

Asters CEN74: Mainstreaming Ecological Connectivity Around Lake Annecy:

A Pilot area as an example for Spatial Planning Integration

Interreg



Co-funded by the European Union

Alpine Space

PlanToConnect

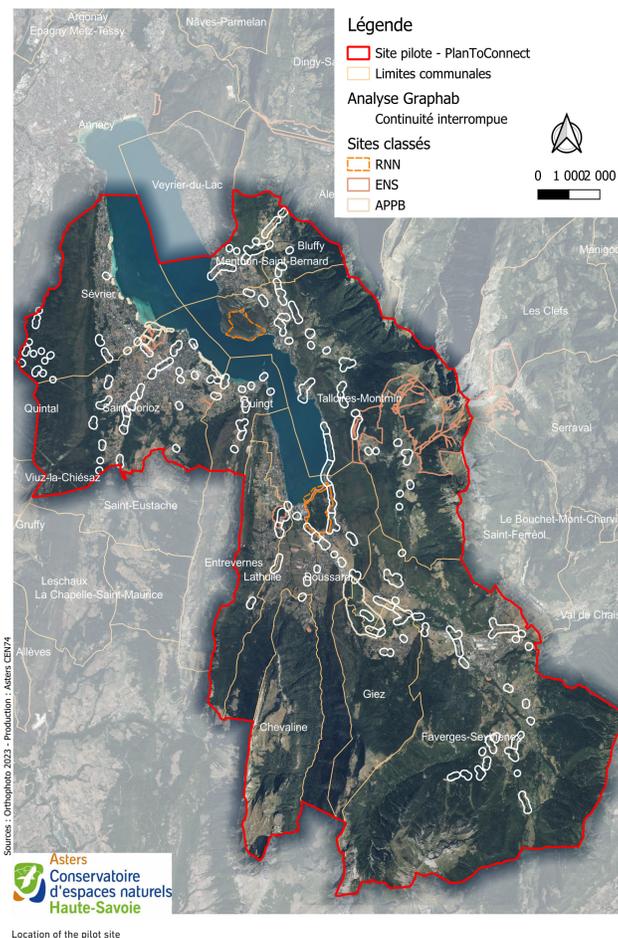


1 Why act here? — Ecological connectivity in the South of Lake Annecy

Asters CEN74 conducted a case study in the South of Lake Annecy to improve the consideration of ecological connectivity in the central and southern parts of Lake Annecy.

The main issues in the pilot site is the presence of major natural areas with rich biodiversity surrounded by urban areas and an anthropic great lake that can create barriers and even insulating effects on some sites. Poor connectivity of corridors can be caused by urban sprawling, downgrading of agricultural and natural lands into urban one in local urban planning and an increase of road users.

Several urban planning documents were elaborated during the last years for which we analysed the outcomes to incorporate methods inspired from the pilot site.



2 Case study objectives

The pilot site faces an administrative boundary between the Urban Community of Great Annecy and the Source du Lac's Council of Community. The purpose of the study was to harmonise local planning between these two distinctive communities by creating urban planning tools, grid of understanding, raise awareness on the topic towards local councillors, etc...

PlanToConnect

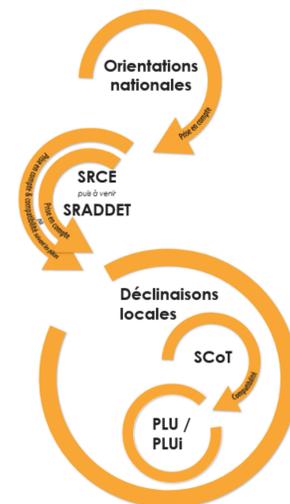
3 Methodological approach

The regional planning document (SRADDET) is already well composed with main regional corridors. However, at a smaller scale such as the one of our pilot site, mapping local corridors could help to adapt spatial planning to each local specificity. We used the software Graphab to model possible paths of local corridors within the territory by using different grading of permeability. The outcome of modelling was to assess if local corridors needed to be maintained, protected or restored. We also forecasted to use them as a tool for decision makers and planners to identify more precisely places where corridors are located and what are the potential issues of their functioning in the territory.



5 From concept to statutory plans

In France, green and blue infrastructures are well taken into account in urban planning due to a national impulse from the Environmental ministry in 2007. It allowed to create a national scale mapping analysis of corridors that is mandatory to use in urban planning documents. It frames urban rules and gives legal boundaries for local connectivity toward urban plans at different scales.



Source : Environnement paysage, 2018

6 Governance & stakeholder engagement

We wanted to include the majority of local actors concerned by local connectivity to better understand spatial and social dynamics around the territory and to receive feedback on local use of the territory.

Main local actors were:

- Local council community,
- State institutions (Department, municipalities, Agriculture agency, forest agency, Regional Park, environmental conservatory, etc...)
- State representatives within the territory (DDT)
- Local associations (environmental protection, hunters, water institutions, etc...)

4 Pilot design

The South of lake Annecy plays a strategic role by its geographic position for local to regional connectivity. The lake can represent a natural structural barrier for some terrestrial species and urban areas are narrowing the possible paths in an East/West direction from one mountain range to another. It leads to few but very important corridors at a local scale to be maintained into a functioning state.

Several local measures could be implemented to improve local connectivity such as:

- Applying road traffic regulations in favour of local corridors (warning signs, speed limits, etc.),
- Set up infrastructures around roads (under or overpass, removal of guardrail, etc.),
- Reduce local obstacles (fences, walls, etc.)
- Restore green and blue infrastructures (plant hedges, create ponds, etc.)
- Managed local sites with environmental reasoned methods (mowing, scheduled of maintenance, etc.)
- Clearly identifying and protecting corridors into local urban plans

The map shows in white different measures that could be implemented in this territory, based on local council ideas.

7 Funding toolbox

Several types of funds could finance ecological connectivity, coming from different territorial scales and funding infrastructures: National, Departmental, Environmental Ministry, local national action plan, water agency, etc...

8 Key messages for planners

Despite environmental laws encouraging to consider corridors in urban planning, the monitoring of the quality of application within urban planning documents is essential to make sure that requirements are met and not overlooked.

Ecological connectivity should be analysed and worked at different scales from European to local ones, since each levels have its own issues and rely on each other's. For example, protecting a corridor at a regional scale does not assure that it is functional at a local scale.

9 Next steps / expected impact

Asters CEN74 is planning to follow its local actions to raise awareness directly to political representatives. This approach is essential to identify their level of interest into some projects, engage future projects that could rehabilitate local connectivity and have local actions that can contribute to a large scale of corridor rehabilitation programs. Monitoring work will also be continued to make sure that laws toward connectivity are well applied in each urban documents.

The work in PlanToConnect will be used as an example and its methods reused to serve other territories in Upper Savoy.



The project is co-funded by the European Union through the Interreg Alpine Space programme

Asters Conservatoire d'espaces naturels Haute-Savoie