LE:NOTRE Landscape Forum 2025

Budapest–Vác and the Danube Bend

Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences
Institute of Landscape Architecture, Urban Planning and Garden Art
2025

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Content

1 Introduction to the Forum

Jeroen de Vries *LE:NOTRE Institute, Wageningen, the Netherlands*

The landscape forum in Budapest / Vác is the 14th of a series of events where academics, professionals, students, and local experts come together for a limited but intensive time to focus on a series of topical and often urgent issues connected to the landscape of a particular place – a place with its own genius loci, geography, culture, history and challenges.

Figure 1.1 River prospect of Vác. *Photo: Istvan Csuhai, creative commons*

We use the definition of the term landscape as defined by the Council of Europe Landscape Convention (ELC): “Landscape is an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors”. So let us remember this definition, as perceptual and human dimensions are especially important. The Convention celebrates its 25th anniversary in October 2025. The implementation involves (1) fostering knowledge of landscapes: identification, description and assessment; (2) definition of landscape quality objectives; (3) attainment of these objectives by protection, management and planning over a period of time (exceptional actions and measures and ordinary actions and measures); and (4) monitoring of changes, evaluation of the effects of policies, possible redefinition of choices.

This year, the landscape forum was preceded by an international student competition, which resulted in a series of innovative plans for the Danube Bend (Annex B). In a pre-forum workshop, participants explored their values,

actions, and future perspectives on the Convention. A side event of the forum was the exhibition Cornucopia which presented an artistic dialogue with the philosophy of nature, where art becomes a medium expressing both admiration for nature's richness and concern for its future (Annex A)

The forum paid special attention to the relevance of landscape democracy for sustainable landscape development, with a focus on the role children can have in this. Children are both a vulnerable group of people and the future agents of landscape transformation.

Three keynotes on the Landscape Convention, children's perspectives, emotional and sensory engagement with nature, and participatory processes for common spaces (Chapter 3) informed the participants at the start of their three and a half days of intensive work on the local landscape. In smaller teams, five working groups immersed themselves in the landscape of Vác, which resulted in an outcome statement (Chapter 2) and a series of recommendations (Chapter 4 through 8).

2 Outcome Statement

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This outcome statement aims to provide guiding principles for the sustainable development of public space and landscape in Vác, and the ecological, social, and economic benefits for the entire city and its environment. This document intends to support a public dialogue about the future of the Vác landscape.

Envisioning resilient urban peripheries: living streets

Living streets provide equal possibilities for soft traffic modes and provide good accessibility and climate comfort for all kinds of people (old, young, less able).

Streets need to be adapted to environmental requirements. They can function as elements of the green (and part of the blue) infrastructure system in the city.

Figure 2.1 Impression of how Altány Street would look according to the vision. *Source:Lukas Draschner*

When developing streets in existing informal neighbourhoods the planning and design should adapt to the existing landscape, with elements and interventions by residents. There needs to be a balance between the city's main infrastructure and the in-between spaces for stay/meeting/play which are co-created with citizens.

Foodscapes: Imagining Budapest's zero-km, local food system transition

Figure 2.2 Envisioned example of an acupuncture space for a zero-km food system.
Tahsin Ahmad with the help of ChatGP

Connection with nature, establishment of a sustainable food system, community bonding, and generation enhancement, with quality education and economic stability, begins by putting your hands in the earth, in your backyard. For the sustainable development of food systems, future generations must develop an awareness of the importance of fresh local food and the impact that food production has on the environment. This is essential to basic education. It can be raised by growing food in schools, using locally grown produce in public canteens, food festivals, and being active as buyer or seller in local food markets.

It is important to develop a zero-km food culture resulting in environmental stewardship, social cohesion, better governance, strong socio-economic networks, and a lifelong sustainability mindset across generations.

Vác: Towards a living Landscape Biography

Figure 2.3 The 'beach zone'.
Photo: Adrian Noortman.

Reconnect the city and people of Vác with the river in diverse and nature-inclusive ways.

Create spaces for nature and natural processes in the river area, connecting the river's ecology throughout the whole riverfront of Vác.

Enhance human-nature interactions and connections, tapping into the specific identity and diverse spatial qualities of different river/city sections.

Between here and there: Sustainable peri-urban mobility

The transition towards sustainable and active mobility needs an integrated process at the interface of spatial design, strategic planning, and education.

The school campus in Vác has great potential for becoming a reference case for promoting sustainable mobility.

Such an integrated transition pathway can create various co-benefits for recreation, health, social coherence, and spatial quality.

Figure 2.4 Bicycle priority street from the school district to main station, with example. *Source: infravelo*

Through the Child's Eyes: Democratic Nature Experiences Along the Danube in Vác

Prioritising children's nature experiences requires designing a spatial sequence of nature-rich places, where each site plays a specific and complementary role in supporting children's sensory, emotional, and imaginative engagement. No single place can serve all needs; the strength lies in their connected diversity.

The Natura 2000 area of the Danube and its floodplain should evolve toward a more legible and welcoming space for environmental education while preserving its wild character. Subtle wayfinding tools and child-friendly access paths can help demystify the site without diminishing its ecological integrity.

Horváth Mihály Park should expand beyond formal sports infrastructure to include nature-based fantasy play elements. Integrating natural materials, topographical variation, and storytelling cues would support children's imaginative freedom and emotional connection to place.

The beach area already fulfils many criteria of high-quality nature experience spaces, particularly in terms of sensory richness and free play potential. However, its value for children will remain inaccessible unless safe, legible, and inclusive routes are created to and from the site.

Figure 2.5 Example of how natural loose materials can support unstructured, creative play while keeping the forest character intact. *Source: play – skullstudio*

3 Landscape Convention, Landscape Artistic Approaches and Co-design

Marta Rodrigues *Chair of the 13th Conference on the Implementation of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention (3.1)*

Zsófia Szonja Illés *Artist and researcher at MOME Budapest (MOME MAG, Landscape Futuring) and IASK (Environmental Research Lab) (3.2)*

Dominika Tihanyi *Landscape Architect at Újirány Group (3.3)*

3.1 Celebrating the 25 years of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention

The year 2025 marks the 25th anniversary of the European Landscape Convention of the Council of Europe, a perfect occasion to highlight the importance of landscapes in our quality of life, our environment, and our shared heritage.

For those unfamiliar with the Convention, it is essential to understand why, how, and when it was created. The approval process was long and demanding, with a strong participatory dimension. The first steps go back to 1994, when a Resolution of the Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities called for a framework convention based on the Mediterranean Landscape Charter. An ad hoc drafting group was set up, followed by several rounds of consultation marked by wide participation. The process culminated on 20 October 2000, when the Committee of Ministers adopted the European Landscape Convention, also known as the Florence Convention.

The Convention is the first international treaty devoted exclusively to landscapes in all their dimensions (natural, rural, urban, and peri-urban) and it applies to the entire territory of the signatory states. It establishes a shared definition of “landscape” as an area, as perceived by people, whose character results from the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors. Impor-

tantly the Landscape Convention affirms that landscape is everywhere: in cities and countryside, in degraded areas as well as in areas of outstanding beauty, embracing both everyday landscapes and exceptional ones.

Figure 3.1 Landscape is everywhere: Old apartment building in Yerevan, Armenia (photo Marta Rodrigues), Water play square (Photo Marta Rodrigues), Houses in Rio de Onor (photo: Javier Garcia Bianco), River landscape (photo Marta Rodrigues), Boxhagener Strasse, Berlin (photo Marta Rodrigues)

The Landscape Convention aims to integrate landscape into public policies, recognizing it as an essential element of individual and social well-being, and as a fundamental component of Europe's natural and cultural heritage. It seeks to promote active public participation in the protection, management, and planning of landscapes, and to set quality objectives that reflect the aspirations of local communities.

Figure 3.2 Malta ratifies the Council of Europe Landscape Convention.
Source: https://www.coe.int/en/web/landscape

Until today forty-one member states ratified the Convention, making it one of the most widely adopted treaties in its field. Promoting its effective implementation remains crucial. Landscapes must be legal recognised as an essential component of people's surroundings, as expressions of cultural and natural heritage, and as foundations of our identity. There are several fields of action, that include knowledge (identification, description, and assessment of landscapes, including public perception); awareness (making specialist knowledge accessible and understandable to all); public participation (engaging civil society and stakeholders at all stages of landscape policy); landscape quality objectives identification (defining goals that reflect the values and aspirations of local communities). Concrete actions are also needed to take place in three main areas, as protection, by preserving and maintaining significant or characteristic features of landscapes; management, guiding and harmonizing change through ongoing care, aligned with sustainability and planning, proactively enhancing, restoring, or creating landscapes in response to social and environmental needs.

There are ranges of Implementation tools, from regulatory mechanisms (legal measures, spatial planning instruments) to voluntary approaches (charters, contracts, agreements with stakeholders). Other tools include Landscape Impact Studies to assess the effects of projects, and Observatories and reporting systems to ensure continuous monitoring of landscape conditions and policy effectiveness are good solutions. Education, training, and awareness are essentials. This includes introducing landscape issues into school and university curricula, providing interdisciplinary training for professionals in both the public and private sectors, and raising public awareness through campaigns, exhibitions, and cultural and scientific initiatives. Online platforms can also provide access to policies and best practices.

Governance is another key factor, and it is necessary to integrate landscape into existing policies and development plans, ensuring cooperation across sectors and levels of government. Establish dedicated funding mechanisms or integrate landscape financing into budgets for culture, environment, or tourism is equally important to enable action.

Over these 25 years, the Council of Europe, together with its member states, has carried out many initiatives: twelve conferences, numerous workshops on specific themes for the exchange of good practices, national and regional symposia, eight editions of the Landscape Award, as well as guidelines, recommendations, and thematic publications.

Looking ahead, the Reykjavík Declaration, adopted in 2023, brings new challenges and opportunities for the Convention. It reaffirms the essential role of landscape in cultural, ecological, environmental, and social fields. The Declaration highlights landscape as a key factor of individual and collective well-being, closely linked to cultural identity, ecological balance, and quality of life. It stresses that landscape protection, management, and planning imply both rights and responsibilities for everyone, reinforcing an inclusive and participatory approach. Landscape is thus affirmed as part of the Council of Europe's broader commitment to human rights in the face of environmental challenges, including pollution, climate change, and biodiversity loss.

3.2 Sensing a Changing Landscape: Artistic Approaches and Local Ecological Knowledge in Landscape Transformation

In the context of the climate crises and human-induced ecological disasters, it becomes evident that the dominant Western modes of relating to the landscape have failed us. We are living through not only a climate crisis but also a knowledge crisis—a loss of biodiversity entwined with a loss of knowledge diversity. In response, this paper explores how art can help surface and share forms of ecological knowledge that are rooted in everyday experience and long-term connection to place that often remain excluded from land decision-making processes.

A Different Way of Relating to Land – Local and Traditional Ecological Knowledge

An ecological disaster that is unfolding 500 km-s away from us at this moment, in Praid (Parajd), Transylvania illustrates the consequences of such extractive and human-centred approach to land use. The collapse of the Parajd salt mine (in June 2025), caused by the flooding of the Korond stream, led to large-scale soil and water contamination, leaving over 50,000 people without drinking water in the region. The damage remains ongoing at the time of writing this paper.

Local and traditional ecological knowledge (LEK/TEK) can offer inspiration for a different way of relating to land. It challenges dominant land use models by insisting that land is not owned but related to, so that governance emerges from relationship rather than control, and from stewardship rather than ownership. This knowledge is place-based, rooted in lived experience, and developed over generations through close interaction with land. It centres around responsibility, care, and stewardship, supporting a reciprocal relationship between people and their environment. This shift—away from ownership to relationship—could inspire another way of designing and governing our landscapes.

Ethnobiologists and ecologists increasingly agree that traditional ecological knowledge, with its practices, contributes to biodiversity and to understanding complex environmental issues (Demeter et al., 2021). However, much of the knowledge that, for example, flood-meadow farmers hold lives in tacit and embodied practices and is rooted in lived experience. Traditional consultation methods may struggle to involve them in conventional ways or even recognise them in their expert capacity.

Artistic Spaces as Sites for Ecological Engagement

"The traditional or tribal shaman (...), acts as an intermediary between the human community and the larger ecological field." - Claims contemporary ecological philosopher, David Abram (Abram, 1997, p.7). Similary, I suggest that art is capable of creating liminal spaces, gently guiding human perception toward subtle aspects of the more-than-human world, fostering a new kind of attention. Artistic approaches can offer alternative pathways by creating more inclusive, sensory, and situated ways for this knowledge to emerge, to be shared and appreciated.

Figure 3.3 Gathering of female shepherds within the landscape installation. *Source: Zsófia Szonja Illés*

For example, at an event connected to the author's exhibition in February 2025, female shepherds were invited to share a meal and conversation with the exhibition visitors. The informal setting—with shared food and conversation—created a space where their ecological insights, deeply embedded in everyday practice, could emerge organically. This encounter fostered meaningful connections between the shepherd women and audiences who might not otherwise come into contact with the realities of daily work and ecological wisdom of pastoral communities.

Abram also emphasises the importance of attunement and sensory engagement, arguing that such experiences enhance our sensitivity to the natural environment and foster a new kind of attention (Abram, 1997). By engaging our senses and emotions, art can create spaces for attunement and reflection, cultivating ecological imagination that allows people not only to think, but to feel into alternative ways of living with the land.

One such instance was the 'Landscape Futuring' project (a MOME University course and exhibition), held in the Balaton Uplands in October 2022, where local farmers were invited into a sensory landscape installation. Together they imagined how the landscape might taste and feel eight years into climate change—projected to 2030.

In another instance, at Trafó Budapest Contemporary Gallery in 2023, a jelly version of the traditional weatherfish–cabbage dish ('csíkos káposzta') was re-created. The weatherfish is now a protected species due to marshland habitat loss and can no longer be fished. The installation invited visitors to taste the dish in this new form, reflect on habitat loss, and foster a tangible connection to our shared ecological past through a performative dinner (Illés, 2025).

Case Study: Local Ecological Knowledge of Floodlandscapes in Hungary's Central Tisza Region

> *"We will never capture the essence of biodiversity without including its cultural and spiritual dimensions."* Darrell Posey

I deeply resonate with this definition of biodiversity by Darrell Posey, an anthropologist and activist who was a pioneer of ethnoecology and the study of indigenous traditional knowledge. His perspective helps me understand why and how art can play a vital role in this regard, by integrating both the cultural and spiritual dimensions of place.

The Central Tisza case study – my most recent research – illustrates Posey's definition of biodiversity through the lived experience of floodplain farmers in Hungary's Tisza region. The research and the documentary film (Wild Water Country – Vadvízország, Bartha, Illés, 2024), highlight how local farmers' knowledge and practices can contribute to landscape-scale water retention. The history of humans drastically reshaping the wetland landscape here dates back to the mid-19th century. As a consequence of river regulations implemented during the 19th century, the Tisza River has been reduced to less than half its original length. The once 39,000 km2 of flood meadows, that served as natural water storage, have been diminished to only 2300 km2. The drastic transformation of a once 'wild water country' has brought about species and habitat loss and the desiccation and salinization of extensive areas. The summer droughts of 2022 and 2024—particularly severe in this region—brought sudden urgency to the question of planning with water. While the reversal of river regulations is no longer possible, valuable insights can be drawn from the practices of floodplain farmers who have long collaborated with water and flooding.

In the villages of Nagykörű and Dobapuszta only a few people—five or six—still farm flood land today. Their knowledge of this wetland ecosystem is especially important if we want to understand different ways of co-living and collaborating with water and flooding.

These floodplain farmers were at the heart of this research and its accompanying documentary film (Bartha, Illés, 2024), bringing the landscape and its practices to life through their lived experience. The research and documentary film unfolded through four distinct perspectives, to bring in specialised knowledge about the more-than-human aspects of the wetland: a fisherman, who spoke about water retention and wetland biodiversity; an elderly farmer woman, who reflected on past and present traditions of floodplain orchards and resilient local fruit species; a forester, who highlighted how local tree species and grazing can help manage invasive plants; and a bird expert evoked the richness of the wetland soundscape, explaining how birdsong—changing with the seasons and even throughout the day—reflects both species diversity and the presence of water.

Figure 3.4 Walk-along-interview with farmer in his flood forest. *Photo: Zsófia Szonja Illés*

Drawing on my artistic practice, I worked with sound and moving image to capture this often-unspoken ecological knowledge by walking with farmers in the landscapes where they live and work. The process was collaborative: participants co-edited the film with us, so they had control over the way they were represented and over aspects of their knowledge that could be shared.

One example of local ecological knowledge that was recorded came from a shepherd and forester, who spoke about the impact of invasive species to the flood landscapes, such as false indigo-bush. He explained how these plants raise flood levels and dominate native species, yet he also showed how flood-meadow grazing can help manage them and "allow local species to return—"poplars, ashes, maples, willows, and oaks." His account highlighted not only ecological practice but also his deep attachment to the floodplains: "There is birdsong here, scents and mist. Over the dam, it is an endless desert, while what you see here is a vibrant mosaic landscape." He pointed out

the stark contrast between the green, diverse floodplain and the land across the dam, cultivated by extensive agriculture and dried out during the summer droughts in 2022.

Sensory Landscape Installation

Drawing on my artistic practice, this rich, tacit ethnographic knowledge was recorded through sound and video during walk-along interviews. These stories and insights—often difficult to express in spoken or written words (Pink, 2015)—were not only documented in the film but also taking shape in the form of a landscape installation (Illés, 2024).

Figure 3.5 Wild Water Country' installation (2025) made from materials gathered from the floodplains. *Installation and photo: Zsófia Szonja Illés*

Materials gathered from the flood meadow, such as false indigo wood and foraged dye plants, became part of an environment where visitors could sense the landscape through smell, taste, texture, and story. The sensory installation also opened space for reflection and dialogue, creating encounters such as the one with a group of shepherd women. This event (in MODEM, 2025) combined shared storytelling with a landscape tasting of local and foraged foods from the Tisza floodplains. It offered a way to honour the vital—yet often overlooked—role of women in tending land and animals, and to make their knowledge and presence visible within this work.

Conclusion

The examples show why it matters to bring together art, film, and ethnographic methods—especially those that engage the senses. Such approaches can help make tangible forms of ecological knowledge that are lived but often unspoken, revealing how people relate to and care for the land. By engaging the senses, artistic methods also create spaces for reflection and connection.

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3.3 /Re/Constructed Urban Situations – The Role of Durational Art Strategies and Community Engagement in the Course of Urban Generation

New models of practices

It is quite evident that we live in challenging times where the role of designers becomes ever more important in offering perspectives on a new understanding of our environment, our common values, a better future and in promoting ways to act on this future. In this sense we must constantly shift between spatial and strategic thinking, between regional and local scales understanding processes, linking flows of resources as one system to create economies and landscapes that are based on ecology, community and environmental ethics. We must learn from natural processes and promote new, more collective and sustainable lifestyles to create the so called, good life' for all the more people.

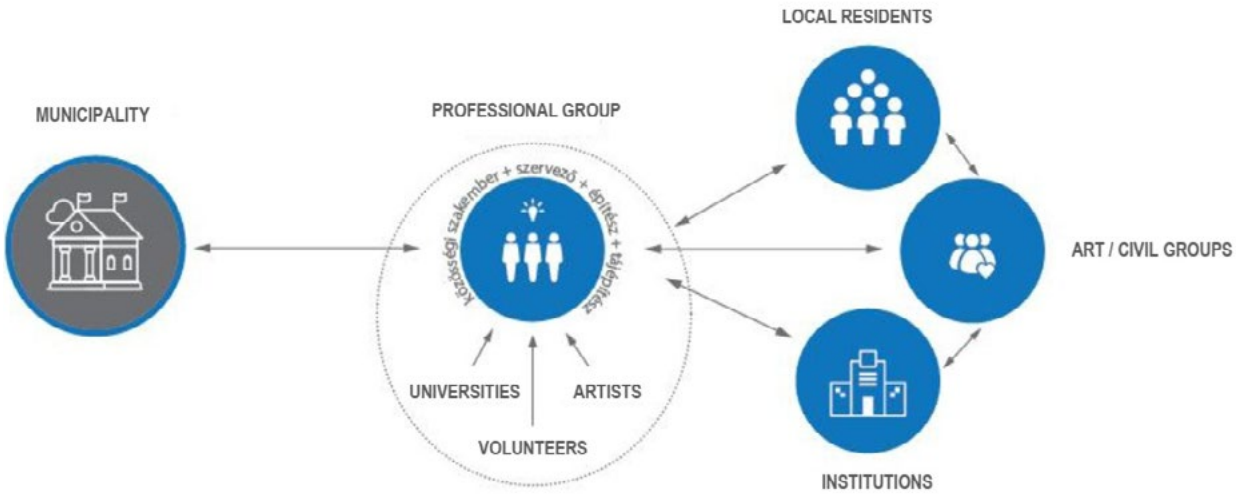

Figure 3.6 The pre-habilitation phase to be developed as a part of a cultural masterplan led by a team op professionals acting as curators to develop a set of cultural actions to activate the site and the locals.
Source: scheme by Dominika Tihanyi

These ideas are not anew. Agnes Denes emphasises the paradox of humanity, that we are prisoners in our own social systems, and the importance of questioning how things work to create new structures based on community involvement. The questioning how things work has evoked making change in the perception of the public domain in the 1960s resulting in human centred

approaches in the fields of urbanism, architecture, landscape architecture and public art leading to socially engaged initiatives arise that engage in creating meaningful interactions in public space through community engagement.

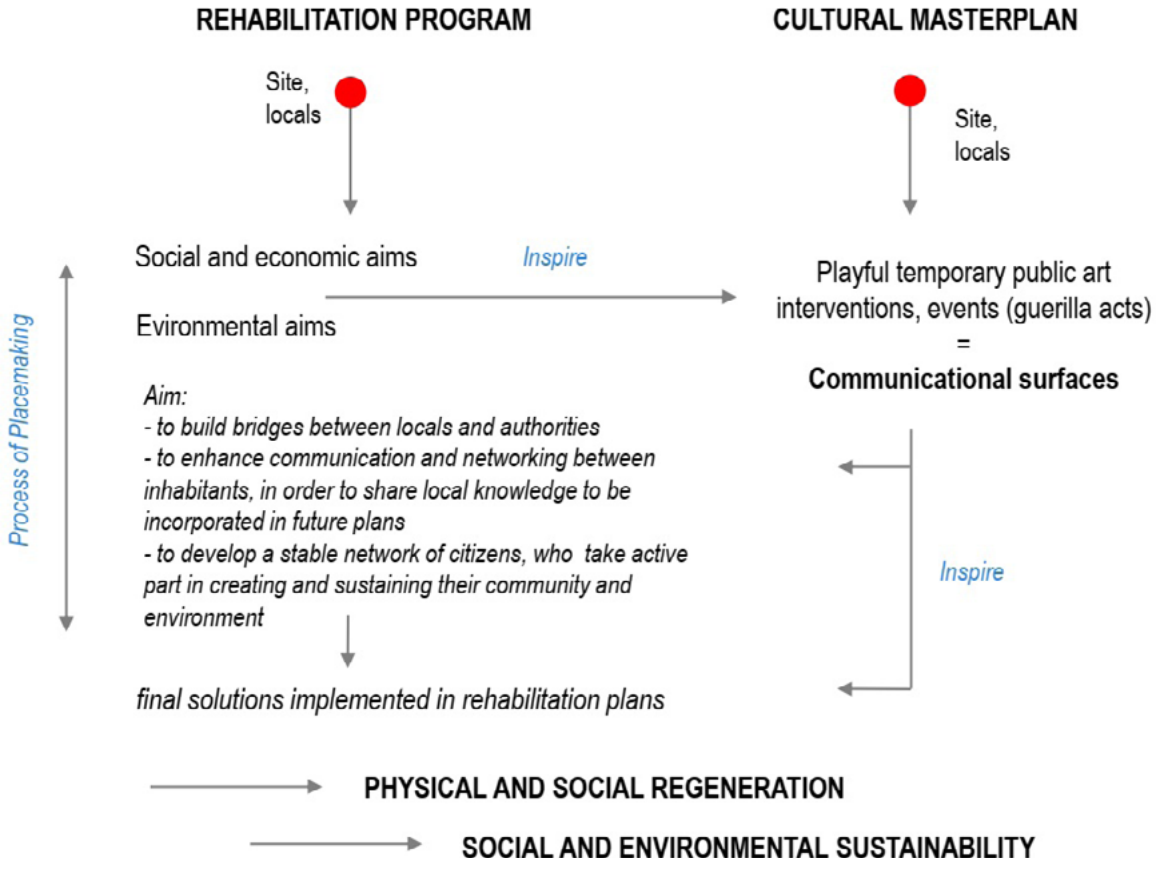

Figure 3.7 The organisation of a rehabilitation plan in relation to a cultural masterplan.
Source: Dominika Tihanyi

By the middle of the 2000s we see new models of architecture and public art arise that initiate small scale public interventions that encourage participation. Opposed to creating capital projects, they reflect on existing problems, exploit the potential of a place and activate it through modelling possible solutions to create social spaces. They care, create and act, and most importantly they build trust through community engagement. They are less concerned with what architecture is and more concerned with what it can do to help, and teach the importance of learning to inhabit the world again. We can regard them as alternative ways of urban regeneration, tightening the space of relations.

The community-based reinvention of Teleki Square

At certain times top-down urban rehabilitation programs also give the chance to incorporate such approaches. This was in the case of the community-based reinvention of Teleki square, where the aim was to turn the barren, crime ridden and functionless space into a community park, through community participation. Local inhabitants were invited to join a series of workshops spanning 3 months to take part in defining how they pictured their own future. Playful interventions such as on-site discussions and activities, temporary art installations, photo exhibits and the on-site modelling of the plan aimed to make the project more visible while building a strong connection between participants to set base to the complex process of community design.

Figure 3.8 The design process of Teleki Square (July 2013) with playful interventions such as on-site discussions and activities, temporary installations, and photo exhibits. *Source: photos Dominika Tihanyi*

In this discussion-based project the design process resulted in the formation on an embedded concept and design that considered the history of the area and the true needs of the community creating a multifunctional resting park giving space to all age groups, and future events and community activities envisioned by the community. The process also enabled people taking part to act in their lives for instance by organizing a closing party, on their own

as a group which they have never had done before these three months, proving the importance of engagement. Furthermore, people taking part is the process formed Teleki Square Association to continue to contribute to the park's management and ongoing improvement and to take action for realizing their common dreams/goals together. In the past ten years they have done a wonderful job at this. Unfortunately, today we see the decline of the association which has been unable to renew itself in the past years. This draws attention to how fragile a community is and raises questions about how a rehabilitation program could do better in supporting communities to become more resilient ones and about the responsibility for such fragile formations to be appreciated and cared for more.

Figure 3.9 Residents collaboratively co-designing the layout of Teleki Square.
Source: Dominika Tihanyi

Durational art strategies

This is what durational art strategies aim at: to lengthen the time of engagement long before the process of spatial design through the incorporation of a chain of interconnected low cost, playful, temporal interventions in a specific site that activate public spaces (streets squares, inner courtyards) of actual city

part for a long duration of time. This method can be defined as a pre-rehabilitation phase to be developed as part of a cultural masterplan lead by a team of professionals developing cultural actions/interventions; to activate the site and the locals.

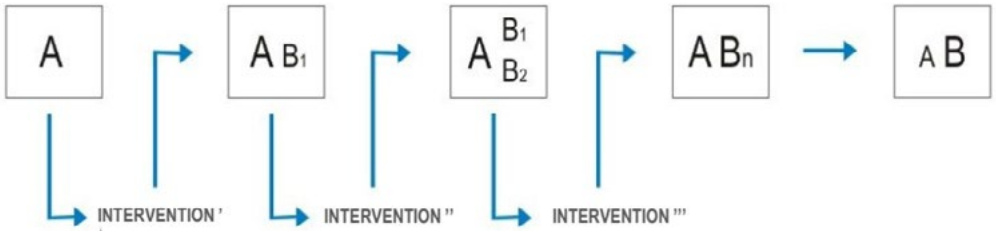

Figure 3.10 The duration method allows new thoughts and design ideas to rise through the artworks, which can be incorporated in the regeneration programme that hence becomes a dynamic one that is capable to change and adapt with time. *Source: Dominika Tihanyi*

The small-scaled art projects act as acupuncture points of communicational surfaces aiming to build bridges between locals and the authorities, to enhance communication between fellow inhabitants to share local knowledge to be incorporated in future designs and to develop a stable network of citizens who take active part in creating and sustaining their community and their environment. The durational method also allows new thoughts and design ideas to rise through the artworks, which can be incorporated in the regeneration program that hence becomes a dynamic one that is capable to change and adapt with time.

The case study of Palota-quarter, as a durational approach

The durational approach was put in practice during the period of 2008-2012 on the site of the Palace -quarter. “Palace-quarter” is the part of the infamous 8th district lying closest to the inner city. The twelve art projects realised scattered in Palota quarter were developed parallel to the rehabilitation program and in strong connection to the social-economic and environmental aims of the rehabilitation. The projects reflected of the aims of the rehabilitation, the cultural and historical background of the site, aimed to regenerate inner courtyards and modelled alternative space usage

For a few years these interventions, together with the upcoming actions of the Civils for Palace-quarter transformed the site of the Palota-quarter into an ever-evolving interactive gallery, creating constructed situations of various spontaneous meeting places in public space, where locals could create new networks and grow into a strong association, which was capable to take part in one of the highlights of the cooperation resulting in a Palota-quarter guide, and the conceptualization of the renewal of the inner part of the quarter, building on the findings of the four years of research work.

Figure 3.11 For a few years the interventions transformed Palota Quarter into an ever-evolving interactive gallery. *Source: photos by Dominika Tihanyi*

The interventions enabled networking between locals, the formation of a local association, local art groups to join the network, design ideas to arise, that emphasise locality. Today the Civils of Palota Quarter take on developing the “soft” elements of the rehabilitation, helped by offices as ours. Hence the Association is being supported and is a thriving and connected one, that develops many activities like photo exhibitions, picnics, markets, flower and tree planting occasions, programmes for children, initiates more and more complex works to enliven life on the streets and create a neighbourhood that is full of life.

