

MaGICLandscapes

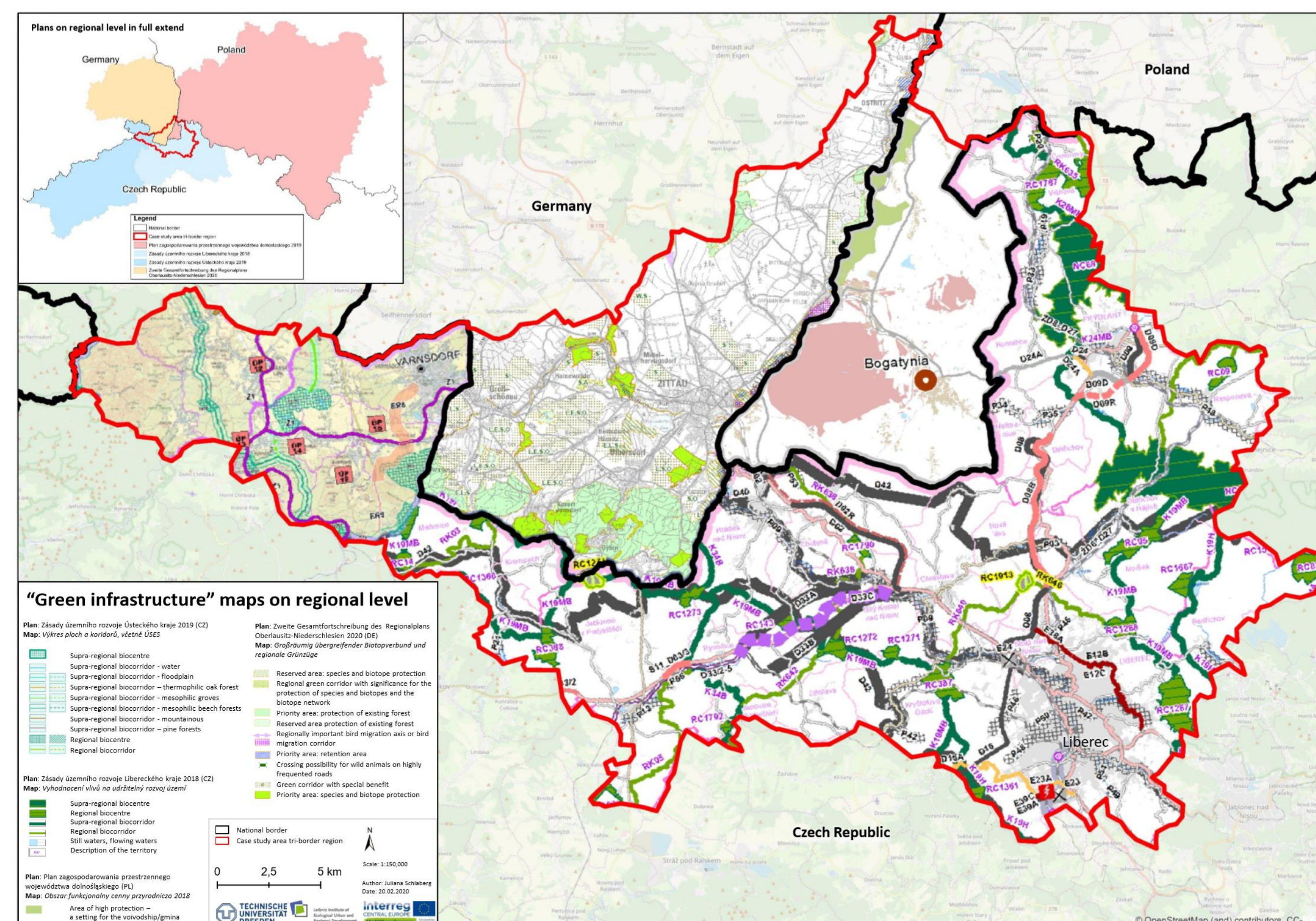
Planning and Implementing Green Infrastructure in the Tri-border region CZ-DE-PL

Juliana Schlberg

Introduction

Green infrastructure (GI) is a strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services. It incorporates green spaces (or blue if aquatic ecosystems are concerned) and other physical features in terrestrial (including coastal) and marine areas. Based on results from the Interreg MaGICLandscapes (Managing Green Infrastructure in Central European Landscapes) project, the research hypothesis was derived:

GI planning in general and across national borders could be improved in the tri-border region of CZ-DE-PL.



