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Advocating for a more sustainable use of land

Sharing knowledge and good practices on landscape planning at the Swedish MinLand workshop: two examples from Fäbodtjärn project and Boliden AB

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Interview with Prof. Assoc. Dr. Ms. Doris Damyanovic

Landscape Planning Expert

Institute of Landscape Planning, Department of Landscape, Spatial and Infrastructure Sciences, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna

What are the main challenges of the future landscape planning assessment?

A successful landscape planning assessment is based on a trans- and interdisciplinary approach. One core challenge is setting up a 'good' content- and process design for such an approach that covers the entire life-cycle of a project, starting in the very beginning. Landscape and spatial planners are trained and have strong capacities and skills to set up and manage planning and permitting processes, which are crucial for negotiating and balancing the interests of the different involved local stakeholders, project applicant, residents – or local community. Those communicative and coordinating skills are of particular importance, since technical experts, stakeholders and operating companies are often not familiar with communicative and participatory planning procedures and speak a 'different' language than local stakeholder or residents. Those skills and capacities are complementary to content knowledge, such as technical, ecological and socio-economic knowledge, and shouldn't be overlooked – it is a key factor for a landscape planning assessment and successful permitting procedures.

What is your perspective on mineral use in the context of sustainable landscape planning?

Mineral land use and extraction are often linked to the notions of overexploitation and environmental and community problems. One aim of sustainable landscape planning is a viable integration of social and ecologically friendly perspectives on the case. This means three things:
1) to develop recommendations for an ecologically friendly raw material extraction by considering the European and national requirements (European FFH (Fauna and Flora) Directive, Nature conservation, water and forest management and spatial planning legislations);
2) to ensure the proper information and participation of stakeholders and residents during the planning procedure;
3) keeping the viability of the project in mind; all three together are a base for sustainable processes.

Which good practices did you get to know during the MinLand project? Could you please tell us more about it?

A good practice, in my perspective, is the Swedish project –“Fäbodtjärn project” presented by the Magnus Langendoen from the CAB Västerbotten in Sweden. This project has a very holistic approach for stakeholder involvement and also to find solutions in an ecological way. It was presented on the MinLand meeting in January in Vienna.

Biography Doris Damyanovic

Assoc. Dr. Doris Damyanovic studied landscape planning and landscape conservation. Currently she is an owner of an engineering office for landscape planning. She is also researcher and teacher at the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna (BOKU Vienna). She has done landscape planning assessment in close collaboration with a mining engineer and a mine surveyor the last twenty years with the focus on Austria.



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Interview with Mr. Lennart Gustavsson

Swedish Left Party politician

Institute of Landscape Planning, Department of Landscape, Spatial and Infrastructure Sciences - University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna

Is there a formal decision-making / administrative process to assess the final use / designation of land?

Regarding communication with stakeholder: From a land use perspective before and after exploration. It is important to communicate to the public that the possibility that an exploration project will result in a mine. The communication is important during the whole process from exploration until a mining permit (all necessary permits) has been granted.

From a Swedish perspective what is making people irritated is if they think information has been withheld. The mining companies has recently become increasingly open with information regarding their projects – SLO is something that is earned. My opinion is that new actors (“companies”) have raised the level in this issue.

How is transparency in the process implemented? (i.e. how are decisions communicated publicly, do authorities have to respond to...)

The authorities though could be involved in increasing degree in the early information (“communication to the stakeholders”) in explaining how the process from exploration to mine is functioning. Important is to communicate with those who do not want to communicate (“stakeholders who are not necessarily positive”).

Maybe the actors need to contact the Sameting (“the gathering authority for Sami in Sweden – governed by Sami”) or “Urberggruppen” (“a group of stakeholders negative to mining”) and other stakeholders who do not agree with mining or have a different opinion of mining than pro mining.

One example is that the geological survey of

Sweden had open talks with the different stakeholders in one room at Almedalen (“the event for all political and other stakeholders in Sweden”).

At what stage(s) is the community/interested/affected parties involved? How have you been involved, was the level of involvement considered appropriate?

There is a mutual responsibility that the municipality need to be up-to-date with relevant information and at the same time the company (“responsible for the exploration/mining project”) also has a responsibility to inform (“inform all affected parties”).

I believe in regular communication and update of state of the projects. Regarding municipalities they do have too meagre resources to oversee the development of the projects. Important for the municipalities is to update the comprehensive land use plan. This important for the mining industry.

Often the municipalities lack experience. Mostly there is a better contact with companies like Boliden (“one of the two biggest mining companies in Sweden”) and the geological Survey of Sweden.

