



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund



Minutes Peer2Peer meeting WLE Limburg 29 January 2020, Workshop landscape business models

Participants: Ulf Hägglund, Glenn Douglas, Katrin Schikorr, Lauren Verheijen, Peter Tapak, Ulrich Stöcker, Helena Newell (moderator), Kristel Neyens (minutes), Erwin Christis (moderator)

- Helena gives a presentation: Making Europe a Wilder Place - through landscape business plan approach (in annex mail)

Questions:

- Katrin Schikorr:

We are very interested in the economic analysis of regions. Do you have experience regarding what kind of group you need to start the analysis?

Helena Newell: We have experience in Greater Côa Valley (Rewilding Portugal) and a new project in the Iberian Highlands. It is essential to have someone in your local team with business background, a local person who leads the analysis. First search online and then check which research you have to do yourself. Engage a local university or local consultancy. We can share the template of the landscape business plan we are working on.

- Lauren Verheijen: How do you give local communities ownership of the process?

Helena Newell: You cannot impose a transition, you cannot persuade landowners if they don't see the transition to be beneficial for themselves. Look for early adopters, try to understand as much as you can of the region, are the entrepreneurs looking for opportunities to change? Are they struggling?

- Lauren Verheijen: Do you come across common hurdles between different regions?

Helena Newell: Lack of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship, lack of business opportunities. You have to find interested businesses. We are exploring whether we (local teams) need to be the entrepreneurs or if we have to find entrepreneurs. People are not always business minded, public is getting older in these areas, young people move away.

- Ulrich Stöcker: Could you clarify Offset Encroachment?

Helena Newell: we create a buffer around core natural areas to protect them from areas that have impact on the land we are working on (e.g. pesticides). We see rewilding as a kind of spectrum, people may want to impose a system somewhere between the traditional system and rewilding.

- Katrin Schikorr: Is there in the RiverPark Maasvallei cooperation with the water agencies?

Erwin Christis: There is close cooperation with the agency which manages the river. They lead the efforts to restore the natural river valley (in this part the river Maas is the last unchanneled river in Flanders), mainly to prevent flooding with economic impact as result. This approach to combines nature restoration and highwater security in close collaboration with nature organisations. We find it important to communicate to the public why this approach is necessary in terms of safety and economic development. There is also close collaboration with gravel extraction companies. There is

only a limited amount of gravel extraction allowed under strict regulations. The area where the gravel is extracted has to be restored and becomes a nature reserve.

In the Netherlands there is collaboration with drinking water companies where they own dunes. They manage these areas as nature reserves because they can guarantee the water quality much easier. The European Bison was introduced here, hence there is a close relation between the water management board and the nature organizations.

You have to maintain a delicate balance. How far do you go? You always change the landscape!

- Helena Newell: Why did they use nature-based solutions to prevent flooding, and not dikes for example?
Erwin Christis: There was already an example in the Netherlands, on the river Rijn, that this solution not only works but also benefits landscape and hence tourism and economy. It is also important to know/work with the right people who have the same vision.
- Erwin Christis: Do you use these landscape business models only in the existing Rewilding Europe areas or do you also implement them elsewhere?
Helena Newell: So far they have been only been applied in 2 of the Rewilding Europe areas but it can be an opportunity to use them looking for new rewilding areas. We look for ecological integrity and rewilding opportunities but also at economic impact. We are certainly willing to work with other organisations, maybe even on a European scale but local knowledge is important to make it a meaningful plan. You have to adapt a business plan to a specific region.
- Glenn Douglas: Do you see any scale problems? How large can an area be?
Helena Newell: Problem is that if area is too big it is difficult to understand what opportunities there are, understand local dynamics in terms of looking at different jobs or different land use.
- Erwin Christis: Who pays for his research? Communities? Businesses? Rewilding Europe?
Helena Newell: Research in Greater Còa Valley was funded by Life WofFlux project. Research in Iberian Highlands was part of Endangered Landscapes Programme. However, we are looking at ways to create business networks. The planning process is undertaken by Rewilding Europe, but in the future, this can maybe also be done by local universities or organisations.
- Peter Tapak: Do you have examples of better use of forests?
Helena Newell: We have an expert on forestry (Jamy Lawrence) who looks for opportunities within our rewilding areas (e.g. carbon storage).
- Helena Newell: How does an increase in fishing licenses in the Alpine region in Sweden benefit the river/nature?
Glenn Douglas: 75% of income of licenses go to Sami community (divided between reindeer herding cooperatives and a Sami fund), 25% is used for management. Outside the Alpine region in the fisheries administration areas, all of the money goes to management. So it depends on who owns the water area. Entrepreneurs understand that if fishing is increased, tourism is increased and this benefits the economy. However, there are a lot of problems with fish species disappearing and more invasive species because of climate change. Also cutting of forests is a problem because of the effect of the sun on the river (temperature change) because there are only guidelines and no regulations.

Interesting film is 'More of everything' on the Swedish forestry model.

- Raymond Tilmans: I understand that it is not possible to write one business model which can be applied in all areas, because of the economic situation and the specific character but are there similar specifics we can use (health sector)?

Helena Newell: Yes, it is interesting to look at other areas and learn things (e.g. River Maas – River Rijn), use showcases for natural solutions and illustrate how it works. The more we can work together, the more we can replicate things taking into account the specifics of each region.