



**Title project:**  
**VALUE: Valuing Attractive Landscapes in Urban Economy**

**Lead partner:** South Yorkshire Forest Partnership/ Sheffield City Council

**Partners: (8)**

VLM

Amersfoort Gemeente

University of Sheffield

Verband Region Stuttgart

SPI+ (Service Promotion Initiatives Liège)

ULG

ILS (Intitut für Landes und Stadtentwicklungs- forschung Dortmund)

CNFW (Community Forest North West) (= Manchester)

**Duration project:** July 2008 – June 2012

**Financing:** INTERREG IV B North West Europe, budget 7.241.571 €

**General outline:** The growing population density and coupled intensifying of land use in North-Western European regions puts land under pressure. Public and private 'green' space often has to give in to construction building, housing, industries and community services. This is often because the value of these green structures is not enough validated. However, investments in green infrastructure can have a considerable economic return on both a regional and community scale. In VALUE, the different partners want to show the economic return of green investments and investigate where such green investments would render most.

**Actions/workpackages:**

- **Action 1.1. PEOPLE.** Engage key stakeholders in NWE regions and access knowledge on green infrastructure planning.
- **Output 1.1.** Report on transnational workshop, identifying common strategic issues and solutions. Nov 2008.
- **Action 1.2. VALUE.** Scope existing economic valuation tools for application to green infrastructure investments. Audit and contrast different approaches, and identify optimum evaluation techniques at the city/region scale and site scale.
- **Output 1.2.** Baseline analysis of valuation tools: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and

threats. This report will address two levels of action: (i) the city/region scale; (ii) site/neighbourhood scale. Apr 2009.

- **Action 1.3. GREENSPACE.** Innovations in green infrastructure management. Forge high profile, durable 'greenspace partnerships' with business and communities to generate contributions and improve long-term impacts, at the local and regional levels.
- **Output 1.3.** Formal agreements with private enterprises and communities, establishing 'greenspace clubs' or 'social enterprises' to manage durable quality improvements. Nov 2009.

## Workpackage 2

- **Action 2.1. PEOPLE.** Cooperate with businesses and communities to establish the importance of green infrastructure and desired qualities.
- **Output 2.1.** 'Visioning' report evaluating interview/focus group responses to landscape flythroughs simulating green infrastructure scenarios for city/regions. Jun 2009.
  
- **Action 2.2. VALUE.** Innovations in the targeting of green infrastructure investments.
- **Output 2.2.** Green infrastructure masterplans published online. Number of website 'hits' to be recorded. The maps will illustrate how investments have been targeted at the city-region scale to (a) improve areas of low value, high urban density, deprived communities or poor image; and (b) link up green spaces to provide greenway infrastructure for sustainable transport. Firmer classification of land use status. Dec 2009.
  
- **Action 2.3. GREENSPACE.** Transnational workshop with policy makers and private enterprises to raise awareness of the benefits of green infrastructure
- **Output 2.3.** Workshop report on potential adaptations to EU territorial cohesion policy and Action Plans, to deliver green infrastructure. This report will compare national/regional policies on urban land-use competition, including contextual analysis of political-legal frameworks and how these affect the targeting of investments. May 2010.

## Workpackage 3

- **Action 3.1. PEOPLE.** Community engagement campaigns to encourage the use of greenspaces & sustainable travel
- **Output 3.1.** Report summarising the impacts of an international community engagement campaign, including statistics for people's usage of greenspaces, and website hits. March 2010.
  
- **Action 3.2. VALUE.** Hold 1<sup>st</sup> transnational conference on VALUE: the economic benefits of green infrastructure
- **Output 3.2.** A major transnational conference (Bruges), accompanied by the 1<sup>st</sup> VALUE project report on 'the economic benefits of green infrastructure'. Oct 2010.