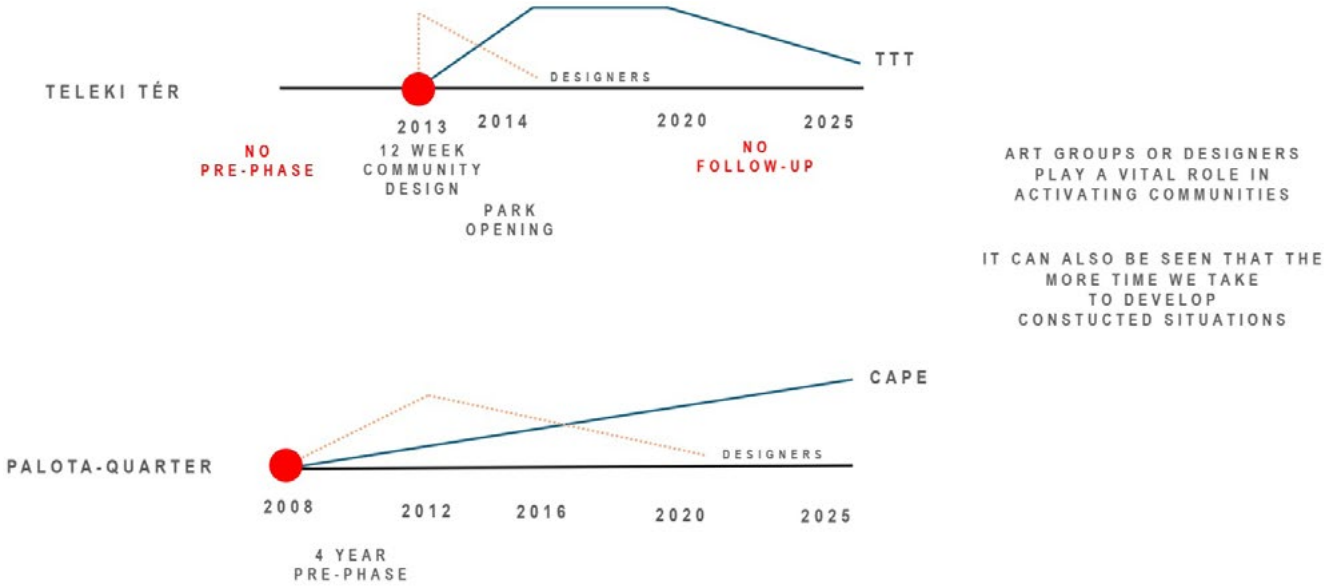

Figure 3.12 The timelines of the process of Teleki Square and Palota Quarter. *Source: Dominika Tihanyi*

As a conclusion it can be said that art groups or designers can be of help for communities rise, building bridges between locals and the authorities. It can also be seen that the more time we take to develop constructed urban situations that encourage people to meet meaningfully in public space can be of help in creating more resilient communities emerge, hence a more open, inclusive and cooperative society that takes active part in forming its' environment and future. We all have a role in helping that.

4 Envisioning Resilient Urban peripheries: Living Streets

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4.1 Introduction to the Theme & Site Context

The aim is to explore ways of enhancing the experience of natural environments for all ages in the urban periphery of the city of Vác, with a special emphasis on children. Our group delved into the dual role of Vác as part of the Budapest Metropolitan Area and as the centre of the Vác district/micro-region, focusing specifically on how suburban developments can be planned to facilitate interactions with natural processes. The goal is to provide diverse experiences that are stimulating, playful, and educational.

Local dynamics and Environmental challenges

The strategic location of Vác invites a complex layer of urbanisation affecting both its landscape and the experience of the natural environments available to its community. Our group explored how Vác can manage its growth while enhancing the qualities of its open spaces and surrounding landscapes. The main environmental challenges relate to the potential competitive impact of

urban expansion on the character and qualities of the landscape. Therefore, there is an urgent need to consider more harmonious approaches to preserve existing and plan the open spaces network to foster rich, immersive nature experiences, particularly for young residents. The group focuses on how these spaces can promote a lifelong relationship with the natural world.

Challenges

Our group studied two specific locations, one is Altány street on the edge of Vác, North-West of the city centre, and the other is Törökhegy forest on the edge of the hospital in the North-East area.

Figure 4.1 The location of Altány street and Törökhegy in Vác. *Map elaborated by Lukas Draschner*

Both sites lack identity and clear ownership. Leading to the perception that they might be 'nobody's spaces'. However, there are signs of community personalisation and activities, which provide evidence that these spaces could become successful communal places.

Altány Street seems a leftover space with limited character or community attachment. There are critical environmental and physical issues to be con-

sidered, including a poor microclimate, limited vegetation, steep topography, and inadequate consideration for water management. The informal gravelled street is wide, but at present, mainly used for car traffic with no opportunity for recreation or social uses. Furthermore, the connectivity to the wider context is poor. Community engagement is minimal, and people don't treat it as a shared or social space.

The forest site lacks legibility of access, which makes it unfriendly for potential users, including children and parents. This further reinforces its exclusion from everyday use and community value. The absence of old trees, overgrowth of dense young vegetation, in addition to low species diversity, diminishes its ecological value and resilience for long-term perennity. At present, the forest might be perceived as unsafe due to its dense vegetation and the lack of natural surveillance. Parents and children feel reluctant to explore it because it is not inviting. The lack of functions and purpose constitutes a deterrent to interaction opportunities.

4.2 The Objectives

The overarching objective for our group is to explore innovative ways to preserve the qualities of the existing landscape and promote engagement with the natural environment in Vác's suburban areas. This includes the promotion of community-led processes to deliver stimulating, playful, and inspiring shared places. It also seeks to optimise the engagement and participation of children and adults alike. This includes:

- To identify strategies that preserve and enhance green infrastructure in suburban settings, providing safe and engaging nature experiences for children and the wider community.
- To use the suburban landscape of Vác as a canvas for innovative ecological and recreational planning that supports biodiversity and nature experience.
- To foster community involvement and ownership over local green spaces, encouraging an active and sustainable relationship with the natural environment.

The output of the working group takes the form of a strategic framework for the children-oriented approach in Vác. This includes visionary ideas for the spaces we are focusing on and strategies for transforming the suburban street and the linear forest to provide a strong identity and character to these unique places. The minimal structural interventions should encourage residents and local communities to engage with the open spaces and interact with the natural environment. The idea is to empower them to adapt the spaces to their own needs to feel a sense of ownership and belonging.

4.3 The Working Process of the Team

The work process was divided into five steps:

1. Pre-workshop on landscape democracy values, perceptions, and task briefing.
2. Field trip to the focus areas in Vác.
3. On-site brainstorming to identify challenges and generate initial ideas.
4. Development of the vision, strategies, and proposals.
5. Preparation of a presentation summarising the results.

Step 1 – Pre-trip workshop (OLA workshop)

In this initial session, the group collaborated with students from the Open Landscape Academy (OLA), who were engaged in participatory work with local children. The goal was to gather children's perspectives, uncover hidden qualities and interests within the Törökhegy forest, and better understand their needs for public spaces. The group discussed the students' findings to explore integrated development approaches for the forest.

It became evident that there is a contrast between children's preferences and parents' concerns—children seek adventure, while parents are more focused on safety. Other issues identified included noise, various perceived dangers, and unclear spatial design. However, positive aspects also emerged, such as the potential to promote children's autonomy and play, the site's interesting topography, dense vegetation juxtaposed with open clearings, possibilities for a productive landscape, existing uses, and the prospect of future developments.

A central question emerged: *'How can children and the wider community be meaningfully involved in the development of these areas?'*

Step 2 – Field trip

The group's first on-site experience proved to be a vital and inspiring step in the creative process.

The Forest and Törökhegy

The group accessed the forest via a small gravel road in a loosely developed neighbourhood, previously an orchard and allotment area. During the socialist period, residents used these plots—around 4000 m^2 each—for self-sufficient food production. Today, many have been subdivided into smaller 1000 m^2 parcels with individual houses, and some are now seeing denser developments. Public space is minimal, and roads are variably managed—some privately, others by the city. The entire area is strongly car-oriented, with limited public and commercial facilities.

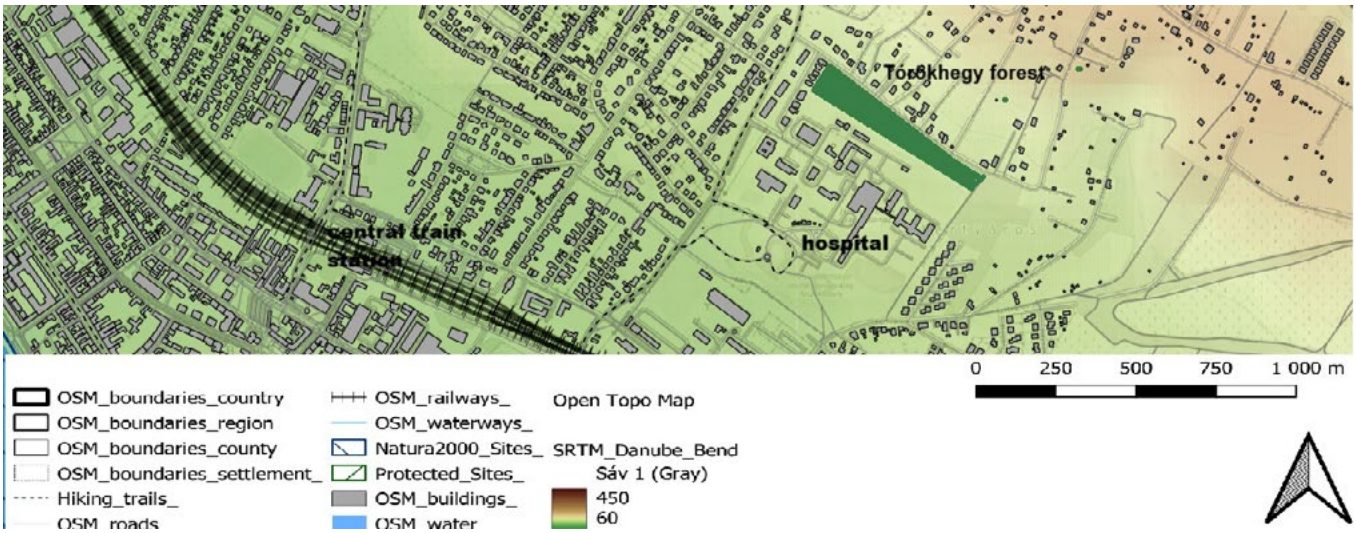

Figure 4.2 A map with the location of the forest showing the urban sprawl. *Based on open street map*

The forest itself is a remnant pine woodland, intersected by an overhead power line. Measuring approximately 500 by 150 metres, it has seen minimal management over the past three decades and is now overgrown with native shrubs and trees. Only the strip beneath the power line is maintained through annual mowing. An informal footpath cuts through the forest from the northern neighbourhood to the hospital area, reflecting a "desire line" used by locals to reach the nearest bus stop. Recently, the NGO kultúrAktív established

a Living Lab in partnership with MATE University and the municipality. Within this framework, the forest was partly cleared and revitalised through community events involving children and residents.

Figure 4.3 Students of OLA at the entrance of the forest. *Photo: Frederico Meireles*

Figure 4.4 Path inside the forest. *Photo: Frederico Meireles*

Figure 4.5 The open space in the forest and the high-voltage line. *Photo: Frederico Meireles*

Törökhegy Neighbourhood

This area is primarily composed of detached houses. The newer ones typically feature ornamental gardens, while older ones maintain fruit trees and vegetable plots. Public and semi-public spaces are scarce, and the original dirt road which provided access to the productive plots have retained their rural character. They have not seen modification to accommodate the more frequent vehicular traffic associated with permanent residences nearby. To the northeast lies a 30-hectare vineyard, established on a former orchard in 1986. It serves both the local and regional markets and has also opened its grounds for community gatherings. Initially accessible throughout the week for picnics, its availability is now limited to weekends and special events due to earlier issues with neglect. These events are often enhanced with music and art installations.

Figure 4.6 Typical house in a former closed garden area. *Photo: Mária Bihuňová*

Figure 4.7 Vineyard of 30 hectares on the Northeast side of Vác. *Photo: Jeroen de Vries*

Altány Street

Located in the north-western part of Vác, Altány Street exemplifies development in a typical urban sprawl area. Urban planning maps suggest a vision of a car-oriented corridor. The street, unpaved and riddled with potholes, has few trees and lacks any designed public realm. In some areas, residents have taken it upon themselves to plant trees and shrubs. Social life is largely confined to private gardens and homes, with few, if any, shared or communal spaces.

Figure 4.8 Map of Altány Street in the urban planning documents. In the north, one can see the ring road motorway. *Source: Urban Plan Vác*

Figure 4.9 Altány street. *Photo: Frederico Meireles*

Figure 4.10 Altány street. *Photo: Frederico Meireles*

Figure 4.11 Altány street – green area to the south.
Photo: Frederico Meireles

Step 3 - Onsite brainstorming

Following the field trip, the team collectively identified challenges and developed preliminary ideas for both sites.

Lack of Identity & Ownership	The street lacks a distinct identity, and people don't feel ownership.
	No clear sense of place or community belonging.
Environmental & Physical Issues	Poor microclimate.
	Insufficient trees or greenery.
	Lack of lighting.
	Difficult terrain: Steep topography, gravel surface, and drainage issues make access difficult.
Functional Problems	The street doesn't support multifunctional use (e.g., recreation, social interaction).
	Poor connections and infrastructure.
	Car-oriented urban planning.
Community & Engagement	People don't use the street as a shared space.
	Lack of community involvement in urban planning.
Preserving Rural Character	A strong desire to maintain the rural character while improving safety and access.

Scheme 4.1 Main Challenges Identified for the Street

1. Foster Identity & Ownership	Community-Led Art & Signage: Murals, community signs, or installations co-designed with residents.
	Naming Zones or Features: Let the community name specific corners, benches, or gardens to create a personal connection.
	Storytelling: Collect and showcase historical or cultural narratives of the area.
2. Enhance Environmental Quality	Planting More Trees: Shade, cooling, and visual identity.
	Introduce Rain Gardens or Bioswales: Improve drainage and biodiversity.
	Green Walls or Planters: On buildings or fences to soften hard surfaces.
3. Activate the Street	Temporary Installations: Pop-up parks, seating areas, or weekend markets to draw people in.
	Safe Play Areas: Low-cost, flexible play installations for children.
	Street Furniture: Benches, shaded seating areas, and water fountains.
4. Improve Accessibility & Safety	Pathway Upgrades: Pave steep or gravel paths for smoother access.
	Lighting: Install solar-powered or ambient lighting to improve safety.
	Wayfinding Elements: Maps or signage to help navigate.
5. Encourage Community Engagement	“Street Day” Events: Block parties, clean-ups, or co-design workshops.
	Participatory Planning: Involve residents in decisions through surveys or meetings.
	Street Ambassadors: Volunteers from the neighbourhood to represent voices.
6. Respect and integrate Rural Character	Use Natural Materials: Gravel paths, timber benches, and native planting.
	Preserve Views & Slopes: Integrate design with the existing topography.
	Low-Impact Design: Avoid over-urbanization; emphasize rustic, minimal intervention.

Scheme 4.2 Ideas & Strategies for Improvement for the street

1. Identity, Ownership, and Access	The forest is perceived as a “leftover” or “nobody’s space.”
	It lacks identity and a sense of ownership.
	Poor accessibility for different groups (e.g. children, parents).
2. Ecological degradation	Missing old trees.
	Too dense with young vegetation.
	Low biodiversity (limited species).
	Faded forest character.
3. Safety & Perception	Fear of nature contact.
	Forest doesn’t feel safe to parents or children.
	Difficult access and unclear design cause hesitation.
4. Usage & Design	Lack of clear programming or intended uses.
	Question of how to keep it a “loose-fit” space (unstructured, open-ended).
	Management and funding issues.
	Minimal interaction opportunities (e.g. unclear how children can use it).

Scheme 4.3 Summary of collected challenges for the Forest Area

1. Build Identity & Ownership	Community Forest Name: Invite locals to name the forest or specific trails.
	Stewardship Programs: Engage schools or community groups in forest care.
	Interpretation Panels: Share local stories, ecology facts, and history.
2. Encourage Diverse & Inclusive Use	Design Loose-Fit Interventions:
	Use minimal and reversible installations like logs for seating or play.
	Natural play features like boulders, tree stumps, or wooden balance beams.
	Zones for Multiple Uses: Quiet nature areas and open clearings for gatherings or learning.
3. Improve Ecological Health	Reintroduce Old Tree Species: Improve age structure and biodiversity.
	Plant Native Species: Boost ecological resilience and educational value.
	Habitat Restoration: Create deadwood piles, birdhouses, and insect hotels.
4. Enhance Safety and Accessibility	Clear, Inviting Entrances: With signage and maps.
	Design for Visibility: Light pruning to open sightlines; no dense undergrowth in paths.
	Parent-Friendly Zones: Safe spots for children with benches for supervision.
5. Strengthen Community Ties	School Partnerships: Create programs where students learn and care for the forest.
	Events: Seasonal nature walks, storytelling days, or citizen science events.
	Ask Parents to Co-Design: Build trust and ensure spaces meet real needs.
6. Maintain an "Un-Designed" Feel	Minimalist Design Approach:
	Keep interventions natural and low-impact.
	Let the forest "speak for itself" through simple enhancements, not overdesign.

Scheme 4.4 Ideas for Improvement of the forest area

Step 4 – Analysing, visioning, strategy, and collecting references

The team synthesised findings and ideas during an intensive one-day workshop. Tasks were divided, and regular feedback loops ensured coherence. The resulting vision is detailed in the following chapters, combining sketches, maps, photos, and group consensus to guide strategic development for both sites—the forest and the street. For the forest in important reference is Rorabaugh, S. (2019). Flexible futures: children's agency on the adventure playground explaining the role that children can fulfil in developing playgrounds.

4.4 Vision and Strategies

Specific visions for both the suburban street and the forest were developed following the principles included in the concept of democratic landscape transformation, which is explained in more detail in Chapter 8.

4.4.1 The Living Hill Street – Walnut Promenade

The street envisaged has a common garden, a place for nature, community, and common enjoyment.

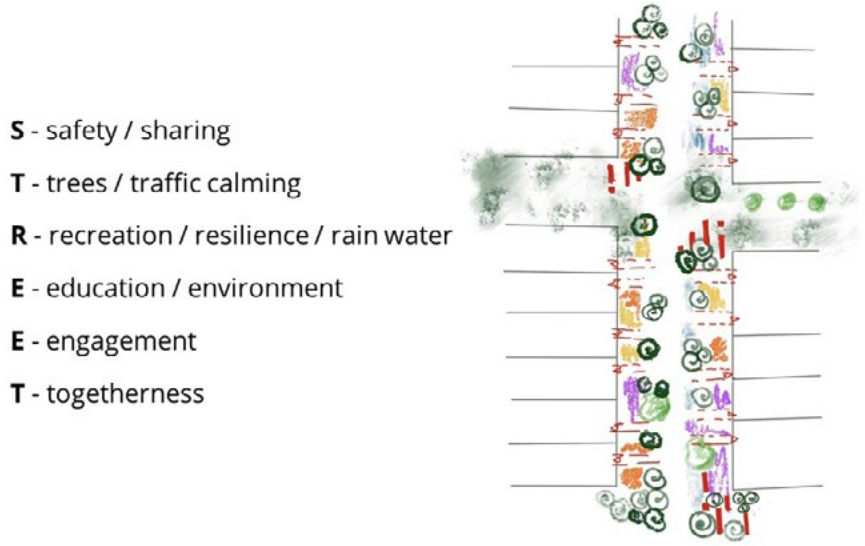

Figure 4.12 Concept of a living street. *Drawing by Laurence Pattacini*

A street that is welcoming, with places to stay, play, and meet, where the residents feel connected and have a sense of ownership. A vision for a new type of street that addresses issues related to climate comfort (shade, cooling) and visibility of natural ecosystems and processes (rainwater streams, seasonal change).

A common place where the main infrastructure for traffic (cars, bicycles, walkways), runoff water, and tap water & electricity is managed by the municipality, and where the residents co-manage and personalise the intermediate space closer to their home (the in-between space/ the semi-public space).

Figure 4.13 Principle of the structure of Altány street in the context of the area. *Sketch by Tilman Latz*

Figure 4.14 Elaboration of Altány street as Living Hill Street that respects the existing interventions and provides diverse uses and modes of mobility. *Sketch by Tilman Latz*

Figure 4.15 Impression of how Altány Street would look according to the vision. *Image: Lukas Draschner*

The strategies to achieve the vision include:

- Capitalising on the existing qualities of the street (vegetation) and respecting the existing landscape (what residents planted and installed).
- Raising awareness on the potential of the intermediate spaces, the street edges to increase comfort, resilience, and reclaiming spaces for people, including walking, cycling, and playing.
- The city would provide the main infrastructure and services, ensuring the proper functioning of the street. But this should only take up a third of the available space. The implementation of the key services and infrastructure should include consultation with the residents.
- Communal spaces should be envisaged In consultation with the residents and in response to their needs. Places for meeting and sharing, experiencing and interacting with nature, and playing. The process should draw from principles related to co-creation and codesign. This could include temporary or movable installations, in which residents can test how it works best for them.

4.4.2 The Butterfly Forest of Törökhegy

Törökhegy forest is envisaged as a place of wonder; a stimulating, biodiverse, and rich environment where every step reveals mysterious surprises.

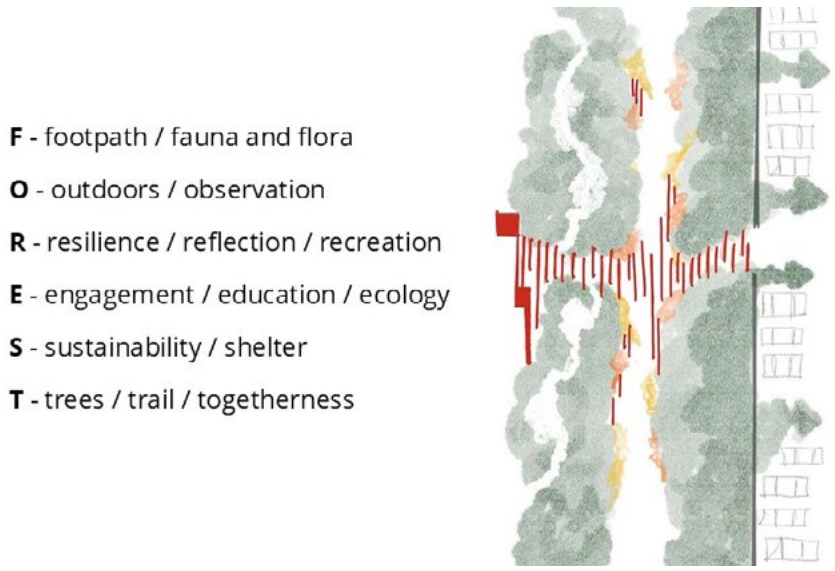

Figure 4.16 Concept for the Törökhegy forest.
Drawing by Laurence Pattacini

A forest that is recognised by the residents as a common natural place for a wide range of leisure activities and a meeting place for families and the local communities. Capitalising on the existing structure, including the informal path and clearing that has easy access and feels safe, it invites children to explore nature in a playful way. A place that allows the spontaneous development of a diversity of species, with small interventions by participants and sensitive management by the municipality for safety and the promotion of natural diversity.

Figure 4.17 Principle of the structure of the Butterfly forest with main structure and small interventions. *Sketch by Tilman Latz*

Figure 4.18 Representation of the butterfly forest. *Image by Lukas Draschner*

The strategies to achieve the vision are:

- Capitalising on the existing qualities of the street (vegetation) to the north of the forest and respecting the existing landscape (what the local community and users have planted and installed).
- Develop the forest together with the community, starting with one artistic landscape architectural intervention that strengthens its identity in the clearing.
- Facilitate visible and comfortable access with for example an identifiable entrance and a walkway that connects the neighbourhood with the bus station at the hospital, following the existing user's desire line.
- Apply co-create and co-design principles to ensure long-term ownership, use, and management of the place, including an ongoing process facilitated by local neighbourhood groups to explore further interventions. This could include Adventure play, sport opportunities, planting for biodiversity, and long-term longevity of the forest, etc.

4.5 Good Practice Projects/Case Studies

As references for the sites in Vác, there are interesting examples of child-friendly and climate-adaptive streets and subtle interventions in forested areas.

The street projects show how to introduce communal places for meeting, play, and enjoying the outdoor environment. Also illustrate landscape interventions for harvesting rainwater and providing more shade to mitigate the potential negative impact of climate change.

Figure 4.19 Examples of living streets. *Source: presentation of the working group during the 2025 Landscape Forum*

The AREP Group explored the place of different age groups in public space and more specifically the place of children in streetscape. The goal is to imagine how people can reclaim public space so that the city becomes a highly walkable place. The idea is to create an ecosystem where school streets provide favourable conditions for various uses and can accommodate different uses and activities at different moments of the day. For example, the city of

Paris redefined school streets as multifunctional spaces encouraging learning outside the class, urban gardening, sports practice and play. It blurs boundaries and promotes the reclamation of space through landscape interventions. It also contributes to biodiversity gain in the city. The proposed stimulating street environment fosters social ties and interactions at different moments of the day.

Preliminary and ephemeral interventions are useful to test ideas and empower the community. This approach could be proposed as prototypes in Vác. For example, the 'Walking Forest' project in the city of Leeuwarden (the Netherlands) by Bruno Doedens proposes temporarily intervention of trees that are mobile, people are physically engaged with moving them and can choose more permanent position through testing their spatial impact and benefits. The project 'Brings uf d´Strass!' (Bring it to the street) in Zürich (Switzerland) by Denkstatt Sarl highlights the potential value of streets through temporarily use of a street as a free space without cars. For climate change adaption there are now many examples of street using natural processes for integrated water management including rainwater gardens, for example in Gdansk (Poland) but also in Budapest city centre.

The examples of landscape projects in forests show the use of nature-based solutions and small interventions for walking, enhancing nature play, and the experience of nature.

EXAMPLES OF OTHER COUNTRIES

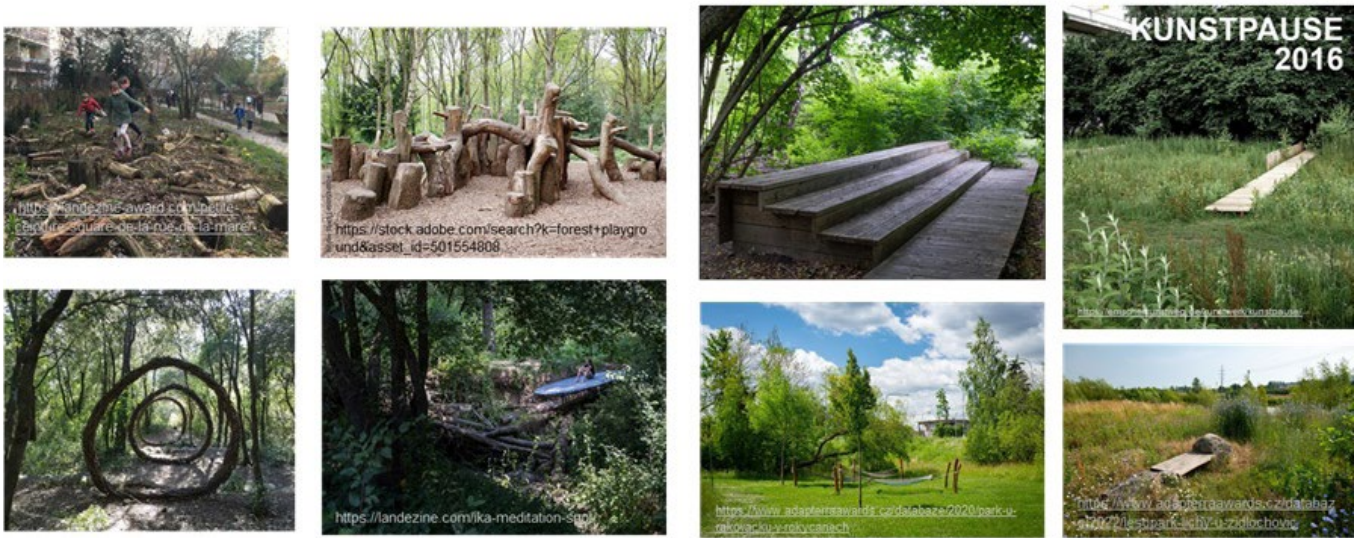

Figure 4.20 Examples of nature interventions that respect landscape quality.
Source: presentation of the working group during the 2025 Landscape Forum

The project 'Swiss Path' by Georges Descombes consists of subtle interventions to allow places to speak and reveal their hidden treasures. In Dortmund, a large, overgrown hazelnut grove near a motorway feeder road was transformed into a place to linger on the banks of the Emscher. The original character of the site (wilderness) was preserved, sculptural accents added by deliberately removing and adding vegetation and structuring the grove with wooden walkways and platforms. The strategies of co-creation was applied to the development of a network of open spaces including a community-based food forest including herbs, berry bushes, wild fruit, vegetables, and fruit trees.

Other projects illustrate the great diversity of potential interventions for the forest. These include the urban forest in the western part of Židlochovice Czech Republic by Architect:Ing. Jitka Vágnerová, Ing. Ondřej Remeš and Ing. Martin Dratva; Südgelände in Berlin by Odios where a wasteland was transformed into a public space, working with the existing structures, and the Passerelle de la Troche in Orsay (France) by Bassinet Turquin Paysage illustrating efficient and comfortable connections for pedestrians and cyclists.

4.6 Forum Outcome Statement

The main recommendations, related to the outcome statement: 'Envisioning resilient urban peripheries: A children-oriented landscape approach' are:

1. Living streets provide equal possibilities for soft traffic modes and provide good accessibility and climate comfort for all kinds of people (old, young, less able).
2. Streets need to be adapted to environmental requirements and function as elements of the green and blue infrastructure network in the city.
3. When developing streets in existing informal neighbourhoods the planning and design should adapt to the existing landscape (elements, interventions by residents). There needs to be a balance between the city's main infrastructure and the in-between spaces for stay/meeting/play, which are co-created with citizens.

4.7 Suggestions for Further Activities

Education for planning, design and implementation of streets should besides the basic knowledge of functional traffic, also include awareness of social and environmental aspects of streets. Integrating run-off water systems for harvesting rain, cooling and shading elements in the plan, including meeting places and elements of play in an integral way, and have residents participate in planning.

Research for living streets could focus on how to implement these types of streets on hill sides and in areas where the housing is already developed before the street is redesigned. Research questions can be how to tackle erosion in street design, how to assess existing landscape values, and how a water system of roofs of private houses, hard landscaping in gardens, and street construction can be developed, considering the water quality, re-use of water, and creating possibilities of experiencing the water in public space.

For professional practice, it is important to have study trips to look at good practice of planning, design processes, and the construction of elements. Especially, a focus could be on how diverse functions can be integrated into one space while assuring safety and high-quality design.

