LOS_DAMA! - Let’s start! - C’est parti! - Forza cominciamo! - Pojdimi! - Auf geht’s!

With LOS_DAMA! - “Landscape and Open Space Development in Alpine Metropolitan Areas” we are striving to protect and enhance the “unspectacular” Alpine landscapes on our doorsteps and secure liveability in our cities while connecting people and green spaces throughout the Alpine region. These green spaces in and around our cities are valuable, yet exposed to heavy development pressures and a variety of demands.

Franziska, managing the project requires a lot of skills. The partners are scattered all over the Alpine region, yet, it needs common understanding and concerted action. How do you facilitate exchange and implementation?

Most project partners have more tasks apart from LOS_DAMA! and recruiting additional staff takes time. It can be challenging to keep up with the pace of our work programme. On the bright sight – all our project partners are very committed. Meetings and phone calls are crucial and the best way to keep in touch, it is inspiring and creates team spirit.

Matthias, you and six other partners get the chance to implement pilot activities together with stakeholders in the city region. Can we learn from each other despite the differences?

Overall, many problems are similar. Most of us face that urban transformation can work against securing open spaces. It is fruitful to look at similar issues in different settings. In Munich, territorial borders are narrow and there are many small neighbouring municipalities with self-governing rights. With our local pilot we aim at joint action.

Sylvia, as European affairs officer – how would you describe the value added of EU-projects?

A great advantage for those involved is to get out of the “hamster wheel”. By explaining your own approach to outsiders you take a new look at it. And what’s more, your peers offer their experience. It is important to strongly interweave the project and daily practice.

Munich’s Department of Urban Planning and Building Regulations is lead partner of LOS_DAMA! Read about Munich’s expectations:

Susanne, you’re in charge of green planning. Securing open spaces in a growing city is a challenge you face every day. Why would Munich still launch an EU project as lead partner?

Well, that’s a good question considering the extent of such a project. And yet, it was a unique opportunity for enhanced regional cooperation. A growing city definitely needs cooperation for landscape and green infrastructure development. The neighbouring municipalities expressed their interest – LOS_DAMA! is a wonderful vehicle for creating new joint projects.
The LOS_DAMA! Local Pilots and Knowledge Partners

The City of Munich collaborates with three associations for landscape and inter-municipal management. They presented their approach at the LOS_DAMA! kick-off event. A field trip to Fröttmaninger Heide showed the heathlands just north of the city and a former garbage heap, now an artificial hill for recreation and sheep breeding. The heathland association has been managing the area across municipal borders since 1990, with a focus on conservation and recreation. In Munich south-west, the City and the Regional Management will involve citizens in a “green treasure hunt”. Dachauer Moos association manages a mire landscape.

Regione Piemonte is defining an ecosystem-based approach for sustainable planning and management of green infrastructures in the Turin metropolitan area. An integrated territorial vision shall be rooted in nature-based solutions and landscape ecology, building on ecosystem services. It will benefit ecological, social and economic development. In addition, Piedmont Region strives to introduce green infrastructure into its territorial and urban planning through an inter-municipal structural planning scheme. At local level, an integrated management system according to the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) shall be applied.

Salzburg Institute for Regional Planning and Housing (SIR), the City of Salzburg and the Regional Association Salzburg City and Surrounding Communities will (re)initiate and innovate the ‘Open Space Fund’. This instrument shall activate and support green infrastructure projects and enable compensation measures. The pilot will involve stakeholders and will foster multifunctionality. The pilot partners will define and prioritise measures for their green areas and will include new, creative solutions for negotiated or voluntary exchange of plots of land on a regional level.

Together with various stakeholders, the City of Vienna and the neighbouring municipality of Gerasdorf develop a landscape and action plan to strengthen the multifunctionality of the landscape in the north-east of Vienna. These areas will be upgraded to be inviting to people seeking recreation while keeping local agricultural use. To best involve stakeholders and citizens different formats are provided like a ‘greenspace conference’, a workshop of ideas and a range of discussions with stakeholders on-site.

The City of Trento involves citizens for improving social and ecological connectivity and accessibility of peri-urban spaces as well as changing the common perception of these areas. The local pilot strategy has three axis: ‘exploration’ – mapping potentials of open spaces around the urban core (for agriculture, recreation or ecological improvement) and acquiring deeper knowledge; ‘cultivation’ – including new strategies into planning policies and projects for selected areas and for enhancing the potentials of open spaces; and ‘dissemination’ – raising interest of stakeholders and involving citizens (and associations or schools).
In Slovenia’s urban region of Ljubljana, the pilot area is Ljubljana Marsh Nature Park. It is shared by seven municipalities and is a pronouncedly multifunctional territory with settlements, economic activities and valuable natural and cultural heritage. Due to its location and attractiveness, tourism and recreation have been gaining importance in recent years, opening new challenges for future development. The pilot activity stakeholder is oriented and participatory, addressing potential synergies and conflicts as well as possibilities for development of an inter-municipal green infrastructure strategy.

Grenoble-Alpes Métropole is implementing three local pilot activities:

1. Developing landscape guidelines to be integrated in the metropolitan urban regulation scheme,
2. Holding landscape workshops to initiate new tools for intervention,

The Technical University of Munich, the University of Grenoble Alpes and the Eberhard Karls University Tübingen are supporting pilot partners to bridge the gap between theory and practice. They do so by facilitating knowledge exchange between partners and providing state-of-the-art expertise on green infrastructure, ecosystem services and landscape governance. An autumn school for students and young professionals will transfer knowledge and experiences to a wider community as well as gaining creative and professional input from the young participants.

LOS_DAMA! Kick-Off Meeting and Workshop on Green Infrastructure in Munich

On 31st May and 1st June 2017, more than 50 local, regional and international experts, officers and stakeholders from Austria, France, Germany, Italy, and Slovenia attended the event. LOS_DAMA! organised the meeting in close cooperation with the European Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP), in particular Action Group 7. Protecting and enhancing Alpine green infrastructure is the joint interest of both, LOS_DAMA! and AG7.

“Green Infrastructure” may sounds quite technical but it is very helpful for strategically developing a network of multifunctional green spaces and open areas. Parks, river beds, agricultural land, street trees, green roofs, and other elements can be parts of such a network. It delivers various benefits such as recreation, reduced flood risks, improved air quality, and it supports biodiversity.
LOS_DAMA! City and Metropolitan Authorities Network

On the occasion of the EUSALP environmental minister’s conference on Green Infrastructure on 2nd October 2017, the first five political representatives officially launched the LOS_DAMA! City network. Trento, Vienna and Munich and the metropolitan authorities of Grenoble-Alpes and Torino signed the LOS_DAMA Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation. The cities of Graz, Milano, and Salzburg already pledged to do so.

It establishes a long-term cooperation for green and open space development in urban and peri-urban areas. Other signatories will follow and the LOS_DAMA! will foster the cooperation. Signatories commit to work closely together with stakeholders and citizens for a green infrastructure that considerably enhances the quality of life in city regions.

The Bavarian Minister for the Environment and Consumer Protection, Ulrike Scharf, and the Mayor of Munich, Josef Schmid, as hosts, Lidija Stebernak, State Secretary of Slovenia, Daniel Calleja Crespo, Director-General of DG Environment of the European Commission and Herbert Dorfmann, Member of the European Parliament all outlined the high importance of green infrastructure.

Contact us if you would like to join in as signatory or supporter!

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