Modelling landscape perceptions

in European Protected Areas

A study by Marie Micol, consultant for protected areas
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Summary

Landscapes are fascinating. They mean so much to all of us, yet from one person to the next the definition and description of a landscape can vary greatly. For some people, a landscape will be everything natural and human interacting to shape the land and with that the culture of people who live there. For others, a landscape will only exist where there is minimal human impact, and landscapes must therefore be ‘beautiful’, ‘pristine’ (which in itself is very subjective). For some, a landscape will be something that is seen from a viewpoint, whilst for others it is something that is felt, individually and / or collectively.

Are any of those perceptions more valid than others? When I started this study, I thought the ‘right’ way to approach landscapes and to manage them was through an integrated lens: landscapes for me were everything there is and was and will be. ‘My’ landscape was a blend of childhood memories in the deep forests, roaring economic activity down in the valley, and everything in between. I thought if everyone saw it like me, we could manage it better. My goal was to find a way to make that happen.

With this study I was therefore hoping to find out what lies behind protected area staff perceptions of landscapes and landscape approaches, in order to come up with a framework – a standard way for protected areas across Europe to apply an integrated, holistic management approach to their precious landscapes.

The study was supposed to bring me on a journey across four countries in Europe to uncover landscape perceptions. The global situation from 2020 onwards meant that I only got to visit one country (Italy) besides my home country (France), and the rest was conducted over ‘Zoom’, but this piece of work has nonetheless been for me a metaphorical journey: a journey of questioning and learning, of feeling inspired by you people who care for those special places we call ‘protected landscapes’.

This study is not a review of existing landscape approaches nor a review of theoretical models. The data I collected is a sample, resolutely practical, of what people in protected areas think about landscapes. It is asking important questions to those people who are in the position to shape the future of our most cherished landscapes in Europe. It is an invitation to pause and reflect on what we manage and care for.

With carefully crafted interviews, with 19 people in 7 different protected areas across France, Italy, Germany, and the United Kingdom, as well as a short online survey to over 40 people, I set out to uncover what landscapes were really all about. I found that there are as many landscapes as there are people. Each individual perception is a blend of many factors...
interplaying differently from one person to the next: what we like and care about, what we have lived, our aspirations for the future, our knowledge of a place (its history, its biology, its geology, etc.), our knowledge and appreciation of other places outside of it, and importantly our philosophical view on where humans fit in all of this!

What would become of my idea of a standardised framework to approach landscapes? I moved away from this initial goal and instead realised that the exercise I had conducted could be the basis for a methodology to enable protected area teams (and their partners) to ‘have the conversation’. Indeed, what I found is that people working in protected areas rarely get opportunities and time to stop and reflect on the bigger picture. Yet I feel this is hugely important in order for us to be able to tackle the enormous challenges we face (climate change, biodiversity loss, inequality of access to green spaces, and many others, ...). Landscape is indeed a concept which is intimately linked with the way we manage those places we cherish, today and for the future. Making these places resilient, accessible without harming them, is a key consideration when it comes to landscapes.

‘Have the conversation’ thus means first with yourself, to reflect and sometimes to even realise what landscape means for you. Importantly however, we need to have that conversation collectively. Indeed, I have found through this research that perceptions of landscapes vary enormously even within teams of protected area staff working closely together. They are not in contradiction, but they are different and call for different approaches to managing those places. To enhance local delivery, I therefore believe it is vital to enable this conversation within protected areas teams and with their close partners. We can only solve the complex challenges we face if we understand each other’s perceptions of landscapes and behind that, the reasons why we do the work we do.

This study has therefore brought me to develop a methodology to enable protected area teams to uncover variations in landscape perceptions, and what it means for their protected area management. My goal now is to refine this methodology and make it more consistent so that I can use it to empower protected landscapes across Europe to have these important conversations. There are as many landscapes as there are people and their strength comes from the fact that they come together to care for those landscapes and to bring a common vision forward. Protected areas are only as strong as the people who work to protect them.

This is not an academic paper. It is a think piece asking big questions. It is a eulogy to protected landscapes and the power they hold within them, to show the sustainable way forward and set the bar high. Ultimately, it is also a plea to resource them better, to believe in their potential and to enable them to fulfil what they were designed for: to bring people together, connect them to nature, and sustain liveable places.
Introduction
The premise to this study

Protected landscapes or protected areas? They refer to the same entities (designated places broadly encompassing nature reserves, regional and national parks, with variations across Europe), but many prefer using the former, a more evocative term for what we, professionals of this sector, care so deeply about… and yet, ask one person what they think a landscape is, then ask another: their answers will surely be different.

Why is that, and how can we protect landscapes when we all potentially mean different things? Shouldn’t we all agree on a definition? Is the way I define ‘landscape’ more correct than the way others perceive it? And which approach will take us closer to tackling complex challenges and achieving sustainable development in those precious places?

The European Landscape Convention defines the transdisciplinary aspect of ‘landscapes’, bringing together ecology (conservation, ecosystem services, etc.), economy (growth vs. sustainability, employment, public spending, etc.) and sociology (notably well-being, but also elements of culture and history). Building from that, landscape approaches encompass socio-cultural, economic, and environmental processes managed towards sustainable development.

This was my starting point for this study. I was convinced landscape approaches were the key to our future as protected area managers and staff.

Literature on the topic of landscape approaches is rather scarce, or rather not easily found through a simple ‘landscape approach’ search on Google. With some time I found a thorough review of landscape approaches (Arts, et al., 2017), which concluded that there was not one, but many landscape approaches. In fact, as many approaches as there are scientific disciplines referring to landscapes (planning, ecology, economy, sociology, political science, and many more). Scientists from various disciplines (combined or not) have devised theoretical models to support landscape approaches. The World Wide Fund For Nature also presents interesting and valuable guidance on the landscape approach (World Wide Fund For Nature, 2016) involving protected areas, but their potential involvement feels rather impersonal. In the literature I have read, I have struggled to find what role could protected landscapes play in all of that (although I recognise, I surely could have read even more).

Yet I know protected areas have an absolutely central role to play. As specialists of nature conservation and local engagement, they represent a substantial pool of knowledge. Many of them are also at the forefront of research and practice in many different areas of work and in
a very good position to define the relationships between natural, economic, and social processes and thus to lead on a landscape approach in their local areas.

Finally, one model caught my attention: the T-shaped professional (Arts, et al., 2017). Professionals managing landscapes need not only their expertise, but also various personal competencies, allowing them to bridge the gap with other disciplines, to understand complex landscape management problems, to handle conflicts, etc. Yes, this is fundamental. I have seen first-hand what fantastic results developing such competencies can bring, having participated in the Competent Inclusive Communications course elaborated by the EUROPARC Federation (EUROPARC Federation, 2021). This is also what my colleagues in the United Kingdom have worked on tirelessly for many years, implementing psychometric profiling and coaching methods with protected area staff to enable better collaboration (NAAONB, 2021). There is no doubt that this approach is the one that will take us forward as a sector.

Yet the question remained for me: what exactly are we managing?