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Webpages

https://www.vta.org/programs/complete-streets-program A website that shows how streets can be developed with all users and types of use in mind, with 5 key objectives: safety, accessibility, multi-modal options for mobility, community engagement, and environmental sustainability.

Exemplary projects

Berlin: https://landezine.com/schoneberger-sudgelande-park-by-odious/

Dortmund: https://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/en/mission/solutions/mission-stories/building-a-network-of-connected-green-infrastructure-story63

Geneva/ Swiss way: https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9780429199882-8/make-path-georges-descombes; https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Sketch-Plan-of-the-Swiss-Way-Georges-Descombes-drawing-pencil-on-paper-From_fig31_366812221

Leeuwarden: https://www.brunodoedens.nl/bosk/

Paris: https://www.arep.fr/en/our-projects/school-streets-initiative/

Orsay: https://landezine.com/passerelle-de-la-troche-by-btp/

Židlochovice: https://www.adapterraawards.cz/databaze/2022/lesopark-lichy-u-zidlochovic

Zurich: https://mitwirken.stadt-zuerich.ch/processes/bringsufdstrass?locale=en

5 Foodscapes: Imagining Vác's Zero-km Local Food System Transition

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5.1 Introduction to the Theme & Site Context

Our local design challenge is: 'How might a future local food system in and around Vác help cultivate community and nature connections?'

Local dynamics

Changing functions: In Vác, allotment gardens traditionally used for agriculture are increasingly threatened by urban expansion. According to the current land use map (Urbanista, 2024), the areas that were earlier part of the allotment gardens are now indicated as residential land use. This means that landowners can use the allotment gardens for residential construction.

As a result, there has been a decline in the engagement of Vác residents with their allotment gardens. Revitalising these spaces could re-energise community interest and participation in urban agriculture, bridging generational gaps and fostering a deeper connection with food sources.

This group explores ways to protect and re-purpose these spaces as integral parts of the town's green infrastructure, supporting biodiversity and serving as centres for local food production, awareness raising, capacity building or even possible job creation.

Figure 5.1 Landowners have started building allotment garden areas in various forms of residential use, like private villas or gated communities. *Photos: Tahsin Ahmad*

5.2 The Main Aims and Research Questions

The objectives for developing a sustainable food system are:

- Enhance urban nature experiences: Develop Vác's allotment gardens into educational and recreational areas that provide immersive nature experiences, making them accessible green classrooms where both children and adults learn about sustainable food production.
- Promote sustainable local food production: Conceptualise a zero-kilometre food system for Vác.
- Strengthen community ties: Use these gardens to foster social cohesion and community spirit, creating vibrant hubs for interaction and cooperation among residents of all ages in Vác.
- Educate and engage: Implement educational programs tailored to Vác's community that promote hands-on learning about agriculture, nutrition, and environmental stewardship, engaging children in particular to nurture a lifelong connection with nature and food.

5.3 The Working Process of the Team

The group made a one-day field visit in Vác to (a) the urban forest of Törökhegy, (b) a local vineyard, (c) Munkácsy Park, (d) Altány Ut, (e) the local market and (f) a possible location for a community garden downtown.

a. Felső-Törökhegy Street – Urban Forest
– Location: Felső-Törökhegy Street

Observations: The urban forest serves as a multifunctional space, providing food for instance fruits and herbs for humans while supporting local biodiversity. This urban forest acts as a model for integrating edible landscapes within urban environments. Moreover, Törökhegy forest demonstrates how green spaces can be designed for both ecological and human benefits.

b. Lingvay Vineyard – Local Wine Production
– Location: Felső-Törökhegy

Observations: As we met the winemaker, he highlighted community engagement strategies and gave insights and informed us his vineyard hosts events that encourage people to celebrate local culture while learning about sustainable viticulture. Which could set a successful example of agro-tourism and community bonding.

The vineyard is located on one of the higher contours of the valley that overlooks the Danube and the historic city centre of Vac. One gets a good panoramic view of a large part of Vac from the southern to the northern strip along the Danube from the top of the vineyard.

Talks with the Lingvay vineyard owner revealed that the lands in this area which were allotment gardens for private residential properties do not have the kind of infrastructure to support the present sprawl where landowners are converting their spaces into dense residential spaces. The lack of water supply and sanitation lines would put a lot of strain on the landscape in the near future as a result of the rate at which private allotment gardens are turning into

row housing and/or dense housing. The vineyard depends on the annual rainfall and irrigation through municipal water supply or from groundwater supply is not a possibility.

Figure 5.2 The view of Vac from the top of the Lingvay Vineyard property. *Photo: Arati Uttur*

c. Munkácsy Park – Forest Area & Community Meeting Space – Location: Munkácsy Mihály út

Observations: A green space near the heart of the city, where local residents gather for leisure and educational activities and is only known to the community alone about its existence. Children participate in nature-based learning programs, fostering environmental awareness. Munkácsy park illustrates the role of urban parks in community well-being and informal education.

d. Former Allotment Gardens Converted to Residential Area – Location: Altány út

Observations: This area was previously used as allotment gardens and has been transformed into a newly developed housing zone. The new landowners have begun constructing private villas and gated communities, leading to the loss of green spaces. This neighbourhood highlights the tension between

urban expansion and the preservation of productive green areas. As well as it raises concerns about sustainable land-use planning and the need to protect remaining community gardening spaces in Vác.

e. Historic City Center – Local Producers' Market – Location: Cathedral Square

Observations: Producers from nearby villages (Kosd, Nógrád, Érsekvadkert, Szentendre) sell homegrown produce in front of the Cathedral square, which was initiated by a former Priest from the Cathedral. This 'pop up' farmers' market could be described as a key example of a zero-kilometre food system, reducing food miles and supporting local farmers. Cathedral square market provided us with an opportunity to study direct farmer-consumer interactions and local food economies.

f. Lower Town – Potential Community Garden Site – Location: Zöldfa Street, housing block area

Observations: As we walked down Zöldfa Street in search of a community garden, we could not find one. However, we identified potential spaces for development. Reintroducing the community gardens creates opportunities for urban agriculture initiatives in residential areas.

In short, the study trip provided valuable insights into how Vác can develop its allotment gardens into educational, recreational, and sustainable food production hubs. By integrating lessons from the visited sites, Vác can create a model for urban nature experiences

Challenges

Key challenges from the field trip were discussed among the group members while working further on the forum topics:

Loss of Productive Land to Urbanization	Former allotment gardens (e.g., Altány út) converted into housing reduce space for edible landscapes.
	Competing land uses threaten the integration of food-producing green spaces into urban planning.
Limited Adoption of Multifunctional Landscapes	While Felső-Törökhegy's urban forest provides food and biodiversity benefits, most green spaces in Vác remain ornamental rather than productive.
	Lack of intentional foodscaping in parks, streetscapes, and residential areas misses opportunities for local food resilience.
Fragmented Community Engagement in Food Production	Zöldfa Street's unused potential highlights gaps in mobilizing residents around communal growing spaces.
	Market vendors (Cathedral Square) and vineyards show successful models, but broader participation is needed for citywide impact.
Knowledge Gaps in Edible Landscaping	Munkácsy Park's nature activities could incorporate food-growing education but currently lack structured agricultural components.
	Residents and policymakers may undervalue foodscaping due to limited exposure to best practices.
Policy and Design Disconnects	No clear guidelines to protect or incentivize food-producing landscapes in new developments (e.g., Altány út's villa constructions).
	Urban planning prioritizes aesthetics over food security, missing chances to integrate edible plants into public and private spaces.

Table 5.1 Challenges for the food system in Vác

Ideas

Guided by the field trip's findings and the forum's research questions, our group proposes activating underused public/semi-public spaces to create a hyper-local food network:

- Transform small, scattered plots near homes and schools into productive food gardens, creating a "patchwork" food system that reduces reliance on distant supply chains.
- Sites like Zöldfa Street and Munkácsy Park's edges offer ideal testbeds.
- Combat the myth that "food comes from elsewhere" by making growing visible and participatory.
- Cathedral Square's market and the vineyard model show how direct engagement fosters appreciation for local food.
- Integrate food growing into school curricula using gardens as living labs for ecology, nutrition, and community stewardship.
- Munkácsy Park's child-focused activities could expand to include edible landscapes.

Good practice projects in Switzerland, Spain

The community gardens project in Zurich has the following key features:

- Policy Integration: Zurich's urban planning prioritises community gardens as tools to reconcile the "compact city" (densification) and "green city" agendas. These gardens are designed to be multifunctional, space-efficient, and socially inclusive.
- Edible Commons Initiative: A project on Zürichberg revives communal food production through Food Councils, where residents, institutions, and growers co-manage spaces. It emphasises feminist perspectives by valuing reproductive labour (e.g., gardening) and fostering social cohesion.

Figure 5.3 Community garden in Zurich, Switzerland, and Edible Commons: a Territorial Vision. *Source: Swiss Federal Office of Culture (2019) (top) & Zurich Insurance Group. (n.d.) (bottom)*

The project has social, ecological and economic benefits. It strengthens community bonds through shared gardening and knowledge exchange, enhances urban biodiversity and reduces food miles, and lowers the cost of land management compared to traditional allotments (Anamizu et al, 2024).

The educational gardens for climate change in Barcelona have the following key features:

- Barcelona's Climate Shelters: Eleven schools transformed into climate-resilient spaces with:
    - Green measures: 1,000 m^2 of new vegetation, planted 74 trees, and introducing green walls.
    - Blue measures: Water features like drinking fountains and play areas.
    - Grey measures: Improved building insulation and cross-ventilation (Barcelona City Council, 2021).
- Pedagogical Impacts:
    - Students co-designed solutions like shade structures, linking climate education to hands-on action.
    - Schools serve as neighbourhood cooling hubs during heatwaves (Corrochano et al, 2022).
- National Trends:
    - Spanish preservice teachers recognises gardens as effective for climate literacy, although engagement plummets at higher education levels.
    - Programs like More Sustainable Schools (Barcelona) integrate gardens into curricula for SDGs 2 (Zero Hunger) and 13 (Climate Action).

5.4 Goals, Vision, Strategy, and Proposals

To achieve in Vác a Foodscape that is aligned with European Sustainability Vision are the following goals are essential:

1. Carbon-Neutral Food Systems: Develop urban foodscapes that sequester carbon through perennial plantings, composting, and reduced food miles, supporting the EU's 2050 carbon neutrality target.
2. Zero-Kilometer Food Production: Transform underused urban spaces (allotments, rooftops, schoolyards) into hyper-local food hubs, ensuring 50% of produce consumed in the community is grown within a 5 km radius by 2030.
3. Biodiversity Enhancement: Design foodscapes with 70% native or climate-resilient edible species to restore pollinators and soil health, aligning with the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030.
4. Circular Resource Use: Integrate closed-loop systems (rainwater harvesting, organic waste composting) to achieve zero-waste food production.
5. Community Resilience: Empower neighbourhoods through participatory foodscaping, with at least 30% of residents engaged in growing/harvesting by 2035, fostering social cohesion and climate adaptation.

The vision is to cultivate a sustainable future by creating a zero-Km food culture. By 2030, Vác could become a model Green City where urban foodscaping transforms public spaces into thriving, edible landscapes that nourish both people and the planet.

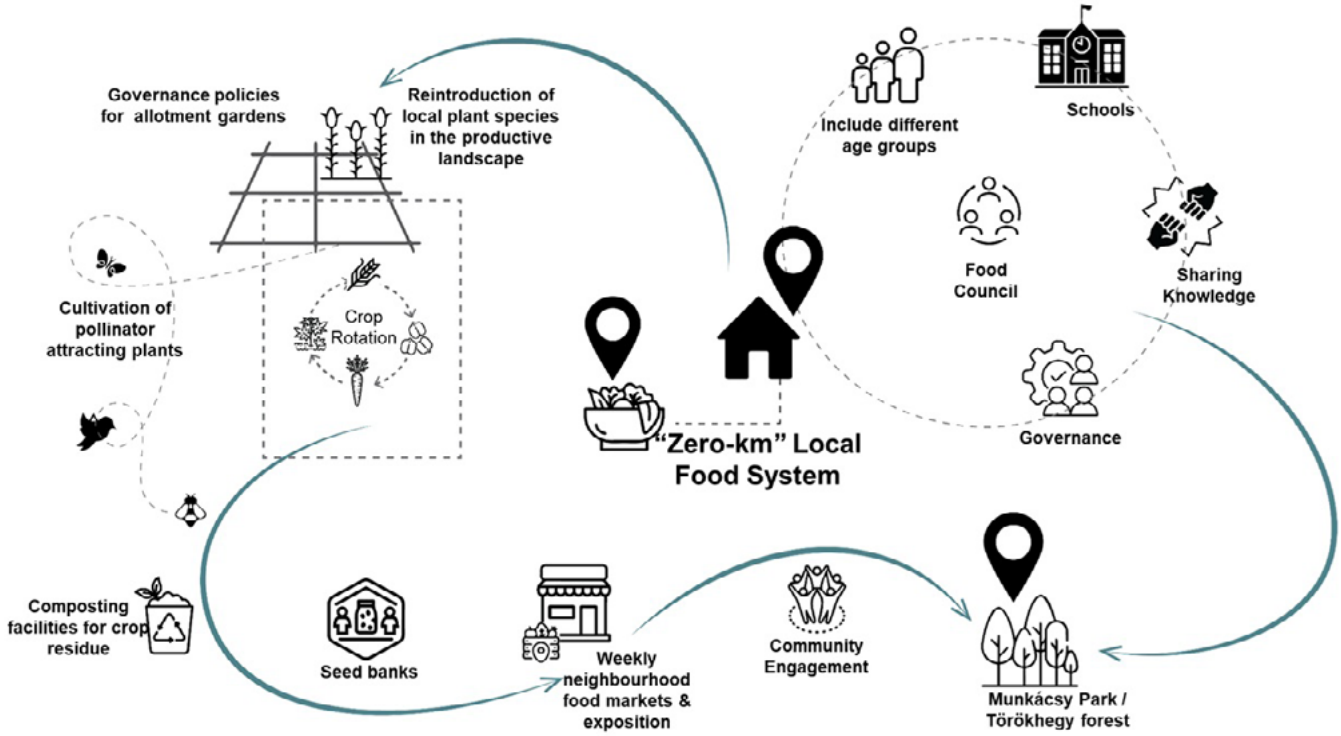

Figure 5.4 Framework of an effective food system for Vác. *Graphic: Jannatun Nayeem.*

For this we envision:

- A Zero-Carbon Food Hub – Where urban gardens, orchards, and agroforestry systems reduce food miles, sequester carbon, and contribute to Hungary's climate goals.
- A Self-Sufficient Community – Where fresh, zero-kilometre produce is accessible to all, strengthening local food security and reducing reliance on industrial supply chains.
- A Biodiverse Oasis – Where native plants, pollinators, and heritage crops flourish, enhancing urban ecology and preserving cultural traditions.
- A Connected, Educated City – Where schools, neighbourhoods, and policymakers collaborate to make foodscaping a cornerstone of sustainable urban living.

Through innovation and community stewardship, Vác will lead the way in resilient, regenerative urbanism—proving that cities can be both green and abundant.

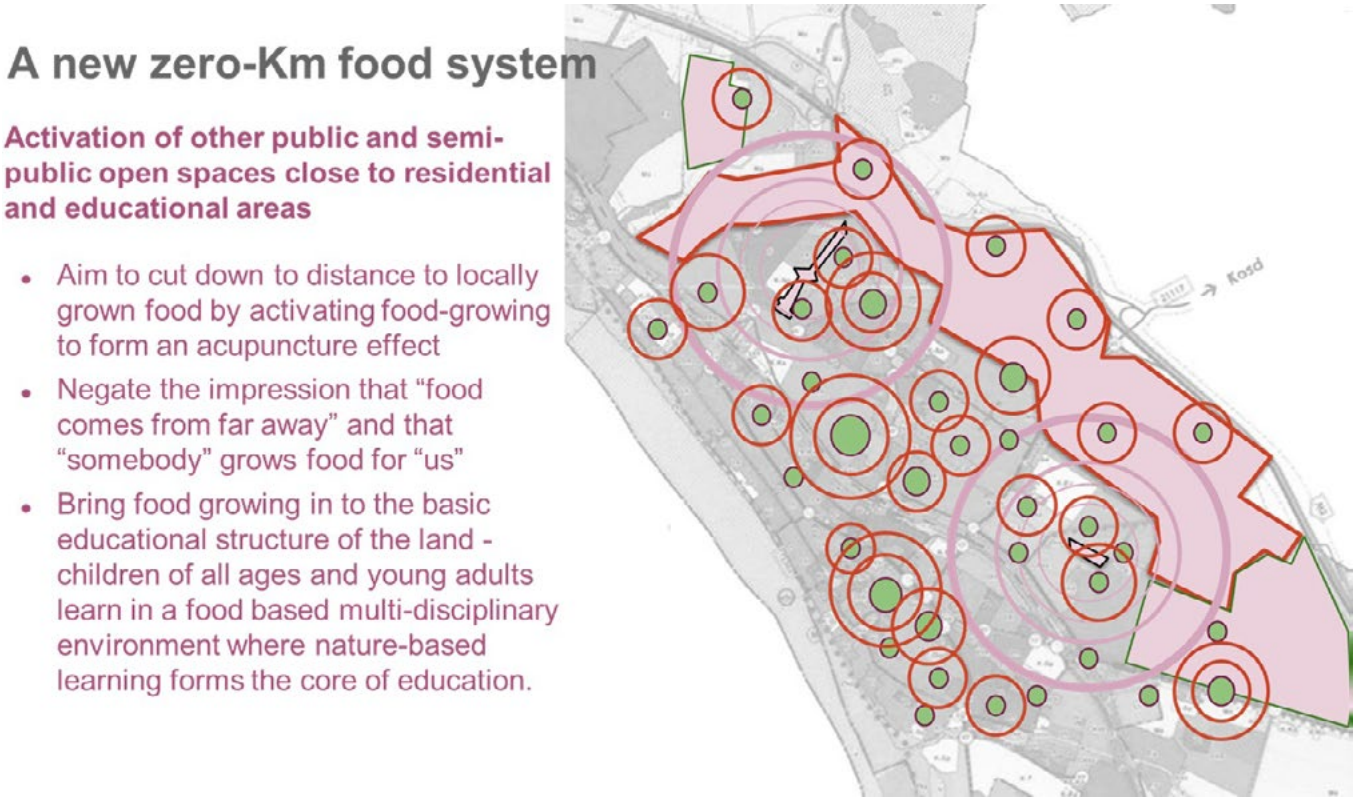

Figure 5.5 Acupuncture effect – Educational institutions and public/semi-public areas are ideal for initiating the zero-km food system. *Graphic: Arati Uttur*

Strategy / process

Establishing a policy framework which set guidelines for sustainable urban land use by limiting built-up areas and requiring productive green spaces with native vegetation. It mandates biodiversity and community farming while offering incentives like tax reductions for proper maintenance. The plan includes community engagement through educational events and workshops to foster environmental stewardship. Enforcement combines citizen monitoring with graduated penalties, prioritizing compliance through support rather than punishment. Pilot projects will test the approach before citywide implementation.

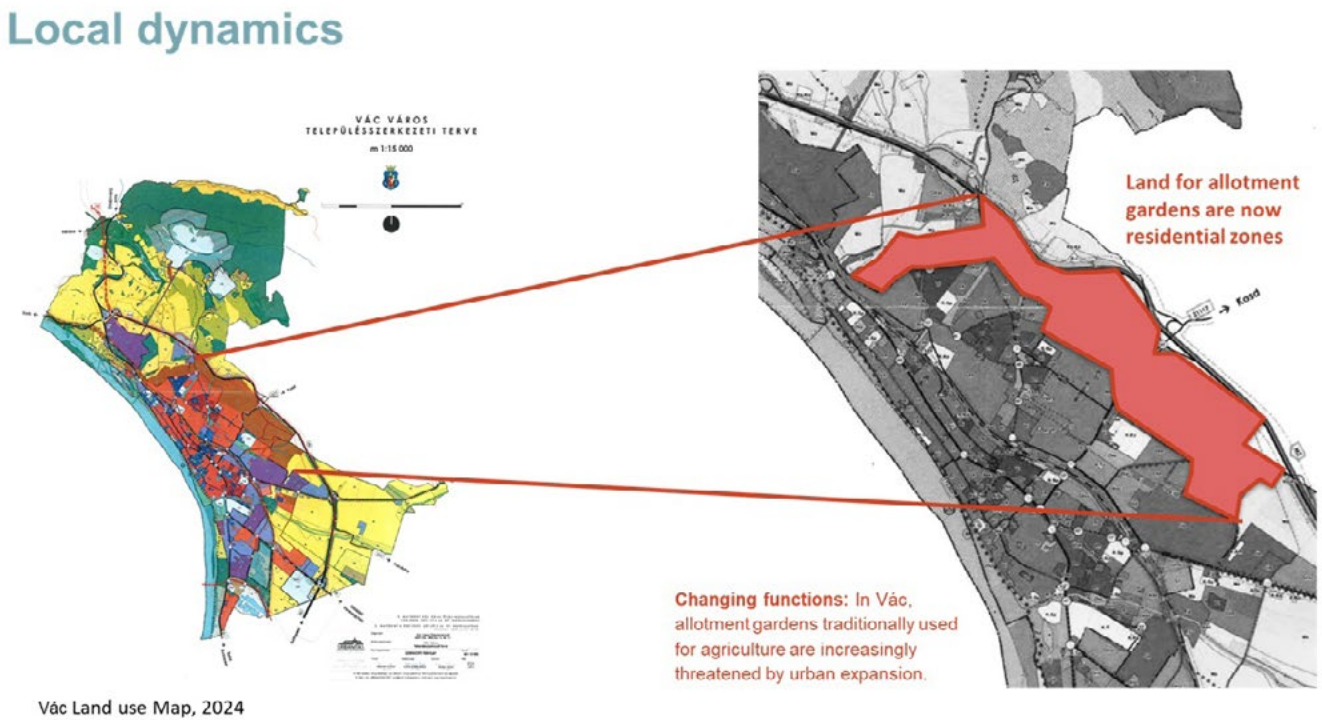

Figure 5.6 Reverse the land use policy to ensure protection of productive land. Graphic: Arati Uttur

Possible interventions, proposals

Munkácsy Park

The community around Munkácsy Park, along with supporting collaborators, have already taken very good initiatives to activate this space, which is now being used by the neighbourhood for its community meets, children's activities, as a general meeting and outdoor space for the residents around this space. However, the Forum teams visiting the space observed that this wonderful initiative has not really gained popularity, and neither is the existence of the park known to even the veterans of Vác.

We feel that Munkácsy Park should be projected as one of the successful good practice examples for the rest of Vác to take inspiration from. In addition to this, the Park is an ideal ground for promotion and activation of the Zero-Km Food System. By promoting local and neighbouring food growers to set up weekly markets in the park space to sell their produce, and by also setting up spaces in the Munkácsy Park for local food production in the form of community food gardens, the space would not reduce the distance to food for the neighbourhood surrounding this space, serving as one of the acupuncture

spaces envisioned by the Foodscape team. In addition to bringing about such local markets and food production spaces in Munkácsy Park, the important role of education and awareness about sustainable, locally grown and organic food sources should also be actively integrated into the interventions.

Activation of Community Gardens in residential spaces

The Foodscapes Team had the opportunity to visit some of the newer residential spaces in Vác (e.g., Zöldfa Street, Altány út) and observe the absence of any form of local food growing. The residential areas in most parts of Vác have immense potential for activating a food growing culture.

Such interventions should be steadily introduced into not only residential areas, but also schools and public spaces in the city, like city squares or parks.

Figure 5.7 Potential public and semi-public residential areas that could develop into community garden for food production as well as local food markets to reduce the distance to food as well as increased awareness about the Zero-Km Food system. *Photo: Arat Uttur*

Figure 5.8 Envisioned example of how a public or semi-public residential space could become an acupuncture space for growing and selling food and contributing to the Zero-Km Food System. *Graphic development: Tahsin Ahmad with the help of ChatGPT*

Integration of biodiversity and connection to Nature – Example: Törökhegy Forest

The Törökhegy Forest, having also been one of the primary intervention areas of the Landscape Forum, is an essential element of the Zero-Km food System and network.

Special reference with the help of this example goes to the BIP intervention and suggestions from the "Forest Management" Team. As mentioned in the interventions of the Forest Management team, the introduction of edible trees and plants into the city fabric is essential to form the connection to food in daily life. The Törökhegy Forest extends this thought of "edible" to the non-human occupants of the landscape, for example, the birds, animals, insects and other organisms that share the landscape along with humans. The acknowledgement of their existence alongside us humans is extremely essential in order to understand the important role that biodiversity plays in the food system as well as the environment as a whole.

Educative material, signages, informative workshops as well as community activities that help promote, educate and support local biodiversity in flora and fauna are an important and integral part of a food system. Food that exists in the forest that might be a source of nutrition for not only humans, but also the other residents of the forest should be treated as a vital part of the Zero-Km Food System, because these organisms play a vital role in the food chain as a whole and this should by no means be undermined, neglected or disrespected.

Another example where non-human food sources could be highlighted are the allotment gardens themselves, as well as the large productive landscapes of the Lingvay Vineyard and their newly developed olive groves. These landscapes are supporters of some of the most essential members of the food chain: pollinators.

Integration of activities like bee-keeping in order to promote indigenous species of bees and insects, birds, bird-watching workshops and adoption of trees and plants in the forest and other natural spaces with the intention of becoming stewards of the local landscape are some of the ways in which a deeper, sustainable, research and knowledge-based food system can be established.

The forest, the allotment gardens, public and semi-public green natural spaces, as well as the Danube bank, and the valleys that encapsulate Vác, need to be acknowledged, celebrated and integrated into the daily lives of the occupants of Vác as the rich, essential connection to nature that everyone needs in order to fully appreciate the value of sustainable lifestyles. Not only the use of these nature-based systems as a resource for relaxation and entertainment, but also the act of stewardship to give back in full to what we receive from Nature is what we need to build our communities towards.

Local Food Council and the Food Network

For the Zero-Km Food System to effectively fall in place, there is one very essential entity that needs to develop in parallel to the acupuncture interventions : the food network and a food governance system that functions in an interdisciplinary manner alongside other governance systems that regulate the broadly outlined thematic branches highlighted by the Landscape Forum.

A Local Food Council should be established that takes on the role of regulating the interventions and local food hubs into a network, while also developing a governance system that brings the local food hubs into a participative, locally governed, democratic network that helps to bring the individual interventions into a well-connected and regulated network which then acts a single organism.

The role of the Local Food council would also be the educative dissemination of essential knowledge related to the food system.

Systems related to the local food network, such as waste management and segregation, maintenance of surrounding natural green and blue infrastructure, education about local flora and fauna, and stewardship of human and wilderness habitats inside and outside the human settlements, should be well integrated in an interdisciplinary manner into the Food Council.

The socio-economic aspects pertaining to development, maintenance and sustenance of the Zero-Km Food System should be managed in a participatory manner by the Local Food Council that should be formed by the local community in collaboration with schools, educational institutions, governing bodies, residents and NGOs.

The involvement of children of all ages as well as the younger generation into the Zero-Km Food System is the essence of the idea. If there is a need for a generation who can understand the importance of sustainability, we need a generation that grows up practicing sustainability in their daily lives. Hence, the act of food growing needs to be implemented into basic education through all ages. The act of producing, cultivating and growing local, organic food, as well as the related activities like composting, waste management, land-use management, water conservation and rainwater harvesting, and many other such activities need to be omnipresent and evidently visible, and integrated into the lifestyle of people of all ages. These activities need to become just as normal as the act of consumption of food or the consumption of any other products that surround human lifestyles.

The Local Food Council along with the local governing bodies should also be actively responsible for the policies that are essential for the Zero-KM Food System to stay sustained.

As mentioned earlier, policies such as reversal of land-use to protect productive landscapes as well as related policies that protect the biodiversity and green spaces of the region are integral to the sustainability of the landscape.

It is essential to emphasise again that these policies need to be handled in a participative and interdisciplinary manner, to stay inclusive to related landscape conservation and development approaches, some of which are also highlighted in the other thematic approaches of the Landscape Forum.

5.5 Forum Outcome Statement

“Connection with Nature, establishment of a sustainable food system, community bonding and generation enhancement, with quality education and economic stability begins by putting your hands in the earth, in your backyard. For future generations to understand sustainability, they need to live sustainability - Starting from age zero. A zero-Km food culture means environmental stewardship, social cohesion, better governance, strong socio-economic networks, and inculcating a lifelong sustainability-mindset across generations.”

For the vision of a Zero-Km food culture to fall into place, it is essential to begin with community-focused drives, interventions, and initiatives to make the local community aware and engage in the Zero-Km food culture.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Activities

To ensure the success and longevity of the community garden and local food network through acupuncture of local food systems, a well-integrated small business model for every intervention needs to be integrated.

It would be of great value to use the small business model to support local food growers and ensure their integration into the economy of the Pest County which would not only show them that their efforts and interests are being supported but also give them a means to continue with organic and sustainable farming while supporting their own little communities that actually are a part of the whole.

Value-based economic models would be essential to ensure the quality and authenticity of the interventions.

Once the above-mentioned interventions for Vác have fallen in place and are fully functional, the educational, economic and social network can be further extended to neighbouring towns, to Budapest, and beyond. Vác could become a good practice example for other cities to take inspiration from as well as to connect with. Careful and monitored socio-economic expansion of the

acupuncture model while paying attention to the delicate local environment and biodiversity can start spreading the Zero-Km Food System to other human settlements and contribute to a symbiotic system that functions from whole to part and part to whole as an organism.

Integration of other aspects such as Mobility, Forest and Nature Management, Landscape Economy, Value-Based community business models, governance and democratic landscape transformations could then be realised in parallel, as all of these form parts of the whole Ecosystem and can function best when coordinated along the same sustainable mindset that they all spring from.

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6 Vác – Towards a Living Landscape Biography

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6.1 Introduction to the theme & site context

Our local design challenge

Landscape biography is a methodology and an interdisciplinary approach (Kolen & Renes, 2015) to studying the historical, cultural, and environmental development of landscapes over time. It integrates perspectives from geography, archaeology, history, and ecology to explore how human activities and natural processes have shaped the landscape and created multiple identities over time. The working group explored what a living landscape biography approach might comprise. By doing so we wanted to understand how it might support the development of innovative and creative approaches to the community's interactions with the landscape.

Regular landscape biographies are static and mostly state the past. In order for them to be used as a starting point for development or design, we need to look at the future and consider the time factor and people. The living landscape biography approach treats the landscape as a living document or narrative, emphasising its dynamic interaction with people, societal changes, and natural processes.

