto ry. (SSpl) was founded in 1930 and is based in Pengerkatu 9 B 39, 00530 HELSINKI. It has 38 local member associations representing a total of 4,400 allotment gardeners. There are several allotment garden associations in Finland that are not members in the national federation.

The average size of the plot is 300 sq metres. The total surface covered by allotment gardens is approximately 300 hectares. Each allotment garden is connected to a water supply (for drinking and irrigation). Electricity is also available on each plot. The average rent is 0.70 €/sq metres varying between 0.50 and 1.20 €. The annual

contribution to the National Federation is 33 € per allotment garden.

An allotment garden is ideally a nice green oasis with a dense and varied vegetation for the enjoyment of both gardeners and neighbours alike.

In each allotment garden there is a small house. The average size is 30 sq metres. It can not be used as a permanent dwelling. Many gardeners stay in the house for most part of the summer (1st June – 15th August), many spend the night occasionally and some never stay there overnight. 100% of the houses are connected to electricity and there is a tap for running cold water on each plot. Land-



owners normally give regulations as to the size, colouring, building materials (wood), structure and shape of windows of the house. Where there is communal sewage available, newest houses are provided with WC. Composting toilets are becoming more widely used, too. Normally there are common toilets on the site. Houses are traded like any other commodity. When you buy a house you become automatically a member of the association and you will have to comply with the rules of the association and terms of lease. There is no limit to the selling price of the houses.

On most sites there is a club house that is used for meetings, parties and other common events. Many associations run a common sauna where also the neighbours are welcome at certain hours and by paying an entrance fee.

Normally land must be used for cultivation, either useful plants (vegetables or fruits) or flowers. Small patches of lawn are allowed.

SSpl has no regular co-operation with any Finnish organisation. On rare occasions over the past few years it has co-operated with e.g. The Finnish Association of Landscape Industries, Finnish Environment Institute, Association of Useful Plants, Association of Finnish Herbal Heritage, Horticultural

Federation of Finland and the Global Dry Toilet Club of Finland.

At national government level, the allotment gardens fall within the remit of the Ministry for Environment. SSpl applies annually for a small financial subsidy.

Seminars and training sessions in gardening skills, waste handling, administrative and financial matters of an association, secretarial skills, how to organise various kinds of events, use of information technology, etc. are organized by SSpl for the members of the affiliated associations.

SSpl publishes a magazine (5 issues annually).

Financially the federation is dependent on the membership fees. The Ministry for Environment has so far granted a small subsidy annually. Fund raising is done by selling publications like an annual calendar, printed forms of congratulations and condolences, Allotment Gardener's Manual, medals for prize winning allotment gardeners, banners etc.

According to the statutes of the federation its purpose is to develop and promote allotment gardening in Finland. To fulfil this purpose the federation prepares new projects for setting

up any new allotment garden site. There are a few sites being built all the time, but processes are very slow mainly because communes are not very familiar with the idea of allotment garden and are reluctant to lease land for such a purpose. It takes years to convince decision makers and civil servants of the benefits of allotment gardening.

Allotment gardens and allotment gardening is represented by the federation and associations at garden fairs and other exhibitions nationwide, www-pages, brochures, press releases, articles and interviews in the media.

Member associations organise various kinds of social activities. They invite local elderly people and children for a visit in the gardens. Their club houses are available for neighbours too for weddings, birthday parties etc. They arrange midsummer festivals with bonfires and buffets, harvesting events, days of the Garden, open house days etc.

At the moment allotment gardening - and gardening as a whole - is a trendy pastime and people want to grow their own food environmentally friendly in the vicinity of their homes.



# Belgium: The Slotenkouter allotment garden association in Sint Amandsberg (Gent) received the diploma for social activities.

## New Allotment Garden Rises in Lapasan – Cagayan de Oro – Mindanao – Philippines

With the generous financial assistance of the Provincial Government of East Flanders and the Sint-Amandsberg Slotenkouter Allotment Garden of Gent, a new allotment garden for 12 families has been established in Sitio Hill Site, Barangay Lapasan (Hillside Allotment Garden).

It took a long time to find a suitable area, but with the assistance of Barangay Chairman Antonio S. Olango, an area was finally identified in Sitio Hill Site and the private landowner convinced to make the area available for this noble purpose.

The area is very accessible and suited for gardening activities. The water level is very shallow which allows easy well digging. In addition, the local community is already involved in small gardening activities.

The establishment of the garden is coordinated by PUVeP technician Clarito „Turok“ Santos Jr., who is spending his holiday breaks in Cagayan de Oro, before returning to continue his masters studies in Germany in mid-October. He has already established successful allotment gardens in cooperation with the communities of Kauswagan and Tibasak in Macasandig. After organising the first lectures on allotment gar-



dening and beginning the land preparation shortly after, the first beds were completed and the first crop – water spinach (*Ipomoea aquatic*) - was sown few days later.

The gardeners will be further assisted in the implementation of the project by 20 students of Xavier University as part of their National Service Training Program (NSTP), a mandatory community involvement program for 2nd year students.

The garden was officially launched in the first week of December 2008, at the occasion of the celebration the 5th Cagayan de Oro Allotment Garden Day and has flourished ever since.





# Switzerland: The Wipkingen allotment garden association, site Käferberg, received the diploma for an ecological gardening.



The Wipkingen local group started up back in spring 1915 as one of the first local groups of the Zurich Allotment Garden Association.

The first tool shed in the Käferberg site was built in 1927.

Today some 145,000 m<sup>2</sup> gardening land is cultivated by 712 allotment holders from 17 different nations on 9 different sites. The Zurich-Wipkingen Allotment Garden Association (FGZW) was created from the initial local group on 20th January 2007.

Price increases have not spared the association. In 1958 an allotment hold-

er paid CHF 17.50 a year for his plot. The same plot, still cultivated by the same family, now costs CHF 315.00. In 1958 the allotment holders did not pay any water rate, they paid no contributions to shredders or to the community, and the Bodenschutzstiftung [Soil Conservation Trust] was not an issue.