Map 1: Plans on regional level from Czech Republic, Germany and Poland within the Tri-border region study area of the MaGICLandscapes Interreg project, showing green infrastructure elements in different colours and with different definitions..

Research Questions

1. Are aspects of GI and its services already considered in existing plans? If yes in which intensity? Where can deficits be identified?
2. Is cross-border planning of GI taking place in the tri-border region? If yes in which intensity? Where can deficits be identified?
3. How could GI be better implemented into formal and informal planning in the tri-border region? Which concrete measures could promote the implementation of GI?

Methodology

- Questionnaire for stakeholders: Local knowledge about implementation and planning of GI
- Analysis of spatial development plans on regional and local level: Analysis concept developed out of literature with focus on implementation of GI, ecosystem services, and cooperation possibilities
- Assessment of needs and opportunities for GI during workshops in Liberec and Zittau
- Expert interviews: More detailed insights on specific projects and planning practise

Results

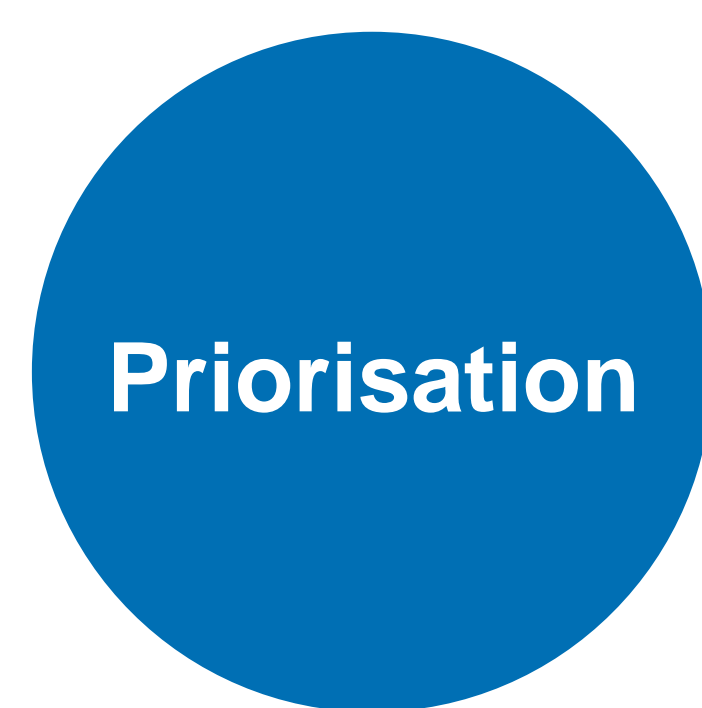
Different understandings of GI and thus distinct ecological networks impede cross-border planning of GI. While GI is already partially integrated through ecological networks in seven of the eight plans reviewed, each network is defined differently making cross-border comparisons and planning problematic.

None of the spatial development plans give GI the same priority as grey infrastructure although its many ecosystem services and their importance are already recognised and partially integrated. In particular, the multifunctionality of GI elements and the individual functions of GI have so far been insufficiently embedded in the formal plans as well as the coherence of the GI network.

In seven of the eight plans analysed, GI planning ends at the border and no proposal is made on the inclusion of neighbouring sites. However, the general need for cooperation is expressed in four plans.

