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BOUNDING TERRITORIES FOR INTEGRATED LOCAL LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

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Poster Abstract

Within the EEC, but also in many other parts of the world, drastical changes in the planning and management of the rural landscape will take place over the next years: Due to changing economic and market conditions for production of agricultural products, land use as well as agricultural structure might change considerable. Growing environmental problems partly connected with the existing agricultural technology might impose new production forms, affecting land use and general production conditions, too. A tendency towards multipurpose land use as a general social strategy for a more intensive use of the territory calls for a way of planning and management of the countryside, that can combine agricultural, conservational, recreational and other functions in a proper way.

In Denmark, this development has been followed by a rapid growing mass of legislative initiatives concerning agricultural practice and land use, protection of ground water and streams, and conservation and administration of habitats for wild flora and fauna within the agricultural landscape. The implementation of these initiatives appears to be very complicated for several reasons: First of all, this change is taking place very rapid, especially seen in relation to the situation up till now, where there has been almost no restrictions on the agricultural use of the countryside. The private property of land means that measures of ekspropriative character can be extremely expensive. On the other hand, a general very strenuous economical situation for a major part of the agricultural holdings makes it very difficult to burden these with expensive arrangements. In the long run, however, other problems connected with this transition of planning and management of agricultural landscapes will probably take over:

The integrated management of agricultural landscape proves more and more to be a local task, very narrowly linked to local economic and social activity. The municipal authorities have seldom the expertise and resources to formulate detailed integrated plans, and still less to secure the management. And due to the relative small holdings they are at the same time forced to focus on specified regulations for the single holding, instead of concentrating on the overall formation of territorial systems of ecological landscape stability, ecological infrastructure and a planned balanced multipurpose land use structure.

This calls for the formation of local landscape administration units, which can manage for instance specified standards for combination and density of biotopes in a flexibel way. The geographical bounding of such units must be based on very different and often conflicting principles concern-

ning size, landscape structure, agricultural structure, historical-geographical structure and socio-economic infrastructure. As shown in an example from Zeeland, the old division into parishes, which was abandoned in connection with the municipal reform in 1970, might be very relevant especially from an organisational point of view, has however to be combined with other principles to secure an integrated administration of important landscape types such as valley systems, which traditionally divides the old parishes.

The basis of such units should be cooperations of local farmers, who can combine this function with the growing economic and practical advantages of cooperation concerning an agricultural practise more adapted to the local landscape ecological conditions and potentialities.