The environmentally-friendly and ecological cultivation of the allotments is one of our major concerns. As a visible sign of its practical implementation, in 2010 two allotment holders from our site won the 1<sup>st</sup> respectively 3<sup>rd</sup> prize in a biodiversity competition, and the award for especially environmentally-friendly soil cultivation went to an al-

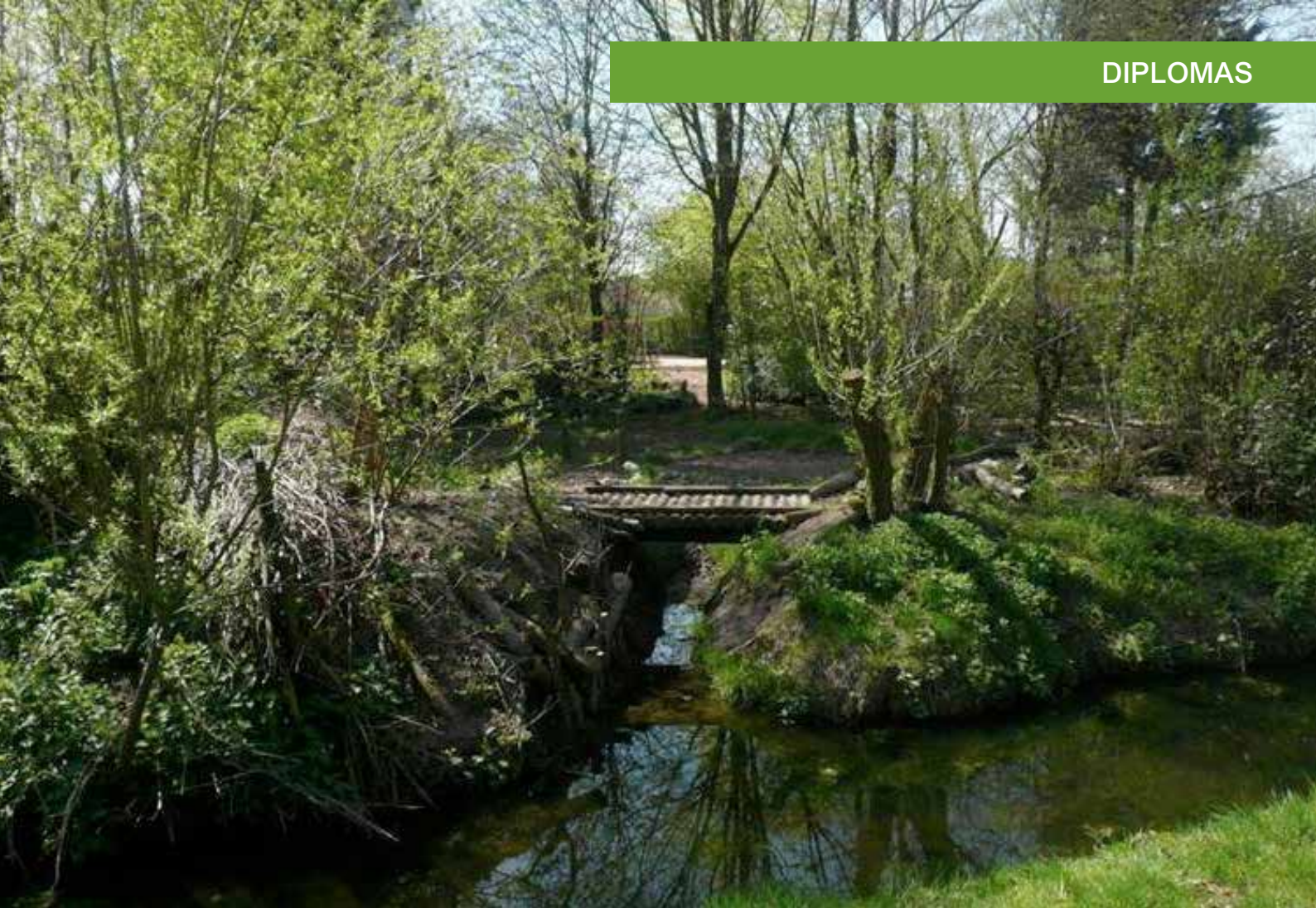


lotment holder from the Käferberg site.

In summer, patients from the nearby Krankenhaus Käferberg visit us at our garden restaurant. Recently some groups have started coming for lunch to our site. A sausage from our garden barbecue is a welcome change from a meal in the home. The beaming faces show us how much they enjoy this.

Allotment Garden Association  
Zurich-Wipkingen





## Netherlands: The association De Boerderij in Rotterdam received the diploma for an ecological gardening.

De Boerderij allotment site has an approximate area of 5 hectares and contains 120 gardens. The garden site is situated on the edge of Rotterdam. De Boerderij started in 1998 with natural gardening and it led to their first National Quality Mark for Natural Gardening in 2000.

At the latest inspection held in 2011 the association achieved the highest level of four stars.

In the past four years the natural gardening working group has been working hard to develop the potential of the allotment site.

De Boerderij has developed several features of natural gardening on their site:

- The paths of the complex are paved with shells.
- The old toad pond has been completely renovated. Because the

water level had dropped the pond silted up and became completely overgrown. In autumn 2011, the toad's pond was re-excavated. The dredged clay was used to create different levels, so that different types of vegetation could develop.

- Along the paths round the toad pond a hedge of branches was constructed and a strip along the path was turned into a beautiful border with annual flowers.
- A butterfly garden was developed in 2008 and has been carefully maintained since then.
- A natural garden located in the middle of the complex was laid out with a great variety of plants.
- Along the stream a wall for kingfishers was built as well as a bridge made from tree trunks, small fields with arable weeds and woodland vegetation, berries, dry stone walls and also a sand hill for certain kinds of solitary bees.
- The rear path (known as the owl path) of the garden site is a grassy path with a row of pollarded willows, which is very typical of the Dutch landscape. The rear path is mown twice a year with removal of the grass cuttings in order to starve the soil.
- Nine bird boxes were built and hung up in 2009. In 2010 seven of them had birds nesting in them (coal- and blue tits). In 2011 six bird boxes were occupied.
- A bat box was hung in a tree in the natural garden. Several species of bats are known to be present on the allotment site.



- At the entrance to the allotment site and near the toad pond signs were posted with information about natural gardening. The roofs of these signs are covered with vegetation. The back of one of the signs is designed as an insect hotel.
  - An information centre was set up.
  - The association's newsletter is sent out four times a year and always contains a topic on natural gardening.
- On the first Saturday of the month, even in winter, the natural gardening working group meets to maintain and develop the projects on the allotment site. The working group consists of eight permanent members, but many other association members join in if they are asked. The activities are much appreciated by the members.



# Netherlands: The Tuinwijck association in Groningen received the diploma for an ecological gardening



Tuinwijck was founded in 1913 and has had its present leisure garden site (6 hectares: 143 recreational and 24 vegetable gardens) since 1963.