- **Action 3.3. GREENSPACE.** Investments: demonstrate how to maximise the value of green infrastructure improvements
- **Output 3.3 (i).** Innovative designs for attractive and valuable green infrastructure, published by each country via the project website. May 2010.
- **Output 3.3 (ii).** Practical demonstration of how to maximise the economic value of green infrastructure investments at 11 investment sites (see section 5.3). Jan 2010 - Dec 2011.
- **Output 3.3 (iii).** Six-monthly progress reports on the work and impacts of ‘greenspace management partnerships’. Jul 2009 - Dec 2011

#### **Workpackage 4**

- **Action 4.1. PEOPLE.** Business & community assessments of green infrastructure investments
- **Output 4.1.** Reports on a series of public events to gather feedback from businesses and communities. Showcased in a transnational stakeholder workshop, and summarised in a workshop report including qualitative survey data. Aug 2011.
- **Action 4.2. VALUE.** Economic valuation of green infrastructure investments - real time and ex-post evaluation.
- **Output 4.2.** Hard economic evidence on the value of green infrastructure at the level of the city/region (type-i) and the site/neighbourhood (type-ii). Oct 2011.
- **Action 4.3. GREENSPACE.** Jointly describe a prototype ‘competitive green city’, including best practices from each region.
- **Output 4.3.** Online prototype ‘competitive green city’, maps and simulated landscapes. Dec 2011.

#### **Workpackage 5**

- **Action 5.1. PEOPLE.** Provide practical training and support for NWE regions on the economic valuation of green infrastructure
- **Output 5.1.** Training courses provided in 5 NWE countries, offering financial support for participation by all regions. A roadshow of 5 practical training events. Nov 2010.
- **Action 5.2. VALUE.** Hold 2<sup>nd</sup> transnational VALUE conference, Sheffield, Nov 2011.
- **Output 5.2.** A major transnational conference and associated public cultural celebration of green spaces, accompanied by public debate.
- **Action 5.3. GREENSPACE.** Deliver to the Commissioner for Regional Policy an illustrated ‘Agenda for green infrastructure in NWE’ based on economic evidence.
- **Output 5.3.** An ‘agenda for green infrastructure in the NWE regions’ delivered to the

Commissioner for Regional Policy. Apr 2012.

**VLM & VALUE:**

**Project leader:** Liesbeth Gellinck

**Location:** Brugge, West Flanders

**Actions/workpackages: WP3:** VLM is responsible for WP3, the demonstration of investments in green infrastructure in an peri-urban context.

VLM has made a plan 'A green bicycle belt around Bruges' with investments in green infrastructure as planting tree lanes, laying new bicycle roads between green areas and investments in nature conservation.

**Additional information:**

<http://www.vlm.be/algemeen/Projecten/detail/Pages/default.aspx?itemId=187&webId=56d32dc9-29d8-46c9-8224-467b784d49d8>

**Title project:**  
**MP4: Making places profitable**



**Lead partner:** South Yorkshire Forest Partnership/ Sheffield City Council

**Partners: (8)**

VLM

Emmen Gemeente

HafenCity Universität Hamburg

Lawaetz Foundation Hamburg (= charity organisation)

Gothenburg City

University Sheffield

Heriot-Watt University Edinburgh

University of Copenhagen

**Duration project:** 2008 – 2012

**Financing:** INTERREG IV B North Sea Region, budget 5.827.542 €

**General outline:** Well managed open spaces have an important economic, social and environmental function, especially in a urban environment. Cities can be much more attractive for working and living if quality of the open space is guarded. The socio-economic development of urban areas is therefore strongly entangled with the place keeping of open space. A large challenge is the foreseeing of efficient open space, involving the private sector. Innovative partnerships for management of open space are unexplored, and there is the need to understand its impact on the social cohesion, economic development and environmental quality. The MP4 project wants to evaluate if an efficient management of open space delivers socio-economic advantages, and how a creative and innovative collaboration between different users of the space can guarantee a sustainable management.

**Actions/workpackages:**

**Workpackage 1: TRANSNATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF PRACTICE:**

Assess existing transnational experiences with place-keeping – Generate/use a knowledge base on place-keeping approaches covering establishment, governance, durability, efficiency and effectiveness. Scope the potential value of different approaches within public and private open spaces. At a transnational level, document intelligence on how successful partnerships are created along with their economic, social and environmental impacts locally and locally, nationally and transnationally.

**Workpackage 2: PLANNING FOR PLACE-KEEPING IN PARTNERSHIP**

Produce model agreements for sustainable partnerships and develop innovations in place-keeping – Ensure the long-term durability of improvements. Plan and test replicable scenarios to maximise benefits/value. Models of partnership management would cover practical issues such as procurement, contracting, finance and troubleshooting.

