

BORDERLAND

A contribution to discovering the neighbours in Central Europe

bauchplan).(
landscape architecture and urbanism

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art

Project Proposal 06/2009

BEE-FREE

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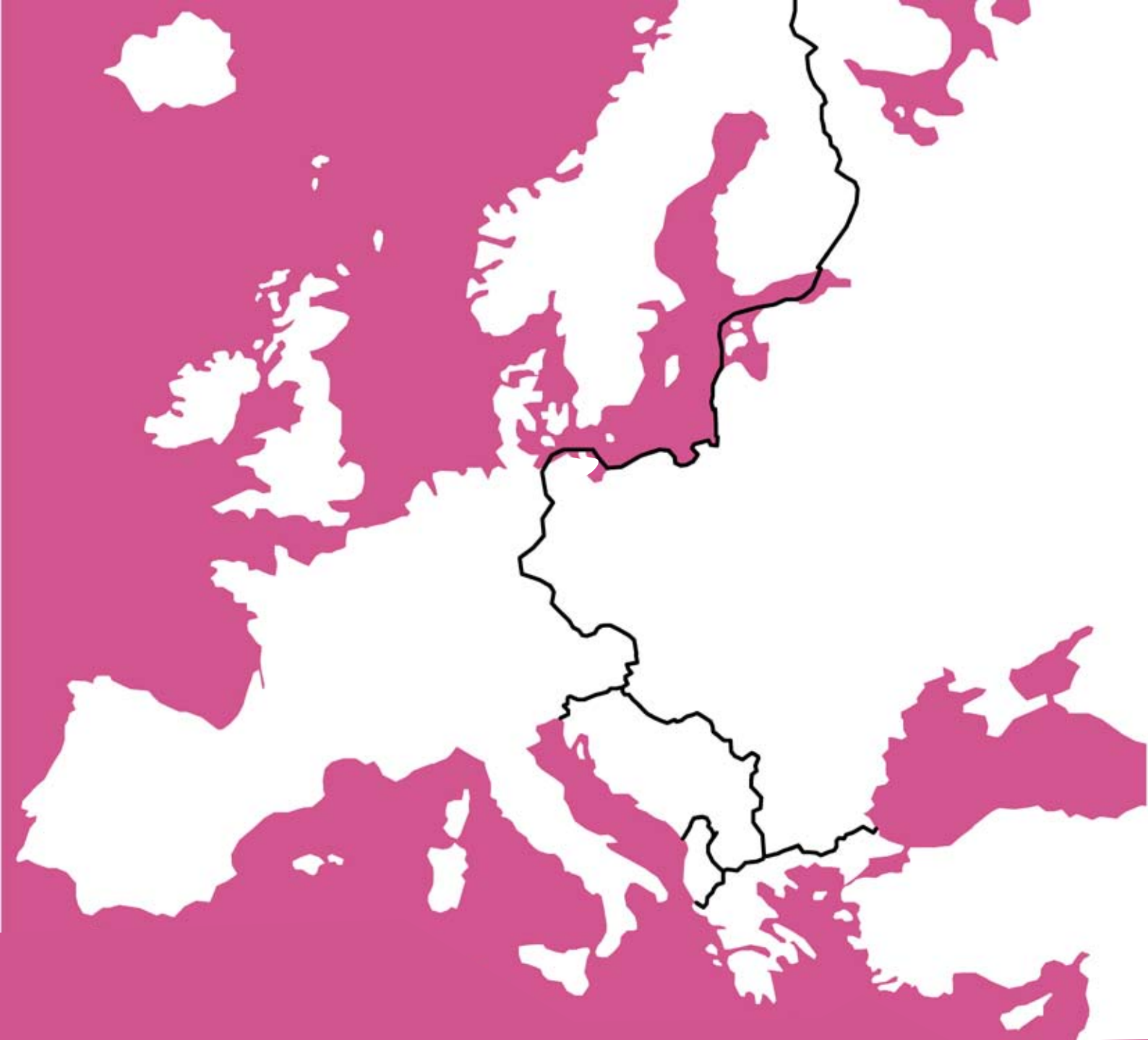
public effect

bottom up - top down

cooperation

Green Belt
IUCN
BEEGroup
Yuji Oshima
bauchplan

imprint



Project Summary

The vision of the project is a permanent transformation of the former death zone to a connecting landscape corridor that is positively unique and holds supra-regional support functions. New forms of neighbourhoods shall be developed on the basis of the joint albeit dividing former border situation. In reaction to the complexity of the scope for design, bee colonies and beehives will represent the border strip; first of all a simple idea, albeit with a complex variety of possible interpretations.