In 1996 Tuinwijck started ecological management of their garden site. In 1998 Tuinwijck was one of the first five associations in the Netherlands to be awarded the National Quality Mark for Natural Gardening (two stars). In the following years Tuinwijck worked hard to further improve its ecological management: in 2003 they received three stars and last year, 2011, they achieved the maximum of four stars.

Some of the special projects on ecological gardening, developed by Tuinwijck:

- special pond for toads, frogs and newts
- fences of branches and twigs
- an insect hotel
- a butterfly garden
- a bee garden
- many different types of nesting boxes
- bat boxes
- use of green electric power
- wetland pond
- special education for children
- dry stone walling
- nature education trail
- information signs (to explain the ecological projects)
- bee hives (2012)
- many trees are named
- phased mowing
- encouragement of member garden-

ers to compost garden waste and use walls of branches to separate the gardens

- In the quarterly magazine of Tuinwijck (De Tuinwijcker) the garden members are kept informed on ecological matters
- The site is part of the ecological city structure of Groningen because of its special natural value.

The percentage of gardeners who effectively apply the criteria of organic gardening is approximately 85%.





## Netherlands: The Piccardthof association in Groningen has received the diploma for an ecological gardening

In 1942 the Piccardthof was founded to provide citizens with a place for them to grow food together with others. A suitable area of over 15 hectares was eventually rented in the low peatland in Peizermaden. A few years later the park expanded and became situated directly adjacent

to the Piccardthofplas (a lake). This created an extremely diverse ecozone and Piccardthof was now part of the green lung in the south-western part of Groningen. At this moment about 300 families have a garden at the park. The gardens vary from gardens without a garden shed to gardens with a

garden house in which members are allowed to stay overnight during the summer.

Piccardthof started in 1997 with natural gardening and it led to their first National Quality Mark for Natural Gardening in 1999.

Now in 2012 Piccardthof has acquired a unique position in the social and ecological environment of Groningen.

The basic theme is nature-friendly gardening! The Piccardthof Garden Committee (PGC) is the initiator and coordinator of various ecological projects and excursions on or around the park. Piccardthof especially wants to be noticed, but in a relaxed way. Thus Piccardthof tries to contribute to broadening understanding and to get support for creating a healthy and environmental friendly way of living.

Some recent examples:

- 2011, „The edible city“ – a project initiated by the municipality of Groningen: Piccardthof expanded the fruit trees and berry bushes which were part of a project that started in 2009;
- 2010, „Natural banks“, a project where a watercourse is excavated to shallow areas with changing water levels, creating a dynamic environment, with associated flora and fauna.
- 2011, „Insect Hotel“, a „growth tower“, created by a designer, with quirky guests matching housing.



Currently throughout the year more than 15 environmental projects can be found on Piccardthof, including signs with interesting information. Piccardthof tries to arouse the interest of its members and visitors in the local flora and fauna.

The park also has a large number of trees more than 60 years old. This means that the Piccardthof will increasingly serve as habitat for example for owls and woodpeckers. However it is striking that some animals which one would expect, are just not present at the park: the hedgehog, for example.

And our audience? Association members, people from the neighbourhood, office workers from surrounding businesses. And not to forget the daily passers-by who walk or cycle through the Piccardthof to take the shortest route to and from home to work.

In short, Piccardthof is a special home for plants and animals and we humans are actually their guests. To maintain this unique environment Piccardthof gets some help for example from Natuurmonumenten (National Trust), the organization that maintains the Piccardthofplas. In addition, a good relationship with the local media is also important.

# Germany: Finding the crux of public relations – not a disjointed job but on a united front (part 2)

Contribution as part of the seminar on PR for the Bundesverbandes Deutscher Gartenfreunde

Sylvia Stanulla,  
Edition W. Wächter GmbH, Bremen

## 2.2. Develop a strategy



As in the analysis phase, there are different sub-sections to deal with for the strategy. In the framework of the strategy, you (or the XY association) determine(s) – based on the findings from the analysis – how the goal will be reached, taking into account the financial and/or human means and resources available.

In the scope of a PR strategy, this again means answering a series of questions.

These questions are also part of the strategy:

- What is the goal that has been set? (goals of the communication)
- What are the target groups?
- How is the XY association positioned? (positioning)
- What are the messages to communicate?
- What is the implementation strategy to reach the goal?



For the XY association the following goals came out of the analysis:



This allows the XY association to form a target group:

The public

- The citizens are at the same time spectators, listeners and readers

Another target group is indirectly reached through this group:

The media and its representatives

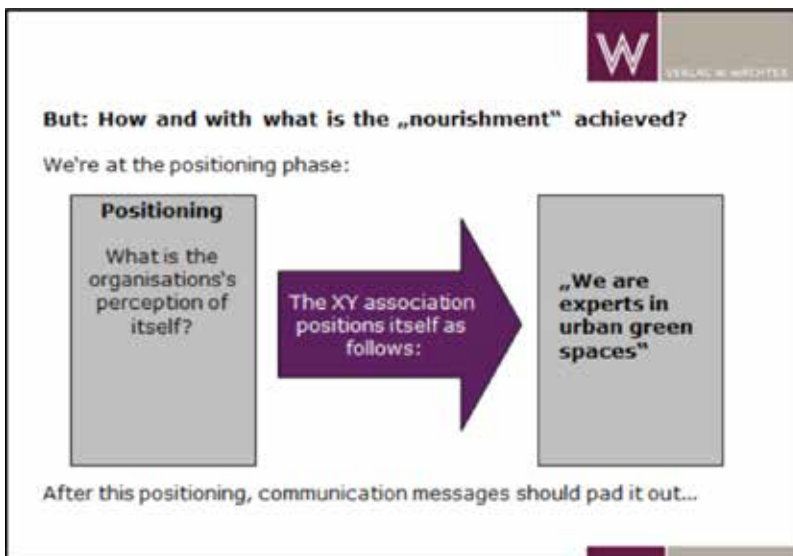
- The journalists and editors are known as multipliers or intermediary target groups – those who write about/publish the problems and challenges of the XY association for the citizens – which can in turn influence the association's current image.

The intermediary target groups such as the media reach a large number of recipients (readers, spectators, listeners etc) and have a big influence.

The disadvantage is often the fact that the originator's (the XY association's) message is or can be changed. Therefore it's not possible to guarantee that exactly what the originator wants to communicate will reach the receiver.

Relations with the intermediary target groups and their representatives (journalists, editors) must be looked after, e.g. through a continual communication of content and information that is significant to the media.