The workpackage jointly coordinates work to build cross-sector partnerships for long-term open space improvements. Prepare and test new legal instruments, dialogue processes and model agreements.

**Workpackage 3: IMPLEMENT INNOVATIONS, INVESTMENTS & PILOTS:**

Implement, promote and test place-keeping models transnationally – Demonstrate the benefits of place-making and place-keeping. Pilots testing and applying best practice at locations that offer the greatest transnational impact and which target ket communities. innovative open space products, sustainable processes and services brought to market. 'Hard and soft' support for economic development.

**Workpackage 4: MONITOR & EVALUATE INNOVATIONS, INVESTMENTS & PILOTS:**

Monitor and evaluate socio-economic impacts – Evaluation of the transnational impacts and transferability of on-the ground' of open space improvements. Analysis of strategic impacts: cost effectiveness, access to skills, procurement risks, sustainability of integrated approaches.

assess and document the impacts of place-keeping, plus wider transnational cooperation lessons to support policy and practice. Evaluate direct and indirect economic benefits of durable improvements.

**Workpackage 5: POLICY INFLUENCING, COMMUNICATION STRATEGY & PROJECT PROMOTION**

Develop place-keeping policies and 'mainstream' best practice – As part of the dissemination strategy, utilize partner networks and contacts within each of the participating regions and countries (e.g. regional development agencies, government dpertments/minisitries), establish extensive coomunications and cooperate with key EU networks, to develop policy, provide training and embed innovations into routine business. End result: deliver an EU-level Agenda for place-keeping

WP5 promotes the aims and objectives of the programme and project. Cooperate with Interact, URBACT, URBAN-NET and Eurocities to deliver radical changes in project planning and funding, to secure efficient long-term management.

**VLM & MP4:**

**Project leader:** Hendrik Vermeulen

**Location:** PA Brugge, Oostkamp

**Actions/workpackages:** development of private and public open space near city hall  
Oostkamp

**Additional information:**

<http://www.vlm.be/algemeen/Projecten/detail/Pages/default.aspx?itemId=188&webId=56d32dc9-29d8-46c9-8224-467b784d49d8>

<http://www.mp4-interreg.eu/>

**Title project:**  
**Urban habitats: European cross border cooperation**



**Lead partner:** Hoogheemraadschap of Schieland and Krimpenerwaard (NL),  
**Partners: (3)**  
Vlaamse Landmaatschappij (VLM)  
The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (UK)  
Southend-on-Sea Borough Council (UK)

**Duration project:** February 2008 to December 2011

**Financing:** INTERREG IV A - 2 seas

**General outline:**

The aim of Urban Habitats is to improve availability and quality of urban natural spaces and enhance awareness and engagement of urban nature by local communities. The four partners manage urban nature sites in the Netherlands, the UK and Belgium. These urban areas are experiencing growing economic activity and steadily increasing population levels, resulting in mounting pressure on the sparsely available space. Land use within cities is intensifying and urban agglomerations continue to spread into surrounding peri-urban and rural areas. Within these increasingly busy and populated cities, the quality of the urban living environment is clearly under pressure. City authorities and other organisations responsible for the quality of the natural environment need to work together to create and improve urban natural spaces amidst the pressure of urbanisation. They need to turn the available natural spaces into areas with high-quality habitats.

The Urban Habitats Project brings together parties responsible for managing these 'Urban Habitats' in the Netherlands, the UK and Belgium. Together the partners share and develop their methods and experiences in cross-border cooperation and develop new ways of creating and maintaining high-quality natural spaces in urban areas and increasing public involvement and awareness. Urban Habitats partners will jointly design tailor-made measures to improve the quality of each other's Urban Habitat sites and/or to better allow the public to experience them.

The partners will together develop tools for increasing public awareness of and engagement with urban natural areas, including customised public awareness campaigns for the individual partners and an education package. These will be implemented locally, to enhance local communities' awareness of the urban habitat sites, their importance for nature and biodiversity protection and their sustainable use.

Urban Habitats' results and findings will be actively disseminated to nature management professionals, policy makers and politicians in the 2 Seas area, to maximise the cross-border impact of the project.