Just a little over two years have passed since I first wrote my application for this scholarship. Then, I had been working in the environmental sector for only 8 months. I have grown professionally and personally but my ambition remains the same: to become a landscape specialist and help protected areas enhance their local delivery through the concept of landscape.

As highlighted above, I did not really know what it meant in practice then. Now with more experience and importantly through conducting this study, I have uncovered what I can do to support protected areas, local organisations, and communities in managing their landscapes for sustainable development, and what it might mean for them. Although I could not visit all the places I had planned to because of the global sanitary situation, I can say this study has nonetheless been a fantastic journey.
The objective

My initial goal when I applied for the scholarship was to develop a framework for landscape approaches, replicable in different regions, based on the understanding of ‘landscape’ and ‘landscape approach’ perceptions across Europe. The hypothesis was that some cultures (national, local, or organisational) might naturally bring stakeholders together to collaborate to deliver integrated landscape management, whilst others might initiate this approach after a change in legislation or institutions.

This objective has evolved as I carried out my interviews and analysed my results. As you will see in the analysis, I have moved away from defining a framework, and instead felt a more useful approach was to propose an overall model and methodology to capture the variety of perceptions around landscapes and how we manage them.

This is not an academic research, it is not exhaustive, and it is not perfect. Instead, it is an invitation, a short study asking important questions to people who are in the position to shape the future of some of our most cherished landscapes in Europe.

The method

The guiding principle in deciding which protected areas to visit (albeit virtually!) and who to interview was variety. By asking a variety of people from a variety of places (and countries) what they thought landscapes were, I was hoping to find some answers about landscape perceptions.

Here are the areas I planned to visit and the reasons why I included them in my application:

- Where I grew up (Isère, France): There is a strong sense of place and dynamic collaboration here. For example, artisan products from protected areas have a marked presence in most convenience stores and supermarkets. Also, the local economy is heavily dependent on mountain tourism (notably winter sports), and protected areas are at the heart of this important source of activity.
- Tuscany, Italy: The first region to set up a regional landscape plan in 2014 after a change in national legislation. I thought this might have some significance. Tuscany is also set between land and sea, renowned for its quality of life and vineyards, dependent on tourism, but also dependent on various land-related industries such as mining. This makes for very distinctive protected areas: 2 regional and 2 national parks and many periurban and rural nature reserves.

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1 A regional landscape plan is a planning tool at the regional level, which gives orientations for local planning and territorial development, with ambitions in terms of landscape and their quality.
Herford County, Germany: It is made up of 41 small nature reserves (natural and man-made habitats) of an average size of 40 hectares. There are no national nor regional parks in the wider area, notably due to the historic layout of human settlements. This brings variety to the overall study, by looking at the perceptions of smaller protected areas when it comes to their consideration in the landscape.

United Kingdom: This is where I have developed as an early environmental professional. I have a deeper understanding of the current perceptions and practices there, as well as the legislation. Yet I cannot simply state what ‘landscape’ means for British professionals working in protected areas.

Each protected area included in this study is presented in the next section.

After conducting some desk research I elaborated an interview guide to uncover what I felt were key elements in understanding landscape perceptions. These were:

1. Emerging landscape definition
2. Impact of language / culture
3. Composition of a landscape / coherence of several landscapes
4. Perception of landscape fluidity / continuity
5. Protected area role in relation to landscape management
6. Translation of these varied perceptions into practical management
7. Aspirations and blockages around landscape management

The plan was to visit each protected landscape in order to interview staff from various specialties, as well as elected representatives or supporting bodies (depending on the local governance). Naturally, this transformed into conducting virtual interviews for most places, although I was lucky enough to be able to visit protected areas in Italy, as well as, of course, those close to where I live in France.

I also devised a short questionnaire covering some of the above elements, in order to survey a larger population of protected area staff.

The results I would get from these interviews and surveys were completely unexpected and I did not attempt to develop a methodology to analyse them until all interviews were conducted (between July and December 2020). The methodology is thus further defined in the ‘Analysis’ section of this report.
Short descriptions of protected areas in this study

Parc Naturel Régional du Vercors

- 1970; 2,062 km²
- Auvergne Rhône-Alpes Region, France
- 53,000 inhabitants

The Vercors is a very vertical mountain range, rich in **biodiversity and culture**, with an important nature reserve at its core and many N2000 sites, as well as **several designations for artisanal products** and **native breeds** (cattle, horse, poultry). The Park overlooks **three major urban areas** and attracts many visitors year-round for its **outdoor activities**.

The **operational team** is made up of around 50 people. The governance also involves a **committee of elected representatives** (116 members) from all 83 municipalities as well as department- and regional levels, who then select **35 board members** for ongoing strategic decision-making.

This is where I spent most winters growing up – for me, it represents both **adventure** and **tranquillity**.
The Chartreuse was shaped over 1,000 years by the order of the Chartreux, the monks who found there an isolated and quiet place in the mountains for their religious calling, as well as dense forests to use for economic exploitation. The timber is now designated for its high quality and the monks also still to this day produce a famous, 400-year-old plant-based liquor (the Chartreuse). Its remarkable geology also gives it very diversified habitats and rich biodiversity. The operational team is made up of around 30 people, and the governance is the same as the Parc Naturel Regional du Vercors: a committee of elected representatives from all municipalities, department- and regional levels, and a selection of board members for ongoing decision-making.

The Chartreuse is where I was born, and where I live today. There is something unique and magical about this place: the smell of the forests, the majestic gorges and towering summits, the elusive presence of the lynx…

Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is made up of both coastlines and countryside. The geology, ecology and scenery have inspired generations of poets, authors, and artists, as well as scientists, giving the AONB a rich cultural heritage. With growing urban populations surrounding the area, leisure and recreation are important activities in the AONB, but agriculture remains a dominant land use. The marine environment is also important for the area as its management can have an impact inland. The AONB is also home to a portion of the Jurassic Coast, England’s only UNESCO natural World Heritage Site, and a major area for geology and fossils.

The operational team is made up of 7 people and is guided by the AONB Partnership, made up of representatives from local authorities, landowners, businesses, environment groups, and various government agencies.

Due to COVID restrictions I unfortunately did not get to visit Dorset AONB. However, I had the chance to work on an ad hoc basis with some members of the team on national AONB projects over the past few years. They struck me as strongly committed, creative, and genuinely collaborative!
This oddly shaped national park **embraces the coastline**, being about 16km wide at its widest point and 100m at its narrowest. It is famous for its **coastal landscapes and beaches**, but also boasts a wide range of **high-quality habitats and rare species**. It is also rich in its **cultural heritage**, with important castles and forts and many other scheduled monuments. The **team** managing the park has around 150 people, supported by a **committee** of 18 members, 12 of whom are nominated by Pembrokeshire County Council and the remaining 6 appointed by the Welsh government. All together, they form the **National Park Authority**.

I visited Pembrokeshire Coast National Park years ago, before I started my career working with AONBs. Although the Park is small, I remember **very varied landscapes** and a **sense of adventure** at the edge of Wales (notably a wonderful kayaking trip along the coastline!).