In the next phase, the XY association develops a positioning. What does our organisation represent?



What is its perception of itself?

With the help of positioning, something must “enter the heads” of the target group by way of continuous PR; in our case: When it comes to urban green spaces, the XY association is the right choice; they know what to do, they fight for...

A good positioning very clearly describes the strengths of an organisation and clearly distinguishes it from other organisations. Another fictitious example:

The Waldesruh association is the first point of contact for educational projects in nature with primary school

children. The reason: it has a lot of experience in implementing projects between associations and primary schools in the community. This also allows it to attract parents' attention regarding the association and thereby gain new members.

With what content can the XY association “pad out” its positioning? Here are some answers:

**We are experts in urban green spaces because...**

- In the XY association, 6,000 people actively work to improve the urban climate each day,
- We pay €XXXX per year in tenancy leases to our town of XY,
- We have set up, with the “Kleine Zwerge” allotment garden, an educational project in nature,
- XX% of our population uses the community’s gardens to relax,
- Etc... etc.... etc...

In the next phase, the XY association develops its

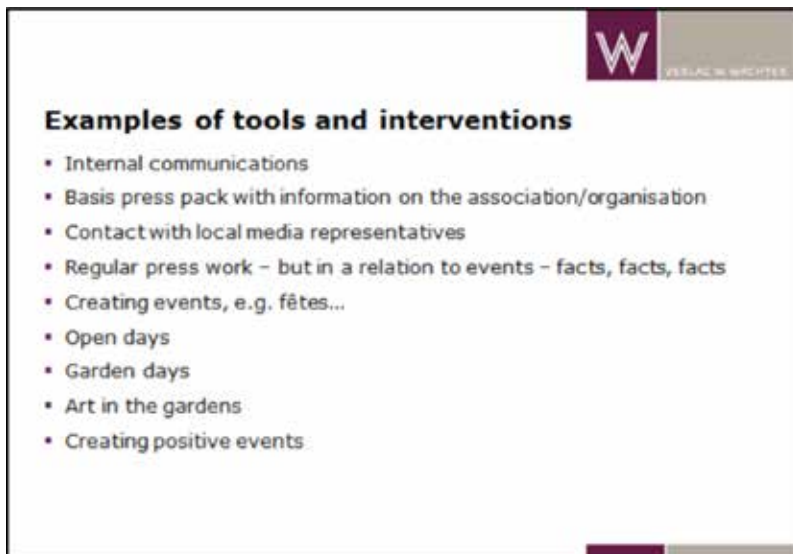
Implementation strategy – or in other words:

**How does the XY association get its message across to its target groups?**

As part of planning for the implementation of the strategy, the following are developed:

- Tools and activities (direct, through the media, at events)
- Roll-out and timing (planning, when do I tell what to whom?)

PR offers a multitude of tools and interventions, from press releases to organising an event.



It is therefore possible to draw on a multitude of possibilities in the scope of a PR strategy to reach both “citizen” and “media” target groups in the implementation phase and through targeted activities.

The art is to find, amongst this multitude of possibilities, those that work best. Which tools are adapted to the XY association’s problem, for example? It has neglected its relationship with the media for a long time, must now face up to an urgent problem (allotment gardens are under threat) and would now like to inform the community, with the help of the media, of its problems, its offering, services and strengths.

There is a range of possibilities:

- Firstly: internal communications: it is important to first inform its own members to get them engaged.
- Create a basic press pack with information on the association and its services. This pack can then be completed as needed by press communications for current events.
- Make contact with the media representatives with the goal of creating a long-lasting relationship based on trust.
- This contact is aided by events – for the XY association, for example, the real danger of losing land and the request to an editor to speak to the party involved.
- But there are also positive events, which are worth the media knowing about – and which merit media coverage: “day of the garden”, the association fête, new collaboration with a school... and many other things are content that local journalists love to cover for their readers.

### 2.3. Implementation/Activities

Finally: put your ideas into a good order; the best in the form of an action plan and implementation for the whole year.

To do this, and as we have already seen, it is possible to make use of the widest range of actions and means – from press communications to PR events, which can be used as an occasion to communicate with the media and other target groups.

But: activities must be communicated and developed regularly so that bit by bit a positive image is created and develops in people's minds.

The XY association developed a year's plan of activities, which you will find an extract of on the next page.

#### Action plan – example

	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept
Supermarket petition	Guarantee the upkeep of green areas (responsible: H Schmidt)					
Association stand at the community fête						Slogan: We are experts in urban green areas (responsible: G Krüger)
1 <sup>st</sup> May activities in the pedestrian zone		Attract citizens' attention in a positive way (hand out flowers) (responsible: G Krüger)				
Start of the children's garden cooperation				Round table for press with all participants (responsible: H Schmidt)		
Day of the garden			Public fête in the gardens (responsible: C Meier)			
Open day					Invitations to all those interested (responsible: B Ulrich)	
Information for all members	Continuously before activity in the media or events for internal communication and member loyalty					
Press releases	Created continuously before and after events and distributed to the media					



# Germany: 25 years of friendship between the allotment federations of Great-Poland and Westfalen-Lippe

Wilhelm Spieß,  
president of the allotment garden federation Westphalen-Lippe

On 19th August 1987 the presidents of the German and Polish central allotment garden federations signed a friendship treaty. Some weeks later between September 20th and September 26th, 1987 a historic meeting between the allotment gardeners of the Province of Poznan and of the national federation of Westfalen-Lippe took place. That was the beginning of a friendship, which we celebrate the 25th anniversary this year. Such an event deserves some special appreciation. Following an invitation of our Polish friends a delegation of our national federation, presided by our President Wilhelm Spieß, visited the province Great-Poland/Poznan between 17th and 22nd September 2012. Our Polish friends had prepared a very interesting and large programme.

## A vast programme – Visits to allotment sites and receptions by mayors.

In Wolsztyn we visited some museums that also take into consideration the period of the Prussian administration. We could discover the life of the writer Fiedler and the period of Robert Koch, who worked some years in Wolsztyn. We were received by the mayor, a person always looking towards and planning the future. He described the successful development of the town to us after the political changes with all the problems that this caused. This situation as well as the needs of the local allotment gardeners had been taken into consideration. Of course, we visited allotment sites too. The main focus of these gardens is

gardening and we found that the Polish allotment sites are similar to ours. An intensive use of the common parts of a site, as we know it in Germany, is only at just starting.