Landscape Biography is an approach that sees the landscape as a form of text that reflects changes over time – with an emphasis on historical development and landscape-forming processes. It focuses on the 'story' of the landscape, based on material evidence such as maps, archaeology and documents. Living Landscape Biography, on the other hand, complements this perspective with the experiences, stories and memories of local people, making the landscape alive and constantly changing. This approach also focuses on how people perceive and interact with the landscape today. It emphasises the importance of the landscape as a social and cultural process in which the past, present and future are intertwined. The main difference is that Living Landscape Biography gives greater importance to human voices and subjective experiences.

Aspect	Landscape Biography	Living Landscape Biography
Definition	A historical account of how a landscape has changed over time	A dynamic, participatory narrative of the landscape as a living entity
Sources	Archival materials, maps, surveys, historical data	Same sources plus oral histories, local knowledge, emotions, values
Time perspective	Often retrospective (past-focused)	Past, present, and future-oriented
Typical output	Academic publications, reports	Interactive processes, visual tools, stories, and community engagement

Scheme 6.1 Comparison between Landscape biography and Living landscape biography

The working group set out to answer the following design challenge: How might we create a living landscape biography of Vác?

The working group wanted to investigate how the integration of outdoor play areas and the evolving nature experiences in Vác can help reinforce the town's historical identity and strengthen community bonds, particularly focusing on its children and broader population.

A methodology or framework for developing a Living Landscape Biography could be the following (Antrop, 2005; Kolen & Renes 2015, Verbrugge et.al. 2019, Gottwald et al. 2021):

- Research of the historical, ecological, and social background of the place.
- Pinpoint the interest points and activities in great detail (legal or not so much). Ideally, get to know the residents, needs, and stories in the field.
- Build the concept of future development linking past values, present usage and future needs.

However, the process of develop a Living landscape biography for the site during the LE:NOTE Forum had to be very concise due to time restraints of the forum program. Ideally the working group would have spoken with many different stakeholders and groups from Vác, school children, elderly people, such as fishermen, as well as visitors and passers-by.

Since this was not possible within the given time, the field visit was the main source of information. Local experts explained the working group about the landscape, its history, recreational, nature and other values, as well as challenges that the area is facing. During a day-long walk we met with a local expert from the sailing school, who explained to us about the area. Further information was given by two local experts on landscape from MATE University.

Local dynamics

- Integration of historical and natural spaces: Examining how Vác's public spaces, streets, parks, gardens, and riverbanks, steeped in history, can be adapted or enhanced to provide meaningful play and learning experiences. These areas serve as gateways for engaging with both the natural environment and the town's multifaceted heritage.
- Outdoor play areas: Focusing on the design and development of outdoor play areas that reflect local culture and history, creating spaces that are not only fun but also educational. This includes incorporating elements that tell stories of the town's past or use traditional materials and designs.

The Vác river landscape dynamics include the following characteristics (Fig 6.1):

- Zoning by intensity of use is clearly visible on the map – from the central city area outwards, activities become less frequent and more natural environments dominate (e.g. from the church and prison area to the forest, beach, etc.). This indicates a gradual transition from an urbanised to a natural environment.
- The connection to the natural riverside is shown by several zones: the Riparian Forest Zone, the park, the "No man's land" and the beach area. Each of them has its own character, but they form a sequential system along the river, which is a potential green corridor.
- The need to improve access to the water's edge and create diversity in the shoreline – the map shows that in some areas access is limited (e.g. near the prison), but in others paths and a beach access already exist. This offers the opportunity to introduce pontoons, platforms or steep banks with plants.
- The need for continuous pedestrian and bicycle routes – the images and map show that some trails already exist, but incomplete connectivity (especially at "No man's land") limits flow. It is possible to develop pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure as a green highway.

- Areas dedicated to natural processes – Riparian Forest Zone and unregulated shoreline near the beach offer opportunities for habitat restoration, especially if there are no intensive activities.
- Potential for linking historic sites – paths run along churches, cathedrals, and central squares. These can be visually and functionally connected to the river promenade, improving sightlines and pedestrian appeal.
- Need for "quality stay" areas – currently there is little shade, benches or well-maintained picnic areas. These should be placed in different areas (e.g. in a park or by the beach) to improve the microclimate and length of stay.
- "Play triggers" and interaction with nature – natural play areas in a forest area or by the water (wood logs, sand reliefs) can activate children's movement and engagement, while creating a connection with the environment.
- Recreational zoning: the area around the rowing club and beach can be more suitable for active recreation, while the forest and "No man's land" are more suitable for peaceful relaxation and nature observation.
- Diverse greenery – the images show that monocultures (lawns for example) prevail in some places, but diversifying the landscape with native plants can strengthen biodiversity and reduce erosion.

Figure 6.1 Vác river landscape dynamics. *Created by authors 2025*

6.2 The Main Aims and Research Questions

The objectives are:

- Revitalise historical outdoor play areas: Discover and imagine new outdoor play areas that are inspired by Vác's cultural and historical elements.
- Enhance quality of nature experiences: Develop initiatives to maintain and enhance the quality of nature experiences in Vác' in combination with appreciating landscape history, such as planting native species, restoring natural habitats, and ensuring that natural areas are accessible and inviting to all residents.
- Community outreach: Create communication strategies and community projects that involve residents in the preservation and enhancement of outdoor play and nature areas, fostering a sense of ownership and a deeper connection to local heritage.
- Promote intergenerational learning: Encourage activities that bring different generations together in outdoor settings, such as storytelling sessions, historical nature tours, and heritage-themed scavenger hunts, promoting shared learning and appreciation for Vác's history.

The planned outcomes for the forum are:

- A methodical framework for a living landscape biography for Vác, including amongst others a possible process model and multi-dimensional maps / participatory maps.
- Design ideas how to implement the living landscape biography in the townscape, in particular in relation to open spaces and play areas.
- Linking Vác to good practice cases and transfer of knowledge to the local community.
- Some proposals for local interventions to exemplify and test the living landscape biography in cooperation with the group that worked on democratic landscape transformation.

6.3 The Working Process of the Team

Study trip

The study trip took place on June 19, with local guides and experts. It was a one-day landscape experience, with walking through the landscape of Vác's river front, and actively discussing on the spot challenges and possibilities of the landscape. One of the aspects was trying to identify local people's needs and river landscape usages, such as walking, relaxing, fishing, swimming, etc.

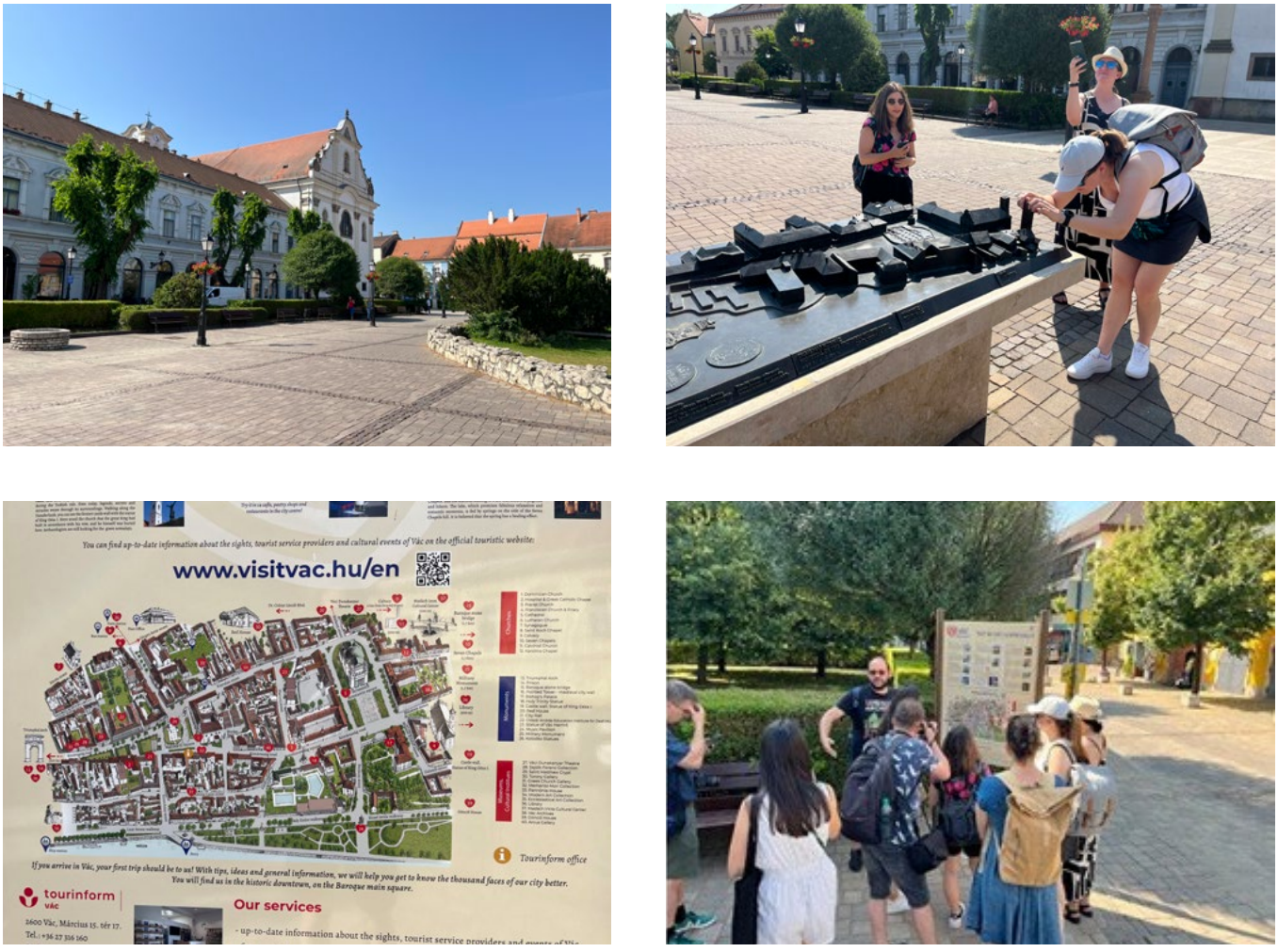

Figure 6.2 Exploring the historical centre of Vac. *Source: Photos by Adrian Noortman*

The trip started off exploring Vác's historical centre, which is rich in historical buildings, such as the Baroque main Square, the City Hall, cathedral, the Triumphal Arch and many more buildings and built elements. Traditionally, the city has always had a strong connection with the Danube river, which is reflect-

ed in the street layout. Several streets, such as Esterházy street, Fürdo street and Petróczy street, connect the central road and city squares directly to road/walkway at the river area.

Walking to the southern river edge of the city, the rowing club marks the abrupt transition between the protected natural forest area to the south and open grass fields and a large parking lot going northwards. Despite the fact that the forest area has protected status, dirt roads run through it and there are even plans for a second building within the existing forest area. Beach access is limited and often requires climbing down a steep river edge that is reinforced with concrete blocks.




Figure 6.3 Impression of the 'Riparian forest zone' and the connecting cultural 'Park zone'.
Source: Photos by Adrian Noortman

Swimming is not allowed and dangerous, due to an existing sewage outlet a little further upstream. Looking back at the city centre, there is a beautiful view to the historic Franciscan monastery. The river is partly hidden behind a thin line of willow trees. We characterised this part of the river as the 'Riparian Forest zone'.

Walking along the river towards the city centre, the area becomes more and more open, providing views to the river. The central park area that lies beneath it is a mostly open and grassy area. Scattered trees provide some shade, but in large parts trees are absent. This area features no natural vegetation. The river edge is paved with natural stone and concrete, to protect the river edge, leaving no space for spontaneous natural processes.

Figure 6.4 The 'forest zone' near the river south of the center of Vác. *Source: Photo by Adrian Noortman*

The central park area has an outdated character and mainly consists of paving and grass, with negative effects on the microclimate in sunny days. Due to the height difference with the water, the river is hardly visible from the main walkway. Continuing our walk further south the character of the river edge changes into a type of boulevard. Also, in this area accessibility of the water is very limited. Together with the park, we characterised this part of the river edge as the 'Park zone'.

Figure 6.5 The central park area. *Source: Photo by Adrian Noortman*

Figure 6.6 The park area and the boulevard both have a hard river edge with very limited space for natural growth. *Source: Photos by Adrian Noortman*

Once we get to the prison at the river edge, we have the feeling of entering a ‘no mans land’. We are unsure if and how the route along the water continues. In this section the river is not visible and a feeling of alienation and disconnection with the river area further north is felt.

Figure 6.7 The public walkway in front of the prison building feels like ‘no man’s land’. *Source: Photo by Adrian Noortman*

Finally, after passing the prison complex, the character of the river edge changes again drastically. Suddenly the pebble beach becomes visible and accessible at several places. A cycling path demarcates the transition between the backyards of the residential area and the beach area. A thin area of natural vegetation delineates the river edge. The beach invites visitors for a stroll, offering a sense of being outside the city.

Figure 6.8 The 'beach zone' features an elongated stretch of stoney beach bordered by natural vegetation. A cycling path separates the river front from the adjacent housing area.
Source: Photos by Adrian Noortman

Challenges

During our walk along the Danube near Vác, we observed the following challenges in the area:

- Difficulties in the accessibility of the riverfront, as well as a bad water quality in the southern part of the area, due to an existing sewage water outlet.
- A strong disconnection between the different parts of the river edge, both in a spatial and in a functional way. Nature areas and cultural areas are strongly separated.
- Non-continuous paths for cycling and walking.
- Lack of a space for natural processes.

- Lots of paved area and absence of trees and shadow in large parts of the park zone, leading to a local heat island and bad quality of stay on sunny days.
- Conventional park with outdated flower beds and trees that are not connected to natural river landscapes.
- Lack of benches and opportunities for play or other activities.
- Playgrounds that do not include play facilities that could remind the river ‘s importance and/or heritage to children.

Ideas

In general, the ideas have arisen from the study of the place in nature, the identified challenges and opportunities, as well as the local narrative. The main ideas that were put forward:

- the continuation of nature and re-naturing the riverfront.
- improving accessibility.
- increase opportunities for play at the river.

Good practice projects / cases

- Pünkösfürdoi park at the north of Budapest.
- Riverfront park Nijmegen (Spiegelwaal Nijmegen), The Netherlands: https://hnsland.nl/projecten/ruimte-voor-de-waal/.
- Vistula river park Warshaw.

6.4 Goals, Vision, Strategy, and Proposals

Goals

The vision, strategy, and design proposals strive to reach the following goals:

- Revive and celebrate the old connection of the city with the river in which the river and the city co-exist in a balanced way.
- Enhance the over-all quality and quantity of natural areas.
- Restore river edge nature and create space for natural processes.
- Enhance the quality of stay for visitors.
- Enrich nature experience for all visitors in close proximity to the city centre.
- Offer an alternative for current activities that are harming existing nature, as well as a framework for possible new recreational programming of the river front.
- Improve connections for pedestrians and cyclists along the river edge, as well as connection from the river edge to the city centre.

Vision

At the river front of Vác two important qualities come together: the presence of the beautiful city of Vác at the Danube river and the beauty of the natural river system itself. For the people of Vác the city always had and still has a strong connection to the river. However, the physical connection between city and river is not as strong as it used to be in the past, due to a range of developments, that have made the connection to the river weaker.

The natural riverbanks have been gradually hardened with stone and concrete, herewith erasing natural elements and processes from the central area where the city meets the river. In this area children and adults will not come into contact with nature, since here natural processes have been limited to a very narrow line at the water's edge. Nature areas can be found close by, but the majority of visitors will not frequently visit those areas. The remaining natural area in the south has a protected status, but suffers from quite intensive

use, whilst new building developments in this area are under way. The result is a spatially fragmented river edge that is rather disconnected from the city, leading to the challenges mentioned above.

Strategy / process

Three members from the Landscape democracy group joined us during the field visit. They were looking at and engaging with the landscape from a child's perspective, each of them representing a certain type of child (persona) with specific interests, fears and ways of engaging with the landscape en nature in particular. In this way the working group was informed on how different children would probably perceive the different types of landscape and nature that were encountered during the day. This helped the working group when translating our experience into a vision and plan proposals.

Aspect	Landscape Biography	Living Landscape Biography
Definition	A historical account of how a landscape has changed over time	A dynamic, participatory narrative of the landscape as a living entity
Sources	Archival materials, maps, surveys, historical data	Same sources plus oral histories, local knowledge, emotions, values
Time perspective	Often retrospective (past-focused)	Past, present, and future-oriented
Typical output	Academic publications, reports	Interactive processes, visual tools, stories, and community engagement

Scheme 6.2 Comparison between Landscape biography and Living landscape biography

Possible interventions , proposals

The working group recognises that the river front of Vác at the Danube river has a lot of potential for the restoration of the river edges habitat. The city should consider a progressive strategy towards nature, with the aim of creating (giving) more (space to) nature in the central river area, thereby improving the quality of nature and connecting the river banks, north and south of Vác throughout the whole river area (shown in image below). By doing so, not only will nature get a change to restore, but also the quality of stay will greatly improve, since more trees and shrubs can grow there, that create shade and are more resilient to drought. Children and adults can experience and enjoy nature closer to the city and will automatically engage more with the natural environment. Another advantage of this approach will be that the fragmentation of the river edge will be reduced. New developments can be fitted in the new natural areas and will not have a negative effect on existing forest nature. Automatically the ‘urbanity gradient’ will fade out from the city area outwards.

A specific problem is the presence of a main sewer outlet upstream of Vác, which has a strong negative impact on the water quality and probably also on nature. Efforts should be made to maximum mitigation of this impact to restore ecological and recreational value of the riverbanks. However, finding a solution for this problem, is not feasible within the scope of the working group.

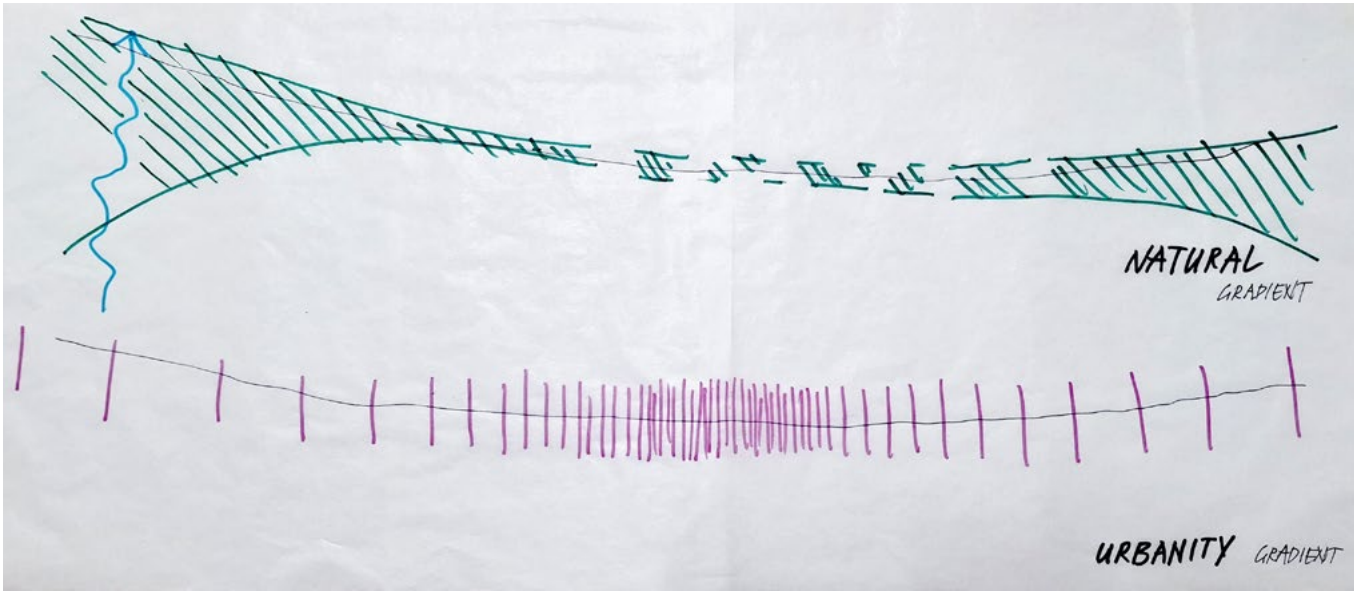

Figure 6.9 Proposed gradients fort nature and urbanity. (In the drawings, Vác should be imagined at the bottom of each drawing, and the river at the top).
Source: Sketch by Adrian Noortman

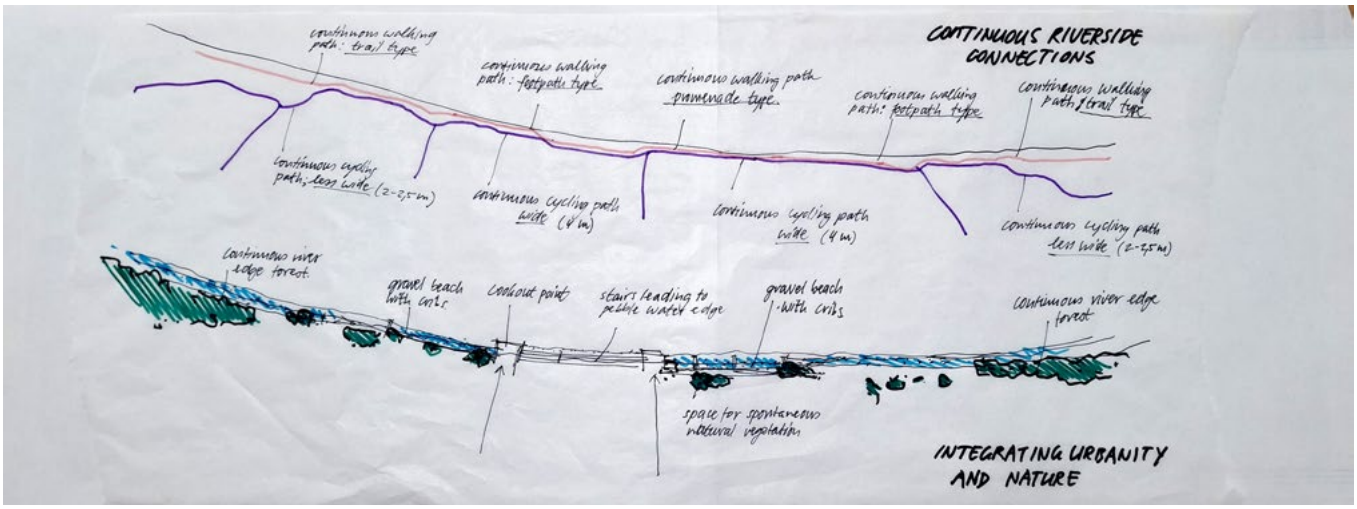

Figure 6.10 Example elaboration of possible river front adaptation to integrate more nature along the river edge. *Source: Sketch by Adrian Noortman*

We propose to develop initiatives to maintain and enhance the quality of nature experiences in Vác, in combination with appreciating landscape history, such as planting native species, restoring natural habitats, and ensuring that natural areas are accessible and inviting to all residents. Enhancing river edge accessibility can be done by improving existing access points as well as adding several new ones, especially near the city centre.

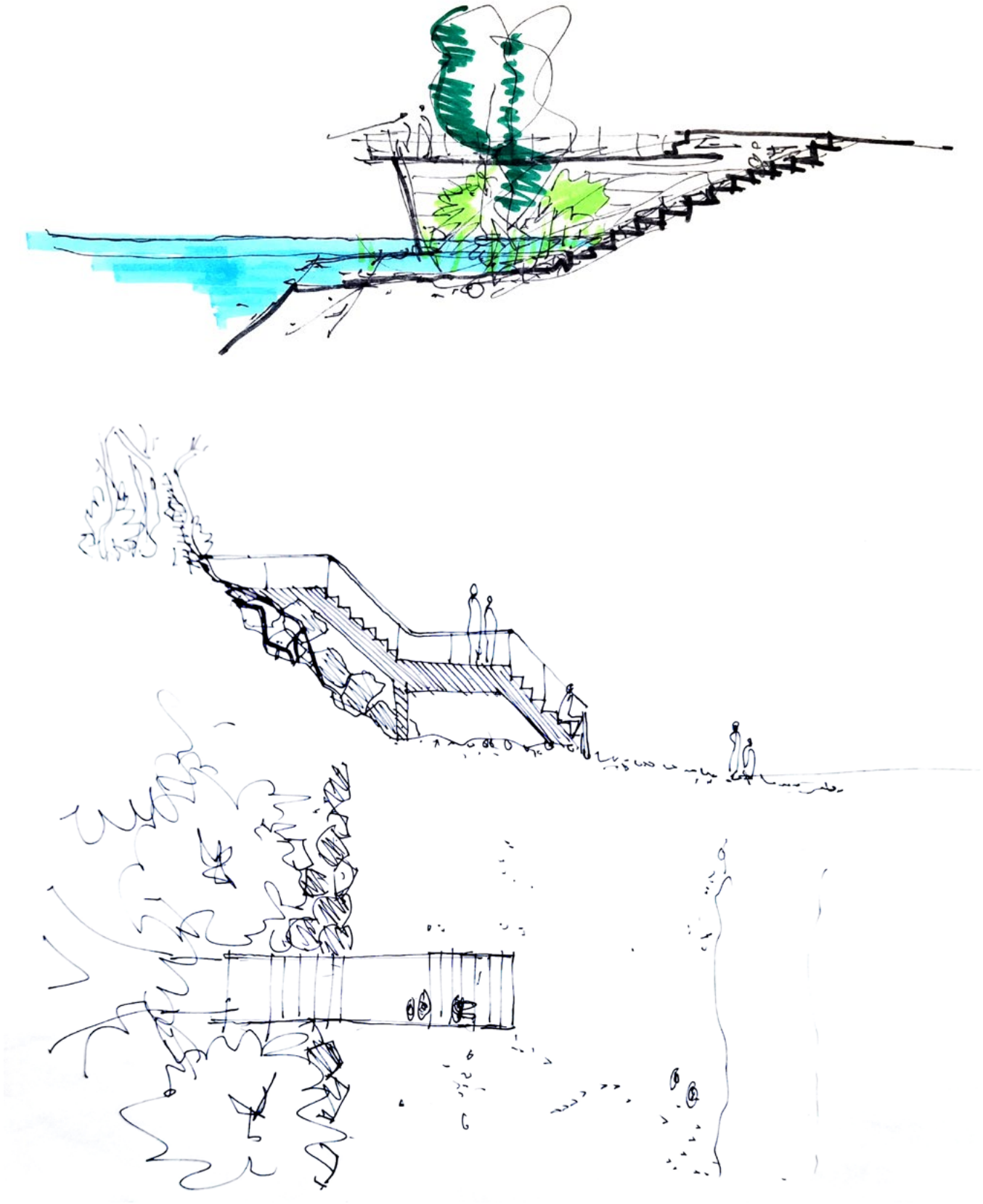

Figure 6.11 Some sketches of possible interventions to improve access to the river and enhance nature experience. *Source: Sketches by the authors*

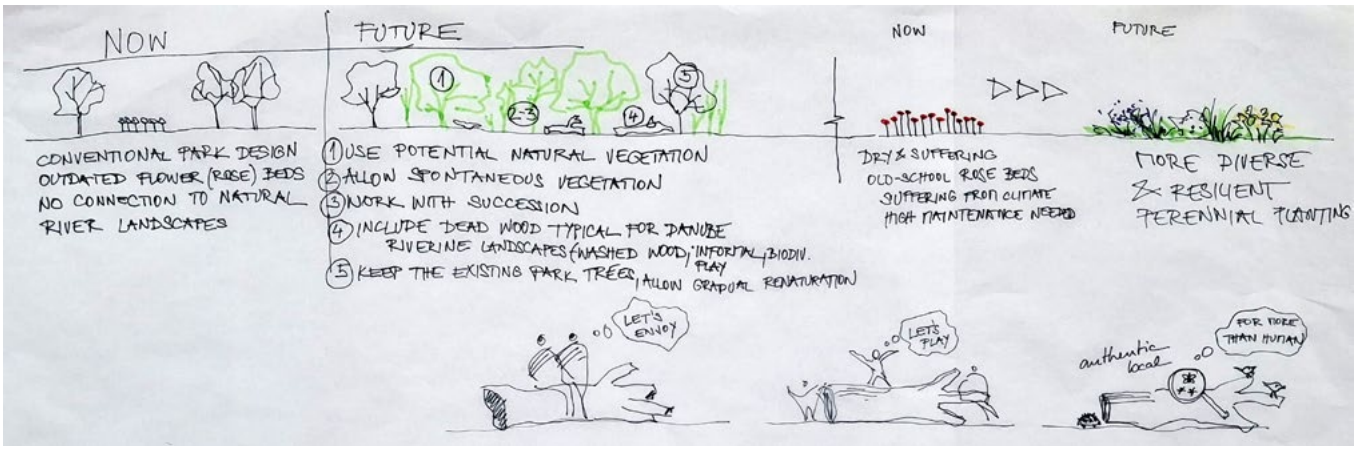

Figure 6.12 Transforming the conventional park design of the central area into a more natural and biodiverse river front park, with areas with extensive as well as parts with more intensive maintenance. *Source: Sketch by Adrian Noortman based on the discussion of the authors*

Figure 6.13 Play elements could refer to different historical and local objects or stories (e.g. a fisherman's climbing net, a boat swing or slide. 'Sound rocks' may make natural sounds or tell stories about the river area. *Source: Drawing by Konstantina Panagiota Panagaki*