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**Kreis Herford**

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<th>N/A; 449.95 km² (nature reserves 17 km²)</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany</td>
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<td>250,547 inhabitants</td>
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[See 'Naturschutzgebiete' on their website](https://www.naturpark-herford.de)

NB: ‘Kreis’ in German means district, county.

There are **41 nature reserves** in the Kreis Herford, totalling approximately 17km² (3.8% of the total area). Their average size is 41 hectares, and the largest one is 220 hectares. Most of these areas are protected for their rich biodiversity: **species-rich wet grasslands**, **managed woodlands**, **brook valleys and floodplains**. A ‘typical’ view of the district is therefore made of soft rolling hills and creeks, with many agricultural lands and dotted with small woodlands and meadows, with rather dense settlements.

The nature reserves are managed by the **nature conservation authority within the Kreis Herford**, forming a small team of about 10 people. They are supported in their work by the **Biologische Station Ravensberg**, a private association founded by nature conservation NGOs, farmer associations and the Kreis Herford, focusing mainly on the practical care of those protected places and their ecological monitoring.

I did not get to visit the area due to COVID restrictions, but the Kreis Herford is actually **twinned with my hometown** in France (Voiron), so I am sure I will visit at some point!
The National Park is located where continental Europe meets the Mediterranean climate and this dualism is reflected in the landscapes and the cultures of its Northern and Southern sides. This is what makes it such a diverse place, both in terms of biodiversity and cultural heritage. Spectacular hikes, ancient villages, pastures for the Parmesan cheese, age-old woodlands…. From the highest peaks you can see the Alps as well as the sea.

The team managing the Park is made of around 10 people, with a governance structure including a President, a Board for strategic decisions, a Committee for financial management, and an Assembly made up of representatives from local and provincial public administrations. Since 2015 the National Park is also in charge of the UNESCO ‘Man and the Biosphere’ reserve embracing an area of 223,229 km² all around the Park, reasserting sustainable development (maintaining mountainous agriculture), sustainable tourism and environmental protection as cornerstones for the area.

I was lucky enough to visit the Park in 2020 – we were mesmerised upon arrival by the Pietra di Bismantova, a majestic, sacred mountain and a fantastic panoramic viewpoint over the Park!

Giogo Casaglia is characterised by medium-altitude mountains (~1,000 meters) carved by water, creating canyons and valleys rich in woodlands (approximately 75% of the Park) and pastures. For administrative and legislative reasons, the Giogo Casaglia complex is not yet designated as regional or national park, but it is however a state-owned area benefitting from legislative protection and notably hosting many N2000 sites. The ambition is very much to protect and enhance its precious landscapes and cultural heritage. It is accessible by car within less than 2 hours from Florence, a major urban area, and is therefore very popular for recreation and outdoor sports.

The operational team managing Giogo Casaglia is very small and supported by technical operators. The team is hosted by the Unione Montana dei Comuni del Mugello, a federation of municipalities covering the park area and beyond.

I only managed a short stop at Giogo Casaglia during my tour in Italy in 2020, but I got to wander through the sinuous roads to reach a pass overlooking the mountains and forests. Such a peaceful place so close to a large urban area.
The National Park is characterised by high mountains and deep forests, which are some of the most precious in Europe for their biodiversity and scenic beauty. At its heart lies the ‘Riserva Naturale Integrale di Sasso Fratino’ (a nature reserve where no human impact is allowed), instituted in 1959 to protect these ancient forests. The entire Park is rich in varied flora and fauna which the team works to protect.

The team managing the park is made up of 15 people, with a similar governance as the other National Park I visited in Italy: a President, a Board for strategic decision, a Committee for financial monitoring, and an Assembly of representatives from the various public authorities within the Park.

When I visited, I accessed the National Park via a long, sinuous road, with no GPS signal, thunderstorms roaring and forests all around me. I then reached the small town of Pratovecchio where their office is, just on the edge of the Park. It felt like I had arrived in some sort of sacred place, where humans fell silent to let nature express itself. The next day, the weather cleared up and this feeling was confirmed as I admired vistas of endless forests in every direction.
Analysis

Developing a methodology

I conducted a total of 15 interviews with 19 people – most interviews were individual, but I also experimented with group interviews in two places. A total of 44 people answered my online questionnaire (anonymously), from four protected areas. Although a few people I interviewed also answered the questionnaire, I have surveyed about 60 people overall. This was a lot of data to cope with, but also felt representative enough to give meaning to my results. However, please bear in mind this is still only a sample of perceptions from protected area staff in four different European countries and not an exhaustive survey of all European countries nor types of protected areas.

Before analysing the results, I thought I would be able to draw some sort of standard approach to landscapes, or at least a series of approaches based on commonalities between people I interviewed. After reviewing every interview and answers to the questionnaire, by summarising people’s answers to the seven elements mentioned in the Introduction, I concluded that standardising would not do justice to the diversity of perceptions, ideas and opinions collected through this exercise. I also concluded that developing a framework might be missing the point: what was powerful was how personal these answers were. There seemed to be as many perceptions of landscapes as there are people working in those places! How could I then capture this variety and make sense of it?

Through brainstorming ideas, I decided to model each individual interview, by grouping answers under four key headings:

**Individual landscape perception model**

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<th>WHAT</th>
<th>WHY</th>
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<tr>
<td>(landscape definition)</td>
<td>(protected landscape role)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHERE</th>
<th>HOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(landscape boundaries)</td>
<td>(protected landscape management)</td>
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</table>

Although this meant losing a bit of detail in the process, it also made the results easily comparable across and within protected areas. All 15 models from each interview are presented in Appendix 1. They have been anonymised to respect people’s privacy.
Analysing the individual perception models

Comparing the various individual models brought me to re-evaluate my initial objective: what was emerging was not a framework, but rather a method. A tool for protected area teams to ask themselves important questions and enable a conversation on landscapes. Although we all know in theory the purposes or our parks, many people I interviewed told me it was very interesting for them to reflect on the questions I asked them, to pause and take a moment to think about what they do every day when they manage those precious landscapes.

This study was thus not really about what the landscape approach is, but about getting people to reflect on what landscapes and a landscape approach mean for them.

One of my interviewees, James Parkin from the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, told me: ‘the conversation is the powerful bit’. This strongly resonated with the results from this analysis: there is not one definition of landscape, and there is not a single, ‘right’ way to manage those landscapes. Trying to set definitions into stone would be risking losing the power that lies within this ambiguity – instead, we can all ‘write ourselves into the story’ (as James Parkin puts it) and this is how we can move towards achieving common goals.

What struck me though, is that individual perception models within a single protected area vary greatly. They are not contradictory, and they can absolutely co-exist in the same reality, but they are different. They somehow form various pieces of a puzzle and together they form the overall management of a protected area. What I have come up with is thus a methodology to explore landscape management from the field and what I am hoping is that this could be useful for protected area teams to further enhance their delivery and management plans.

Another layer of analysis was then to try and find patterns across the various individual models. Were there more similarities between protected areas of the same country? Or between people with a similar role in their respective organisations? To find out, I extracted key themes from the models, and marked the occurrence of each theme against each interview. This detailed analysis is presented in Appendix 2.