After a visit of the town of Gniezno we were received by the mayor, who underlined in his welcoming words the importance of the relationship between the two federations and the 25 years of friendship.

After a visit of an allotment site we were invited to the celebration of the 110th anniversary of the foundation of the allotment site K.Marcinkowski. Here a surprise awaited us: Werner Bolder, Werner Heidemann and Wilhelm Spieß were honoured for their efforts in the construction and devel-

opment of the partnership between Great-Poland and Westfalen-Lippe. They received the millennium medal of the town of Gniezno.

We went on a small train to visit an allotment site. During an exchange of views we discussed the similarities and the differences, of our allotment garden movements.

On September 20th we visited allotment garden sites in Poznan and Luben. During a reception, offered by the mayor in the historical white hall, we were informed about the history and development of the town. During the afternoon we visited the replacement ground provided for allotment gardens that had to be closed down for the construction of the stadium in Poznan for the European football Championship. As a result of the closedown the town financed the reconstruction. Additional funds from the central federation, enabled new equipment to be provided for the local association.

**25 years of partnership between Westfalen-Lippe and Poznan**

The main celebration of the anniversary took place in the excellent rooms of the allotment garden site „Gluszyńska“. The two presidents, Zdzislaw Sliwa and Wilhelm Spieß, gave a short talk ground and underlined the confident and friendly cooperation characterised by mutual respect. They agreed on the fact that a partnership has to be developed and cannot be imposed. They concluded in accordance with the deputy president Jerzy Kucznerowicz, that both the partnership and the friendship have largely contributed to the normalization of the relations and the quick unification following the membership of Poland in the European Union.

The members of the German delegation were then especially honoured. All of them received the silver honorary medal of the federation and the jubilee medal at the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the federation.

Following this, the two presidents Zdzislaw Sliwa and Wilhelm Spieß signed the document offered by the German federation at the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the partnership and friendship.

Of course solidarity goes together with friendship, especially when a partner has problems. All the participants signed an open letter to the president of the House of Parliament, underlining concerns and the requests for action.

With an interesting picture show and many stories from the past this jubilee evening came to an end. A high-



**Together the allotment gardeners from Poznan and Westfalen-Lippe sign an open letter for the protection of the Polish allotment garden movement.**



**The vice-president of the federation Westfalen-Lippe, Peter Schulz while signing the letter**



**Signature of the jubilee documents by the presidents of the federation of Poznan and Westfalen-Lippe left.: Zdzislaw Sliwa, right Wilhelm Spieß**

light of the festivities was the fact that on both sides members from the foundation period were still present and so they could give precise information on that time. Everybody still knew everyone and one could feel this friendship between the individual allotment gardeners that has been developed during the alternative visits. Special facts and stories were told. As usual in such meetings there were dances and songs.

On Friday we visited the old town of Poznan and an allotment garden site. We had time to do some shopping in a shopping mall and then we visited the "Euro" stadium, the home and training ground of the football association Lech Poznan.

The closing evening once more was characterized by an jovial being together. We danced, sang and old relations were refreshed and new contacts created. Wilhelm Spieß invited our Polish allotment garden friends for a visit to Lünen.

After a very hearty goodbye by Zdzislaw Sliwa and Magdalena Klessa, director of the federation, we started our way home to Lünen.

**Thanks**

If one looks back at the 25 years one can underline the following:

- The allotment gardeners from Westphalen-Lippe and Poznan have largely contributed to the normalization of the relations between Poland and Germany
- The friendship between the allotment gardeners is stable and deep. It is based on a mutual confidence and respect.
- The common points are much more numerous than the few points that separate us.
- The allotment garden movement in Poland is similar to the German one.
- We have experienced a hospitality that cannot be greater.

Finally we thank once more our Polish friends for the hospitality and the numerous impressions we could get.

A great thank you is as well addressed to the allotment gardeners, who have started and developed this friendship. They have largely contributed to the understanding of two populations.

All participants of our delegation will for a long time remember our visit and the 25th jubilee. It is as well for them an obligation to continue on the designed track.



**Exchange of the commemorative documents**



**Wilhelm Spieß (left) gives an illustrated book on the cultural capital of the Ruhr district to the mayor of Poznan (right) Zdzislaw Sliwa, President of the regional federation of Poznan**



**Hearty welcome in the allotment gardens and animated discussions**





# France: What future for our allotment gardens?

Hervé Bonnavaud,  
President of the French allotment garden federation

In the article „The allotment gardens in Europe“ published in the French allotment garden review „ Le jardin familial“ of January/February 2011 I gave you both a short historical overview of our allotment garden movement and a short presentation of the allotment gardens in our neighbouring countries.

On these pages I would like to share with you our reflexions after two years of work on our national executive board and in the International Office. Our secretary general Gil Melin visited the allotment gardens in Kazan (Russia) in July 2010. He brought back very interesting documents from

this country. There are approximately 20 million allotment gardens. Due to its importance this subject has been discussed during our last general assembly and I consider creating a forum on our Internet site, thus enabling the greatest possible number of you to submit your ideas.

### The image of the allotment gardens

With England, Belgium and Luxembourg we are among the last countries which still have gardens that are nearly exclusively used to cultivate vegetables and that have very modest equipment (garden sheds, a local associative home is very often inexistent, absence of toilets). Many of our old sites still remind us of the worker gardens of Abbé Lemire. The name worker garden is better known by the public and elected representatives than family garden.

The image that people have of our allotments is very often negative. The citizens only remember the sheds made of junk on plots closed by improvised fences and where barbed wire is very important, gardens nearly exclusively cultivated by retired men using a lot of pesticides. The cherry on the cake is that during the last war our gardens were often called "The gardens of the marshal" because of the involvement of some of our leaders.

This past is very difficult to bear and it is even more difficult to change it despite the numerous changes and the progress we have made especially since the middle of the seventies, and above all during the last ten years. The „Jardins en carré“ (gardens led out in square) of the Fontaine d'Ouche in Dijon have up to now no equivalent in Europe. However, except for the local media, they have not drawn the attention of the important national media that prefer to speak about "community gardens".

### The great success of the community gardens

The community garden movement appeared in the States of America in the middle of the seventies. In New York citizens had the idea to requisition uncultivated land, situated in the middle of the residential areas in order to cultivate it together. This idea arrived in our countries approximately fifteen years ago and has very quick-



ly developed in towns like Lille, Paris, Lyon, Nantes. There are now nearly a hundred of them in Paris. These sites are generally very small. The surface is normally smaller than one of our allotment garden plots. However, they welcome a great number of families living nearby who cultivate vegetables together. They share them or eat them together during meals organized on site.