## **Activities:**

### **Activity 1: Improving Urban Habitats**

This activity delivers actual improvement of urban habitat sites of each project partner using the expertise of the cross border partnership. On all sites measures will be jointly designed and implemented to physically improve quality of habitats and/or better allow the public to experience them. Each site targeted has specific challenges:

- Kralingse plas, Rotterdam :  
replace hard surface lakeside by vegetation (combines habitat and pollution filter), fish stock diversification, prevent pollution.
- Krekengebied Oostende & Oude Kale :  
improve bird and waterside habitats, replace original plant & tree species, create wetland, enhance biodiversity by small landscape elements
- South Essex Marshes :  
improve wildlife habitats and create easy viewing facilities for public
- Southend Country Park :  
develop strategy to create new accessible wildlife sites, foot and cycle site access

Each urban habitat site improvement goes through these steps:

1. Cross-border initiation session. The present situation and plans for habitat improvement are analysed by experts from all partners, resulting in recommendations to tackle challenges listed above. In Southend the session will kick-start the strategy development process.
2. Implementation of measures. Specific measures (from Step 1) are implemented on each site ranging from strategy development (Southend) to physical interventions to create/improve habitats and their access and use by public (all sites). Partners will provide each other expertise continuously during the implementation phase (mail, phone).
3. Expert visits. During implementation, partner experts revisit each site once, to monitor progress and provide on the spot advise for the remaining work. At the end of the implementation phase partner experts visit the sites again to evaluate measures.
4. Final report. The experts draft a final report presenting the 4 sites case studies and making conclusions and recommendations for future Urban Habitat improvement on sites across the 2 Seas area.

### **Activity 2: Public awareness and engagement**

#### Description:

This activity develops and implements actions for public awareness raising and engagement in urban natural areas. Target groups are the local communities in the partner areas as (potential) end users of the urban habitat sites involved. This activity aims to :

- raise awareness of the importance of nature and biodiversity protection in urban environment
- promote availability and recreational potential of urban habitats (incl. deprived communities/minority groups)
- encourage life long learning on nature and biodiversity (from school children to retired people)

- activate people in protection of urban habitats
- promote responsible and sustainable use of urban habitats

The following actions will be implemented:

1. A cross border working group will catalogue experiences and instruments in public awareness and engagement (toolbox, e.g. (interactive) wildlife information, site history, lesson plans).
2. Joint development of awareness raising campaigns. Using toolbox and targeting specific issues of each partner, a tailor made campaign will be designed for each partner by the working group.
3. Joint development of an education package for schoolchildren. HHSK will make and test an initial package on urban water quality and nature for schoolchildren. This will be developed by the partners into a package that can be used internationally.
4. Implementation. All partners will implement their public awareness campaigns locally. HHSK and RSPB will implement the educational package in cooperation with local schools.
5. Effect measurement. The effect of project Activities 1 & 2 will be measured on each urban habitat site, using common indicators (e.g. visitor numbers, quality appreciation, responsible use). Base and result values will be established using a standardised questionnaire for each partner area.
6. The working group compiles a final report presenting this activities results: toolbox, tailor made campaigns, education package and outcomes of the effect measurement.

**VLM & Urban Habitats:**

**Project leader:** Stefan De Brabander

**Location:** PA Brugge, Oude Kale (Ghent), Oostends kreken gebied (Ostend)

**Actions/workpackages:**

The 'Oude Kale' is a meandering stream through the communities of Merendree and Vinderhoute. The project aims to develop the 'Oude Kale' valley which is 100 to 600 m wide and 5 km long. The project is situated near the city of Ghent in the centre of the province East Flanders. The overall objectives of the project are fortifying existing nature, restoring the landscape, enhancing the environmental quality and water catchment and improving recreational infrastructure.

The valley is a well-preserved historic landscape with several farms embedded between pastures and farmland. It is also part of a water supply area which provides drinking water to several areas in Flanders. Connecting the neighbouring stream 'Poekebeek' with the 'Oude Kale' will result in a larger water supply. This will result in raised water levels during winter. A compensation system was developed to make up for the loss of crop yield.