This revealed that there are no visible patterns in this data. My initial hypothesis when applying for the scholarship was that legislation and national / local culture had a central role in explaining landscape perceptions and management. The absence of patterns means culture (nationally or locally) is not a determining factor. As for legislation, it was in fact mentioned only sporadically by a few people, except for Pembrokeshire Coast National Park where several important legal acts were referred to by almost everyone I interviewed (which is due to historic/political reasons, the Welsh government as an institution being rather ‘young’ in political terms and therefore using its powers to write new laws rather extensively).
This therefore only reinforces the result that there is no such thing as a standard model to approach landscapes. Instead, each person (in each place) has its very unique way of interpreting the concept and of managing it. However, it is worth highlighting that several themes occurred in at least two thirds of the interviews. These were:

- the notion that landscapes change, are dynamic;
- the impact from human activity on landscapes (positive or negative);
- the natural elements of landscapes, i.e. the habitats, fauna, and flora (which is of course something we should expect to see here!);
- the idea that there is a personal connection with a landscape, something to identify with;
- the fact that landscape boundaries are perceived rather than set, and that there is some sort of continuity or fluidity (meaning we cannot really tell when we come out of a landscape and into another one);
- the fact that protected areas are mosaics of diverse landscapes;
- the perception that protected areas exist in order to protect nature and landscapes (again a theme we could expect to be very common anyway!);
- the idea that landscapes are best managed in partnership, and that protected area teams are there to bring people together, to be neutral, to help achieve cohesion;
- finally, the fact that protected area teams are there to serve a place and to represent it, but also to ignite passion and carry a vision forward.

These key themes are somehow a testimony of what protected landscapes are at their core, of what it means to be working to protect these special places.

As for the online survey, this allowed me to generate further quantitative data, but it felt rather like a question mark in terms of usability – as it was online and meant for a high number of people, I wanted to keep it short and to the point. Looking at the results, except for a very small number of people who have written very long answers, it was impossible to draw individual models as I did through the interviews. It allowed however to draw more numbers on the occurrence of the key themes identified in the interviews. In the case of a very large protected area team (e.g. > 100 people), this method could enable them to open the conversation on landscape approaches without running detailed interviews with every single member of staff and making it a very lengthy process.

The online survey also allowed me to test questions and the kind of answers they bring. For example, looking at the overall results, you can see that the first question ‘Think about the landscape you work in: what elements is it made of?’ was answered systematically with natural elements (geology, habitats, fauna, and flora, etc.), and then some other elements. However,
the question ‘In the context of your work, and in your own words, how would you define the word ‘landscape’?’ brought more varied answers, with the nature / environment theme being present in only 20 answers out of the 44. In comparison, in the interviews I asked people to describe ‘their’ landscape, and this is what the ‘WHAT’ in the model was based on, meaning I did not directly ask how they defined landscapes. I felt this gave more powerful and detailed answers – asking for a definition can give rather dry answers, and not necessarily thought-through, whereas asking people what they put in their landscape makes it immediately personal.

**Difficulties and limits**

This study was resolutely practical – I did not want to create theoretical concepts that no one could apply in their own area. When I started this journey, I thought my approach of landscapes was the ‘right’ one (to simplify, I was abiding to the definition from the European Landscape Convention), and I was hoping to find a framework, a standard way to help protected area teams implement it in their areas. My hypothesis was that culture and legislation were determining factors in making this happen (or keeping this from happening). It is through conversations that I realised that there is no such a thing as right or wrong when defining landscapes, because they are in essence a personal (and yet also collective!) experience.

It was thus a difficult process to let a methodology and conclusions emerge without forcing my own views. For some months I thought I had done it all wrong! However, I did intentionally design my interview questions to not lead people in any particular direction – I wanted to let them tell me what they thought about it all. It was after all a study about perceptions. I was expecting that answers would vary, but I surely did not expect they would be so deep and unique. Another difficulty came from the amount of data I had collected. Reviewing interviews and processing information was a very lengthy process, notably because I did not initially have a methodology in place and because I did not know what I was looking for. Brainstorming with my colleague and mentor Richard Clarke helped me navigate this phase of the project.

As for limits to this short study, I have identified three:

- The places I chose to visit are all located in Western Europe, meaning the ‘culture’ is, to an extent, rather uniform (although there are variations as we have observed!); I think this study could really benefit from more data from other parts of Europe and other types of protected areas (notably marine ones, where the notion of landscape/seascape could take us to a whole other dimension!).
- I was not fully consistent in the way I asked interview questions: in some cases the people interviewed talked for most of the time without me asking anything, and I then associated their answers back to my questions, but there were sometimes a few gaps;
I also did not always use the exact same set of words, as I was going with the flow of the conversation – how much did that impact final results? This is hard to tell. However, this allowed me to test and reflect on the methodology, and how certain questions can give valuable answers and should not be skipped.

- The list of key themes extracted from the interviews is possibly biased by my own appreciation of what is ‘key’. It deserves to be refined further. This would best be done by assessing the individual models with other people and to then test that with yet another group of people, to avoid bias and ensure everything that needs to be captured is indeed present in the list.
Conclusions

How this study will be used

As mentioned above, this scholarship has enabled me to develop a basis for a powerful tool to enable conversations about landscapes within protected area teams. This could also be extended to their local partners. There is now for me a path ahead: to refine this methodology and test it more extensively, with more varied protected areas, in order to propose a thorough and advanced tool for protected areas to carry out this exercise so it serves their management. This could be useful for example in the context of a management plan review, or for any team trying to tackle this complex concept that is ‘landscape’. Indeed I believe enabling these conversations around landscapes and how we manage them is crucial to empower teams to work more cohesively, between individuals but also across different services.

It would make sense to start this other journey with Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the United Kingdom, since this is where I have a strong, established network of professional relationships. However, I prefer extending this to the rest of Europe right-away, rather than risking making the tool too specific to the British context. Another key step for me will therefore be to call onto the EUROPARC network to test and use the methodology I will propose.

Recommendations

Have the conversation! Ask colleagues and managers what they think landscapes are, what they mean, what we as protected areas are supposed to do with them, and more. I can only encourage every protected area team to stop a moment and reflect on these important questions. Many people I interviewed told me they felt ‘landscape’ was an important concept for the future, yet they felt unsure how to address it, because it is complex and can be confusing. It can even lead to conflict, as many interviewees have pointed out, when different visions of a landscape are in contradiction.

Another important recommendation falling from the first one is to not try and impose a specific perception of landscapes. Rather, I would invite everyone working in protected areas to accept and even to celebrate the fact that others see their landscapes differently. This is possibly where the key to protecting these special places lies, for us all now and for future generations.

Finally, please do get in touch (marie@integrated-landscapes.eu) if you would like some support to conduct such an exercise within your team!
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Appendix

Appendix 1 – Individual Perception Models and Survey Results

Individual landscape perception model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT</th>
<th>WHY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(landscape definition)</td>
<td>(protected landscape role)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHERE</th>
<th>HOW</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(landscape boundaries)</td>
<td>(protected landscape management)</td>
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</table>
How to read the individual perception models?

