

Dienst Landelijk Gebied

Land use and land banking: Tools to enhance river restoration

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dienst landelijk gebied
voor ontwikkeling en beheer

Content

- 1. Frame work and context (topic WWF6)
- 2. Problem and thesis
- 3. Considerations
- 4. Land banking
- 5. Land use (land planning)
- 6. Recommendations



1. Frame work, context

- In the framework of the 6th World Water Forum preparatory process, ONEMA, ECRR and EWA are coordinating the Target and Solution Group (TSG) 8, which is elaborating the target to:
'Develop new knowledge and know how on rivers hydro-morphology, restoration and protection of water ecosystems'

The 4 topics under target 8 are defined as:

- integration of aquatic ecosystems conservation in land use planning, land policies and good practices of land banking
- sharing of experiences on the best local implementation of restoration measures
- public education on water ecosystems and resources preservation and restoration
- improving the link between tourism development and the quality of water ecosystems



2. Problem and thesis

- Problem
- Land purchase, different forms of land use and land use planning, sometimes in relation to the Common Agricultural policy, is often seen as the most evident barrier for river restoration.
- Thesis
- Local land use planning and land banking instruments are useful tools to implement nature conservation / river restoration projects.
- Stakeholder involvement
- Cooperation and teamwork
- Creating awareness (on local and political level)



3. Considerations

- **Climate change, rising sea level and human impact will increase flood risks in the future; traditional ways to tackle flooding are not sufficient anymore.**
- **Offering the concept of “room for the river” and controlled flooding will lead to extra claims on land along river banks**
- **A most evident barrier for river restoration forms the acquisition of land (or rights to change land use)**
- **Varieties in land use often implicate complex ownership situations to deal with in river restoration projects, and within more extended areas**



Considerations (2)

- **The new EC's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) ensures farming and preservation of the environment to go hand-in-hand. Land use and land use planning play a vital role in confronting new challenges such as climate change, water management, bio-energy and biodiversity.**
- **Emphasis is no longer laid on providing enough food for Europe; instead of subsidizing production on a large scale, farmer support now is linked to compliance with broader objectives including control of diffuse pollution and bird and wildlife conservation (both potentially key elements of river restoration)**



4. Land Banking (1)

- **Changing land use and ownership by a coordinated programme of buying, selling, leasing and exchange of land between different owners and users**
- **Land banking involves both acquisition and temporary land management**
- **An integrated land acquisition process forms a key mechanism for river restoration**
- **Three kinds of land banking instruments applied**



Land Banking (2)

- 1. Land exchange bank, a revolving fund in which land owned by the state can be exchanged with farmers' land in order to increase the agricultural structure or to make space for public functions. Re-parcelling processes can make available land for other purposes like nature reserves.
- 2. Land development bank, land owned by the state gets exchanged or sold or leased out in order to develop public functions, for example the establishment of ecological networks, nature reserves, river restoration areas etc.
- 3. Land bank as a financing instrument, especially in areas where high land prices occur. Lands can be acquired by the land bank and given in lease to farmers. In this way, vulnerable landscapes can be maintained and preserved.



5. Land use and land planning

- Land use planning is an important tool for optimal integration of water issues in spatial planning of rural areas
- Land use planning offers an effective mechanism for river restoration and in particular for adopting a more integrated approach to land management.
- Challenge: to combine and integrate all different functions into planning processes, f.e. in river basement management plans
- Stakeholder analyses and –participation, inter active processes (involvement of stakeholders) , tailor made solutions, by multi disciplinary teams



6. Recommendations

- Land development requires new partnerships between public and private sectors and stakeholders and collaborative ways of working
- Networks have to include a mix of organisations dealing with policy development, implementation and research/innovation
- Countries, regions or local governments should start pilot projects in specific areas related to river restoration
- Integrate river restoration programs or flood protection policies and ambitions with economic, environmental, infrastructural policies



Points of attention and discussion

- *Land banking (by reparceling of lands, land exchange between farmers, or between the state and private owners) creates space for new developments and thus enhances river restoration projects*
- *By keeping land in stock, public authorities can play a mayor role on the market to enhance new projects or spatial developments*
- *To develop a land bank and keep it functioning succesfully, a solid financial budget is necessary*
- *Apart from that, political commitment for establishing a (national) land bank is needed, which is not in all cases obvious*
- *Approved regulation and a judicial base is an important precondition for a well functioning and trustworthy land banking system*



Points of attention and discussion (2)

- *Proper involvement of all stakeholders, managed by local area committees is a key factor for successful land development*
- *How can we make the connection between sector planning and integrated, multi purpose land use planning ?*
- *Land use planning or land development are most effective when different interests are matched, and balanced during project preparation and execution. This requires active involvement of all stakeholders. How can we obtain that?*
- *A good balance between public interests as well as local private interests is a precondition for success (combining top down and bottom up)*
- *Specific attention in planning policies has to be paid to land owners (in many cases farmers); can we make the connection with the new CAP?*