The wettest pastures with high ecologic potential will be expropriated and developed for nature. A buffer strip (5m) along the river banks will connect these wetlands. This green framework will hopefully stimulate future ecological developments and improve natural habitats. To optimize recreational use different slow paths will be realized to connect the local communities and the city of Ghent.

The project 'Oostends kreken gebied' is a nature development project near the city of Ostend. The project area consists of salt, wet meadows and creeks formerly connected with the sea. The nature area is totally surrounded by industry and housing.

With the Urban Habitats project the creek 'Grote Keignaert' and its surroundings will be developed. On the western banks a new wildlife zone with reed beds and salt meadows is restored. On the eastern banks new infrastructure for fishing will be placed. Several measures to improve water quality of the creek have been taken. On the north side, a new forest zone is developed with walking and cycling tracks.

**Additional information:**

<http://www.urbanhabitats.eu/>

**Title project:**  
**SOLABIO: Species and landscapes as carriers of biodiversity**



**Lead partner:** Provincie Limburg

**Partners: (27)**

**RLLK vzw**

**RLKM vzw**

**RLHV vzw**

**NP beheer vzw**

**ANB**

**LILA vzw**

**VLM**

**Provincie Limburg**

**Provincie Noord Brabant**

**Vereniging natuurmonumenten**

**Staatsbosbeheer**

**Stichting Noordbrabants landschap**

**Brabant water N.V.**

**ZLTO**

**Provinciebestuur Vlaams Brabant**

**RLD vzw**

**RLNH vzw**

**RLZH vzw**

**NP studie**

**provinciebestuur antwerpen**

**vzw kempens landschap**

**provinciebestuur west vlaanderen**

**proclam**

**PIVAL-POVLT**

**PLBK Oost-Vlaanderen**

**stichting landschapsbeheer Zeeland**

**Duration project:** December 2008 – December 2011

**Financing:** INTERREG IV A, border region Flanders-Netherlands , 8.690.708 €

**General outline:**

SOLABIO's basic premise is clear: nature and environment are an essential part of regional economic and socio-cultural development. The project explicitly adopts an integral approach via three main pillars: economy, nature and man.

The main aim is to obtain maximum involvement of all local stakeholders - including those not usually involved in nature conservation - in achieving the biodiversity targets.

SOLABIO's aims call for an efficient, targeted approach.

The SOLABIO project creates opportunities to work together across borders (after all, species and landscapes do not recognize borders) on a range of best practices: by exchanging knowledge and experience to arrive at measures that can form the basis of a firmly underpinned species policy. The provinces involved in this project (Belgian and Dutch Limburg, Antwerp, North Brabant, Flemish Brabant, West Flanders, East Flanders and Zeeland) exchange knowledge and work together on important themes.

Cross-fertilization between the various approaches, for instance the Dutch rural habitat approach and the Flemish participative approach, offers good chances of achieving a firmly underpinned and broadly supported local biodiversity policy.

## **Actions/workpackages:**

### **WP1: The MIAS lever: Human infrastructure and industry as a springboard for species:**

seeks win-win results for nature and the environment as well as industry with target groups that are not usually involved in nature areas, such as transport infrastructure managers or industry representatives. On the one hand, well-managed industrial land, buildings or transport infrastructure can shelter many plant and animal species. On the other hand, an industrial site can gain much from well thought-out management or beautification of grounds or buildings.

### **WP2: The FarmerAndNature lever: Agricultural landscapes as a shelter for many species:**

aims to stimulate win-win situations in the agricultural sector. Many species depend for their survival on open man-made landscapes. However, the intensification of agriculture threatens the survival of many arable-field species. Yet life in the fields can offer many benefits to the farmer and his farm: for instance, natural pest control by insects and birds, attractive herbaceous borders that stimulate recreation and farm tourism.

### **WP3: The SADER lever: Species on the edge:**

seeks win-win opportunities with local stakeholders along the edges of nature areas or at the transition between municipalities, provinces or countries. Boundary areas are a tangle of different functions, property situations and administrative or legal provisions. In these areas it is essential to be in tune with and to learn from each other. This lever specifically targets the management and restoration of forests, forest margins, heaths and rough pastures.