The intended reading of these models goes in the following order:

- from the top left (WHAT – landscape definition);
- to the bottom left (WHERE – landscape boundaries);
- to the top right (WHY – protected landscape role);
- and finally the bottom right (HOW – protected landscape management).

Each individual model is meant to give you an overall picture of a person’s perceptions on the various elements assessed in the study (presented in the introduction of this report).

Visual or textual representations of landscapes are added in the very top left corner where people provided them.
Person A
Parc Naturel Régional du Vercors

LANDSCAPE DEFINITION

- Economic activity doesn’t harm the environment
- Human + Nature
  - Visual identity: cliffs, verticality, forests (70%)
  - Abandoned farlands, natural succession
  - Geological history
- Aesthetics
  - Some exceptional sites deserve very strict protection, limited H activity
- Dynamic concept

LANDSCAPE BOUNDARIES

- ‘Unités paysagères’ (landscape units): hard boundaries for practical reasons
- Mosaic of varied landscapes w common elements (limestone, forests, cliffs)
- The mountain is the limit (geomorphological criteria, used to create PNRR)
- Used for education / awareness-raising (tool) with elected representatives
- Political dimension: for aesthetics, it would be good to integrate surrounding municipalities, to avoid visual sharp stop

PROTECTED LANDSCAPE ROLE

- Push economic activity while respecting nature and aesthetic
- Preserve exceptional character: Natural heritage + Cultural heritage + Landscape heritage + Keep the Parc open and inhabited
- Enable necessary transitions (ecological, climatic, energetic...)
- Maintain balance: Protection of nature + Attractiveness, economic resilience

PROTECTED LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

- 2 key lenses, interlinked
  - Landscape
  - Biodiversity
  - Essence of our work = gather stakeholders around management of the Parc
- We have to listen
- Dialogue and collaboration are anchored in us
- A useful, cross-cutting tool
- Make links btw topics, allow everyone to talk about everything
- In practice, some services of the Parc are less inclined to use integrated approach, their focus is on nature
"The landscape is an encounter, a unique encounter between the memory of a place and the movement of societies, between the individual onlooker and a collective living environment, between heritage and project."

*In Histoire et mémoire d’un maquis - Gilles Vergnon - 2002

**Person C**
Parc Naturel Régional du Vercors

**LANDSCAPE DEFINITION**

- Natural element + Evolution linked to human action
- Heritage + Present + Future
  - Not something we put in a glass case; it is alive and forever changing
  - Perceived by individuals
  - A connection, a place to live

**The ELC’s definition... but with more sensibility**

**LANDSCAPE BOUNDARIES**

- Several landscapes within the territory of the Vercors
- Common characteristics in all of them
- Cliffs are hard landscape boundaries
- Piedmont plains offer some continuity

**The Parc must however form a coherent whole**

**PROTECTED LANDSCAPE ROLE**

A Parc is a rural, inhabited landscape, which is attractive and dynamic (influence from Grenoble and Valence)

- Being a Parc allows this place to be a living territory, to stand out, to create connections
- This is what it exists for
- It is a geomorphological entity with plural identities, coming together with a single voice
- The landscape is a key concept in the foundation and definition of any Parc

**PROTECTED LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT**

Landscape is a tool and a lens for planning

- One lens amongst others (e.g., biodiversity, agriculture...,)
- A fantastic tool to enable discussion, take on complex issues, get qualitative answers
- In practice however, it is dealt with rather unequally between institutions we work with (when it comes to planning)

Our strength comes from our ability to work together, in particular to make the Parc more attractive

- The whole team is progressively more versed in the concept of landscape
- The charter revision brings the landscape at the centre of discussions

*translated from French*
Person D
Parc Naturel Régional du Vercors

LANDSCAPE DEFINITION

Everything I carry
- Collective memory
- Family values
- Personal journey
- My Senses
- Mindset evolution (subjective)
- Material dynamics (factual)

Time dimension

Everything I see
- Like a jigsaw:
  - Relief: cliffs, valleys
  - Humans
  - Urban pressure
  - Mountain roads
  - Cave
  - Hydro-electric plant
  - Caprine
  - Paragliders
  - Ozine

Cyclical evolution

The landscape is both an object to analyse and a subject / a tool for mediation

LANDSCAPE BOUNDARIES

Standing in a landscape, I see all other landscapes around, they are not really external

No hard boundaries

LANDSCAPE ROLE

An exceptional territory: diversity of landscapes but also social and cultural diversity

An ability to remain exceptional: stakeholders working together, and a dedicated team serving this process

PROTECTED LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

Approach
- Landscape allows travelling:
  - Btw micro and global scale
  - Btw yesterday, today and tomorrow / in 50 years

Helps define the questions we must ask for functionality and aesthetic

Provide advice and the appropriate tools for decision-making

Culture
- Team must convey this diversity and its importance, be open and listen, convey dynamism
- This requires a certain degree of neutrality, whilst also setting limits

Helps bridge the gap when institutions (including the Parc itself) are not cross-cutting enough in their management
Online survey – theme occurrence
Parc Naturel Régional du Vercors

Think about the landscape you work in: what elements is it made of?

Change, dynamism
It's a visual concept
Human activity / impact
Exceptional place, aesthetics
Nature / environment
Perception, senses, feelings
Connection with place, identity
Diversity
It's a tool, a lens

In your own words, what do you think the purpose of a protected area is?

- Maintain a balance
- Preserve an exceptional place
- Enable responsible access & activity
- Enable transition, sustainable development
- Protect nature / landscapes
- Represent a unique identity, manage as whole
- Enable gathering of stakeholders, resolve conflicts
- Serve the territory
- Preserve diversity (social, cultural, ...)
- Promote well-being
- Educate, understand, raise-awareness

In the context of your work, and in your own words, how would you define the word ‘landscape’?

Change, dynamism
It's a visual concept
Human activity / impact
Exceptional place, aesthetics
Nature / environment
Perception, senses, feelings
Connection with place, identity
Diversity
It's a tool, a lens

Does your protected area management team exist to bring stakeholders together to manage that landscape?

Yes
No
Cross-cutting to enable everything we do
Secondary, not the main reason but nonetheless very important

What type of stakeholders do you work with to manage that landscape?

Local/regional public bodies
National govt
Local communities (incl. schools)
Third-sector orgs (env. focus)
Third-sector orgs (social focus)
Third-sector orgs (cultural focus)
Local, small-scale businesses
Large-scale businesses
Universities, research institutes, etc.
Grant providers (foundations and others)
Investors (foundations, banks, investment funds, etc.)
Other protected area teams or other env. designations
Person E
Parco Nazionale delle Foreste Casentinesi

LANDSCAPE DEFINITION

What visitors come for
Visual / aesthetic
significance

Environmental
significance

Dynamic: we should limit our impact on the NATURAL transformation of the landscape

Changes in forest composition
Natural succession (old pastures)

Forever evolving identity / character of the landscape

The landscape is firstly a visual concept, but intimately linked to biodiversity

FORESTS

LANDSCAPE BOUNDARIES

Mosaic of landscapes w/ commonalities: mountains, old forests, some pastures, younger forests, many chestnut trees...