These gardens have an enormous success and certainly bring happiness to the majority of participants who freely access these gardens.

### New forms of gardens

Locally we have succeeded in integrating the concept of community gardens by adapting this concept to our vision of allotment gardens. Our community gardens are of course small (10 – 20 sqm) or very small (2 sqm), but they are secured and each gardener has his own plot even if most of the equipment, tools and activities are shared.

At the same time our study office has developed gardens at **the bottom of towers of flats**. They are created on an area of the green spaces that surround these flats. Their equipment

takes into consideration that the gardeners live nearby and that they only need to leave their flat in order to use their plot that is normally not bigger than 50 sqm.

These gardens favour the creation of social links within this area and the supply of additional vegetables, which is very important.

These gardens are additionally beneficial for the owner and/or the authorities that have to take care of these green spaces. They also increase the quality of the visual environment of this living area.

Also one has not to forget the **gardens led out in a square**.

We are ready to accept **gardens on top of the roofs**. Our study office in fact already realized such gardens in Boulogne-Billancourt in 2002. We do not administer them, but they are really successful and we are proud of this achievement.

On the island of Martinique and Guadeloupe we are developing Creole gardens respecting the local traditions thanks to the association SEVE. The aim is to fight the soil pollution due to



the use of clordekon, a pesticide used in the banana fields in order to fight the snout beetle.

Within all these forms of new gardens we stimulate the creation of **educational gardens and ponds** as well as of plots **for disabled people** with the financial help of our partner GrDF.

#### A new demand: leisure gardens

Since 2009 the French federation and its study office are contacted at least once a week by the owners of grounds who consider creating allotment garden sites and to rent these plots to individuals.

The consultation of our Internet site allows us to measure the importance of this phenomenon, which is developing very quickly. The offers are increasing around towns and the rents asked for a plot amount to a minimum of 50 € per month.

On several of these garden sites it is possible to stay for the weekend or longer. The rules for these gardens differ from those of our gardens. Property taxes, as well as sometimes rent charges, have to be paid here.

These gardens cannot become member of our movement recognised as a public utility organisation and is consequently regulated by strict laws.

These leisure gardens reveal a new need of families, who have not enough

money, to buy even a modest secondary residence in the neighbourhood of big cities. But in many aspects they resemble the allotment gardens that can be found in our neighbouring European countries.

#### As a conclusion one can say

We cannot ignore our environment and the fact that nearly 80 % of the French people now live in towns in opposition to 20 % when our movement was created.

The extension and the spreading of the towns have as a consequence that the grounds at disposal are becoming more and more scarce. Nevertheless, there are still grounds at disposal. Our traditional allotment gardens, however, have difficulties to find their place there today. They have to adapt to the new facts.

The traditional allotment gardens will be able to find their place at the outskirts of the towns.

However one has not to conceive them according to the model of the allotment gardens of the past.

#### The needs and the gardeners have changed:

- There are much less large families and the necessity to use the plots to feed the family is less important, even if this might be necessary for families in difficult situations
- The young gardeners very often

have no experience of gardening at all

- There are more and more women who like to have an allotment garden plot
- The local authorities wish that our gardens become more open to the town
- The need of toilets is necessary to be attractive for these new gardeners. The plots are often too big as the people have neither the strength nor the time due to their professional activities

Our old allotment garden sites give on the contrary the image of a closed universe both physically and mentally, which is the opposite of the community gardens that spread like mushrooms.

We are at a crossroad. If we do not accept changes we are condemned to go backwards and to disappear over a longer or shorter period of time and this despite the fact that the demand for gardens has never been so high during the last fifteen years.





# Denmark: News from the Danish Federation of Allotment and Leisure Gardens

Mogens Ginnerup-Nielsen

Who are we – let's begin with a few statistics:

Our Federation, founded in 1908, has 400 affiliated garden societies that comprise a total of 40.000 allotment gardens. We are organized as a central office in Copenhagen and 22 regional districts. Allotment gardens are situated on land rented by our Federation from municipalities (67%) or from the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (15%). The remaining societies own the land themselves (18%).

Our central office consists of 5 full time staff including our president and a part time editor. Our Garden Magazine is published for all our members 5 times

a year. Volunteers undertake each district's administration.

Each district appoints a garden expert, who is either an experienced horticulturalist, landscape architect or a gardener. The role is to offer practical advice to the garden societies, garden owners as well as evaluating gardens for the district's garden prizes.

We held our triennial Congress in Aarhus 14th – 15th September 2012. The Congress is convened every three years to consider and adopt strategic issues.

This year the congress adopted decisions on several important issues.

First of all a carefully prepared and comprehensive reform of the Federation's organization and structure. The reform will reduce the number of regional districts and district boards from 34 to 22 and sets out the responsibilities and competencies of the individual garden societies, the regional districts and the federation headquarters. The Congress also approved new standard regulations for district boards and for garden societies. The reform will be effective from January 1st 2015.

In 2009 the Danish Ministry of the Interior changed their interpretation of the customary law governing the activities of the municipalities. The change

meant that municipalities offering land for allotment gardens are no longer able to fix the rent lower than the market rent. Where leases between the Federation and municipalities have been renewed it has led to considerable rises in the rent.

We have been successful with our requests to the Government to review this decision. A proposal for a bill making it again possible for the municipalities to fix the rent as they wish is now in the pipeline in Parliament.

The EU Water Framework Directive will put sewerage on the agenda of all garden societies in Europe where people are permitted to stay overnight during the summer.

In Denmark the implementation of the directive is the responsibility of the municipalities so most garden societies will need to provide appropriate sewerage facilities within a relatively short period.

At the outset the cost of sewerage must be borne by the land owner. However, due to contractual obligations it's in reality often the garden societies that have to bear the cost of the sewerage which usually amounts to around 10-12,000 euro per garden plot. Many allotment gardeners cannot afford this money. Therefore we are investigating ways to solve or reduce the problem using long term loans at a low interest rate.

A high demand for traditional and new types of gardens exists in our cities. We have established a pilot project to rent for a short term lease allotment gardens with a small mobile container unit in an urban development area in southern Copenhagen. These container units could be rented for 3 – 5 years, after which they would be moved to another place if the site is to be used for construction purposes. We expect to have these units in place in May 2013.

It is well known that allotment gardens can play an important role in integrating citizens with differing cultural backgrounds. In collaboration with Copenhagen City Council we have been financially supporting the development of an allotment garden society specifically aimed at bringing citizens with a different cultural background together with people of a Danish cultural background. The garden society was opened in July 2012.