### **WP4: The BEEKDALEN lever: Source of diversity:**

focuses on the blue arteries through which water-bound species move through the landscape. Because of the variety of their habitats, stream valleys are home to many distinctive, often rare, species. Stream valleys often cross property, provincial and country boundaries, so their restoration calls for an integrated approach. Pilot projects are used to involve surrounding areas, owners and managers.

Each lever seeks new actors, individuals or companies, and warms them to working for biodiversity. This is achieved through example projects, field visits and training.

A horizontal lever – operated by the provincial authorities – takes care of the organization of the SOLABIO project and keeps watch over the project structure and approach, the joint monitoring and evaluation aspects, and overall communication and public relations.

## **VLM & SOLABIO:**

**Project leader:** Marion Liberloo

**Location:** across Flanders

**Actions/workpackages:**

**Functional agro-biodiversity:**

Nature has always helped the farmer to combat pests naturally: flying insects (such as ichneumon wasps, lacewings, hoverflies) and walking invertebrates (ground beetles, spiders), that live in herb, grass and herbaceous verges feed on crop pests such as aphids and so contribute to natural pest control. However, intensification of agriculture (use of herbicides, pesticides, land reparation) are putting these natural enemies under a lot of pressure, leading in some cases to fields that are almost devoid of life. By planting herbaceous field edges in combination with grass-herb strips, useful creatures are attracted, and they contribute to natural pest control. Furthermore, such strips also have an added value for how holiday-makers and tourists experience open spaces, and place the farm in a positive light. The projects being executed (in East and West Flanders) are giving an idea of the impact of such strips on pest control in crops by counting aphids at various distances from the strips, and by catching and identifying the useful insects.

**Farmland birds:**

Farmland birds depend strongly for their survival on wide, open but also small-scale landscapes, and have been under great pressure in recent years. The intensification of agriculture has caused the loss of nesting opportunities, insects, grain and seeds as food for young, and often there is not enough food in winter (no stubble fields). Targeted measures involve creating opportunities for specific species to recover. In the loam area (Zuid Haspengouw and Flemish Brabant) measures are being tested in project areas (core areas that still have large populations of i.a. Yellowhammer, Corn bunting, skylark, partridge) that should ensure that more food is available in both the winter (bird food crops) and the summer (mixed grass-herb strips); moreover, they create nesting opportunities. In addition, the possible double function of erosion buffer strokes as food and nesting opportunities for farmland bird species is being tested. A monitoring system, in which several partners are participating, will follow the effectiveness of the measures.

**Transition zone vegetation on the edges of a field or meadow with null fertilization:**

The natural transition from forest to open country is swarming with life. Many unique species of butterflies, dragonflies, birds and beetles are at home here. Because of the pressure on our open spaces, the transition from forest to field is not longer gradual, but abrupt, and the specific micro-climates to which some species are bound are gone. Proper management of the change to transition zone vegetation creates a range of possibilities. However, for this various stakeholders (farmers, forest owners, hunters) have to cooperate, and a management agreement in specific target areas could be helpful. Within SOLABIO the VLM will test practical examples for their applicability to farmers and their effectiveness for biodiversity recovery (i.a. butterfly monitoring).

**Meadow birds:**

are under great pressure in agricultural areas. In certain areas management agreements can be reached to protect meadow birds. These focus on improving brooding success by postponing the time of cutting and leaving land to pasture, nest protection, etc. However, these measures have so far had only limited success. Via SOLABIO the VLM will examine how the management agreements can be adapted so that they 1) can be incorporated in the farmer's operations as effectively as possible, 2) optimize the possibilities for foraging of the wandering chicks leaving the "meadow bird plots". A new package is being tested that combines nature in field edges (but not only along the vulnerable areas) and postponing of the cutting date.

**Additional information:**

<http://solabio.org/solabio/>

**Title Network:  
FARLAND**



**Lead partner:** The Netherlands (DLG)

**Partners: (10)**

Belgium: Flemish Land Agency (VLM)

Hungary (2): Research institute for Soil Science and Agricultural chemistry  
MTA-TAKI

Lithuania (2): Ministry of agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania  
National Land Service

The Netherlands (2): Government Service for Land and Water Management (DLG)  
ALTERRA

Portugal DGADR

Spain (2): AGADER  
University of Santiago de Compostella

Support by FAO

**Duration project:** undefined

**Financing:** Each organisation contributes financially

**General outline and history:**

In August 2008 a FARLAND network was created because the partners of the past Interreg IIC project FARLAND, saw the need of the continuation of the cooperation between the partners on rural development.