Emilia Romagna Region ➔ Historically more pastures (Papal Sates), many left unmanaged now

Toscanca Region ➔ Historically more forest protection (Medici)

Some continuity on both sides (mountains & forests) but weaker protection from the law outside of Parc ➔ woodcutting

= 'Riserva Integrale' at the heart of the Parc

PROTECTED LANDSCAPE ROLE

Preserve natural processes

Conservation and research / monitoring (biodiversity):
put an end to wood cutting and harvesting of forests for profit, to stop destruction

Tourism economy:
encourage people who come to ‘admire’ and take it all in, rather than to ‘use’

Education:
general public and local decision-makers, teaching them to value this landscape

Typical landscapes
Biodiverse ecosystems

PROTECTED LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

Each action measured against impact on landscape and biodiversity

Dynamic: preserve natural evolution of landscapes and ecosystems

Strong commitment to the mission, ready to act

The team is serving the territory, each staff with their own expertise ('an operational ecosystem')

Approach

Culture

Work with universities, citizen science, research institutes, etc.
Work with tourism actors

The main obstacle for action is often the bureaucracy (blocks with administrations, slow progress...)

Towards Mugello
Towards Casentino
Online survey – theme occurrence
Parco Nazionale delle Foreste Casentinesi

Think about the landscape you work in: what elements is it made of?

- Change, dynamism
- It’s a visual concept
- Human activity / impact
- Exceptional place, aesthetics
- Nature / environment
- Perception, senses, feelings
- Connection with place, identity
- Diversity
- It’s a tool, a lens

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- Enable transition, sustainable development
- Protect nature / landscapes
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- Enable gathering of stakeholders, resolve conflicts
- Serve the territory
- Preserve diversity (social, cultural, ...)
- Promote well-being
- Educate, understand, raise-awareness

In the context of your work, and in your own words, how would you define the word ‘landscape’?

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- No
- Cross-cutting to enable everything we do
- Secondary, not the main reason but nonetheless very important

What type of stakeholders do you work with to manage that landscape?

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- National govt
- Local communities (incl. schools)
- Third-sector orgs (env. focus)
- Third-sector orgs (social focus)
- Third-sector orgs (cultural focus)
- Local, small-scale businesses
- Large-scale businesses
- Universities, research institutes, etc.
- Grant providers (foundations and others)
- Investors (foundations, banks, investment funds, etc.)
- Other protected area teams or other env. designations
Group interview (4 people)
Parco Nazionale Appennino Tosco-Emiliano

**LANDSCAPE DEFINITION**
- A dynamic compromise, a balance
  - Human activities
  - Semi-natural elements

Diversity: forests, meadows, pastures, rocky areas, altitude and South/North variations...

"Every time I look at the landscape, I modify it."

**LANDSCAPE BOUNDARIES**

The landscape is a mirror, we represent the landscape, and it represents us.

**PRIVILIGED LANDSCAPE ROLE**
- Maintain a good balance
  - Well-being
    - For people who live here and visit
  - Nature conservation
    - This balance is always evolving
  - Sustainable socio-eco development
    - Risk of contradictions and conflicts
    - Be a lab for experimentation, be a model of sustainable development, prepare for change

- Maximised biodiversity
  - For everyone in the world, and future generations

**LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT**
- All our areas of work have an indirect impact on the landscape
- It is rarely the main objective, but it is there as a common thread
- It is used as a lens (e.g., reading the CEP with students and applying it to our landscapes)
- It is source of debate, notably between generations (e.g., nice forests, accepting change vs. abandoned land, degraded landscapes?)

- Be convinced of the value of the Parc, and its ability to instigate change
  - Together as a team we carry a vision, we are an idea
  - We continuously learn from others, especially other parks
  - We must communicate carefully, share the right messages
  - We must facilitate conversations, compose with different versions of the landscape

- Personal perceptions, future ambitions...

- Ongoing relationship with the globalised world...

- Emilia Romagna Region
- Toscana Region
- Parmigiano Reggiano cheese
- Tuscan wines

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Person F
Parco del Giogo Casaglia

LANDSCAPE DEFINITION

- Full of history, heritage
- Woods (70 to 80% of the landscape) → colours, biodiversity
- Pastures and orchards
- Network of paths and lodges

‘The beauty of our Appennino’, our local identity

Appreciate and enhance what we see

A ‘green’, rural landscape, changing with human activity or non-activity

LANDSCAPE BOUNDARIES

The past forms boundaries with which we perceive and manage the landscapes of the area:
- Old abbey of Moscheta
- Traditional chestnut production
- WW2 Gothic Line
- ...

PROTECTED LANDSCAPE ROLE

To protect and enhance, with caution

Minimise intervention

To enhance all these sites together as a whole, even though the park is not designated yet (because of administrative reasons)

Numerous N2000 sites

PROTECTED LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

Approach

Let the natural changes happen, whilst compromising with various pressures

Climate Change and diseases affecting forest composition

Need for open areas for visitors

Culture

The team is small, in large part they are technical staff for operations

Ensure the rules are applied correctly, that forestry interventions are appropriate, that N2000 sites are cared for properly

Invite populations to reflect on historical landscapes, so they value them (more diverse and a source of identity for the place)
Person G
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park

LANDSCAPE DEFINITION

Beautiful, unspoilt countryside

Ancient monuments  Biodiversity  Roaring sea, coast  Small villages, farm buildings

‘A few things don’t match’, but beautiful landscapes characterise the Park

Human impact

Negative: Caravan park approved in the 50s spoils the landscape
Positive: Prevent harmful alterations (e.g. wind turbines application rejected)

Invisible

LANDSCAPE BOUNDARIES

Seascapes + Landscapes

Three distinct landscapes:
1. Estuary
2. Preseli Hills
3. Coastline (mainly dairy)

Continuity with Pembrokeshire region: people can’t tell when they come out of the Park

LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

PROTECTED LANDSCAPE ROLE

Protect and enhance the landscape
... whilst allowing people to enjoy it without harming it

Education role
For people to understand what we are doing and why

Resolve conflicts
Provide opportunities for communities to live and work

Conservation imperatives

Approach

Landscape a key consideration in planning: “What you don’t grant planning for is what matters most”

We and our partners are all working towards the same goal

Culture

We influence where interests diverge
 Others help us reach solutions, they challenge us

Making partners aware of their duty to the Park
 We draw on their expertise & power when needed

Well being & Future Generations Act: looking at long-term impact

Organisations are willing to work together in Pembrokeshire, partnership work in Wales functions quite well

Silkin test: major development must be in the national interest

Value and Resilient Policy => Park has more value in the eyes of the public

Env. Act: planning must give regard & enhance biodiversity, not just mitigate

Standford principle: conservation is priority when there is conflict between our two purposes

= military training zone (unspoilt and special, but impact from noise)
Person H
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park

LANDSCAPE DEFINITION

- It’s not just visual, we live in it, we don’t just look at it
- Concept is often misunderstood

LANDSCAPE BOUNDARIES

- Five distinctive landscapes:
  1. Northern Coastline
  2. Southern Coastline
  3. St Brides Bay
  4. Estuary
  5. Preseli Hills