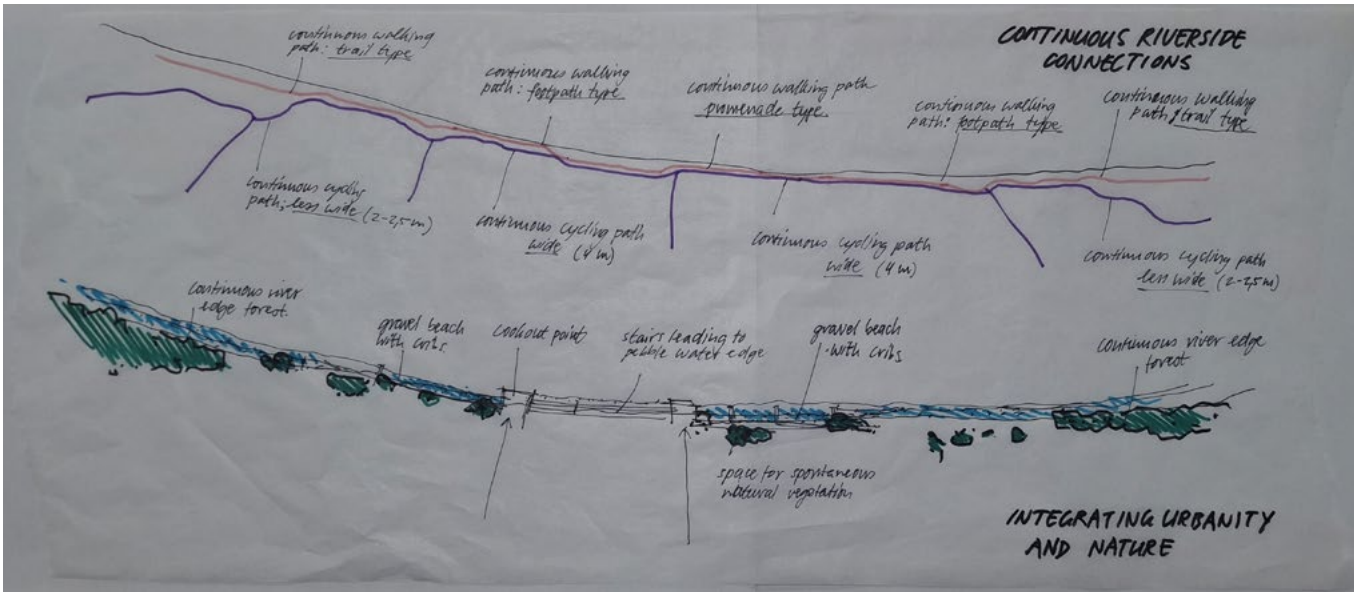

Figure 6.14 By connecting and upgrading existing cycling and walking paths along the shore, with connections to the historical centre of Vác, the connection with the river can be improved. *Source: Sketch by Adrian Noortman*

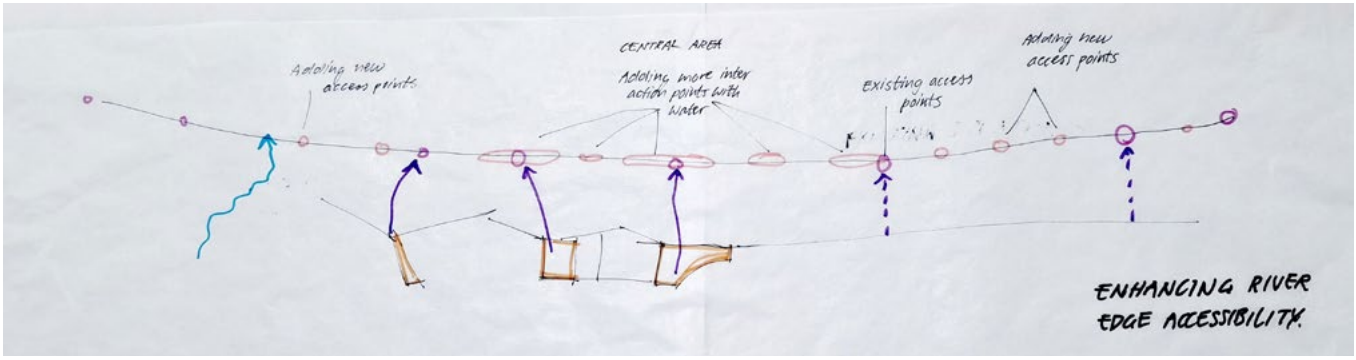

Figure 6.15 Connection of urban squares in the centre to new access points at the river.
Source: Photos and sketch by Adrian Noortman

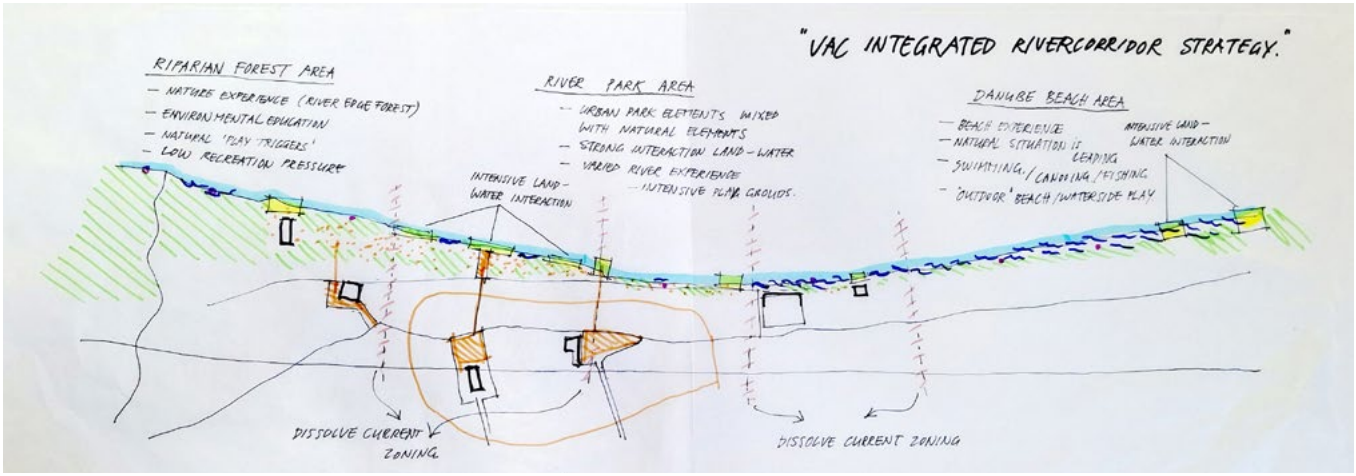

Figure 6.16 The proposals above summarised in one 'strategy drawing'.
Source: Sketch by Adrian Noortman

6.5 Forum Outcome Statement

For a living landscape biography, the team formulated the following recommendations:

1. Reconnect the city and people of Vac with the river in diverse and nature-inclusive ways.
2. Create spaces for nature and natural processes in the river area, connecting the river's ecology throughout the whole riverfront of Vac.
3. Enhance human-nature interactions and connections, tapping into the specific identity and diverse spatial qualities of different river/city sections.

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7 Sustainable Peri-Urban Mobility Strategies for the School Campus in Vác

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7.1 Introduction to the Theme and Site Context

This report presents the work developed during the Landscape Forum 2025 by the Mobility Group, focusing on the transition towards sustainable mobility in the peri-urban context of Vác, a city located within the Functional Urban Area (FUA) of Budapest. The site under investigation is the secondary school campus area known as Iskolaváros, which accommodates more than 2000 students arriving daily from the wider region. The main school is the Bernáth Kálmán high school. The campus is located between different transportation corridors, the road Nr. 2, a former important corridor coming from Budapest along the Danube and the Danube river along with the Eurovelo 6 international cycling route. This educational district is situated on the grounds of a former military site, giving it a distinctive character that combines open spaces, infrastructural legacies, and a certain degree of isolation from the rest of the city.

Vác lies at the northern edge of the Budapest FUA, a metropolitan region of approximately three million inhabitants and nearly 272,000 daily commuters. Although Vác is part of the Budapest agglomeration zone, the city itself functions as a local urban centre, providing jobs and educational opportunities to nearby villages. The mobility challenge in this setting is particularly acute be-

cause the campus is positioned at the periphery, where access to public transport is limited, walking and cycling infrastructures are discontinuous, and road safety remains a pressing issue. These unfavourable conditions result in the dominance of car use among both parents and students.

The team's focus was to explore how spatial design, planning, governance, and education can converge to foster more active and sustainable mobility solutions in this unique peri-urban setting.

Location of the site

The school district is located in the northwest part of Vác.

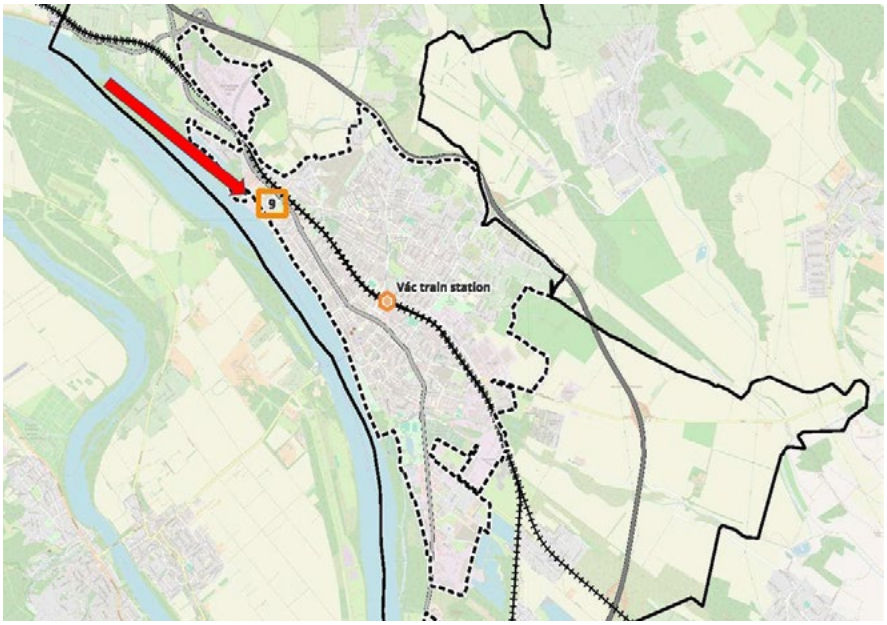

Figure 7.1 Nr 9 indicates the location of unscaled the Iskolaváros School Campus and the Bernáth Kálmán High School at the northern edge of the city of Vác. *Map source: Open Street Map*

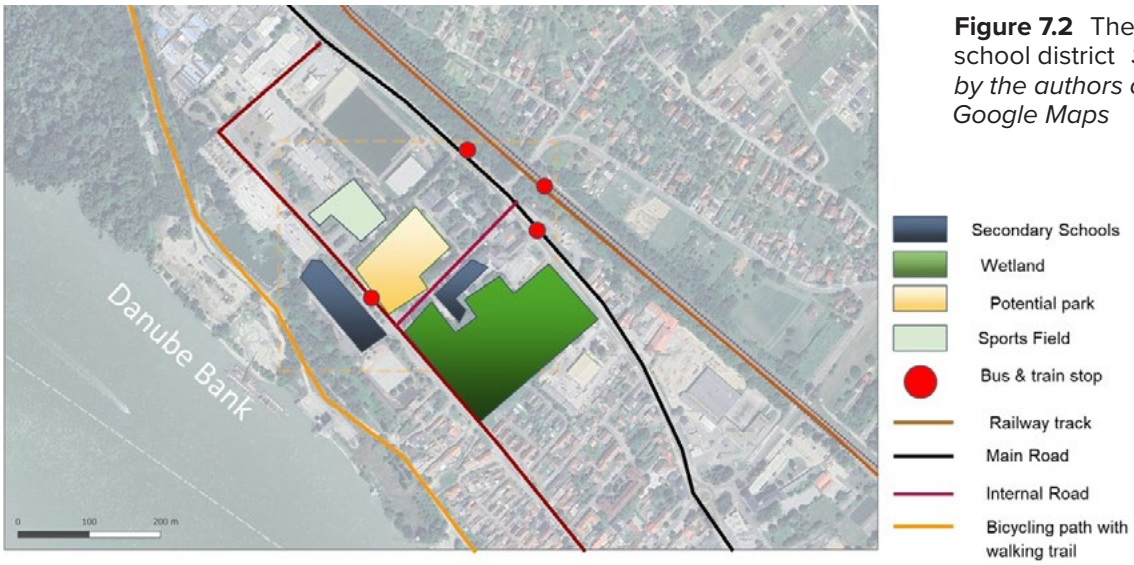

Figure 7.2 The elements of the school district *Source: Drawing by the authors on the basis of Google Maps*

Site observations

Figure 7.3a Car dominance on in the public open spaces. *Source: Photos Ellen Fetzer*
Figure 7.3b Unsafe pedestrian crossing despite the high number of school students.

Figure 7.3c Risky situations during peak hours.
Figure 7.3d No pedestrian road on the way from the train station to the school.

Figure 7.3e No shelter against sun, wind or rain at the train station, train goes only once per hour.
Figure 7.3f Car domination during peak hours.

Figure 7.3g School ground has a lot of potential areas for environmental improvement.

7.2 Main Aims and Research Questions

Mobility and landscape have a very wicked relationship. From a systems thinking point of view, we may ask: How does the landscape affect mobility? And how does mobility affect the landscape?

In the light of this wicked problem, the central aim of the group was to identify strategies that encourage a shift towards sustainable mobility, with a special emphasis on walking and cycling, for students and staff traveling to and from the school campus, and the wider local community. Our overarching and design-oriented research question was thus formulated as follows:

How might we encourage more sustainable, and in particular more active, mobility for the high school campus of Bernáth Kálmán and its surroundings at the northern edge of Vác?

In order to address this question, several sub-questions have been derived. Altogether, this generates the following research agenda, which, obviously, was not possible to embrace during the short forum workshop. But this would be our suggestion for a more in-depth study over the following year:

- What is the current state of the landscape? How does it determine mobility?
    - We need to do a spatial analysis, expert oriented & participatory, with multiple methods.
- Which distances do the school students, teachers and employees have to overcome every day? What determines their mobility behaviour?
    - We need to conduct surveys, interviews, focus groups.
- What are the needs, constraints and perspectives of the public transport providers?
    - We need to do expert interviews, analysis of itineraries and frequency of services.
- What is the current mobility planning & policy framework within the Functional Urban Zone of Budapest?
    - We need to conduct expert interviews, analysis of planning and policy documents & processes.

7.3 Working Process During the Landscape Forum

Our working process combined rapid site analysis, field observations, and collaborative discussion among team members with different disciplinary backgrounds. Within the limited time provided, we did a rough spatial analysis to understand the physical setting, mapping existing infrastructures, pathways, and obstacles to active mobility. On that basis, we were able to identify some key challenges, such as unsafe crossings due to the lack of traffic lights, poor lighting on pedestrian routes, the scarcity of bus services (with only one per hour), and the absence of adequate bicycle roads, parking or shelter.

On site we also engaged in a participatory exploration of potential interventions, considering the perspectives of students and teachers as future users. We made some assumptions with regard to the regional planning framework to ensure that our ideas would fit within the multi-level governance context of the Budapest FUA. Our process was complemented by the co-creative learning experience offered by kultúrAktív, which inspired us to also think about cultural and educational dimensions of mobility transition.

7.4 Results: Vision, Strategy, and Proposed Outcomes

Our group developed a vision for the campus as a model case for promoting sustainable mobility in peri-urban areas. The vision integrates spatial, strategic, and educational dimensions, recognizing that a transition to active mobility cannot rely solely on infrastructure provision but requires cultural change and governance support.

Figure 7.4 An integrated approach towards active mobility. *Source: Scheme elaborated by the authors*

Key spatial proposals include creating high-quality bicycle parking facilities with green roofs and solar panels for e-bike charging, improving the walkability of the campus by redesigning pathways and crossings, introducing traffic lights and speed reduction measures at key bus stops, and enhancing bus and train stops with shading, seating, ventilation, and full accessibility.

Figure 7.5 Some possible measures on the campus. *Visuals are AI generated*

We also proposed establishing safe cycling connections to the central bus and train stations and introducing a bicycle priority street along Dósza György út and Köztársaság út.

Figure 7.6 Proposal for a bicycle priority street from the school district to main station, with example. *Source: infravelo*

Strategically, our recommendation is to develop an integrated sustainable mobility policy with clear targets to increase the share of walking and cycling. This will require multi-level coordination between municipal and county actors, proactive governance, and collaborative planning processes.

From an educational perspective, we encourage the high school to include sustainable mobility in its curriculum and to act as a role model for students and the wider community. Ideas such as a dedicated school cycling day, hands-on learning about safe cycling in urban environments, and creative engagement with the Danube cycling route are intended to foster a culture of active mobility.

Figure 7.7 Towards a culture of active mobility in the Vác landscape. *Image source: freepik*

7.5 Suggestions for Further Activities

The work of our team should be seen as the starting point for a more detailed research and implementation agenda. Future research could include in-depth surveys and focus groups with students, teachers, and local residents to better understand mobility patterns and barriers. Collaboration with public transport providers is needed to optimise service frequency and connectivity. Pilot projects could test innovative solutions such as temporary pop-up bike lanes or traffic calming interventions to measure their impact on mobility behaviour.

From an educational perspective, universities and schools could collaborate on long-term monitoring projects, involving students in data collection and co-design processes. Professional practice should focus on developing design guidelines for peri-urban school campuses that integrate mobility, ecology, and social life, turning them into hubs of sustainable living. The case of Vác offers an opportunity to build a replicable model for other European towns facing similar challenges.

Our observation demonstrates that the transition towards sustainable mobility in peri-urban areas requires an integrated approach, combining spatial design, governance, and education. The school campus of Vác can become a reference project for promoting active mobility, improving spatial quality, and strengthening community cohesion.

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8 Through the Child's Eyes: Democratic Nature Experiences Along the Danube in Vác

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8.1 Introduction to the Theme & Site Context

Children can play a valuable and lasting role in shaping sustainable landscapes — from planning and design to monitoring and stewardship. When their involvement is taken seriously and organised with respect for their evolving capacities and unique strengths, children not only contribute fresh insights but also develop a genuine appreciation of democracy, as well as a sense of competence and responsibility (Hart, 1997; United Nations, 1989).

Over the past four decades, diverse approaches to designing for and with children have emerged — ranging from direct participation to the use of empathy-based tools — supported by a growing body of child-friendly design theory and practice (Lansdown, 2010; Acar, 2013; Bishop & Corkery, 2017; Derr & Chawla, 2018; Global Designing Cities Initiative, 2020; Gill, 2021; Szilágyi-Nagy & Mihály, 2019; Szilágyi-Nagy & de Vries, 2024). These approaches encourage designers to see the world through children's eyes, notice how they play and move, and integrate their perspectives into planning and design decisions.

Within this tradition, the Child-Friendly City Vác Living Lab — initiated by the kultúrAktív Association and the Department of Landscape Protection and Reclamation at the Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences (MATE)

as part of the ERASMUS+ project OLA – Democratic Landscape Transformation: Towards an Open Landscape Academy — was created to explore how urban spaces can better support children's everyday connection to nature (Tóth, Szilágyi-Nagy, Valánszki, & Földi, 2025a). This work responds to the reality that children's contact with nearby nature is steadily shrinking — constrained by urbanisation, car dependence, highly structured schedules, and parental safety concerns. These trends challenge their right to access and shape meaningful landscapes and often reduce play opportunities to risk-averse, standardised spaces (Tóth, Szilágyi-Nagy, Valánszki, & Földi, 2025b). This separation from nature, sometimes described as "nature-deficit disorder," affects children's health and well-being and reduces opportunities for autonomous, creative play (Louv, 2008).

Alongside direct co-creation with children, the Living Lab also develops and tests empathy-based design tools to help professionals better understand how young users experience landscapes. Two such tools — the Child Persona Cards, fictional yet research-informed profiles that synthesise real children's behaviours, motivations, fears, and play preferences into relatable characters (Cooper & Reimann, 2003, pp. 55–74; Funck, Drexler, & Fetzer, 2023, pp. 56–59), and the Nature Experience Discovery Sheet, a structured framework for assessing places across nine key nature-connection categories — were provided to the Landscape Democracy Cross-Cutting Theme members for further testing during the Landscape Forum in Vác.

The testing took place along the Danube corridor of Vác, a mosaic of natural and urban spaces already meaningful to local families. Findings from the 2024 Living Lab workshops showed that this area is especially popular for family outings (Figures 8.1 and 8.2): families from Budapest and neighbouring cities often visit by train or bike on weekends or during seasonal events such as the May Festival and Children's Day. Local families highlighted a variety of valued nature experiences: collecting chestnuts along the Chestnut Allée in autumn, skipping stones at the riverside, watching the sparkling waves of the Danube, taking part in the New Year's bathing tradition at certain spots, cross-

ing with the local ferry, visiting the modern playground, observing the mandarin duck family at the Ligeti Fishing Lake, and recalling walks on the once-accessible educational nature trail in the Liget.

We applied these tools to three underdeveloped Danube sites — the wild Natura 2000 Area, the future Horváth Mihály Park, and the informal Beach Area — to explore their potential for child-centred design and generate development proposals. This experiment resulted in actionable, empathy-based strategies for transforming these places into a connected network of nature-rich spaces where children can play freely, imagine, and strengthen their everyday bond with the Danube.

Figure 8.1 Collecting local nature experiences from families during the May Festival 2024 at the Danube. *Photo: Ákos Rékasi, kultúrAktív Egyesület*

Figure 8.2 Families' favourite nature memories in Vác, collected during the May Festival 2024 at the Danube. *Photo: Le Marietta, kultúrAktív Egyesület*

8.2 The Main Aims and Research Questions

This working group set out to test and critically reflect on the applicability of two empathy-based tools developed within the Child-Friendly City Vác Living Lab: the *'Child Persona Cards'* and the *'Nature Experience Discovery Sheet'*. Our goal was to examine whether these tools could help designers step into children's perspectives and generate actionable design strategies for nature-rich urban spaces along the Danube.

The Child Persona Cards were originally prepared by international landscape architecture students of the Open Landscape Academy (OLA) Intensive Blended Programme, based on local children's input gathered through interviews, workshops, and storytelling. Each persona is a fictional yet research-grounded profile that synthesises children's real needs, fears, play preferences, and spatial desires into a single, relatable "character." These profiles support empathy and perspective-taking during site analysis and design, offering an alternative when direct participation is not possible at every stage.

The 'Nature Experience Discovery Sheet' is a systematic evaluation framework that translates children's diverse ways of connecting with nature into nine key experiential dimensions, informed by play research (Derr & Lance, 2012). It is designed to make the often-intangible qualities of child–nature interaction visible and actionable for designers. By structuring site analysis through these nine lenses, the sheet helps transform children's lived experiences into concrete design choices (e.g., adding modifiable natural play elements where this quality is missing). The nine qualities include:

- *Sensory richness:* diversity of natural textures, sounds, sights, and smells.
- *Hideouts/viewpoints:* secluded or elevated areas for retreat or observation.
- *Modifiability:* ability to build, dig, or change elements of the space.
- *Free/fantasy play:* potential for open-ended, imaginative interaction.
- *Safety and accessibility:* freedom to explore securely and inclusively.
- *Emotional connection:* personal or collective meaning evoked by the place.

- *Topography and diversity:* varied terrain and natural features.
- *Community presence*: signs of shared or social use in nature.
- *Environmental awareness:* cues about sustainability and natural cycles.

From this context, we formulated three guiding research questions:

- *Experiential analysis:* How do different landscapes along the Danube support or hinder meaningful nature experiences for children?
- *Design insight:* How can a network of complementary nature spaces be designed to fulfill diverse experiential needs?
- *Methodological reflection:* Can persona-based and structured evaluation tools meaningfully translate children's needs into design strategies beyond their original development context?

8.3 The Working Process of the Team

At the beginning of the Landscape Forum, we met the students of the Open Landscape Academy (OLA) Intensive Blended Programme, who had been working with local families and children for 5 days in Vác. They introduced us to five *'Child Persona Cards'* — fictional yet research-based children's profiles distilled from interviews, workshops, and storytelling with local kids — and used symbolic objects to bring each perspective to life (Figures 8.3–8.4).

Figure 8.3 Sharing perspectives: introduction of persona cards and symbolic objects by OLA Blended Intensive Programme participants for the Landscape Democracy Ambassadors. *Photo: Anna Szilágyi-Nagy*

Figure 8.4 Symbolic objects representing children's perspectives, placed on their "home places" on the map of Vác. *Photo: Anna Szilágyi-Nagy*

From these five personas, we selected three to guide our fieldwork (Table 8.1): Champion/Bajnok, Edna, and Hope/Remény. Each team member adopted one persona, using it as a lens during the site visit along the Danube corridor to observe details that children might notice — textures, smells, hiding places, play opportunities, and barriers.

Bajnok, a 12-year-old social, playful boy who loves football and active games with friends; he enjoys nature when it feels like a safe, interactive playground where he will not get lost or too dirty.	**Edna,** an imaginative 10–12-year-old girl who loves creative outdoor exploration and wants safe, clear paths so everyone — including family members with mobility challenges — can join her adventures.	**Remény,** an 8-year-old curious, caring girl who loves exploring with her grandmother, collecting plants, and looking after animals; she seeks adventurous but easy-to-navigate spaces where children and adults feel secure.

Table 8.1 Children's perspectives used to evaluate the Danube sites.
Table by Anna Szilágyi-Nagy, with graphics by Anna Sousa generated using AI

During the visit, we applied the ‘Nature Experience Discovery Sheet’, using its nine experiential categories to structure observations and rate how each place supports children’s connection to nature. This helped us convert subtle impressions into comparable findings and highlight design needs.

After returning from the field, we compared our persona-based evaluations and focused on three underdeveloped sites with potential to diversify children’s nature connections:

1. the Natura 2000 Area (wild riverside forest),
2. the future Horváth Mihály Park (currently paved and sports-oriented), and
3. the future Beach Area (informal sandy riverside).

We synthesised the results into design guidelines for each site, building on their strongest experiential qualities and addressing weaker ones (Figure 8.5).

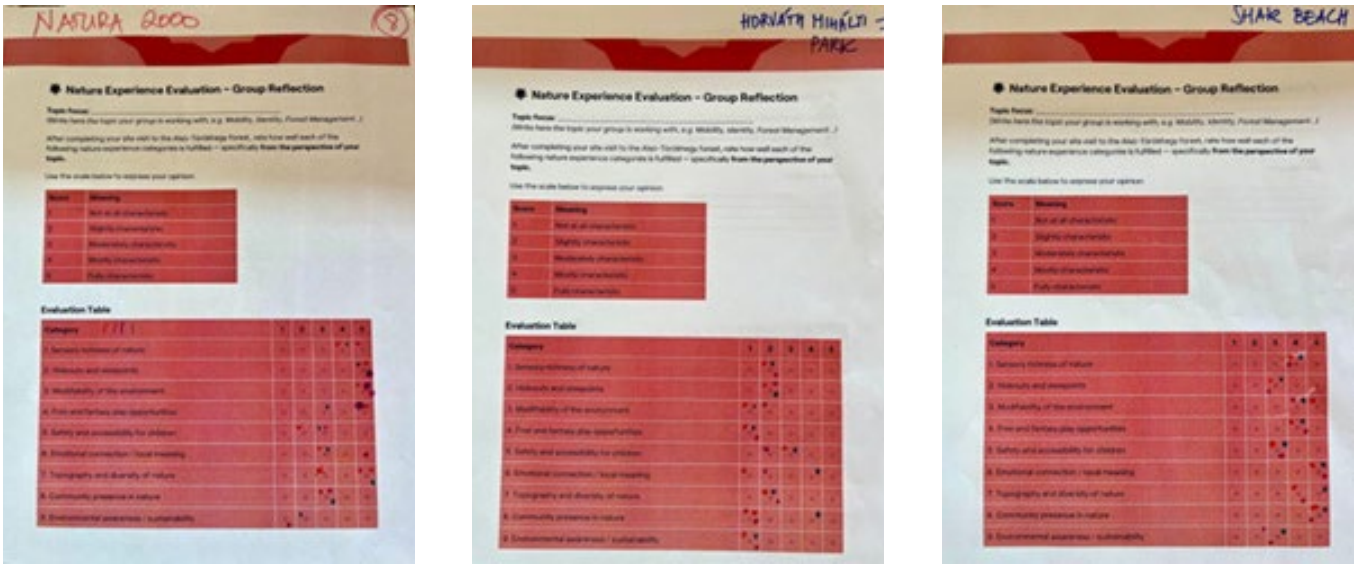

Figure 8.5 Completed Nature Experience Discovery Sheets for the Natura 2000 Area, the Horváth Mihály Park, and the “Shark” Beach. Colours represent the three child personas and how each evaluated the sites from a nature-connection perspective.
Photos: Anna Szilágyi-Nagy

8.4 Goals, Vision, Strategy, and Proposals

By comparing the children's evaluations across nine nature-connection categories (Table 8.2), we identified clear design priorities for each site. The persona-based evaluations revealed what children value, what currently works, and where gaps exist along the Danube.

Each subsection begins with a short introduction of the site, followed by the evaluation from imagined children's perspectives, and concludes with design proposals aimed at making each place a distinct, nature-rich experience where children can play freely and connect with different qualities of the landscape — while maximizing high-scoring strengths and addressing the lowest scoring aspects identified in the evaluations.

Nature Experience Category	Natura 2000	Horváth Mihály Park	Beach Area
1. Sensory richness	4.3	2.0	4.0
2. Hideouts & viewpoints	5.0	2.0	3.0
3. Modifiability of environment	5.0	2.0	4.3
4. Free & fantasy play	4.3	1.0	4.0
5. Safety & accessibility	4.0	4.0	3.0
6. Emotional connection & local meaning	4.0	2.3	5.0
7. Diversity of topography & nature	5.0	2.0	4.3
8. Community presence in nature	3.0	2.0	5.0
9. Environmental awareness & sustainability	1.6	1.0	2.3

Table 8.2 Average scores from the Nature Experience Discovery Sheets for each site across nine child-centred categories (scores 1–5; higher = stronger support for that experience). *Table by Anna Szilágyi-Nagy*

Natura 2000 Area

This site is a wild riverside forest along the Danube: a narrow sandy shore quickly gives way to dense bushes and tall trees, some fallen and mossy, with only faint human traces such as small footpaths. The air smells of warm river water and plants (Figure 8.6).

Figure 8.6 Impressions of the Natura 2000 area. *Photos: Ana Sousa*

Evaluation from imagined children's perspectives

Using our adopted child personas — fictional but informed by local children's stories and needs — we experienced the area as rich and wild (sensory richness 4.3/5). Children noticed rocks, branches, water sounds, and plant smells; they liked collecting things but missed edible plants. Hideouts and viewpoints (5/5) were a highlight: they climbed trees, balanced on fallen logs, built shelters, and looked for high points to see the river, though some trees felt unstable and a little frightening. Modifiability (5/5) was high: sand, branches, and water invited play, but children were unsure what was safe or allowed to move. Fantasy play (4.3/5) thrived — "beaver dam building," making mud cakes and "beaver spaghetti," playing shop with herbs and sand. Safety and accessibility (4/5) were mixed: the site is not reachable for wheelchairs or visually impaired visitors; some feared strangers, falling trees, or getting lost. Emotional connection (4/5) grew from shared family moments — picnics, shelters — but there was no single strong landmark. Topography (5/5) encouraged climbing and jumping but could use more safe climbable trees. Community presence (3/5) was weak beyond their own shelters; children wished for a place to gather, like a bonfire area. Environmental awareness (1.6/5) was almost absent: they did not know the area was protected and saw no signs about how to care for it.