Bees appear to be a pan European phenomenon in characterising the interface between culture and nature: they are utilised as gatherers and carriers of information. Man made hives of the domesticated bee differ from region to region. The cultivated product of the bees, honey, is understood as the essence of the landscape – it makes biodiversity palatable. The intention is to integrate the existing regional diversity along the 8700 km long strip of border areas into a supra-regional boundless concept in as many levels as possible, and to reinstall the consciousness of a common ground via various possibilities for local participation.

Thus, the converted border regions will resound with a positive connotation.

Iron Curtain, Nature Conservation and Regional Development

The recent history of Central Europe is marked by its long years of separation: subsequent to the World War II the Iron Curtain separated Europe for over 40 years into east and west. The demarcation line of almost 8700 km curtailed the freedom of movement and encounter.

Even after the removal of walls, fences and barricades, the border was in large parts strictly controlled as a border of the Schengen Agreement. For the first time in 2008 it occurs that with the shifting of the Schengen border to the east and also with the expansion of the trade agreement, the former no-mans land can ideally be trespassed and crossed freely in Central Europe. Thus a new kind of border experience becomes possible in central Europe – a new space for encounter is currently developing.

Through the long years of human absence in the direct vicinity of the Iron Curtain, phantastic post-cultural landscapes have developed that are worth of conservation. The nature conservation sector claims these unique areas in Europe for preservation. Various conservation measures with varying degrees of restriction mark the present Green Belt. Through these – in parts necessarily strict conservation measures – new barriers and borders emerge.

In the course of further regional development it will be necessary to communicate these conservation measures in the context of regional identity and to show the contribution to the building of identity under consideration of human needs.

Phenomenon and Approach

Historic, professional nature conservation and socioeconomic parameters create design parameters of enormous complexity. In consequence, the project BEE-FREE shall be understood as a deliberately simple, reduced answer that in its complexity can be interpreted as palimpsest. The chosen approach is rather playful: it offers levels of interaction and steering elements in all phases of the project. First of all, the spatiality of the phenomenon of the Green Belt along the trail of the former Iron Curtain is investigated. The consequences of the demarcation line with its changing degree of expansiveness and its enormous length are difficult to grasp. Natural barriers as well as artificial border landscapes are presently a part of the Green Belt. Extensive areas and linear elements added to the traditional structure of a border, all of this acting as a hindrance and an obstacle. The effect of this implementation and the resulting differences in development since the opening of the borders are in some parts diametrically opposed and need to be evaluated respectively.

Based on this decoupled parallel development during 40 years, the border seems, albeit at present not existent in large sections, still strongly rooted in the minds of the people. From that arises the need for new and joining connections and identities. The underlying concept of a joint former border shall be transformed to a common awareness of regional consciousness in the sense of regional enduring development, with a joint horizon and a common view.

Therefore we propose to make perceptible the region of the European Green Belt through expansive swarms: bees collect the characteristic regional honey. They operate as a super-organism. Honey as the cultivated product is understood as the essence of the landscape – it makes biodiversity palatable. The free movement of the bees allows condensing a region across former, present or future borders into a glass – in the form of honey. East and west, forests and meadows, conservation areas and traditional types of extensive grassland-orchard are condensed to specialities. Labelled „BEE-FREE“, the honey will be sold as a heterogeneous product; it transports taste, identity and at the same time information.

The product of landscape, honey, is still today strongly linked to regional small structured production (bottom-up structure). It links cultural landscape and structures of settlements and is often sold from the yard gate, on markets or via street stands, marketed by the producers themselves. The growth of the label of the Green Belt begins on-site with various possibilities for participation. Through a supra-regional presence, the standardised corporate design will be a stepping stone and will utilise the notoriety of the phenomenon of the former border to a sweeping change of connotation. Honey will bring the network of regions to resound in a new context and it can open the way to global markets by initiating a more extensive choice of products.