- Continuity towards marine habitats
- Continuity into Pembrokeshire region
- Welsh speaking
- English speaking

PROTECTED LANDSCAPE ROLE

- To conserve the National Park
- Natural environment + Socio-economic elements
- Conserve the landscape (not just environmental) = an area that can flourish

PROTECTED LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

- Approach
- Culture

- ‘Landscape’ is often misunderstood and treated in parts instead of as a whole
- It is not specifically mentioned in key legislation (Environment Act, Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, Welsh Environment Act)
- Many other concepts are ‘behind’ the landscape, but it is all rather complex
- In practice we tend to use the landscape in small scale/short term assessments rather than long-term and landscape-wide impact

- Our work is engagement and persuasion, support
- We don’t own land, we can only influence
- The level of engagement is as wide as we make it
- We have a responsibility to influence and engage with others, it’s a natural part of our work

- ‘It’s the right thing to do’

- e.g. wind turbine application rejected based on impact on landscape new, without consideration for what will happen to the landscape because of Climate Change (i.e. not using wind turbines)
Any view of Tenby (a small harbour town in the South of the Park): ‘a microcosm of everything in one location’, a very personal connection, a bond with the place, something intoxicating

**Person I**
**Pembrokeshire Coast National Park**

**LANDSCAPE DEFINITION**
Predominantly a visual aesthetic
- It’s subjective, emotive, flows over human boundaries...
- Other aspects / benefits flow from that
- Something that is experienced, both individually and collectively
  - Can generate tension e.g. one desiring tranquility, others a big bike ride...
  - ‘An intoxicating blend of things’

**LANDSCAPE BOUNDARIES**
Endless to characterise every landscape → ‘It’s not about how many different bits of landscape you have, but rather about how many different experiences you can have in one location’

**PROTECTED LANDSCAPE ROLE**
- Represent freedom and escape
  - Where economic exploitation stops
  - Somewhat ‘pristine’
- Where I can be somebody else
  - People do things in Parks which they wouldn’t do back home, like an adventure
- Purpose of the Park is to get people to carry that back home: be healthier, care for the environment, appreciate nature, etc.
- Nature gives equally to everybody, no one can rob you of the experience

**PROTECTED LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT**
- Maximising the range of socio-economic outcomes, make the Park accessible
  - ‘special qualities’ of landscapes, universal = tool to have a conversation, elicit an emotional response
  - ‘exploiting’ the landscape for economic and social outcomes
  - Should be more driven to integrate underrepresented groups, a fundamental ethical issue

**Approach**
- Collective ownership: We are a conduit to make things happen, we only have a role if people who live here and visit care
- Moving collective goals forward with nature as a cornerstone
- Everything we do must work for local communities
- Ignite passion so people care, act through joint agreement

**Culture**
- The conversation is powerful, we don’t need to define landscapes, to label the Park, we are just part of a process of looking after a special place

**Tenby: all facets of the Park in one location (Beaches, cliffs, island, heritage...)**

**Continuity into Pembrokeshire region**, people don’t see the boundary but they might have a different perception, the Park is this special place, an idea
‘A place where your horizons are only limited by the curvature of the earth’

A peninsula on the end of a peninsula in the very far corner of the country. Arriving in Pembrokeshire from inland it may seem like a pleasant but perhaps unremarkable rural, pastoral landscape of undulating agricultural fields. It's only when you reach the edge of the land that the magic happens; at the dynamic meeting point of land and the sea, where the drama of the stormy Atlantic meets the incredibly varied rocky coastline in a spectacular way.

The sense of wildness, an untouched place where you are at the mercy of nature, wind, weather, waves and tides. No other protected landscape where you move so quickly from developed to wild – you can literally walk off the pavement in Tenby onto the shore and be amongst a wild landscape surrounded by some of the most protected species and habitats in Europe.

**Person J**

**Pembrokeshire Coast National Park**

**LANDSCAPE DEFINITION**

- **Dynamic meeting point of land and sea, complex geology = spectacular**
- **Wilderness**: humans can’t influence the wind, the waves and the tides
  - Some of the most protected species and habitats in Europe
  - People feel it is wild
- **Remote**: at the end of a peninsula
  - Small but feels huge
- **Our landscape only exists because of the sea, the rest is pleasant but not remarkable (pastoral, rural landscape)**

**LANDSCAPE BOUNDARIES**

- **Geology and culture create different landscapes, very varied**
  - In practice, divided up in landscape character areas (separate development plans)

- **‘A series of landscapes that make it a whole’**

- **The sea and the view from the cliffs are part of the landscape experience**, although they are outside of the park

- The Park is **like a necklace around the edge** of Pembrokeshire county

- **Welsh speaking**
- **English speaking**
- **Landsker line: cultural distinction**

**PROTECTED LANDSCAPE ROLE**

- Park exists to ensure we use this special place wisely, that we don’t destroy it with unrecoverable changes

- It is there so we don’t lose what is precious to economic exploitation

- **Challenge** = interface of industry / development vs. protection of landscape

**PROTECTED LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT**

- **We are the administrators and custodians** of this special place
  - To persuade, encourage, foster a sense of partnership
  - We work with everybody!
    - Everyone has a role to play
  - We don’t own the land, so we rely on everyone else
  - We need others to relay our messages, to be ambassadors

- **Risk of getting into the detail, but the landscape portrays all the different factors – we can explain the whole picture**
  - **Landscape** = geology + nature + cultural heritage + how people use(d) the land...

- **Explain how the jigsaw works**, to all sorts of audience

- **Not an easy concept for people**, we also talk about interdependence (e.g. following a stream)
Text from Person K describing ‘their’ landscape:
There are lots of photos I could choose to send, but no one photo would be sufficient. So here are some words instead...!

- I guess I see landscape as emergent, from natural resources and processes, including human interactions. People’s perceptions of the landscape are varied and individuals’ views also change. There is possibly also an idealised landscape in mind, from some past or future, when people are looking at a vista.

- Park management in an IUCN Cat 5 landscape like this one would aim to reduce adverse human influences on the natural environment, while enabling people to enjoy and understand it. This might often involve working with people’s perceptions, including staff’s (what is a natural environment anyway?), However for me the outcome of management is not necessarily about preserving landscape character, but about conserving and improving landscape quality and function, in terms of the state of biodiversity, soils, water, heritage etc (incidentally, mapping is really helping us here). A consequence of this is that the attributes of a protected area may be changing from those for which it was designated.

- By managing in this way, people can derive enjoyment and well-being from the Park’s intrinsic qualities in “perpetuity”, even as these qualities change. These can also be measured, although of course people’s expectations change, which changes the reported experience.

A colleague once said to me, “We get the landscapes we deserve” and I think I begin to understand!
Person L
Parc Naturel Régional de Chartreuse

LANDSCAPE DEFINITION

- **Forests:** substantial and typical for our landscapes
- **Mountains:**
  - Covers most of the park

Visible from outside the park: varied landscapes as you go through passes and gorges

The variation of landscapes through passes and gorges is our charm and asset.

