

Introduction to Planning Metropolitan Landscapes

Gunther Tress and Bärbel Tress

Alterra Green World Research, Wageningen University and Research Centre

Land Use Planning Group, Dept. of Environmental Sciences, Wageningen University

Wageningen, The Netherlands

tress@tress.cc

“Can we plan metropolitan landscapes? Do metropolitan landscapes exist? What makes them different from urban landscapes? Where does a metropolitan landscape start and where does it end? Who is planning metropolitan landscapes? How are these plans made? Will the plans ever be realized?” Readers will have these and many other questions when reading the phrase “planning metropolitan landscapes”. It is the aim of this book to discuss some of these questions, however, when looking for answers often new questions arise.

The book was initiated at two recently held scientific meetings. The first was the 4th workshop of the International Study Group of Multiple Land Use (ISOMUL), held at Western Washington University in Bellingham (USA) in June 2002. The meeting was entitled “Collaborative Planning for the Metropolitan Landscapes” and discussed planning and research aspects related to metropolitan landscapes, mainly in the USA and the Netherlands (Haaland & Smith, 2002). The second event was a symposium on “Landscape Dialogues in Metropolitan Delta Areas” held during the 6th World Congress of the International Association of Landscape Ecology (IALE) in Darwin (Australia) in July 2003. This meeting brought together researchers and planners to discuss specific problems of metropolitan areas located at large river deltas (Pearson & Hobbs, 2003).

A third motivation to this book came from the research interest in planning prob-

lems of metropolitan areas that are studied at three Dutch institutes: the Alterra Green World Research institute in Wageningen, the Land Use Planning Group at the Environmental Science Department of Wageningen University, and the Agricultural Economics Research Institute in The Hague. Funding for these activities came from two major research programs: the KAP program – developing planning approaches and concepts for the regional-specific implementation of multiple use of land (Tress et al., 2003a), and the DELTA program – investigating interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity in landscape research and planning (Tress et al., 2003b).

The contributions in this book derive from papers presented at the international meetings in Bellingham and Darwin as well as from research conducted at the above-mentioned institutes. Additionally, we invited some selected experts to contribute to this book. The first part of the book presents conceptual papers on defining and understanding metropolitan landscapes. The second part deals with the demands and problems that exist in several metropolitan landscapes around the world. The third part presents a broad selection of papers that discuss approaches how to plan and manage metropolitan landscapes. Finally, the book concludes with a reflection on the concept of metropolitan landscapes as presented in this book and in current landscape research and planning.

Bärbel Tress & Gunther Tress ,

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References

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