Network events will contribute to exchange of knowledge and upgrading of the implementation approaches. Besides direct benefits for the work of each partner, policy-implementing agencies have a crucial role in advising the policy makers to come up timely with new objectives and effective instruments. Therefore some good steps have been made in FARLAND in linking concrete implementation to the policy level (i.e. our Future Approaches Workshops and discussion papers). By having a more structured and permanent orientation of the network on regional, national and European policies it is possible to embed the network more firmly the different policy environments

**Actions/workpackages:**

The network will be active using creative workshops connected with EURURALIS scenarios which provide an effective framework for FARLAND partners to work on our common objectives. These are:

1. Exchange knowledge and experience to enhance capacity among its members
2. Stimulate the establishment and upgrading of regional and national approaches
3. Stimulate upgrading of the national and European policies by joining policy consultations and taking part in public and policy debate
4. Stimulate professional training and capacity building

**VLM & FARLAND:**

**Project leader:** Maggie Lodts

**Location:** CD Brussel

**Actions/workpackages:**

Although no working packages are defined, it was agreed to organise 4 workshops in the period 2009-2011 on the following themes:

- September 2009: Land abandonment (Portugal)
- June 2010: territorial cohesion (Lithuania) - as part of F:ACTS!  
([www.factsproject.eu](http://www.factsproject.eu)) meeting on Governance and institutional arrangements
- October 2010: Urbanisation and biodiversity (Belgium) – as a part of theGreen Work(s)! conference
- June 2011: River basis management and rural development (Hungary)

'VLM is an active partner of the Farland network and saw an opportunity in organising the workshop as a part of the conference Green work(s)!'

**Additional information:**

The 'Farland book'

([http://www.vlm.be/SiteCollectionDocuments/Publicaties/projecten/FB\\_book\\_final.pdf](http://www.vlm.be/SiteCollectionDocuments/Publicaties/projecten/FB_book_final.pdf)) presents the conclusions of the Farland project. It shows the current state of the art methods in the partner countries, focuses on innovation as the basis for the continuous evolution on policies, investigates whether we are heading to one common approach, looks at the issues at stake and the main challenges for future land development. This book is a very current background document for all the activities of the Farland network.

**Title project:  
European Learning Network on  
Functional AgroBiodiversity  
ELN-FAB**



**General outline:**

The first conference 'Towards a European Learning Network on Functional Agrobiodiversity', held in The Hague, the Netherlands on 23 and 24 June 2008, resulted in the decision to establish a European Learning Network on Functional AgroBiodiversity (ELN-FAB). ECNC in cooperation with DIVERSITAS agroBIODIVERSITY International Project Office (AB-IPO) took up the coordination of this network, and the Netherlands Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment provided funding. The first phase of the project started in January 2009 and will run until the end of 2009. Further support and financial participation is being sought in order to expand the Network in the longer term.

**Vision**

By 2030 the use of agrobiodiversity to enhance ecosystem services in a way that promotes sustainable agricultural production and contributes to sustainable rural development (triple P) is fully integrated into European agricultural policies and practices.

**Mission**

The European Learning Network on Functional Agrobiodiversity is founded to exchange knowledge and practical experience across country and language borders, between farmers and policy makers, scientists, businesses and NGOs, to enable fast and effective implementation of best practices. This will help to optimize agrobiodiversity benefits, promote sustainable agriculture and will encourage widespread uptake of biodiversity concepts, thereby also enhancing non-agronomic ecosystem services.

**Objectives**

The specific objectives of the project are to:  
stimulate dialogue, influence policy making and support implementation of best practices;  
generate and exchange knowledge on best and worst practices as well as on mechanisms and practices underlying functional agrobiodiversity;  
undertake outreach activities;  
provide advice to farmers, policy makers and scientists and other stakeholders.