LANDSCAPE BOUNDARIES

- **Passes and gorges form natural boundaries**
- **People coming from cities:** when do they start to 'breathe', to feel they are within nature?
- **Continuity** towards other mountain ranges (North, East and South)

PROTECTED LANDSCAPE ROLE

- "PNR" = a national label
  - We must demonstrate this is an exceptional, yet threatened territory

- Protect and preserve this heritage (ecological and cultural diversity), for today and tomorrow

Education + awareness-raising role

PROTECTED LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

- From the landscape plan we now have, the next step is to put it into actions
- The team is there to realise the ambitions of the charter, the ‘armed wing’ of the park

A **new approach** for the park, a lot to learn and think differently
- It will give more overall coherence to our actions over time
- From the landscape plan we now have, the next step is to put it into actions

- **A neutral entity** but with clear missions (the general interest)
- Need to prepare for the future, with ‘landscape’ a major stake (currently no specialist)
- Often have to resolve land use conflicts: team is here to bring people together

The park cannot do everything on its own, they must bring people (inhabitants, visitors, businesses...) to care so they are co-responsible for biodiversity and landscapes → participatory approaches are key
Person M
Parc Naturel Régional de Chartreuse

LANDSCAPE DEFINITION

‘Personal’ landscape...
- Pine forests
- Chaotic relief
- Peaks & passes
- Snow (part of the year)

‘Emblematic’ landscapes, which people notice...
- Villages, hamlets
- Expanding forests
- Historic sites (monastery)
- Mountain pastures

Atypical
- Rather open view

... and that’s not everything, there are other landscapes in the Chartreuse

LANDSCAPE BOUNDARIES

Hills (Western side):
- Softer relief
- Calmer nature, with humans & agriculture

Heart of the Parc:
- Chaotic relief
- Wilder nature

Varied landscapes within these

No sharp boundary to the West, continuing with hilly landscapes

More abrupt limit on other sides, the mountain range stops, then plains are not really part of the landscape

PROTECTED LANDSCAPE ROLE

Preserve a specific place for its rural and mountainous characteristics

Against pressure from neighbouring cities, exacerbated by climate change

Guide the evolution of traditional activities (agriculture, forestry) while minimising impacts on landscapes

PROTECTED LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

For now lacking competencies to innovate and be creative in terms of landscapes
- Focus on maintaining what is
- Aspiration to propose new forms which can integrate within the landscape
- Landscape as tool to apprehend evolution of our territory and impact of the charter
- Difficult in practice, creates confusion, requires a lot of explanation
- Landscape is fluid and perceived ≠ technocratic ambition of units and objectives (an exercise for the sake of it?)

Approach
- Bring technical competencies to elected representatives: biodiversity, agriculture, forestry...
- Raising awareness

Culture
- Bring unity, be a link, be responsible for coherence across the Parc

Practical implementation comes from the various stakeholders, we are here to gather them, make them go forward together

40
Group interview (2 people)
Herford County

LANDSCAPE DEFINITION
Humans have been living here for over 6000 years, shaping the landscapes
Positive
Past
Human impact
Negative
Present
Natural change process, yet ongoing impact required to maintain a certain landscape...
= ‘protecting something that is on the move’
Urban hotspots
Agriculture
Rivers & streams
Dense road network
Meadows
Soft hills, creeks
Woodlands

‘Landscape change is what makes our work exciting.

LANDSCAPE BOUNDARIES
Boundaries of nature reserves are where regulations apply, we need them to do the work
One main landscape, but many different landscapes within, at different scales...
It’s a matter of perspective; plants and animals might see hard borders where we don’t...
Boundaries are artificial, not necessarily right for nature...

PROTECTED LANDSCAPE ROLE
Our role is to protect the landscape and nature as a whole
In practice we have to concentrate our efforts where we have influence = nature reserves
Necessity to work outside of these boundaries for connectivity
Focus on hotspots of plants and animals
but there are valuable areas which don’t fall under our protection

PROTECTED LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT
Approach
Culture
Landscape management is managing change
Managing people in partnership is key to achieving our goals
Maintain in evolution
Connect interests, resolve conflicts, find ways to work together
Educate on landscape history, to not lose this precious understanding
Accept diverging interests allows us to find common ground
Manage pressures from recreation, human presence
The influence of politics is often neglected, but it has a strong impact on our work:
we don’t decide on future direction, nature conservation remains a side issue and lacking support is often a barrier
Online survey – theme occurrence
Dorset AONB

Think about the landscape you work in:
what elements is it made of?

- Change, dynamism
- It's a visual concept
- Human activity / impact
- Exceptional place, aesthetics
- Nature / environment
- Perception, senses, feelings
- Connection with place, identity
- Diversity
- It's a tool, a lens

In the context of your work, and in your own words, how would you define the word ‘landscape’?

- Change, dynamism
- It's a visual concept
- Human activity / impact
- Exceptional place, aesthetics
- Nature / environment
- Perception, senses, feelings
- Connection with place, identity
- Diversity
- It's a tool, a lens

In your own words, what do you think the purpose of a protected area is?

- Maintain a balance
- Preserve an exceptional place
- Enable responsible access & activity
- Enable transition, sustainable development
- Protect nature / landscapes
- Represent a unique identity, manage as whole
- Enable gathering of stakeholders, resolve conflicts
- Serve the territory
- Preserve diversity (social, cultural, ...)
- Promote well-being
- Educate, understand, raise-awareness

Does your protected area management team exist to bring stakeholders together to manage that landscape?

- Yes
- No
- Cross-cutting role
- Secondary role

What type of stakeholders do you work with to manage that landscape?

- Local/regional public bodies
- National gov't
- Local communities (incl. schools)
- Third-sector orgs (env. focus)
- Third-sector orgs (social focus)
- Third-sector orgs (cultural focus)
- Local, small-scale businesses
- Large-scale businesses
- Universities, research institutes, etc.
- Grant providers (foundations and others)
- Investors (foundations, banks, investment funds, etc.)
- Other protected area teams or other env. designations
## Appendix 2 – Individual Perception Model Analysis (key themes)

### Key themes from the 15 individual perception models and their occurrence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT (Landscape Definition)</th>
<th>Person A</th>
<th>Person B</th>
<th>Person C</th>
<th>Person D</th>
<th>Person E</th>
<th>Group 1 received (1)</th>
<th>Person F</th>
<th>Person G</th>
<th>Person H</th>
<th>Person I</th>
<th>Person J</th>
<th>Person K</th>
<th>Person L</th>
<th>Person M</th>
<th>Group 2 received (2 people)</th>
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<td>Preserve an exceptional place</td>
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<td>Represent a unique identity, manage as a whole</td>
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<td>Enable gathering of stakeholders, resolve conflicts</td>
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<td>Preserve diversity (social, cultural, ...)</td>
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<td>Educate, understand, raise awareness</td>
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<td>Landscape as a way to give overall coherence, to convey meaning</td>
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<td>Bring people together, resolve conflicts, be a neutral entity</td>
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<td>Serve the park (mission), represent it, carry a vision forward, ignite passion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team doesn't act on its own, partnership is key</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bring technical competencies, raise awareness, educate</td>
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<td>Ensure rules are applied, that sites are cared for</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Highlighted if occurrence >10 (i.e. 2/3)