How were the results of the participation process considered in the decision making?

There is a tendency that a small municipality view the mining projects as too big for us. It is also important for the municipalities with recruiting personnel with adequate competence regarding mining. It is also important that both the municipalities

as well as the industry is aware of each others planning.

Generally exploration is very welcome (“Municipality of Malå and neighbouring municipalities”). It is however important with relevant information about the project so that it is known who is active in an area. The working plan is important – here the legislation is of great value that demand a working, transparent plan regarding the exploration.

Was the project well accepted by the local communities? Which have been the concerns relatively to the case? what was well received?

The Boliden company is a part of the region. They have maybe been too big (“important”). They are very aware of their importance and that the company’s role as a societal actor must be made apparent and clear. E.g., the company participate in the Sami national day together with the municipality (“Malå”).

In general there is a positive view (“for mining”) and the Boliden company has with time an increased developed understanding that they are a societal actor that must be seen in order to achieve a social license and welcoming acceptance by the population.

Without the Boliden company the whole Skellefteå region, i.e., the area covered by the Skellefteå Mining Fields, (“Malå is a part of this area which a part of the official Västerbotten County”) not existed.

Which were the benefits and costs to the communities from the boosting of new activities?

Larger and smaller mining projects where the area has been remediated. The former industrial area can be transformed into reindeer grazing area – the answer is yes and has been delivered. The company contribute e.g., with peat cover with leads to grass grazing for rein deers.



This gives a natural industrial tradition due to mining and as a consequence a dynamic feedback into industrial development.

Disadvantages if large scale industry is obvious it might be negative for the entrepreneurial development – the drivers are too weak since a person still gets a job (“within mining”).

Are there any mandatory/voluntary compensation measures foreseen in the framework legislation procedures? Are these perceived as adequate? If yes, please give us some more insights. If no, please tell us why.

Not for exploration. Whilst mining the royalties are too small (two ppt) which can be perceived that the society gain too small payback.

The role of the company in this aspect need to be reviewed. It could be discussed “oil funds” (“the Norwegian model in which a certain amount of all oil revenues is saved for the future use by the society”) that can be used tax-free for future exploration – this would stimulate Swedish mining industry.

The remediation function well.

Were any mandatory and/or voluntary compensatory measures taken? Are these perceived as adequate? Were these perceived as adequate by the company and by those compensated?

Conflicts exist but can usually be solved. Difficult to say how it is with the tourism industry. Modern industrial tourism exist and the industry can support service within the community necessary for tourism. There is

How are different policy priorities weighed against each other and discussed in decision making? And which evaluation criteria are used in the decision making process? What about the data and information are often needed?

Areas where the different land uses within the area of National Interests (“the Swedish system for land use where different strategically important land uses are shown”) when conflict occur the challenge is to assess the three pillars of sustainability. Here it is necessary with a political decision for guidance how to weigh different land uses against each other.

How important are mining/mineral issues as compared to other local policy priorities (e.g., GDP growth, environment, housing, social/cultural, landscape/nature protection)? For instance, how are benefits and costs to the communities and environment evaluated when designating areas for minerals but also with respect to societies need in terms of raw materials, jobs, stronger economy, etc.?

Very important. Exploration activities are important for Malå. One can view the mining projects as the sugar candy around which the flies gather.

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no conflict there simply that the resources and possibilities could be used better. It could possibly be used the the industry has a clear rural connection and that the decisions by the authorities are delivered on site.

MinLand project aspires to assist and effect the land use process so that mining projects will be evaluated on par with other potential land uses. MinLand will also attempt to provide examples of Good Practice that can assist to improve the authorization and permitting procedures.

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Biography Lennart Gustavsson

Born 1954 in Malå (County of Västerbotten). Teacher in physical education. Politician on local, regional and national level (Swedish parliament 1998-2006). Today, municipal commissioner in Malå. Chairman GEORANGE 1998-2001 and 2005-2018. Married and with a big family.

About the MinLand Network of Experts:

In Europe the need for raw materials by far surpasses the production. In order to meet need of needs of raw materials within the EU has e.g., through the H2020 umbrella launched a number of actions directed at improving conditions for the extractive industry. In this context it was recognised that one of the large challenges in extractive minerals industry is access to land and its use. Therefore, the H2020 MinLand project aims at investigating good practice in land-use planning policies, practices and linking to mineral prospecting and extraction. Specific land-use challenges might arise from/at e.g.,

- highly densely populated areas
- nature conservation and protected areas
- other industrial and other activities- tourism, agriculture, cultural heritage
- infrastructure
- affected parties

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