

Abstract

How the issue of flood risk and ecology is linked to spatial planning -
a review of the Northwest European spatial planning systems

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Acknowledging that the effects of climate change are increased by loss of forested areas up streams, sealing of surfaces by urbanisation and infrastructure, building of residential areas and economic activities zones in river beds, canalization of rivers, it is clear that flooding should be addressed by sound spatial development and planning. New initiatives for long lasting flood damage prevention through spatial planning and urban development are extremely necessary. In order to obtain the highest sustainable spatial development collaboration between the different parties is extremely important. In this study to be presented we therefore explore the national planning methodologies and planning instruments and the relevant EU-directives, national laws and policies in North West Europe with regard to their possibilities and problems related to the integrative approach of water management and ecological aspects.

In this context the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP 1999) provides the political framework for the implementation of sectoral policies with spatial impacts. This jointly accepted document stimulates the co-operation of regional and local authorities across national boundaries by the execution of the INTERREG-programmes. The targets of the EU-Water Framework Directive, Flood Directive and the issues addressed by the ESDP are mainly in line with each other. Therefore, it is quite obvious that co-operation in the field of spatial planning will increase the chance of realizing both a transnational effective flood control and an ecologically sustainable development of river corridors.