Nature-experience-centred design proposals

Build on the site's wild, sensory character but make it legible, safe, and meaningful for children and families while celebrating its Natura 2000 status.

To achieve this:

- Make the wilderness legible and safe: introduce soft wayfinding (natural markers, playful names for key points, subtle clearing around informal paths) so children feel secure exploring and can find their way back.
- Support shared use and belonging: create simple gathering points — picnic clearings, safe bonfire areas — where families can pause and connect.

- Foster ecological awareness: add interpretive and playful educational cues about the Natura 2000 habitat (species, floodplain cycles, stewardship tips), possibly via QR codes or small outdoor learning gazebos.
- Offer nature play opportunities (Figure 8.7): provide safe areas for loose-part play with natural materials (willow, sand, water) to support creativity and risk awareness without harming sensitive habitats (Fjørtoft, 2004).
- Anchor with light-touch infrastructure (Figure 8.8): consider a small eco-centre co-run by local NGOs active in nature conservation, heritage, and environmental education, acting as a meeting and learning place.

Figure 8.7 The "Pecka" playscape shows how natural loose materials can support unstructured, creative play while keeping the forest character intact.
Photo: SKULL STUDIO:, play – skullstudio

Figure 8.8 The Zálesie Natura 2000 promenade — wooden walkways, lookout towers, and outdoor classrooms that invite discovery and protect sensitive habitats.
Photo: Naše Zálesíčko NGO. Source: https://www.nasezalesicko.sk

Future Horváth Mihály Park

Currently this area is a flat asphalt parking lot with a football court, some scattered grass at the edge, and an open view to the Danube but little shade or vegetation (Figure 8.9).

Figure 8.9 Impressions of the Horváth Mihály Park. *Photos: Ana Sousa*

Evaluation from imagined children's perspectives

Our child personas experienced the site as bare and uninspiring. Sensory richness (2/5) was low: mostly hard surfaces, no birds, few textures. Hideouts and viewpoints (2/5) and modifiability (2/5) were missing — nowhere to climb, hide, or move materials. Fantasy play (1/5) was nearly absent; football was the only option. Safety and accessibility (4/5) felt acceptable on the paved area, but reaching the river seemed risky and conflicted with cyclists. Emotional connection (2.3/5) was weak — described as "boring," lacking meaning beyond meeting friends. Topography and diversity (2/5) were almost non-existent. Community presence (2/5) was low — no seating or gathering points. Environmental awareness (1/5) was absent.

Nature-experience-centred design proposals

Transform this blank asphalt space into a child-friendly urban nature park that mixes imaginative play, seasonal change, and community identity.

To achieve this:

- *Introduce diverse natural structures:* plant native shade trees and shrubs; create grassy mounds and gentle slopes to add topography and micro-habitats.
- *Enable fantasy and creative play:* integrate loose natural materials (logs, willow structures, recycled wood, water features) and storytelling elements inspired by local myths or Danube wildlife.
- *Create safe gathering and social spaces:* add shaded seating, picnic tables, and small nooks where families and friends can rest, watch, and meet.
- *Ensure inclusive access:* define safe footpaths and crossings; separate play and pedestrian routes from cycling to reduce conflicts.
- *Incorporate environmental awareness:* use low-impact lighting (e.g. solar), interpretive ecology signage, and playful educational objects to foster learning.
- *Engage local children and families* (Figure 8.10–8.11): co-design with neighbours to build strong identity and belonging.

Figure 8.10 Sp'akw'us Feather Park celebrates community needs while adapting a shoreline to climate change. *Source: Sp'akw'us Feather Park – Hapa Collaborative Sp'akw'us Feather Park by Hapa Collaborative — Landscape Architecture Platform | Landezine*

Figure 8.11 Play spaces co-designed with Indigenous youth foster belonging and resilience, Sp'akw'us Feather Park. *Source: Photo: Hapa Collaborative. Sp'akw'us Feather Park by Hapa Collaborative — Landscape Architecture Platform | Landezine*

Future Beach Area

This site is an open, sandy river edge with scattered trees and shrubs, informal footpaths, and a gently sloping bank into the Danube. Families already use it for summer play, but access is unsafe and the space lacks structure and environmental guidance (Figure 8.12).

Figure 8.12 Impressions of the Future Beach Area. *Photos: Ana Sousa*

Evaluation from imagined children's perspectives

Children experienced the beach as lively and full of sensory detail. Sensory richness (4/5) came from rocks, shells, birds, duck families, the smell and feel of river water, and the breeze. Hideouts and viewpoints (3/5) existed in shrubs and small trees but were limited. Modifiability (4.3/5) was strong — play with sand, sticks, shells, and whatever the river brought in. Fantasy play (4/5) thrived through water play and driftwood constructions. Safety and accessibility (3/5) were uneven: no wheelchair ramps or stable river entry; strong current felt risky. Emotional connection (5/5) was very high; families spend long sum-

mer days here. Topography and diversity (4.3/5) were good but could be enriched. Community presence (5/5) was vibrant with picnics and social play. Environmental awareness (2.3/5) was low — no cues about ecology or safe use despite heavy visitation.

Nature-experience-centred design proposals

Keep the beach's wild, playful character while making it safely accessible, flood-resilient, and more ecologically informed.

To achieve this:

- *Improve safe and inclusive access* (Figure 8.13): add gentle ramps and stable river entry points for wheelchairs and strollers; clearly mark safe play zones away from strong currents.
- *Preserve and enrich natural play value* (Figure 8.14): maintain modifiable elements (sand, shells, driftwood) and add flexible natural play edges — logs, rock groupings, willow structures — that can move or withstand flooding.
- *Support social life and family gatherings* (Figure 8.15): create natural gathering points such as shaded picnic spots and durable, flood-tolerant seating while preserving open sand for free play.
- *Foster environmental knowledge and stewardship:* integrate playful ecology signage about river life, flood rhythms, and safe use, helping families care for the site.

Figure 8.13 Getterön Fifth Bay Public Bath in Sweden — accessible beach and water contact for all. *Photos: MARELD Landscape Architects, https://www.mareldarkitektur.se/work/getteron/*

Figure 8.14 Tidal Park Keilehaven in Rotterdam — balancing cultural use and rewilding in an urban river setting.
Photos: De Urbanisten. Tidal Park Keilehaven by De Urbanisten — Landscape Architecture Platform | Landezine

Figure 8.15 Jonas Amsterdam is an award-winning project of urban development that builds their design principles on connecting users in urban environments to nature.
Photo: Felixx:, Jonas Amsterdam « Landezine International Landscape Award LILA

Conclusions

The evaluations revealed distinct ways each site supports or hinders child–nature connection:

- The Natura 2000 Area fosters wild exploration and sensory immersion but needs clearer access, safety, and ecological interpretation.
- The future Horváth Mihály Park can transform from barren asphalt into a lively, identity-rich community playscape.
- The Future Beach Area already offers strong free play and community life but lacks safe, inclusive access and environmental guidance.

Experiential analysis: This shows that no single place can meet all experiential needs; instead, different landscapes afford complementary opportunities — from wilderness and retreat to community gathering and playful water contact.

Design insight: Together, these findings point to a network strategy: creating a sequence of diverse, nature-rich spaces along the Danube where children can choose between wild exploration, safe social play, and water-based creativity. The proposals directly respond to the high and low scores in Table 2, making child-centred evidence visible in design decisions.

Methodological reflection: The combined use of the Child Persona Cards and the Nature Experience Discovery Sheet successfully translated children's subtle observations — fear of getting lost, desire for landmarks, missing environmental cues — into actionable design moves. Testing these tools beyond their original forest context proved they can help designers empathise with children and guide democratic, evidence-based landscape transformation.

8.5 Forum Outcome Statement

The team formulated the following recommendations for enhancing Landscape Democracy:

1. Prioritising children's nature experiences requires designing a spatial sequence of nature-rich places, where each site plays a specific and complementary role in supporting children's sensory, emotional, and imaginative engagement. No single place can serve all needs; the strength lies in their connected diversity.
2. The Natura 2000 area along the Danube should evolve toward a more legible and welcoming space for environmental education, while preserving its wild character. Subtle wayfinding tools and child-friendly access paths can help demystify the site without diminishing its ecological integrity.
3. Horváth Mihály Park should expand beyond formal sport infrastructure to include nature-based fantasy play elements. Integrating natural materials, topographical variation, and storytelling cues would support children's imaginative freedom and emotional connection to place.
4. The beach area already fulfils many criteria of high-quality nature experience spaces, particularly in terms of sensory richness and free play potential. However, its value for children will remain inaccessible unless safe, legible, and inclusive routes are created to and from the site.

8.6 Suggestions for Further Activities

Education: Landscape architecture curricula should actively integrate persona-based analysis and structured nature experience evaluation. Our work showed that tools such as the Child Persona Cards and the Nature Experience Discovery Sheet help designers step beyond adult assumptions and uncover subtle child perspectives. Studio projects could combine classroom learning with field observations of children's play in nearby natural spaces, using the evaluation sheet to identify gaps and opportunities for imaginative, safe, and adventurous nature contact.

Research: Future studies could track how child-centred design interventions influence play diversity, ecological literacy, sense of safety, and place attachment over time. Longitudinal evaluation would test whether empathy-based tools and participatory processes result in more resilient, socially cohesive, and ecologically meaningful urban spaces.

Practice: Planning authorities and design offices should institutionalise youth engagement as a quality metric for landscape democracy. This could include official guidelines for involving children and young people at multiple stages (analysis, concept, feedback) and measurable indicators — such as the presence of diverse play affordances and children's perceived belonging — in masterplans and nature-based regeneration projects.

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Annexes

Annex A. Exhibition-Cornucopia

Dr. Dominika Gołębiewska *Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk*

Behind closed eyes lie

the minds ready to awaken you

The text comes from the song "Sky is Over" by Serj Tankian.

Title for the exhibition		Cornucopia
Date		from 18th June to 6 July 2025
Location		BARTÓK KultPont, Bartók Béla út 46, Budapest
Project Coordinator/ Curator	**Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences**	Bagdiné dr. Fekete Orsolya, assistant professor, PhD, landscape architect and garden artist MA
	LE:NOTRE Institute	Dr. Ellen Fetzer, chair & ir. Jeroen de Vries bnt, director
	Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk	Dr. Dominika Gołębiewska

Cornucopia

Cornucopia – the horn of plenty – an ancient symbol of nature's inexhaustible wealth and fertility, becomes a starting point for contemporary reflections on the human-nature relationship. In mythology, the horn of plenty was an inexhaustible source of abundance; however, the modern interpretation of this symbol leads us to reflect on the limits of natural resource exploitation and our responsibility to preserve them for future generations.

The "Cornucopia" exhibition is an attempt at artistic dialogue with the philosophy of nature, where art becomes a medium expressing both admiration for nature's richness and concern for its future.

Through various graphic and experimental techniques, artists create a visual meditation on the duality of our relationship with nature - simultaneously drawing from its resources and needing to protect it.

The theme of coexistence plays a special role in the works presented at the exhibition - searching for harmony between human activity and nature's natural rhythm. Workshop graphics, created through a long creative process, reflect the slowness and cyclical nature of natural processes, becoming a metaphor for the need to slow down and increase mindfulness in our contact with nature.

The project references Arne Naess's concept of "deep ecology," which postulates a fundamental change in perceiving the human-nature relationship. Through their works, artists question the anthropocentric perspective, proposing instead a vision of coexistence based on mutual respect and understanding of the interdependence of all ecosystem elements.

The exhibition is also an attempt to answer the question about art's role in shaping ecological, natural, and landscape awareness. The presented works not only document the beauty and diversity of landscape but also encourage reflection on our responsibility for its preservation. By combining traditional graphic techniques with experimental forms of expression, artists create a multidimensional narrative about nature's fragility and resilience.

"Cornucopia" is also an artistic manifesto calling for developing ecological sensitivity through art. The exhibition shows how artistic creativity can become

a cognitive tool, allowing for a deeper understanding of complex relationships between humans and the natural environment. Following Martin Heidegger's thought that "art opens the truth of being in the work," the presented works reveal to the viewer the truth about our fundamental dependence on nature and the need to protect it.

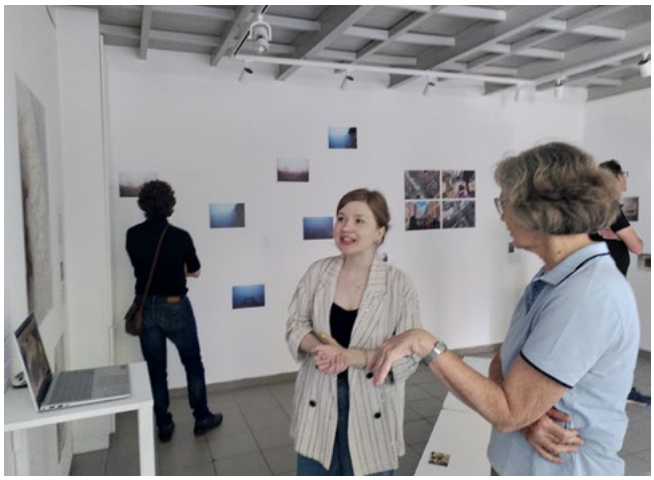

Figure A.1 and A.2 Visitors at the opening of the exhibition BARTÓK KultPont in Budapest. *Photos Jeroen de Vries*

In the context of contemporary environmental challenges, the exhibition emphasises the need for a new paradigm in thinking about the human-nature relationship. The horn of plenty ceases to be a symbol of unlimited drawing from nature's resources and becomes a metaphor for responsible management and conscious coexistence with nature.

The project combines artistic sensitivity with scientific precision of observation, creating space for interdisciplinary dialogue about our planet's future. Through the diversity of techniques and artistic approaches, the exhibition becomes a platform for exchanging thoughts and experiences, contributing to building ecological awareness and promoting sustainable development.

Figure A.3 Aneta Lehmann

Figure A.4 humidity . the lull series of analogue photographs

Aneta Lehmann

Educated as a culture expert, interior designer and gedanist. In practice, she focuses primarily on architectural education, urban tissue research, planning and implementation of exhibitions and cultural events. Assistant at the Architecture of the City Studio at the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk. Winner of the Gdańsk Cultural Scholarship Creative Fund. Participant of Polish and international projects, including Exercising Modernity, TEORIA, RE-WIRING. Since 2011, she cooperates with cultural institutions, including City Culture Institute in Gdańsk, Gdynia Design Centre and European Solidarity Centre. As a curator, she co-creates Open House Gdańsk festival. Believes in language and a story.

humidity . the movement – wilgoć . poruszenie – video with sound, duration 03:04

The video captures a few moments from a densely humid day on the Polish coast of the Baltic Sea. Blinding by a fog suspended over both water and land. Embracing by a thick whiteness.

After crossing the forest's edge, I realised that the mist I was entering was moving. Moving independently from its companion—the river making its way toward the Baltic Sea. Two forms of moisture passing one another, following opposing vectors. Two organisms, autonomous and independent.

I captured the scene through a digital lens using time-lapse technique and then slowed down the recorded footage. Both currents—the riverine and the foggy—do not raise questions at first glance. Only through closer observation does one begin to understand that they have been thrown out of order. My interference with the movement of the image was minimal, and yet it disrupted its original dynamics.

With this nearly imperceptible gesture, I aim to draw attention to the scope of responsibility that encompasses the actions of each and every one of us. In everyday life, detached from large-scale narratives, it's easy to forget about the connections and consequences of human activity. And yet, even a cornucopia has its limits. Though it may seem we can effortlessly reach for resources, venturing deeper into the forest reveals drainage ditches. Empty. And if that's the case, then what will we immerse ourselves in, if moisture escapes us entirely?

2. humidity . the lull - wilgoć . zatrzymanie - series of analog photographs

November drew mist from the place, and it seeped between the trees, wrapping us—human and non-human alike—in a thick blanket. Vast in scale, yet ephemeral and elusive. Silent.

The works the lull and the movement are in dialogue with each other. The photographic series was created by a forest lake, characteristic of the Kashubian landscape. In contrast to the video recorded by the Baltic Sea, these images bring stillness. Let your gaze, dear observer, come to rest. Let your thoughts soften like contours soaked with the humidity suspended in the air. Immerse yourself.

Figure A.5 Dominika Gołębiewska

Figure A.6 Cornucopia - circular textile compositions

Dominika Gołębiewska

Lecturer at the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk, interdisciplinary designer and artist Dominika is landscape architect and spatial planner. In 2018 she defended doctoral thesis in the field of protection and shaping of the environment. She is dedicated social activist, coordinator and participant of many national and international projects and grants related to the protection of natural and cultural heritage, such as Le:Notre Landscape Forum or Learning Landscapes. Since 2014 she has became a co-creators of a block of design and art classes at University of Warmia and Masuria in Olsztyn. Thanks to this project, Dominika enriched her workshop with tools and techniques related to printmaking and graphic design. She has been improving her skills until today, which results in exhibitions and graphic works presented in Poland and abroad. Lately, under the watchful eye of her master in the field of printmaking, she has been focusing her art-way and interest mainly on algraphy/waterless lithography, drypoint and linocut as well as on mixed and experimental methods.

My subcycle "Cornucopia" draws inspiration from Serj Tankian's song of the same name and explores the collision between Mother Nature and capitalism. As Tankian asks: "Don't you think we're extraordinary? Believing and seeing, realizing the imaginary." The work represents a visual meditation on our place in the cosmos—both as individuals and as a collective humanity.

The circular textile compositions are crafted from the wool of my beloved dog Kluska and wool from friendly alpacas named Stokrotka and Misia. Importantly, all materials were obtained without any harm to the animals, outside of an industrial context—through pleasurable, routine brushing that the animals greatly enjoy. In my dog Kluska's case, it was connected with regular fur grooming, which gives him great pleasure. Single strands of my own hair are also woven into the works, creating a truly interspecies connection.

The wool was hand-dyed in shades of blue and pink. These circular forms reference our planet Earth and simultaneously allude to the cosmic particles that constitute our existence. They remind us that we are all elements of a greater whole, interconnected and interdependent in the vast universe, similar to the lyrics: "Yes, I think we're extraordinary, being and living."

Accompanying these textile pieces are strips of printmaking work (algraphy, workshop graphics) that speak to diversity and demonstrate the fragility of our existence, while also highlighting the significance of humanity in the world. These linear elements create a visual dialogue with the organic wool circles, representing the tension between natural and human-made systems.

Through this juxtaposition of materials and forms, my work explores the duality inherent in the cornucopia symbol—abundance and exploitation, connection and isolation, creation and destruction. "Yes, I think we ought to marry"—these lyrics can be interpreted as a metaphor for the need to reconnect humans with nature.

The entire work was created with care, from materials obtained with care and pleasure, showing all the abundance, fertility, and blessing of the world's prosperity. By incorporating natural fibres from my animal companions, I emphasise our relationship with other living beings and our shared existence on this planet.

The work invites viewers to contemplate our interconnectedness—not just with each other, but with all elements of the natural world—and to consider how we might achieve a more harmonious balance between human activity and nature's inherent rhythms. In this way, "Cornucopia" becomes not just a reflection on environmental concerns, but a deeper meditation on what it means to be part of the cosmic tapestry of life.

https://www.instagram.com/fundacja.las/

Figure A.7 Daniel Sobański

Figure A.8 Drowning – plastic sculpture in rectangular prism

Daniel Sobański

Born in 1992 in Częstochowa, he studied Sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Wrocław from 2011 to 2014, and then moved to Gdańsk, where he graduated in 2017. He is currently employed as an assistant at the Department of Sculpture and Intermedia at the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk.

His artistic activity encompasses a wide range of techniques and disciplines, including classical and digital sculpture, drawing, set design, advertising, film, animation, and the restoration of sculpture, furniture, and architecture.

In his artistic practice, he does not limit himself to one specific style - he experiments with various forms, ranging from abstraction to figurative representations of the human body. In his works, he refers to ideas, emotions, and experiences, often addressing topics related to paranormal phenomena and

issues in sociology, psychology, history, and mythology. He combines a classical approach to sculpture with modern technologies such as digital sculpture, 3D scanning, VR, and AR. The use of these technologies allows him to create projects of unprecedented precision and complexity, enriching his work with new possibilities and perspectives.

He has participated in numerous exhibitions both in Poland and abroad, including: TARTU NATURAL WAYS LE:NOTRE 2024 "Local Context Global Context" (Olomouc, Czech Republic, 2019), "Fourth Edition of the Competition and Exhibition of the Best Media Art Diplomas" (Wrocław, WRO Art Institute, 2018), "Entry" completed as part of the exhibition "Best Diplomas from the Academy of Fine Arts" (Gdańsk, Zbrojownia Sztuki, 2018), "Exposition De Dessins" (Orleans, France, Maison des Associations De la Source, 2017), "Baltic Stone Symposium / Baltic Drawing" (Imatra, Finland, The Saimaa University of Applied Sciences, 2016).

The sculpture Drowning depicts a poignant vision of a person trapped by the consequences of their own actions. A transparent head, made of plastic — a material that itself symbolises the Anthropocene era — is shown in the moment of drowning. Instead of a scream, a continuous stream of water flows from its mouth, like a silent fountain.

The entire piece is enclosed in a glass rectangular prism, functioning as a sort of aquarium, a container reminiscent of rising water levels. The water slowly and inexorably rises, partially covering the face. It's a suspended moment — we are still alive, still breathing, but already immersed in a crisis of our own making.

The sculpture becomes a metaphor for the state of the contemporary world: transparent, visible, yet simultaneously ignored. It is not just a portrait of a drowning person but also a mirrored reflection of our collective responsibility.

Figure A.9 Filip Ignatowicz

Figure A.10 Post-consumption, or the archaeology of consumption. A series of ready-made objects subjected to natural interventions, photo + video documentation ongoing since 2018, some works were created in collaboration with Antoni Ignatowicz and his bee colonies.

Filip Ignatowicz (visual artist, painter, filmmaker, art populariser, and educator)

Born in 1990 in Gdańsk (Poland). He is a graduate of the Faculty of Painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk, as well as a graduate of Directing at the Gdynia Film School.

His diploma work "Production, Commercialization, and Hype – On Consuming Art," which he defended in 2014 in the studios of Professors H. Cześnik, W. Czerwonka, and R. Florczak, was awarded by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage (MKiDN) during the Best Diploma Works Exhibition of Fine Arts Academies in Poland.

His short directorial debut "New Bronx" (“NOWY BRONX”- produced by GSF in 2017 under the supervision of Professor Robert Gliński) was screened at nearly 50 international film festivals and won 7 awards.

In 2018, under the supervision of Professor Robert Florczak, he defended his doctoral dissertation: "Art bazaar. A consumer versus culture – i.e. about fakes, love branding and auto-productification."

Since 2017, Filip has been working at the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk in the Faculty of Painting, and since 2019, he has also been teaching at the Doctoral School of his Alma Mater.

In his works, he often examines the condition of humans functioning in a consumer reality. He is the author of the continuously developed project FIGNACY&co, where the created art is equated with the product. He regularly creates an online video performance artUNBOXING on YouTube, where he unpacks artworks and gadgets related to contemporary art.

He is a multiple scholarship holder and laureate of artistic competitions. He was awarded the exceptional Laurel of the Red Rose Association. He also received the prestigious City of Gdańsk Award for Young Creators in Culture. He has received scholarships from the Rector of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk, the City of Gdańsk, the Marshal of the Pomeranian Voivodeship, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, and the Adam Mickiewicz Institute.

www.filipignatowicz.com

www.artunboxing.com

www.instagram.com/fignacy

In Post-Consumption, or the Archaeology of Consumption, I try to imagine a world in which humans no longer exist—or rather: a world where human presence survives only through plastic artifacts. I ask myself what could remain of our species, and how nature would respond to those remnants. I draw from an imagined future, which in its essence becomes a form of speculative archaeology. The protagonists of this story—or rather, the medium through which it materialises—are plastic figurines: mass-produced objects from the collective imagination, most often depicting superheroes and other pop culture characters. I deliberately choose this “repertoire” because, in the context of the CORNUCOPIA exhibition, I see in them a form of contemporary myth—a modern-day fairytale that has replaced ancient tales of gods, heroes, and magical creatures. Just as the Greeks once sculpted Zeus and Heracles, today we are flooded with thousands of plastic Spidermans, mutants from the Marvel universe, Star Wars characters, Harry Potter figures, and many others.

These figurines become a starting point for my own reinterpretation of myth—the myth of the consumer society, which I continually examine through the lan-

guage of my artistic practice. At the core of this myth lies endless replication. Jean Baudrillard described this in his book The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures as a self-replicating system that no longer generates meaning but instead produces signs without referents—mere repetitions. In my view, plastic figurines embody this perfectly: produced endlessly, often hollow inside (like the insides of Jeff Koons's oversized balloon dogs), and yet saturated with collective emotions and cultural projections. In this project, I intentionally subject these figures to the influence of three non-human forces: fauna, flora, and mineral processes. These forces—expressed through the activity of bees, moss, and crystallization—intervene in the plastic bodies, colonizing, assimilating, and reinterpreting them through the lens of nature. Instead of violent transformation or destruction, what occurs here is a soft, organic metamorphosis—a natural inclusion. Minerals form crusts on synthetic materials, and bees cover surfaces and negative spaces with hexagonal networks of wax and honey. These interventions don't destroy the plastic—they enter into a form of coexistence with it. In this relationship, there is no domination; instead, there is suggestion: nature doesn't conquer the material, but absorbs it into its rhythm—especially when it cannot break it down.

That's why I imagine the most fitting way to display these objects would be through an exhibition format modelled after a natural history museum—part cautionary tale, part testimony, part unsettling relic of an age of overproduction. Some of these works remind me of votive figures, while the natural elements resemble fractal ornamentation—forms that, somewhere between chance and repetition, express something beyond mere aesthetic. They are far more modest than Damien Hirst's submerged and re-excavated sculptures, yet they speak a similar language. Collaborating with a bee colony for this project was also an extraordinary moment for me—especially in 2018 during the creation of my doctoral exhibition ("Art bazaar. A consumer versus culture – i.e. about fakes, love branding and auto-productification."), when I worked closely with my grandfather, a beekeeper. In the context of Cornucopia, honey as a natural and valuable substance takes on a different narrative power altogether. In this way, Post-Consumption becomes more than just a collection of objects or documentation—it is a speculative meditation on the end of the human

epoch and what might remain in our absence. It also reflects on our entrenchment within the global myth of consumption—a myth that, in this case, breaks the fourth wall of storytelling and becomes an all-encompassing and paradoxically "natural" habitat.

My project sits firmly within the context of post-Anthropocene and post-consumption imaginaries, where art does not merely represent reality, but instead anticipates, challenges, or transforms it. In that sense, Post-Consumption becomes my own artistic version of an "anti-horn of plenty"—not the mythical one filled with nature's bounty, but a contemporary, synthetic one overflowing with excess forms and goods. And it is precisely this horn—reclaimed by the forces of nature—that holds the potential to become, once again, a source of meaning.

Figure A.11 Katarzyna Lewandowska

Figure A.12 The spiral - Tattoo by Arek Pasożyt - Photos by MikołajJanik

Katarzyna Lewandowska

dr. katarzyna lewandowska, art historian, feminist, curator, activist. In her research, she focuses on finding corporeality in modern art using intersectional feminist strategy. She is interested in engaged and total art, which is often a discourse with authorities. She also looks into motives of femininity in Tibet. She is an author of a lot of displays. She worked with Galeria Wozownia, Ga-

leria S, Kulturhauz, CSW in Toruń and the “Wyspa Progress” foundation. She is a cofounder of magazines: “Splesz” and “Death of the patriarchy. Manifestos/ The revolution is now”. She graduated from Wydział Sztuk Pięknych w Toruniu, where she finished her master’s in Ikonografia buddyjskich zwojów malowanych z Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie. She was given an award im. Jerzego Ramera for this work. In 2009 she obtained the degree of doctor for dissertation Kobieta w malarstwie buddyjskiej wadżarajny. Ikonografia i ewolucja stylistyczna tybetańskich zwojów malowanych. In 1999-2000 she was in Buddhist Center in Bristol and in 2003 she became a scholarship holder in Mongolska Akademia Nauk. She had worked in Katedra Historii Sztuki i Kultury UMK in Toruń, Gender Studies in Torun. Right now, she is connected with Akademia Sztuk Pięknych in Gdańsk.

The Spiral: On my left forearm, on the inside of it, is my first tattoo, made many years ago. It depicts the Star of David, but also the Tibetan yantra Yab-Yum (Mother-Father). Both symbols iconographically look the same. When I was doing this tattoo, I was thinking of both the Star and the yantra, because at the time I was very strongly connected to both Jewish culture and Tibetan Vajrayana. My family on my father’s side comes from Łódź, which before the Second World War was a multicultural city, a melting pot of Poles, Jews, and Germans. My grandparents lived in Bałuty, within the Łódź ghetto. Were they Jewish? I don’t know. My grandfather’s anti-Semitism made it impossible to ask questions, and then it was too late.

After two years of Israel’s destruction of Palestine, I decided to cover my oldest tattoo with a left-handed spiral, which in the Tibetan tradition symbolises death. The spiral is transparent, palimpsestic, and from under it emerges the Star of David, or Yab-Yum.

The spiral was made by Arek Pasożyt, a social artist whom I have met on the street for many years during protests, blockades, and intervention actions. At the time, he was a novice tattoo artist; he had tattooed himself, and I was the first person he was going to tattoo. We made an appointment at my house.

Arek came together with Mikołaj Janik, who was in the process of making a film about Arek Parasite's art activities. He shot professional footage of this sad, important and very difficult situation for me.

Why did I do this? Because on that day, reliable sources reported the following figures: 32,782 murdered, 75,298 wounded. In five months.

Genocide, ecocide, and infrastructural slaughter are taking place in Gaza. It is the intention of Netanyahu and his colonising government to TOTALLY destroy everything that humans and animals depend on. This war has brought massive environmental damage. Agricultural land is being exterminated, and soils are being polluted. Water and air are contaminated, and vegetation is burned.

Estimates by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) say many months of bombing of the Gaza Strip have generated 42 million tons of debris and materials that must be considered hazardous to people and nature.

- This is an unusually large amount of debris, especially in such a small area. Pieces of debris and rubbish can contain harmful substances such as asbestos, heavy metals, contamination from fires, unexploded ordnance and hazardous chemicals, say analysts from UNEP.