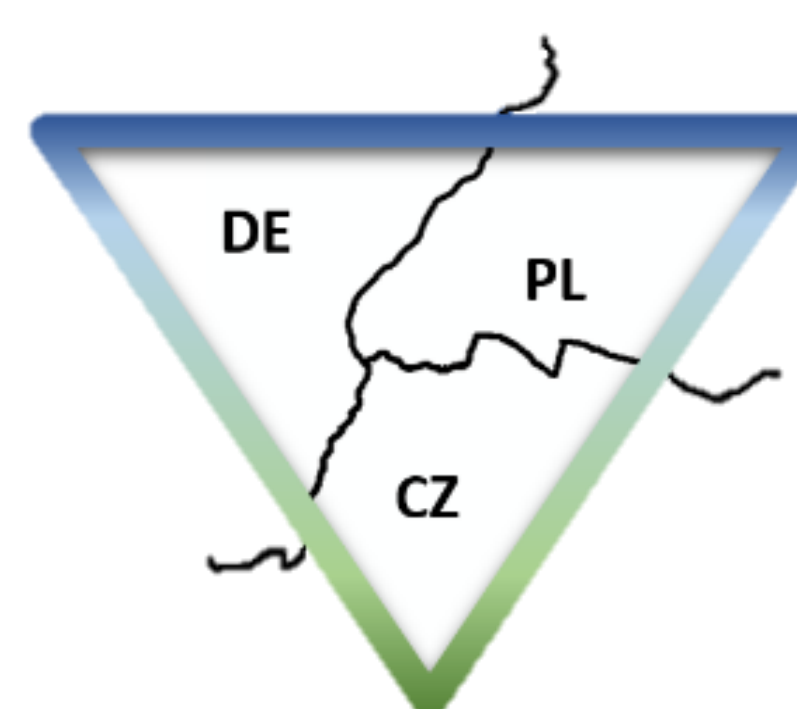
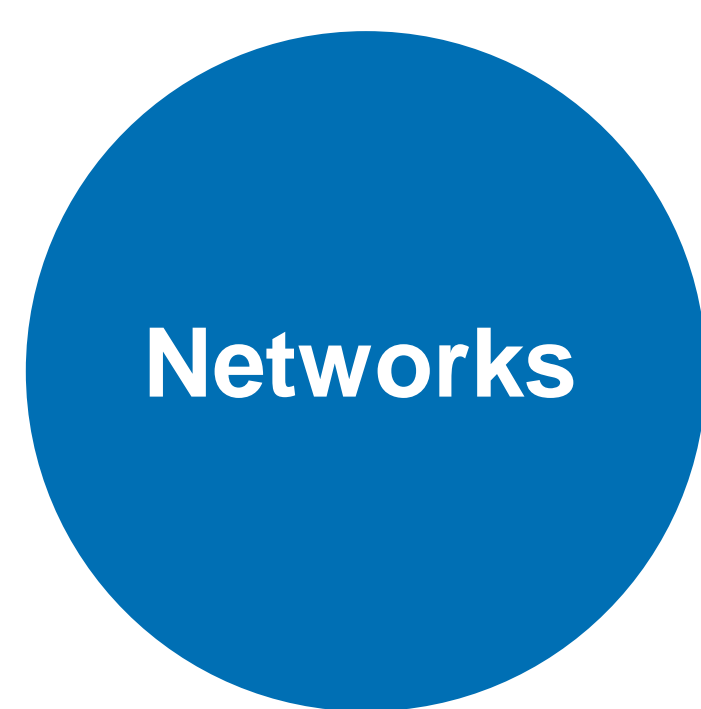
Recommendations and Vision

- Information on websites is available in at least two languages
- Availability of completely translated plans allow joint planning
- Language courses for staff of the planning authorities are offered and free of charge



- Implementation of GI into spatial development plans at local and regional level
- Equally treatment of grey and GI in planning

- Cities in the tri-border region provide up-to-date information regarding quantity, distribution and condition of GI in their urban area on their website
- A common geodata portal contains the cartographic presentations of all formal and informal planning, as well as on existing and planned GI
- The presentation of GI in maps is consistent in terms of colour and meaning
- Existing networks increase the exchange of information by more frequent meetings
- Regular meetings of stakeholders for GI in each city and across the country borders
- Initiatives involved in GI maintenance, improvement, protection or creation are listed on the website of each city with contact details
- Networking aspirations of initiatives across the border are supported by the cities by providing a meeting room and interpreters



- A trilingual office for joint spatial planning and projects is established
- Joint meetings of local authorities to discuss future aspirations for the region take place continuously
- A regional development concept with focus on GI in the border triangle is developed



- Environmental education creates a common understanding of GI
- Involvement of citizens in an early stage of the planning process
- Identified needs and opportunities for GI by stakeholders in this thesis are supplemented from the perspective of the local population

European Commission (2013a). Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Green Infrastructure (GI) - Enhancing Europe's Natural Capital. Brussels: European Commission.

All other sources can be found in Schlberg, J. (2020). Planning and Implementing Green Infrastructure in the Tri-border region CZ-DE-PL. Master thesis. Not published.