Traditionally we have offered members of the evaluation teams in garden societies training courses in the rules that apply when fixing maximum prices of garden houses for sale. These courses have been complemented with courses for board members in law and treasurer work and – as from 2013 - courses in conflict resolution !

I will end by mentioning a matter which we, unfortunately, are often not able to resolve satisfactorily.

An increasing number of garden societies experience problems because of rising ground water levels or diffi-

culties with removing excess surface water. To provide new surface water drainage systems is often costly and technically complicated. As the land is not fit for purpose, the only solution we can suggest is that the gardens should be taken out of use and the lease with the land owner terminated.



# News from the federations

## A National Meetings

### a) Austria

Courses for gardening advisers and beekeepers

### b) Belgium

After a congress in Leuven on 22nd September 2012 the next congress of the Flemish federation will take place in Antwerpen in 2014

### c) Germany

Internationale Grüne Woche (international green week) in Berlin from 17th till 26th January 2013

Round table of the federation followed by a Parliamentarian evening in Berlin on 17th April 2013 at the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the German garden law

Day of the Garden in Hamburg on 9th June 2013

Seminar of the International Office in Berlin from 23rd till 25th August

Meeting of the federation's bodies

Seminars: specific gardening matters legal questions

see under [www.kleingarten-bund/de/veranstaltungen/bdg\\_seminare](http://www.kleingarten-bund/de/veranstaltungen/bdg_seminare)

### d) Luxembourg

National congress (every year on the Sunday preceding Eastern) as well as one regional assembly of delegates and regional assemblies in the 4 regions

### e) Netherlands

Course on a natural Gardening

Youth workshop: making Easter baskets

Youth workshop: making a hotel for worms

Youth workshop: sowing seeds

Workshop on herbs

Presentation of meadow plants - low maintenance gardening

Youth workshop: pleased with flowers

Lecture: process fruit

Youth workshop: Halloween

Lecture: A bird friendly garden

Youthworkshop: make a gnome- / elf house

### f) Switzerland

08.06.2013 General assembly in Geneva



## B Documents

### a) Austria

Specialized book: Vegetable illnesses by Dr. Gerhard Bedlan

### b) Belgium

2011 - 2015 every year the Flemish federation issues a yearly plan to achieve their strategy

### c) Germany

Weekly garden advice by dpa

Monthly garden advice on Internet

Monthly newsletter

The review: "Der Fachberater" 1.4/2012

Grüne Schriftenreihen no. 219 bis 225 in form of a CD

Press-review 2011

### d) Luxembourg

Review: Garden & Home 9 issues per year for all the members

Pocket booklet issued in cooperation with the Ministry for Health concerning the subject: „Healthy food and more exercises“ with interesting ideas and information on garden, home and environment

### e) Netherlands

„Welkom op Tuinenpark de Koekelt“ - Opening up a garden site to the neighbourhood strengthens the social cohesion in that neighbourhood. This is proven by a research made by the Science shop of the Agricultural University Wageningen under the authority of the association „Vereniging van Amateursuinders“ Ede (VAT - Ede)

„Het Algemeen Verbond van Volkstuindersverenigingen in Nederland: 1928 - 2012.

Een kleine eeuw inzet en organisatie in het volkstuinwezen.“ A historical report on the AVVN.

### f) Switzerland

A new information leaflet on butterflies

## C Changes of law

### Switzerland:

First law on leisure gardens by the town of Basel

## D Useful informations

### a) Belgium

- a) The Flemish Government has voted a financial support of 300.000 € for the creation, improvement or adoption of allotments
- b) A new homepage [www.volkstuin.be](http://www.volkstuin.be) has been created

### b) Germany

2nd study of the federal ministry for transport, construction and urban development in order to solve the problems due to inoccupied plots in regions that are not much developed. Publication expected in spring 2013

### c) Luxembourg

Final works for creation of an educational garden for adults and schoolchildren  
Pilote project with the City of Luxembourg concerning the creation of community gardens in Bonnevoie

### d) Switzerland

2 projects: 1) Organisation by the technical high school FIBL: „Allotment garden/biological garden“ on biodiversity. Which knowledge do people have, what has still to be learnt or which information have to be given ?

2) Organisation: Technical highschool: North-West Switzerland Basel: The allotments in relationship with own food supply and the constitution of a space for recreation



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and the landscape



# Council of Europe: Protecting landscapes to strengthen regional identities and local economies: the transnational project “Cultural landscapes”

**Józef Hernik**, Project Coordinator

**Burkhardt Kolbmüller**, Office for European Projects

**Jacek Pijanowski**, University of Agriculture, Cracow

**Agnieszka Waś**, University of Agriculture, Cracow

Cultural landscapes of Central Europe are endangered. The reason for this is not only negligence of conservation but also poor spatial economies and socio-economic processes. However, the experiences of some European countries, such as Germany or Aus-

tria, illustrate that it is possible to protect cultural landscapes when local communities and regional authorities cooperate actively with each other.

The project “Cultural Landscapes” sought to analyse and possibly adjust

such an approach to the development and protection of cultural landscapes in Central Europe.

It aimed at the identification, enhancement and development of cultural landscapes in the whole of the Cad-ses area.



### Structure of the project

The project was one of the activities within the programme Interreg IIIB CadSES. Over 24 months (2006-2008), the network brought together 11 partners from Poland, Germany, Austria, Romania and Ukraine and was directed by the University of Agriculture in Cracow, Poland.

The EU Structural Funds are a powerful instrument for the sustainable development of European regions. Many of the activities co-financed by these funds have a more or less direct impact on landscapes. They may help to maintain landscapes and to safeguard satisfactory living conditions for the inhabitants – an important precondition to avoid migration and negative demographic impacts. Furthermore, the funds support activities directly linked to landscape issues, such as the rehabilitation of brownfields or the protection of habitats. However, in some cases, such as the construction of new roads or new commercial areas, they may have a negative impact on the landscape. It is therefore reasonable that the sustainable development of landscape is an important topic for the Interreg programme, funded by the European Regional Development Fund.

The fact that the project received the formal support of the Council of Europe also confirms the importance of the challenge facing the “Cultural Landscapes” project.

### Activities

Based on the inter-sectoral approach, including the protection of nature and heritage as well as the development of rural areas, and on international research structures, the project has developed the best examples as regards the implementation of the European



Landscape Convention.