Chronic exposure to the inhalation of dust from construction materials generated by warfare has continued for months. In addition, household solid waste management has collapsed. This has led to the creation of wild landfills, which pose health and environmental hazards.

In the Gaza Strip, agricultural land has been severely degraded. By September this year, according to FAO estimates, 67 per cent of agricultural land had been destroyed. Sources of destruction include heavy vehicle tracks, deliberate destruction and shelling. Infrastructure has also been severely affected. According to analyses, more than a thousand wells (52.5 per cent of the total) and 577.9 ha of greenhouses (44.3 per cent of the total) were damaged.

In turn, an analysis of satellite imagery made available to The Guardian shows that some 38-48 per cent of forest and agricultural land has been destroyed < (https://zielony.onet.pl/klimat/ekobojstwo-w-strefie-gazy-onz-badaczy-jest-to-zbrodnia-wojenna/4wqp947)

In Palestine, the body dies: human and non-human, the body of the city, the body of the olive groves, the body of water and air, the body of the earth. The exploitation of THESE BODIES, their absolute control and abuse, and finally their killing are caused by deliberate military actions which, at an accelerated maximum rate, deconstruct any balance between all these fragments that make up the totality of a balanced existence.

Horn of Plenty fatally choked. Here, one meditates only on death.

Figure A.13 Monika Zawadzka

Figure A.14 Mine, yours, and theirs as well - series of photographs

Monika Zawadzka

Monika Zawadzka she/her; architect and cultural anthropologist; researcher of over 40 European cities, designer, author of objects, paintings, texts, educator; professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk, where she runs the Architecture of the City Studio, cultural anthropology courses and laboratories. deals with cities with European-type spaces – their atmosphere, coherence and geographical diversity. examines local ways of forming public spaces, through studies of the identity of urban form; she is fascinated by the phenomenon of the street together with the continuous frontages that shape its walls, created from the facades of city houses. a special place in her work is occupied by the

architectural languages of Gdańsk and Gdynia, whose subsequent districts she makes areas of her research, exploration and a field of visual and material transformations. lives in Gdańsk, in Aniołki. fb: Architektura Miasta / fb: Pracownia Architektury Miasta / IG: Miasto i Architektura.

Mine, yours, and theirs as well

Public places are spaces that can accommodate many: you will meet a local and a newcomer here; a person, a tree, birds; sometimes you will find peace and quiet, at other times you will be surrounded by the current of life with its shimmering, mercury-like energy. You have your favourite cafe and the place where you buy vegetables around the corner. You can sit in the sun of the square or hide from the rain in the bend of its wall - press your cheek to it and stay there for a long time looking at what is the common treasure of cities: the urbanity flowing before your eyes.

All this and much more makes up public space. But each of them is shaped differently, moulded differently, formed from the interlacing of walls, shop windows, signs, lanterns and the gravitational aura of the mix of sounds and smells of the city air.

This is how it is, if it is at all. If we happen to be lucky enough to have such places within the circle of our daily 7 thousand steps.

Figure A.15 Zuza Dolega

Figure A.16 Daydream landscapes - pyrography on paper, 5 x 10x10cm, 2025

Zuza Dolega

born in 1990 in Gdynia, where she lives and works in the field of visual arts and writing.

Since 2012, she has specialised in the pyrography technique, which she has consequently developed till now. Her academic and artistic interests revolve around: asemic writing, blackout and redacted poetry, neurasthenics and synaesthesia.

In 2022 - she received her PhD in fine arts (based on the redacted poetry with burnt-out text from „Hopscotch" by Julio Cortazar, extended with the neurasthenic eye-tracking experiment and book re-construction). She works as a full-time assistant and lecturer at the Faculty of Painting (Narrative Drawing Studio and Studio Drawing Studio). She is also a creator of the Collage Workshop for cultural institutions and conducts classes at postgraduate studies of Art Therapy in Gdańsk.

Zuza Dolega is a member of prestigious IAPMA Association. She was awarded scholarships and art awards, including Paper Position Award 2025; participant of many exhibitions and art and research projects (of national and international range). Her works have been exhibited and are located in the international collections in: Poland, Germany, Denmark, Macedonia, Turkey, Tunisia, Japan, China, Australia, Argentina and Ecuador.

Represented by Molski Gallery. Privately - devoted owner of two dogs and a runner.

https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zuzanna_Dolega

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Daydream landscapes - („a pleasant visionary usually wishful creation of the imagination") , pyrography on paper, 5 x 10x10cm, 2025, zuza dolega

Under the very closed eyes we crystallise visions and fleeting moments from the landscape of our everyday life. Layer by layer, the image gets distorted and loses its primary meaning.

All we have is a sublimation of our visions, dreams. And a horizon that rocks us to sleep.

With our eyes wide open - nothing really changes, we still usually filter so-called reality with our expectations, dreams and hopes. We are not sure whether the image we see is original or not.

We are still trying to reach the horizon and beyond.

Dreams, visions and observations, they all become a palimpsest.

Figure A.17 Anna Reinert Faleńczyk

Figure A.18 The day will come when we all feel shame

Anna Reinert Faleńczyk

Anna Reinert-Faleńczykwas born in 1979 in Gdańsk. Since 2011 she is a professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk. She received her habilitation degree in 2018. She lives and works in Sopot.

Reinert works with painting, including site-specific painting, and press illustrations. In her artistic practice, she explores the relationships between painting and architecture as well as between the city and its users. Her paintings are held in private and institutional collections (e.g., in Stockholm, Uppsala, Berlin, Dresden, Leipzig, Warsaw, Szczecin as well as the State Art Gallery in Sopot and the National Museum in Gdańsk, respectively). She has exhibited her work at over thirty solo exhibitions and participated in more than fifty collectives ones in Poland and Europe. Reinert has won multiple awards, among others the Artistic Grant of the Pomeranian Voivodeship Marshal (2023), the Rector's Award, Academy of Fine Arts (III Degree, 2021), the Storm of the Year in the Visual Arts category, Young Sopot Muse, Grand Front for the best cover of a weekly magazine, Mayor of Gdańsk's Award for Young Creatives in the Field of Culture) and scholarships, such as the "Young Poland" Scholarship of the Minister of Culture and National heritage, Pomeranian Marshal's Scholarship for Artists and Mayor of Sopot's Scholarship for Artists.

The day will come when we all feel shame

In her work, Anna Reinert Faleńczyk addresses a difficult and often repressed issue in public discourse – the industrial farming and slaughter of animals. The installation, composed of ceramic discs featuring the eyes of cows, becomes a symbolic mirror reflecting our collective acceptance of systemic violence against animals. These eyes— carriers of emotion and directed straight at the viewer—disrupt indifference and force a moment of confrontation.

The artist raises questions about a cultural blind spot—a space we refuse to acknowledge, even though it lies within reach. She wonders how it is possible that in Western civilization, so often proud of its humanism and ethical progress, a silent consensus regarding animal suffering has persisted for so long. Reinert Faleńczyk's work not only offers critique but also anticipates the future—a day of symbolic awakening, when society will experience profound shame. Not merely shame rooted in reflection, but a shocking realization that we participated—even passively —in a system of violence that had long been accepted as the norm.

This piece marks the beginning of a larger cycle, born from a deeply personal vision —a premonition that a paradigm shift is inevitable. The artist provokes essential questions: Will we be able to reckon with the past? Will we critically examine the legacy we inherited without protest? And finally—will we, as a culture, be capable of seeking forms of reparation toward those who could not defend themselves?

The Day Will Come When We All Feel Shame is not only the title of the work, but also an expression of hope—that ethical transformation is inevitable, and that art can be one of the voices to herald its arrival.

Figure A.19 Rafał Fedusio

Figure A.20 LETTER - Technique: Lithography in black ink, screen printing in neon green

Rafał Fedusio

A graduate of the Faculty of Graphic Arts at the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk and the Faculty of Management at the University of Gdańsk. He earned his diploma from the Academy of Fine Arts in 2018 in the Poster and Advertising Forms Studio led by Prof. S. Witkowski and Prof. Adam Świerżewski, PhD. He completed his degree at the University of Gdańsk in 2011 at the Department of Marketing, under the supervision of Dr. Robert Bęben.

Originally from Mrągowo, he has been based in the Tri-City area since 2008. For many years, he has specialised in brand building and visual identity systems. He designs logos, posters, exhibitions, and promotional campaigns for various initiatives and events. He has extensive experience both running his own design studio and working with leading creative agencies in the Pomeranian region as a lead designer, trade marketing specialist, and art director. In 2018, he completed training at the world-class Projekttriangle Design Studio in Stuttgart, followed by further studies in 2019 at the Academy of Fine Arts in Venice.

Together with Prof. S. Witkowski, he runs the Poster and Advertising Forms Studio at the Faculty of Graphic Arts. Since 2018, he has also independently led various studios, including the Advertising Graphics Studio, the Digital Design Techniques Studio (for ERASMUS+ students), and the Graphic Design Laboratory in the Cultural Space Architecture program at the Faculty of Architecture.

Since 2020, in addition to teaching, he has been responsible for the image, creative direction, and visual communication of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk. In the years 2024–2025, he was appointed as the Rector's Plenipotentiary for Cooperation, Promotion, and Exhibition Affairs, as well as Head of Part-Time Studies.

LETTER

LETTER is a visual interpretation of nature, transience, and darkness, created through traditional lithography techniques enriched with a bold neon green screen print. The black ink lithograph forms a contemplative, introspective base, evoking the fleeting and often ambiguous presence of nature—at once familiar and unsettling.

Incorporated into the composition is a fragment of a handwritten letter, appearing as fleeting notes—an echo of thought or memory embedded within the natural texture of the piece. This textual element introduces a personal and ephemeral layer, further deepening the emotional resonance.

A dynamic scumbling of lines cuts across the composition, forming a tactile structure that merges with a dense cloud of darkness. This interplay creates a tension between movement and obscurity, suggesting both a force of transformation and the uncertainty of what lies concealed. The gestural energy of these marks adds rhythm and urgency to the otherwise still and contemplative atmosphere.

The striking neon green is not merely a decorative choice but a deliberate graphic intervention. Associated with freshness and vitality, it simultaneously evokes a sense of unease—a superficial vibrancy that hints at change, instability, and hidden tension beneath nature's allure.

By combining the slow, meditative process of lithography with the immediacy of screen printing, the work reflects the duality of our relationship with nature: careful observation contrasted with human intervention. It becomes a layered narrative about fragility, transformation, and the uncertain future of the natural world.

Arch - Technique: Screen print on matte black paper

Arch. is a visual meditation on structure, rhythm, and reduction. Created using screen printing on matte black paper, it explores a minimalist aesthetic in which subtle contrasts of black on black reveal a meticulously constructed system of lines, modules, and geometries. The image unfolds gradually, demanding close observation and a sensitivity to nuance. Unlike LETTER, which carries traces of emotional and organic presence.

Figure A.21 Kund Kopacz

Figure A.22 Nature art from eger

Kund Kopacz

Born in Miercurea-Ciuc in 1991, he graduated from the "Márton Áron" National College with a science and intensive math-info focus before beginning a Bachelor's degree in Nature Art in Eger, Hungary, in 2010. Initially interested in photography, he turned to nature art and work in natural environments, documenting his practice through photo and video. His studies and projects have taken him to numerous countries across Europe and Asia.

Between 2014 and 2016, he pursued a Master's degree in Sculpture at UAD Cluj and did apprenticing in Vienna. His diploma project, neorînduială, was a site-specific intervention exploring ideological and spatial themes.

After a period of working in agriculture and construction, he moved to Bucharest in 2018 and received the Derkovits Scholarship until 2020. During this time, he created several large-scale works, supported by grants and institutional collaborations, including ECOC Plovdiv.

His involvement with the Global Nomadic Art Project in 2017 and subsequent travels inspired a long-term interest in landscape as both subject and concept. In 2021, he began doctoral studies at the University of Pécs, researching the representations of landscape in recent and contemporary art, while also joining the teaching staff of the Nature Art program in Eger as assistant lecturer.

He makes nature art, installations, photo- and video-based works, artistic research, and organises exhibitions, study trips, and workshops. He lives and works between Romania and Hungary, between Bucharest, Eger, Pécs, and Miercurea-Ciuc.

Nature art from eger

The artworks represented here were made by students of a peculiar ramification of the visual arts called nature art. As a discipline, nature art is taught in the framework of a BA programme at the Institute of Fine Arts, Eszterházy Károly Catholic University in Eger, Hungary. The concept of nature art can be summed up as an alternative way of making art where one is working in nature, with nature, for nature. The artist is not just considering the specificity of the site, location but it is proactively seeking a way of interacting with it. The artist is engaged in developing a sense of place. This attitude is motivated by an intention to create a connection, a bond, an intimate, spiritual and intellectual relationship between nature and man. If a goal or a purpose should be named, then attuning man to nature and re-establishing harmony with nature are the aim of such artmaking endeavours. Having this in mind, to use locally available natural materials, to find the appropriate scale for the intervention, to accept the decay of the artwork are only but a few of the inherent qualities which define these artworks and artists.

Among the thousands of works of nature art made by students during their study programme, there was none which dealt with the symbol of cornucopia. This obvious and strange fact asks for explanation in a thematic exhibition. One possible reasoning could be that neither the teachers, nor the students hadn't considered thinking of nature as an inexhaustible source of material

goods. Or, to put it differently, we have thought and taught that nature is rather a source and not a resource. This attitude can be traced back to the concept of the horn of plenty, however, with a contemporary philosophical twist: nature in the arts is a source of inspiration with plenty of hidden, long forgotten ideas waiting to be rediscovered. Therefore, what these and many other works of nature art propose is yet another age of exploration: one that does not exploit, does not strive to leave a permanent physical mark behind, but one that gestures, interacts with nature in a humble manner.

Annex B. International Student Competition on the Danube Bend

Ellen Fetzer *LE:NOTRE Institute, Wageningen, the Netherlands*

The International Student Competition is part of the 14th Landscape Forum of the LE:NOTRE Institute. This year it featured the Danube Bend. This year there were 51 submissions received from 12 countries.

The entire competition including the blind jury review has been managed via the LNI-ECLAS Collaboration Platform on ILIAS. An accompanying lecture series was held from October to November with the support of the competition's scientific partners.

Composition of the competition jury

The jury was moderated by Ellen Fetzer of the LE:NOTRE Institute and was composed of local and international experts in the fields of landscape architecture, landscape planning, urban design and architecture. The jury was composed as follows:

- Adamczyk-Mucha Kamila, Poland, University of Life Sciences in Lublin & ECLAS ExCo,
- Cervera Alonso Marina, Spain, IFLA, LE:NOTRE Institute,
- Kincses Krisztina ,Hungary Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture, Department of National Parks and Landscape Protection,
- Fekete Albert, Hungary, Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences (MATE), HALA and ECLAS ExCo,

- Puha Magdolna, Hungary, Hungarian Ministry of Construction and Transport, Deputy State Secretariat for Architectural Strategy, Head of Department of Innovation, International Relations and World Heritage Affairs,
- Schindler-Kormos Eleonóra, Hungary, Pest County Council,
- Stemberova Zuzana, Czech Republic, Czech Technical University,
- Wilczyńska Anna, Latvia, Rīga Stradiņš University, LE:NOTRE Institute.

The LE:NOTRE Institute Board wishes to express their gratitude to the careful and profound work of the competition jury.

The criteria for evaluation were:

- **The degree of connection of the proposed vision to the actual landscape context.** The authors show that they have studied and analysed the characteristics of the study area landscape from various perspectives. They are aware of the specific spatial, ecological, social, cultural and economic factors. The analysis takes current trends, threats and challenges into account.
- **Methodological clarity and consistency.** The step from analysis to concept development is clearly structured. Challenges, potentials and threats for the river landscape have been derived from the analysis in a logical and coherent way. Planning and design objectives have been defined on this basis and are clearly articulated.
- **Conceptual expression and clarity.** The concept clearly links to the objectives derived from the landscape analysis and evaluation. The concept responds to the local landscape context.
- **Landscape Ecology.** The project builds on a holistic understanding of the landscape's natural foundation and ecological sensitivity. Authors provide innovative biodiversity strategies supported by design.
- **Landscape Economy.** The project includes alternative models of value generation based on an innovative re-invention of the productive landscape. Teams have succeeded in working with representation forms that go beyond classical landscape planning and design such as system models, theories of change and business model canvas.

- **Landscape Democracy.** The team has envisioned processes of landscape democratic, participatory decision-making, co-creation, and bottom-up, place keeping management strategies across a short, medium, and long term communication The posters are well readable. The authors have managed to illustrate the complexity of the landscape and landscape-related processes in a way that is understandable for other disciplines and stakeholders from different sectors. The authors succeed in integrating process models and holistic visions that build on the specific character of the place.

All projects have been exhibited at the landscape forum in Budapest / Vac from June 17 – 21, 2025. The prize-winning entries are published on the landscape forum website. https://forum.ln-institute.org/

First prize

The First Prize has been awarded to a team of MATE - Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Hungary with an entry titled: ‘Towards Wholeness’. The team consisted of Arpad Zsolt Bartha, Jonathan Zsolt Pulugor, Kinga Katinka Ferenczy, and Danjel Komesz.

The Danube Bend, a region of exceptional natural and cultural significance, has long inspired Hungarian poets, artists, and thinkers. Shaped by both history and nature, the bend serves as a symbolic boundary, defining the area’s identity. Beyond its visual appeal, it reflects the deep connection between past, present, and future. The proposed plan envisions a "path towards wholeness", linking sacred, natural, and built elements to strengthen the bond between people and the landscape. This route will support sustainable development while preserving ecological and cultural values. It fosters a balance between urban and rural areas, ensuring responsible growth and community engagement. A key element is the creation of green corridors, which serve both ecological and symbolic functions. These corridors will honour cultural and environmental heritage while providing communal spaces.

The right bank will focus on preserving landscape architecture, while the left bank, more vulnerable to climate change, will embrace ecological innovation.

Sustainable water management plays a crucial role, addressing climate change through wetlands and water retention strategies that mitigate floods, support biodiversity, and promote environmental education. The region's diverse ecosystems marshlands, forests, and meadows will be preserved, transforming neglected areas into meaningful green spaces.

The plan also tackles urban sprawl, reimagining fringe areas to protect the region's identity. Integrating green-blue infrastructure will strengthen the connection between nature and settlements, fostering resilience. Ultimately, this vision ensures that the Danube Bend remains a place of beauty, memory, and identity, balancing nature, culture, and human activity for future generations.

TOWARDS WHOLENESS

The natural landscapes of the Danube Bend are not only visually stunning, but also carry deep symbolic value, having served as inspiration for many Hungarian poets, writers, and visual artists for centuries. Nature has created a sign here: the Danube's bend formed the Danube Bend, which can define the primary identity of the landscape today.

The Danube Bend is special not only because of its natural beauty, but also as a place of memory for the history of Hungary, where the intertwining of the past, the landscape, and identity is strongly felt.

The **short-term goal** of the plan is to create a "path towards wholeness" that connects the unique sacred, natural, and built elements of the landscape. This route offers an opportunity for those who seek to experience a deeper connection with the landscape and the unique identity of the Danube Bend, while also preparing the area for future challenges and development opportunities.

As a **long-term strategy**, "towards wholeness" aims at creating a sustainable setup for the future. This concept strives not only to preserve ecological and cultural values, but also to strengthen an identity that more deeply connects people with the Danube Bend and its unparalleled heritage.

The moderation and controlled regulation of suburbanization is not only a matter of spatial structure, but it also aims at shaping people's emotional connection to both the built and natural environments. For those moving from the city to the countryside, the goal is for them not to bring the urban lifestyle with them into the more rural areas, but to adapt to the peculiarities of the place and establish a responsible relationship with the local natural and cultural values in harmony with traditions. This approach could result in a more sustainable and harmonious spatial development.

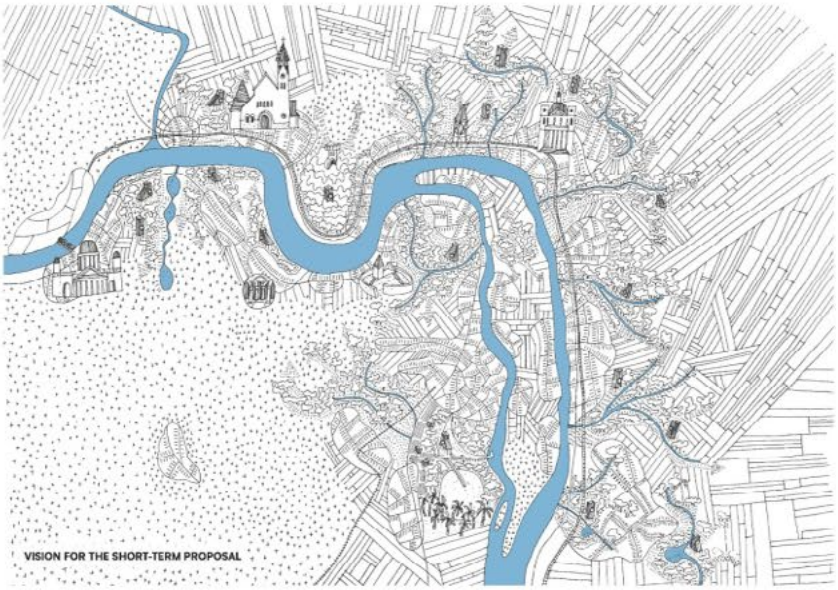
NATURE SETS NEW BOUNDERIES

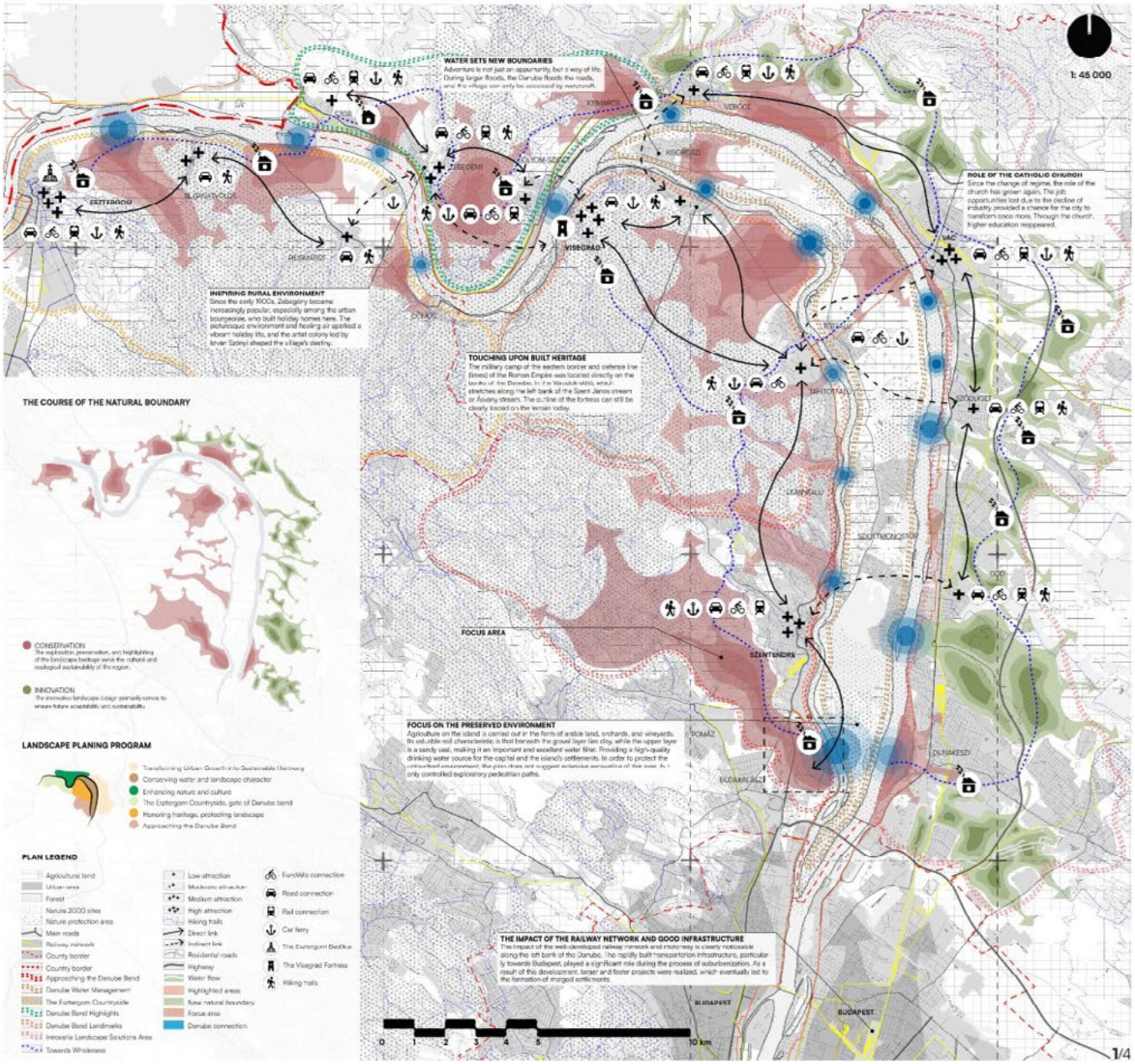
The beauty of nature and green corridors have always played a prominent role in the history and development of the Danube Bend region. Due to the suburbanization processes from the directions of Budapest, the settlements in the area have increasingly merged, resulting in new social and environmental challenges. The aim of the plan is to ensure directed and sustainable development in this context, harnessing the power and characteristics of nature.

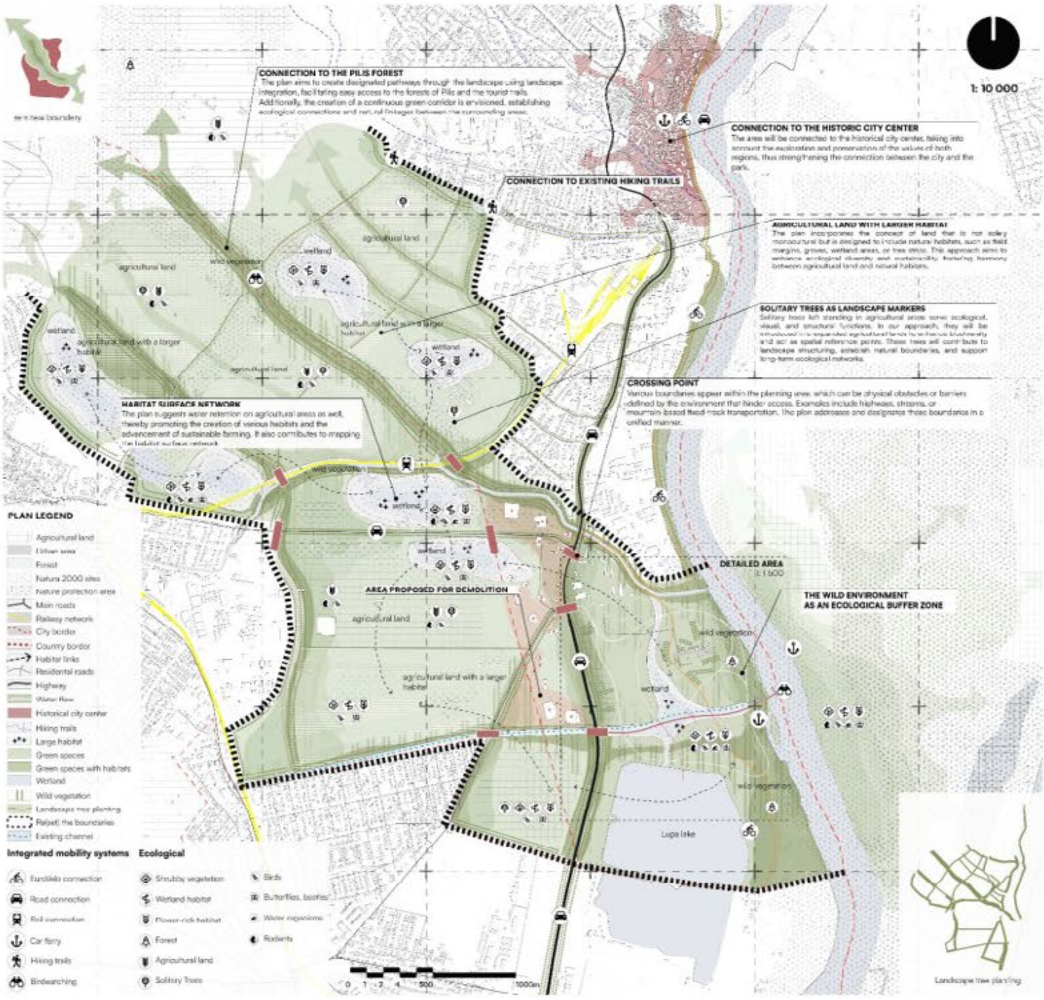
As part of **the concept**, green corridors will be created that go beyond ecological functions: they carry symbolic significance at the boundaries of nature, while also honoring the historical layers and environmental challenges of the landscape. These corridors reflect the balance of nature and cultural heritage while creating new opportunities for sustainability and communal use of space.

The strategic plan places emphasis on preserving and highlighting the landscape and cultural heritage on the right bank of the Danube, while also identifying areas where these cultural legacies can be further enriched and strengthened. In contrast, on the left bank of the Danube, the effects of climate change are expected to be more pronounced, so the plan designates innovative, ecologically focused areas to ensure the future adaptability and sustainability of the landscape. This side becomes a field of landscape architecture innovation, responding to environmental challenges and building on future opportunities.

These designated areas could evolve into a regional park in the future, which will not only become outstanding from an ecological standpoint but will also enrich the region with its cultural, recreational, and community functions. Such developments serve as a long-term vision for the Danube Bend to harmoniously blend natural and human factors, creating a sustainable future for the next generations.

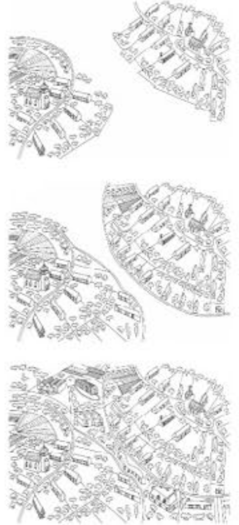






GREEN SIGNS BY THE DANUBE

Along the entire course of the Danube, various landscape signs can be observed, shaping the character and identity of the landscape. The Danube Bend, shaped by nature, is particularly regarded as a powerful symbol along the river. The designated green corridors provide an opportunity for these initial signs to gradually evolve into true landscape symbols, becoming inseparable parts of the merging settlements, thereby strengthening the unique landscape and cultural memory of the region.