**Title project:**  
ECO<sup>2</sup>

**Lead partner:** Boerenbond

**Partners: (5)**

VLM, Agro|aanneming, ANB, Lisro vzw, Rurant vzw

**Duration project:** 01/10/2008-30/09/2010

**Financing:** EFRO

**General outline:**

This project aims to develop new market oriented activities and development strategies for rural/peri-urban areas in order to enhance and reinforce its typical rural qualities. This is put in practice by bringing (agro-)nature preservation/management in an economic sphere, which creates economical benefit on one hand and sustainability on the other hand. Foreign experiences show that a combination of systems, in which agro-nature management is carried out using economical principles, by local groups in a site-specific way, is successful in development of rural areas. These systems are: development of private-based rural landscape funds, organisation of farmer groups and systems of agrarian contractorship in landscape management, which create economical and ecological benefits at the same time. This approach reinforces the existing growth potential of the rural economy. More agricultural entrepreneurs are stimulated to participate in landscape and nature management in an economical way by creating system innovation. The project responds to demand of businesses and citizens for more quality of life: to stimulate economical entrepreneurship, upgrading of landscape and nature and stimulate social cohesion and collaboration.

## **Actions/workpackages:**

### **WP1: Development of partnerships in agrarian landscape and nature management (via Agro-nature management groups)**

Nature projects are increasing in Flanders : nature compensation for large economical projects (e.g. extension of ports), water management projects,... implementation of European habitat and wildlife directives. In many cases, these projects are situated in agricultural areas where agriculture is involved as an economic party. Rural development policy stimulates farmers to participate in nature and landscape management in agro-environmental schemes. Despite many efforts, mainly on an individual basis, sustainable results in nature and landscape management are often scarce. Financial resources and approaches for landscape and nature management are limiting. European rural policy emphasises three majors issues for the future: (i) bio-diversity increase, (ii) site-specific approach and (iii) coordinated approach.

The major aim of this work package is to stimulate and support partnerships in agrarian landscape and nature management (agro nature management groups). Farmers are stimulated to integrate landscape management as an economical activity into their agricultural practice and to take a more pro-active role in nature and landscape projects and to collaborate with other stakeholders. Through partnerships, agro-environmental measures can be implemented in a more coordinated and site-specific way and knowledge about this topic can be increasingly gained (through for instance group training, farmer to farmer extension,...). Finally, this will lead to an improved nature and landscape management and a more efficient use of financial resources. Within the ECO<sup>2</sup> project, a centre of excellence (agro nature management centre) supports knowledge and capacity building, sharing, networking and matching with stakeholders, elaboration of projects, and establishment of an appropriate legal and juridical framework.

### **WP2: Facilitation of agro-contractorship**

Farmers who are willing to do contractor work in landscape management need to meet several legal duties, especially in case of public tender, for which a registration as an official contractor is needed. Legal registrations, administration and total work load retain individual farmers to participate in this work. Aim of this work package is to develop a legal framework for farmers who are willing to do contractor work for other parties (municipalities, land owners,...) on landscape management, in particular by developing a back-office to support in administration and by generating and supporting contractor work for farmers.

**WP3: A site-specific, participative and market-oriented approach for landscape development.**

Current financial instruments and approaches for nature and landscape management are limited. Due to large economical projects (e.g. extension of ports) which are to be compensated, water management projects,.. implementation of European habitat and wildlife directives,.. the number of large nature projects is growing. In many cases these projects are situated in agricultural areas. Farmers are playing an increasingly important role in nature and landscape management with a growing adoption rate of agro-environmental measures. As these initiatives take place in an economic business framework, compensations based on market-prices are needed to be economically sustainable.

The main goal of this part is to develop a strategy and framework in-which citizens, farmers and companies collaborate to stimulate and compensate land users for sustainable landscape management in Ghent Port area in order to increase the viability of near-by villages. Main activities of this work package are: (i) concretisation of demand for landscape development, (ii) sensitization, support and stimulation of cooperation between different actors in landscape development, (iii) development of innovative financial instruments, (iv) stimulating and supporting development of private execution and management structures and instruments.

**VLM & ECO<sup>2</sup>:**

**Project leader 1: Sven Defrijn**

**Location: CD-Brussel**

**Actions/workpackages: WP1**

**Project leader 2: Sylvie Fosselle**

**Location: PA-Gent**

**Actions/workpackages: WP2**

**Additional information: [www.ecokwadraat.be](http://www.ecokwadraat.be)**