The main activities of the project were research, the development of new tools of landscape survey and new teaching curricula, the training and involvement of local experts, and pilot projects to strengthen local economies.

The level of landscape research and education in Central Europe is diverse. With the help of the Interreg project, universities and research institutions from all the participating countries exchanged know-how and practical experiences to improve this situation. Amongst other activities, they developed a common methodology of identifying and categorising cultural landscapes of the CadSES area, and surveyed innovative research methods and planning tools. Intensive exchange of knowledge resulted in the creation of an international catalogue of historical cultural landscape elements of Central Europe.

Setting up an internet platform, “Landscape Wikipedia”, was another significant result of the academic research conducted. This platform makes it

possible to integrate the wider public into the process of cultural landscape identification and categorisation, and promotes social awareness of the significance and quality of cultural landscape. The platform (currently available in German consists of two parts: “Landscape Wiki” (a glossary of elements) and maps/orthophotomaps which allow the digitalising of elements provided by people with access to the portal.

Building social awareness regarding cultural landscape assets should already take place in formal education. That is why project activities have resulted in the development of teaching curricula involving cultural landscape and spatial planning issues to be introduced at university. Some of them were developed and implemented, based on the transnational exchange of knowledge.

The project also resulted in training sessions for the “local experts” (regional decision-makers and local people) to make them aware of the cultural landscape concept. After all, the people who live in a certain region mainly decide on the development

of “their” landscape. Moreover, their knowledge is necessary to complete academic research. Numerous meetings, seminars, and workshops were an opportunity to disseminate the results of the research carried out. These activities have set an example of the perfect integration of theoretical research and practical actions aimed at the promotion of landscape issues among the wider public.

Transregional development tours and a series of thematic regional markets were aimed at strengthening local identities and presenting the cultural landscapes of other participating regions and countries. The tours enabled international participants to become familiar with examples of approaches to cultural landscape issues and observe how landscape can be managed and protected in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

Finally, the project aimed at the integration of landscapes with regional development through pilot projects in agriculture, tourism, regional market and renewable sources of energy. The community of Miechów created

the Centre for Renewable Energies, which promotes energy production from peatets and briquettes (fields being the distinctive cultural landscape feature of the region). The project also made it possible to reconstruct the former retention basin in Wiśniowa, which will now be used for recreation and water tourism. In co-operation with the city of Jena (central Germany) and the Saale-Holzland district, a detailed project of regional development, called “Middle Saale Valley”, was elaborated. This pilot project enhanced the industrial area of Göschwitz with a connection to the Saale River floodplain and led to the establishment of a general marketing concept of manor houses and castles in the area as well as drawing attention to the historic site of the town of Kahla. Moreover, the Cultural Landscapes project undertook integrated activities aimed at the development of agrotourism in the region of Schiidnycia in Ukraine, based on the rich resources of medicinal waters.

### Results

Due to its wide scope, the Cultural Landscapes project substantially increased social and political aware-

ness as regards the importance and role of cultural landscapes for sustainable development, and of the identity of the Cadeses countries.

The protection of landscapes, which are the most basic elements of our European cultural heritage, supports the development and protection of local cultures. The project’s approach to cultural heritage made participating regions more attractive for investment, especially as regards tourism and regional products.

The project was an important step towards the implementation of the European Landscape Convention in Central Europe. However, the project results may be of interest to other regions and actors as well. These results are documented by several monographies also available via the Internet. Currently, a follow-up project to the applied within the programme Interreg IVB Central Europe is under way.



# Council of Europe: towards development of transfrontier co-operation in favour of the territory and the landscape

Maguelonne Déjeant-Pons,

Head of the Cultural Heritage, Landscape and Spatial Planning Division, Council of Europe

The territorial integration of the European continent is a gradual ongoing process in which transfrontier co-operation among Council of Europe member states plays a key role.

In this connection, the CEMAT Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent formulated by the Committee

of Ministers of the Council of Europe present a vision of an integrated Europe, and as such constitute a reference policy document for the many spatial planning actions and initiatives throughout Europe and, in particular, for transnational and international co-operation (Recommendation Rec (2002) of the Committee of Ministers to member states).

The Guiding Principles stipulate that specific spatial development policies in border regions and transfrontier co-operation involve the adoption of a joint approach to development in the form of transfrontier structure schemes and joint plans. They add that such an approach should be based on thorough analysis of relevant border regions' functional relations network, and cen-



tred on homogeneous development of the region's territories located on both sides of the frontier. From that angle, particular attention should be paid to:

- Developing transfrontier transport and telecommunications infrastructures and services;
- The transfrontier conservation and sustainable use of natural resources (particularly in the case of mountain and coastal regions, forests and wetlands, etc.) and of water resources;
- Taking the cross-border dimension of supplying public and private services into account;
- The coherent planning of transfrontier conurbations, cities, and settlement areas of ethnic communities;
- Organising transfrontier employment catchment areas;
- Combating the cross-border impact of pollution:

The Guiding Principles stress that such co-operation can be conducted not only between neighbouring States but also between neighbouring regions or communities which implement different policies in the same State, on the basis of either territorial adjacency or specific shared features. The Guiding Principles refer in par-

ticular to the European Outline Convention in Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities (Madrid, 21 May 1980) and to the European Landscape Convention (Florence, 21 May 1980), and stress the importance of taking account of the landscape dimension in all the activities implemented. The European Landscape Convention stipulates that Parties to the Convention "shall encourage transfrontier co-operation on local and regional level and wherever necessary, prepare and implement joint landscape programmes". A number of initiatives have already been taken to implement this provision. Recommendation CM/Rec (2008) 3 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to member states on the Guidelines for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention specifies that such co-operation may result in joint landscape protection, management and planning programmes and take the form of instruments and measures agreed between the authorities (different administrative levels and general and sectoral competences) and relevant stakeholders on both sides of the border.

Resolution No. 2 adopted by the 13th

CEMAT Ministerial Conference established a pan-European network of "CEMAT Model Regions" as innovative regions undertaking to develop good practices in implementing the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent, constituting pilot experiences for other regions. The landscape dimension represents an essential aspect of this approach. The Initiative on sustainable spatial development of the Tisza/Tissa river basin, which is being developed as a transfrontier "CEMAT Innovative Region" is a good example of the approach.

Action to implement spatial development policies is an important precondition for pursuing the harmonious integration of the European continent, as it highlights the territorial dimension of democracy and social cohesion policy. The Guiding Principles and their application in development decisions can facilitate co-operation throughout Europe by helping to create a more balanced and sustainable Europe.

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