



Working with Communities for Sustainable Human Development

A Brief Summarizing the Benefits of an Integrated Landscape Approach to the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals

To: Local and Regional Authorities, Ministries, Policy Makers, International Landscape Networks, NGOs and INGOs, Academics and Practitioners

Key messages:

- The Sustainable Development Goals are indivisible and should be implemented in an integrated manner;
- Integration requires moving from siloed approaches to multi-level, multi-scaled and multi-sector actions which address multiple needs and interests;
- Delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals requires taking into serious consideration the needs and developmental aspirations of communities in both the developing and the developed world;
- Working with communities requires a more people-centred, culturally specific and opportunity/capability-oriented approach;
- Sustainable human development is the appropriate framework for achieving the above and this framework can most effectively be applied through the integrated landscape approach.

In adopting the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda of the United Nations, Member States have undertaken to meet the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 associated targets. Integrated and synergetic strategies and approaches are needed to achieve these very challenging and simultaneously indivisible targets.

“ *We envisage a world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity, the rule of law, justice, equality and non-discrimination; of respect for race, ethnicity and cultural diversity; and of equal opportunity permitting the full realization of human potential and contributing to shared prosperity.* ”

Article 8 of the Declaration of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, United Nations

To realise this ambitious and transformational vision we need to develop a range of mechanisms that will secure the well-being of all on a sustainable basis. The communities of the Member States differ in cultural, economic and social terms, and in terms of the restrictions and opportunities offered by the places in which they live. From this diverse global reality emerges a need for non-uniform, case-specific approaches and perspectives that are appropriate to particular territorial contexts and, above all, people-centred. The Integrated Landscape Approach aims to improve lives and living environments in an effective and locally-sensitive way.

The Integrated Landscape Approach to Sustainable Human Development

- Delivers better-informed and more effective decisions and actions by:
 - Providing a working framework that can help planners and decision makers to understand the developmental needs and objectives of a given place (urban, peri-urban, and rural) and build on the comparative advantages which its community seeks to promote;
 - Identifying and assessing the cultural particularities of a locality alongside its environmental and the economic characteristics;
 - Generating realistic and long-term solutions that can achieve a range of SDGs and which are appropriate to a diversity of contexts in the developing and the developed world.
- Builds and strengthens the capacity to deliver transformational change by:
 - Fostering inter-sectoral coalitions at all levels (local, national and international);
 - Empowering communities to improve their lives and living environments by building their capabilities through inclusive, ground-up activity;
 - Promoting intergenerational development which tackles complex interconnected problems such as inequality, injustice, poverty and environmental degradation.

Initiatives that build on a range landscape approaches: examples

The Vjosa/Aoos River Ecomuseum:
<http://www.ecomuseum.eu>

Landscapes for People, Food and Nature:
<http://peoplefoodandnature.org>

CIFOR's range of projects:
<http://www.cifor.org/sustainable-landscapes/>

Recommendations for the International Community

- Recognise landscape as an appropriate local platform for integrated Sustainable Human Development (SHD);
- Improve awareness and use of the integrated landscape approach to SHD within international organisations such as the United Nations and the Council of Europe;
- Stimulate NGO and civil society partnerships for landscape and SHD;
- Encourage the adaptation of funding schemes and investment strategies to support the design and delivery of integrated landscape approaches to SHD;
- Advance research into integrated landscape approaches to achieving SHD.

Key policy documents

Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:

http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E

European Landscape Convention:

<http://www.coe.int/en/web/landscape/about-the-convention>

Human Development Report 2015:

<http://hdr.undp.org/en/2015-report>

Recommendations for National Strategies

- Encourage the integration of landscapes approaches to SHD in national development strategies and related financial mechanisms;
- Promote transnational and regional cooperation which produces appropriate action plans aiming at place-based and people-centred approaches to sustainable development;
- Improve inter-sectoral and inter-ministerial synergies for the development of landscape policies which can help achieve the SDGs;
- Develop an SHD framework and related landscape strategy at national level in order to foster improved planning policies and governance procedures;
- Develop a task force to review national/sub-national development plans to evaluate their alignment with landscape strategies aiming to deliver SHD.

Recommendations for Local Level Actions

- Take into account the needs of the community/ies of a given place;
- Work collaboratively with communities for their benefit and for the benefit of the local and regional environment;
- Co-develop, with the community, landscape objectives, strategies and action plans that are inclusive and have the potential to generate secure well-being and sustainability in both the short- and the long-term;
- Form capacity-building groups and support capacity-building initiatives to strengthen communities' ability to act locally for sustainable human development;
- Undertake a scoping exercise, assessing current initiatives and their potential to contribute to SHD;
- Support exchange of know-how within the community and between communities, public organisations, NGOs and others at various levels;

The way forward

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires us to seek a new paradigm for development: one that recognises the need to secure the well-being of communities at the local, national and international levels by taking an integrated approach to natural systems and people's socio-cultural relationships with them. A range of exemplary place-based projects provide inspiration for how such integration might be achieved in practice (see Box 1). All such practices involve working with communities in a committed, long-term manner, with the aim of enhancing their capacity to improve their own lives in just and sustainable ways. To realise the wider benefits of such practices, greater recognition is needed of the importance of SHD and of the potential of Integrated Landscape Approaches to its delivery. The recommendations outlined in this policy brief apply both to the developing world and to the so-called developed world, where inequality, deprivation and environmental degradation are pressing concerns.

The further development and delivery of the initiative will be taken forward by the York Archaeological Trust, an independent charity.

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For more information

visit us at www.landscapecharacter.eu

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