DISORDER AND IDENTITY LOSS IN URBAN FRINGE AREAS

On the edges of urban sectors, infrastructures and networks have facilitated the creation of a disorganized landscape, where elements such as family housing zones, aesthetically often poor-quality industrial areas, various ... and ... Most of these peripheral areas, which are part of larger planning projects, suffer from planning deficiencies, both in terms of urban planning and landscape and architectural considerations. These developments often do not fit the character of the place, leading to a loss of significance for the affected areas, which in turn causes the places to lose their value.

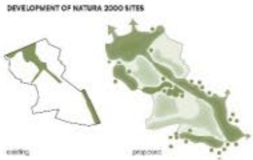
These peripheral areas, which form the entrances to urban agglomerations, present an extremely negative image, even to the settlements themselves. Expansions, often occurring on the hillside surrounding old town centers, tend to spread toward agricultural plains, further extending them. These sections have become generally reserve lands, easy to develop and arrange.

THE OCCURRENCE OF NATURA 2000 AREAS

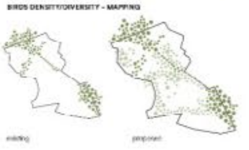
The Natura 2000 sites of the Pilis and Visegrád mountain ranges are of significant importance as protected areas in Hungary, rich in natural values. These areas are home to numerous protected plant and animal species, and the landscape includes a variety of special habitats, such as forests, rocky meadows, and stream valleys.

The plan places a strong emphasis on the protection, exploration, and reinforcement of the Natura 2000 sites. Recreational activities will be defined in a way that does not diminish, but rather supports the sustainable development of natural values, ensuring opportunities for their growth and preservation in the future.

DEVELOPMENT OF NATURA 2000 SITES



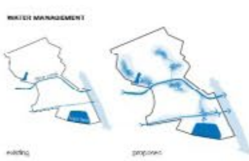
BIRDS DENSITY/DIVERSITY - MAPPING



SUSTAINABLE WATER MANAGEMENT IN THE FOCUS AREA

Sustainable water management is an integral part of the proposed plan for the focus area. It is crucial to address the relationship with water and all its ecological factors through appropriately designed phases. Given that the impacts of climate change are affecting and will continue to affect this region, the plan ensures the long-term sustainability of the area by considering these aspects of water management. These new habitats will provide opportunities for strengthening local biodiversity while also giving the area a new identity.

WATER MANAGEMENT



The aim of the area is to serve not only as a space for recreational activities but also as an educational function, raising awareness about natural values and sustainable land use. In agricultural areas, drainage ditches help with water management, while the Dera stream, the Lupa area, and the high groundwater level contribute to water retention and the preservation of wetland habitats.

THE VEGETATION OF THE DANUBE BEND

The vegetation of the Danube Bend encompasses a variety of habitats, including reed beds and marsh plants in wetland areas, as well as drought-tolerant species living along the sandy and gravelly shores of the Danube. The area's forests are dominated by oak woods, lime and elm groves, and beech forests, while alder and birch forests are found in the marshy and wet areas. Additionally, meadows and pastures play an important role in the landscape. These diverse plant communities provide rich biodiversity for the Danube Bend. The plan has been developed with consideration for the different habitats, placing special emphasis on preserving the area's rich and natural biodiversity, with one of its key elements being the protection of essential plant species linked to local habitats.

EXISTING SURFACE CHARACTERISTIC

Considering the current green space conditions, it is justified to strengthen and protect the existing green corridor to sustainably support the region's biodiversity in the long term. The currently identity-less area can become an important player, serving as a symbolic boundary between settlements, while transforming into an eco-conscious, recreational green space complex. This will offer the opportunity for the area to not only promote relaxation and recreation but also foster environmental awareness and sustainable land use, thereby strengthening the region's cultural and natural heritage. The focus area is a designated imprint within the landscape that further enriches and strengthens the region's natural and cultural traditions, functioning as a regional ... and playing a central role in future landscape architecture developments.

2/4

DOCK AS A BOUNDARY

The central element of **the concept** is the creation of a symbolic and physical boundary that prevents the merging of settlements while strengthening the unique character of the area. This boundary is already present in the middle of Lupa Lake as an administrative boundary, which will be reinforced through landscape architectural interventions in the proposed plan.

The spatial position and design of the object emphasize the division of the area, while also serving as a unifying element in a visual sense. The location of the pier marks the boundary, preventing the formation of a uniform urbanized spatial structure born. In spatial and conceptual terms, while preserving the dynamic balance of the landscape.

LANDSCAPE TYPOLOGY

Christian Heinrich Nebbien's concept for the Vörösliget series as inspiration for the layout of the boundary. This approach emphasizes the symbiotic significance of spatial design, where each component contributes not only to the physical arrangement of the landscape but also to its cultural and historical context.

INFRASTUCTURE AND ACCESSIBILITY

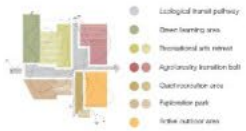
The design focuses not only on visual harmony but also on spatial and functional coherence, where every detail is intentionally interconnected, including infrastructure and accessibility. Similar principles apply in the planned landscape, ensuring that the elements serve not just aesthetic, but also practical purposes.

Road infrastructure and **accessibility** are emphasized, making the various elements easily reachable and functioning in unison to ensure smooth flow and comfortable movement. The integration of the path system and landscape features supports both recreational and educational objectives, with each element contributing to the functionality and aesthetic value of the space.

road infrastructure

accessibility

FUNCTIONAL SCHEMA



The functions presented in the design are closely linked to the benefits of green-blue infrastructure. The community garden and orchard enhance sustainability and biodiversity while serving community and educational purposes. Recreational and artistic spaces emphasize cultural values, while active sports areas and picnic zones cater to relaxation and social experiences. The central wetland holds significant ecological and water management value, connecting the functional units of the area.

FROM SEGREGATED PLANNING TO INCLUSIVE NEXT NATURE

The main goal of the concept is to strengthen the connection between nature and the city while ensuring the long-term preservation of existing natural habitats. The green-blue corridors follow the topographical and hydrological conditions, connecting the Dera stream with the natural biotope, creating a highly efficient landscape system with minimal intervention. These corridors not only introduce the lush character of the surrounding landscape but also contribute to the protection of the biotope by establishing a natural water system. In the plan, the corridors pass alongside the orchard and the nursery, allowing for the emergence of new spatial and ecological qualities from the meeting of these two worlds. Key principles: wetland habitats, connections, social integration.

WATER SYSTEM

Water-regulated habitats balance each other, provide resilience, and maintain a healthy dynamic in the landscape ecosystem.

BEFORE THE RAIN

existing

Due to climate change, rainfall has become more intense, while dry periods have lengthened, causing flash floods in urban areas. The goal is to retain and utilize as much rainwater as possible, thereby mitigating the effects of flooding and water shortages.

One solution is for urban green spaces to function as "sponges": they quickly absorb and temporarily store rainwater, then gradually release it back into the soil during dry periods.

As part of the strategy, wetland habitats created in key locations not only reduce the risk of flash floods but also visually enrich the environment. These natural interventions provide effective water management, contributing to the sustainable management of water-endangered areas.

AFTER THE RAIN

proposed

2. PERSPECTIVE - WETLAND

The perspective of the wetland is to showcase the potential for interaction between humans and nature, where humans do not exploit, but coexist with the natural environment. From a landscape architecture perspective, the focus is on integrating natural landscape elements in a way that maintains their ecological function while providing space for humans to observe and relax. The observation tower and resting areas do not dominate the landscape but subtly provide the presence of humans as part of nature. This green wedge not only represents a transition between the artificial and natural environment but also serves as a reminder that a responsible future depends on achieving a balance between humans and nature.

3/4

TOWARDS WHOLENESS
Identities, Signs, and Boundaries

HUNGARY IN CLIMATE CHANGE

Based on the diagram, it can be observed that the spatial distribution of annual precipitation has changed over the past decades, with decreasing rainfall increasingly affecting the southern and eastern regions of Hungary. The fluctuations between more intense rainfall and drier periods present an increasing risk for water management and landscape architecture. In addition to the decrease in precipitation, particular attention should be paid to the increasing frequency of flash floods, which could overload local watersheds and drainage systems, especially in urban environments.

These sudden downpours also put existing infrastructure to the test, as in many cases, drainage systems are not equipped to handle the rapid influx of water, leading to flooding. Therefore, landscape architecture must not only respond to the amount of precipitation but also address the rapid runoff of rainfall to minimize damage and ensure environmental sustainability.

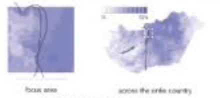
For water management, it is also essential to implement new, innovative water collection and storage systems to prevent flash floods. The integration of green infrastructure, such as rain gardens and green spaces optimized for water use, can help maintain local water resources and effectively manage sudden precipitation events.

In future landscape architecture and water management solutions, sustainable urban development and the protection of natural systems are essential. In response to climate change, it is important to tighten building regulations, especially in rural fringe areas, to prevent excessive urbanization while preserving natural corridors. It is advisable to connect land purchases with agricultural land, encouraging its cultivation through appropriate regulations, thereby supporting the protection of local ecosystems and the establishment of green infrastructure.

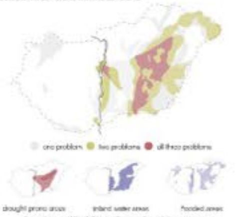
The role of green infrastructure in water retention and drainage is crucial. Integrating storage systems, rain gardens, and green spaces optimized for water management can help handle sudden precipitation and maintain water resources, contributing to the sustainability of settlements. Integrated landscape architecture solutions are therefore beneficial not only for water management but also for community and environmental well-being.

To achieve long-term success, it is necessary to establish a harmonious balance between urban and rural areas, through which sustainable, adaptive design solutions can help cities and their surroundings increase their resilience to climate change. Addressing climate change challenges requires a close integration of regulatory and planning practices to ensure environmental and social sustainability.

CHANGES IN ANNUAL PRECIPITATION TOTALS FROM 1981 TO 2020 (%)



AREAS IN HUNGARY THREATENED BY WATER DAMAGE AND DROUGHT



The presence of water management issues, such as drought, inland flooding, and flooding, is closely related to the dynamics of the landscape, which can be addressed through wetlands and renaturalization projects. The area, functioning as a green wedge, can reduce the risks of drought-prone and waterlogged areas by restoring ecological processes, such as enhancing water storage capacity and building water retention systems. The use of natural water regulation systems (e.g., swamps and meadows) can help with flood prevention while improving the ecological stability of the landscape. Such interventions thus directly contribute to alleviating the water management challenges of the region.

VULNERABILITY OF SETTLEMENTS BY 2100 (DROUGHT, FLASH FLOODS)

EXPECTED VULNERABILITY OF SETTLEMENTS TO DROUGHT BY 2100

EXPECTED VULNERABILITY OF SETTLEMENTS TO FLASH FLOODS BY 2100

SIGNS IN THE LANDSCAPE

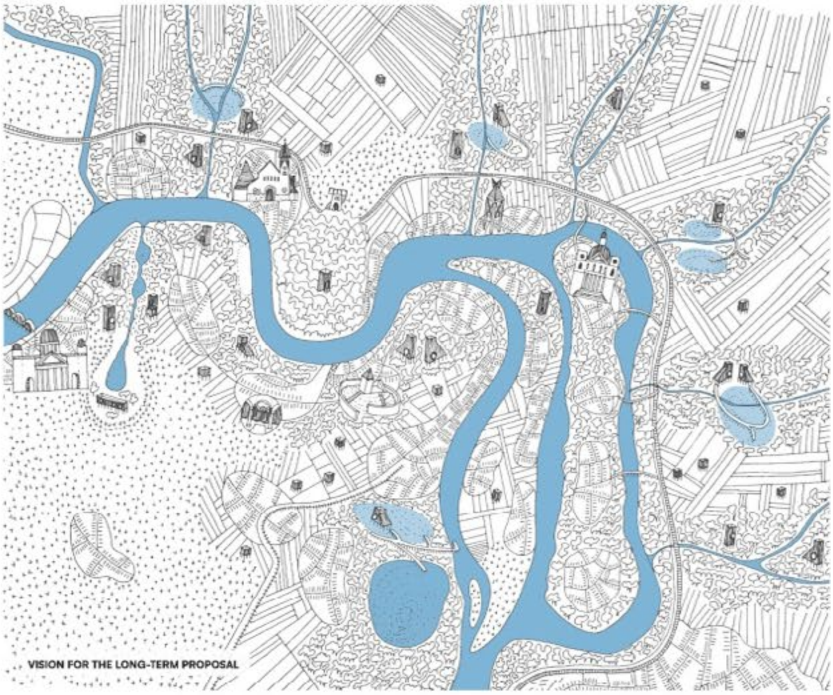
"... A VISIBLE, AUDIBLE, TANGIBLE, PERCEPTIBLE PHYSICAL PHENOMENON THAT MEANS MORE OR SOMETHING ELSE TO ITS PERCEIVER THAN WHAT IS IMMEDIATELY COMPREHENSIBLE UPON ITS APPEARANCE." **GEORG KLAUS** (1963): SEMIOTIK UND ERKENNTNISTHEORIE, BERLIN, 35-36o.

The elements and phenomena found in the landscape are not only interpretable in their visual, physical form but also carry deeper, symbolic meanings. Through the interaction of human activity and nature, these signs form a kind of narrative that reflects the changes in the landscape, human presence, and the imprint of history.

The Danube Bend is an exceptional example of a landscape phenomenon that is significant both geographically and symbolically. At this section of the river, the Danube uniquely turns back, symbolically referring to the linearity of time. Just as time has a beginning and an end, the Danube cannot return to its source, it can only continue its journey. This continuous forward motion, the passage of time, shapes not only the landscape but also human thought and culture. The special geographical form of the Danube Bend serves as a defining "sign" of the landscape, connected to various other elements, such as built monuments, cultural sites, and natural formations, which strengthen the identity of the region.

The human creations and landscape elements surrounding the Danube Bend form a kind of network that highlights the sacred and cultural significance of the landscape. These signs are not just traces of the past, but also active parts of contemporary landscape shaping. The elements created by human activity — such as historical landmarks, churches, lookout points, or other built structures — carry not only functional but also symbolic meaning. These signs form a narrative that links the landscape with human presence, making the past, present, and future of the region more comprehensible.

Thus, the Danube Bend is not only geographically unique but also a symbolic imprint of the landscape's identity and changes. The network of signs shaped by the passage of time and human activity helps ensure that the values and histories of the landscape live on, while efforts to maintain the harmony between the natural and built environments strengthen the region's unique character.



IDENTITY
The first phase involves recognizing key signs in the landscape that reveal its unique character and natural features. This understanding forms the basis for defining the landscape's identity, combining historical, cultural, and ecological aspects. By uncovering the place's spirit and physical traits, we can develop a sustainable approach to its future design.

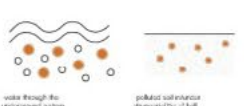
SIGN
The second phase presents the plan's imprint, where the identified signs manifest within the landscape. These signs are linked to deeper, underlying structures that promote ecological balance. The design integrates natural elements with human intervention, ensuring the long-term sustainability and biodiversity of the area.

RE(SET)
The final phase redefines the boundaries of the landscape to establish a networked vision. This involves creating green and blue corridors to protect the environment, address ecological challenges, and promote resilience. The goal is to integrate sustainability into the landscape's design, preparing it to handle future environmental challenges like flash floods.

ECOSYSTEM SERVICES
In landscape architecture, ecosystem services refer to ecological processes that contribute to human well-being, whether in terms of material benefits or broader quality of life. "Ecosystem service patches" refer to areas where the maintenance and enhancement of ecosystems can increase the intensity of these services, such as cultural, supporting, provisioning, and regulating services. These services include water retention, soil protection, biodiversity enhancement, and air quality improvement, which not only help stabilize the natural environment but also have a direct impact on human well-being.

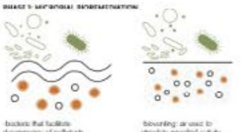
Forests are crucial to the functioning of the Earth. They efficiently store vast amounts of carbon dioxide while releasing oxygen. They influence rainfall, filter fresh water, and prevent flooding and soil erosion. They provide wild foods, fuelwood, and medicines for the people who live in and around them. Forests are storehouses of potential future crop varieties and genetic materials with untapped healing properties.

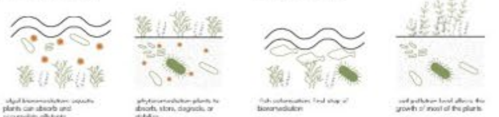
The collaboration of these patches supports landscape sustainability by influencing the microclimate and water balance, while forest degradation reduces ecosystem services and contributes to greenhouse gas emissions. The project aims to restore natural systems, enhance services, and promote sustainable land use, boosting the region's stability.



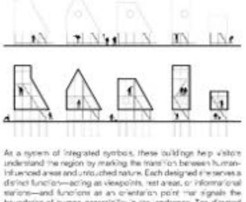
BIOREMEDIATION PROCESS
The goal of the bioremediation process applied for the demolition of industrial buildings and the management of industrial waste on the project site is the ecological restoration of the soil and water. The use of wetlands provides an opportunity for microbial activity and natural water purification systems to facilitate soil regeneration in contaminated areas.

With the help of bioventing techniques and microorganisms, the breakdown of pollutants in the soil can be accelerated, while new ecosystems are formed. Throughout the project, the gradual restoration of aquatic and terrestrial wildlife ensures a sustainable and stable environment, which will contribute to the long-term ecological revitalization of the area.

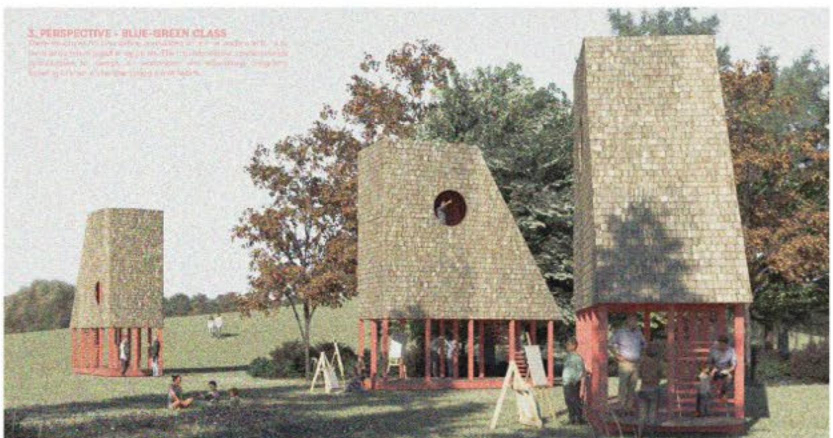




THE CHARACTER OF THE BUILDINGS
The buildings along the "Towards Wholeness" trail are not merely functional spaces but act as boundary markers in the landscape, defining the balance between human presence and nature. Much like buoys in the sea, these structures indicate the extent of human access to the landscape, subtly guiding visitors without imposing rigid physical barriers. The foundations of each building are presented in different colors that harmonize with the natural and cultural characteristics of the local landscape, visually reinforcing the spatial structure and the limits of accessible areas.



As a system of integrated symbols, these buildings help visitors understand the region by marking the transition between human-influenced areas and untouched nature. Each designed site serves a distinct function—acting as viewpoints, rest areas, or informational stations—and functions as an orientation point that signals the boundaries of human accessibility in the landscape. The directed sightlines and seamless integration with the natural surroundings ensure that human presence does not disrupt natural processes but instead aligns harmoniously with them. The use of earth anchoring with soil screws and shingle cladding further strengthens this integration, ensuring that every element resonates with the landscape's natural rhythm, sustainably delineating the space for human activity while preserving the untouched zones of nature.



Annex C. Posters of the Landscape Forum

Jeroen de Vries *LE:NOTRE Institute, Wageningen, the Netherlands*

Three posters were submitted to the Forum. Maria Bostenaru Dan (Ion Mincu University, Bucharest) presented a poster on the Natural and cultural landscapes across the Danube, where one can follow by a Story Map (https://arcg.is/9Tvm) fifteen natural and cultural sites. Carlos Ribeiro, Sara Terrosos, Ana Sousa (of the Landscape Laboratory of Gimarães s), Catarina Silva (Lab of Green Space and Inclusion) and Frederico Meireles Rodrigues (Universidade de Trás-Os-Montes e Alto Douro) presented two posters on Gimarães as a One Planet City and its Strategy on Green Infrastructure.

Landscape Forum 2025
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LE:NOTRE Institute

Natural and cultural landscapes across the Danube

Dr. Dipl.-Ing. Maria BOSTENARU DAN
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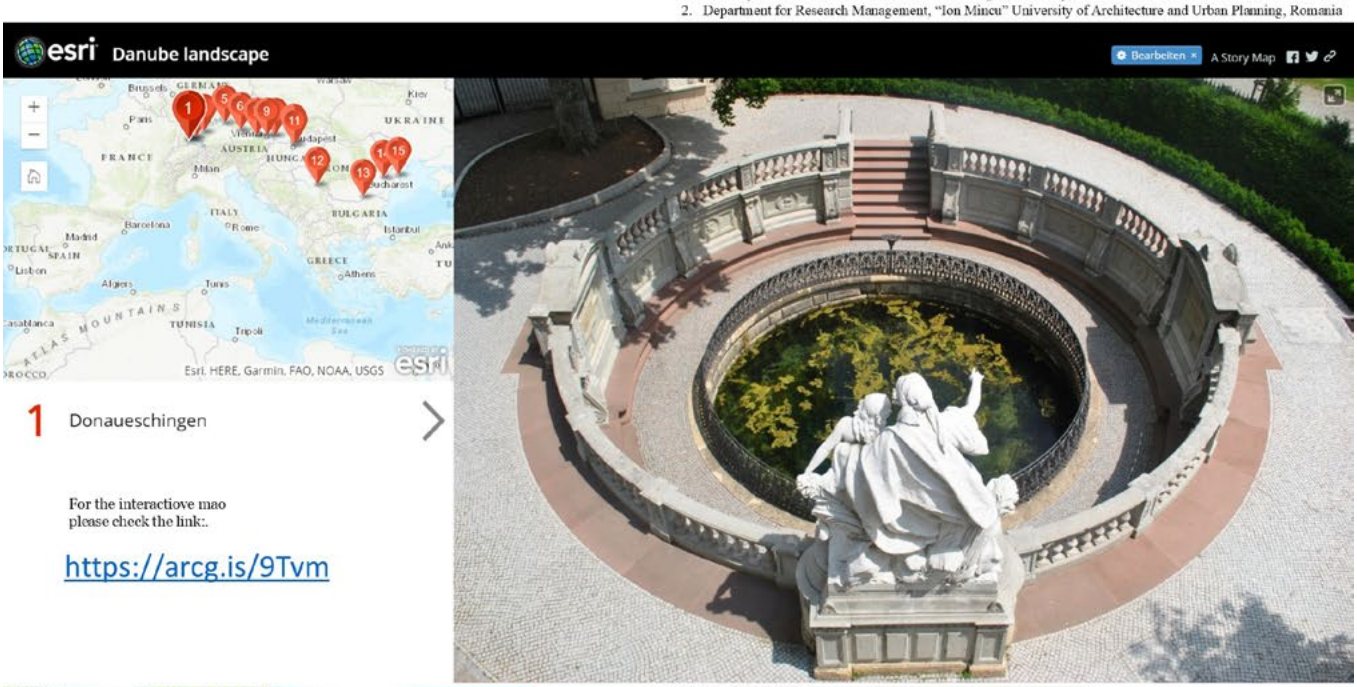
2. Department for Research Management, "Ion Mincu" University of Architecture and Urban Planning, Romania



During the DANUrB project, when writing an article about the natural landscapes of Danube, including the dual nature of water between heritage and hazard (so also flood protection) a story map was created. The DANUrB project aimed among others to explore cross-border spaces of the Danube, but also to create a brand of less known spaces and their touristic potential, which is not focus of this map, which shows major places.
This story map shows 15 places along the Danube and is continuously growing as more are visited.

-Natural landscapes

3. The Obere Donau nature park (Sigmaringen)
6. The Donau Leiten natural park in Passau, Germany, going to Austria
7 bis. Melk in Wachau natural park. Also Krems was later visited and the Wachau Venus in NHM in Vienna
9. Donauauen in Vienna, on the way to Bratislava
10. Duna Ipoly natural park at Visegrad in Hungary
12 Iron Gate natural park between Serbia and Romania at Bazias
14. Small natural landscape: the island of Braila
15. The Danube Delta, where the Danube meets the sea (UNESCO)

-Cultural landscapes

1. The springs in Donaueschingen (sculpture founding and meeting of Brigach and Breg)
3. The castle in Sigmaringen (from where the Royal family of Romania came)
4. The Danube Swabian shore in Ulm (from where the Danube Swabians came to Hungary, Romania, Serbia). A video is available on the Danube at Baja, where the Ulmer Schachtel was reconstructed.
5. The UNESCO city of Regensburg
7. Melk monastery (UNESCO) in MiniEurope exhibition in Brussels
8. Bratislava (Friendship bridge)
10bis. Esztergom
11. The UNESCO city of Budapest
13. Giurgiu, twin city of Ruse in Bulgaria, both visited.

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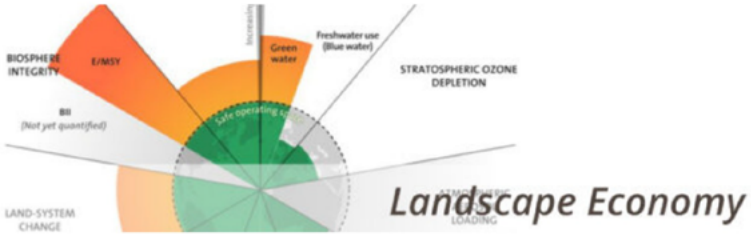

A One Planet City

Guimarães has been named European Green Capital 2026, recognising more than ten years of strong climate action, science-based decisions, and collaborative governance. The city is working towards a clear goal: becoming a One Planet City — living within ecological limits while ensuring quality of life for all.

Since 2013, the Guimarães 2030 Governance Ecosystem has brought together the municipality, universities, civil society, and businesses in a shared structure. This partnership supports long-term planning and connects science to policy. The creation of the Landscape Laboratory has strengthened this approach with data and research.

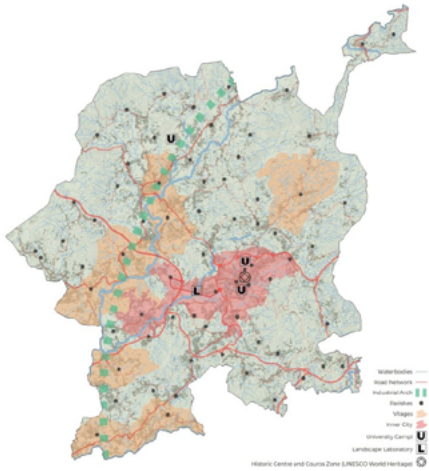

Fig.1 - Guimarães polycentric nature and diversity (9 villages and 48 pariches). Unesco Heritage, green Infrastructure, waterbodies, and the industrial arch

Fig.2 - Guimarães a city of history, culture, and nature

Over the past decade, Guimarães has expanded its green areas, improved river quality, and restored natural ecosystems. Retention basins have been introduced to increase resilience to climate change, reducing flood risks and protecting biodiversity. The city is also a national reference in waste management and circular economy, having pioneered the PAYT system and promoted reuse and recycling through the RRRCICLO strategy.

Fig.3 - Governance Ecosystem 2030 in action: Mission Label awarded 2024; External Advisor Committee; Environmental Research; Environmental Education; Green Brigades; Capacity building

Environmental education and citizen engagement are key drivers. Educational Programmes like PEGADAS, and the presence of Green Brigades in most parishes show strong community involvement.

Fig.4 - Guimarães has been improving blue corridors, increasing green transition and livability

In 2024, Guimarães received the EU Mission Label for Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities, confirming its path towards climate neutrality by 2030. Its Climate City Contract integrates environmental, social, and economic actions for a just transition.

Fig.5 - Celebrating 10 years of our Climate Journey

Broad political consensus and a Climate City Pact with local businesses ensure long-term commitment and cooperation.

Guimarães shows that even a medium-sized city can lead the green transition — combining science, participation, and action to build a fairer, greener, and more resilient future.

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3 LdP . LANDSCAPE LABORATORY OF GUIMARÃES

TITLE A ONE PLANET CITY

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VILA REAL . PORTUGAL

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LE:NOTRE Institute

Guimarães Green Infrastructure Radial Strategy

The Guimarães Green Infrastructure Radial Strategy is a pioneering approach to urban sustainability that reinforces territorial connectivity by linking people with nature.

Rooted in actions initiated since the 1980s, the strategy reflects a long-term commitment to creating and integrating green spaces within the urban and rural fabric of the city. It is structured around a four-dimensional model: enhancing social and environmental cohesion, restoring natural ecosystems, piloting an urban Green Belt, and expanding radial green corridors. These efforts have successfully reconnected fragmented habitats, improved biodiversity, and delivered ecosystem services that benefit both the environment and public wellbeing.

Fig.1 - Three-ringed Green Belt approach will promote territorial cohesion

Fig.2 - Ecovia from above and a section of cycle path

Fig.3 - Green belt pilot and UNESCO heritage site of Bairro-C, the historic industrial city

Aligned with the SECAP2030 objectives and Guimarães' Climate Neutrality 2030 strategy, the radial green infrastructure supports climate mitigation and adaptation. By creating over 61 kilometers of greenways and establishing initiatives like de Veiga Green Corridor and the GreenCap network, the city promotes soft mobility, reduces urban heat islands, and increases resilience to flooding—effectively advancing the concept of a sponge city.

The strategy is estimated to sequester 123 tons of CO_2 equivalent by 2030 and 176.4 tons by 2050.
Innovation lies at the core of Guimarães' approach. The District C GreenBelt pilot, urban gardens, green roofs and walls, and a Green Areas Observatory exemplify replicable and scalable solutions. The Landscape Laboratory supports scientific monitoring, while the Guimarães+Forest initiative, tree management office, and participation in the EU-3BillionTrees pledge showcase institutional commitment and citizen engagement.

Fig.3 - Collaborations between schools, associations and the private sector, in initiatives such as the Green Brigades and the Climate Pact, together with NGOs

The participatory governance model engages diverse stakeholders—citizens, schools, NGOs, and businesses—through education, training, placemaking, and collaborative planning processes. This holistic, multi-scale strategy effectively integrates green infrastructure into the city's development, offering a replicable model for other cities aiming to achieve sustainability and climate resilience through nature-based solutions.

Fig.4 - Penha Biodiversity Route

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TITLE GUIMARÃES GREEN INFRATRUCTURE RADIAL STRATEGY

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