. bees as a boarder-swarm, collecting in certain areas, producing honey as an essence of these regions





.beehives, typical for different regions . a picture-inquest as transeuropean journey



Placement, Design and Communication

The intention is to integrate the existing regional diversity along the 8700 km long strip of border areas into a supra-regional boundless concept in as many levels as possible, and to reinstall the consciousness of a common ground via various possibilities for local participation.

The beehive is the least common multiple in the heterogeneity of agricultural structures along the former Iron Curtain. It represents a local centre for future connectivity, with supra-regional relevance. Its architecture stands for the specific identity of a region; however, it appears self-evident and fits into the landscape.

Initially, a standardised basic structure for the beehive is designed. The development target is supra-regional, the design is modular. Thus the adaptation to the local demands and needs can occur, without losing recognition. The carrying structure of the beehive is understood as an advanced border stone that landmarks a place. It becomes a contact point in the super-ordinate path network, offers possibilities for sojourn and features information on history, region, landscape, Green Belt and biodiversity. The busy humming and swarming of the bees enliven the location. Contemplation is feasible as much as is communicative exchange with a neighbour. Via intelligent information carriers, parallel processes in historical documentation, regional development and nature conservation can point out identities on a joint platform, and attract regional as well as supra-regional attention to this quiet development. Following the additive concept, the sum of locations and bee hives becomes an exciting cross-section of the former border region.

Cultivation is carried out via regional participative methods. Full-time and hobby apiarists from both sides of the border will be actively involved. The result yields a product of heightened quality, while the habitat network is enhanced by an animal species in sweeping decline through a meaningful add-on in landscape management. The neighbouring agricultural sector may embrace this secured potential in order to enhance the potential range of products beginning with any crops pollinised by bees.



.first sketches of a possible platform



.small structured honey-bussines with a lot of possible contacts and interactions



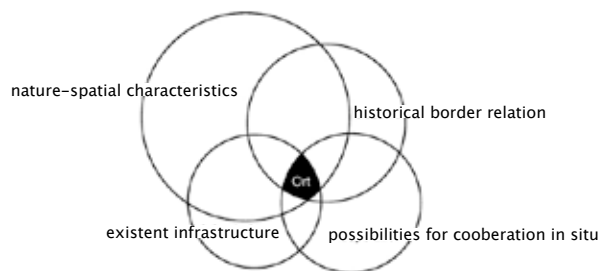
Project Organisation, Activities of the first Project Phase

The project period for the first phase of the project is two years. In order to increase the progress of implementation, a top-down-approach on the lobbying level (IUCN) is combined with a bottom-up-approach in the field of moderation and conceptualising: *bauchplan*). (elaborates the conception of the project in all phases and establishes contact to local partners in order to instigate and moderate initiatives in situ. The aim is to link local partners in design and implementation with regional und supraregional stakeholder groups – together forming a functional team for all implementation processes.

- Cooperation between *bauchplan*). (and the Green Belt network. Communication with national partners, local partners for conception/design and supporters; conduct implementation processes, moderate local stakeholder groups and act as a multiplier.
- A bee hive including carrier will be established at each of the national borders of the Green Belt.

(1) Finland/Russia	(8) Italy/Slovenia	(15) Bulgaria/Greece
(2) Inner German border	(9) Slovenia/Hungary	(16) FYR Macedonia/ Greece
(3) Germany/Czech Republic	(10) Croatia/Hungary	(17) FYR Macedonia/Albania
(4) Austria/Czech Republic	(11) Serbia/Hungary	(18) Albania/Montenegro
(5) Austria/Slovakia	(12) Serbia/Romania	(19) Albania/Serbia
(6) Austria/Hungary	(13) Serbia/Bulgaria	(20) Albania/Greece
(7) Austria/Slovenia	(14) FYR Macedonia/Bulgaria	(21) Bulgaria/Turkey
- Design of each station, the glassware, the complete marketing structure etc. by *bauchplan*). (together with local design partners and professionals. Modification of the super-ordinate design pattern according to regional specifications.
- Identification of each location based on the Green Belt database according to the following premises:

- o Existent infrastructure
- o Historical border relation
- o Nature-spatial characteristics
- o Possibilities for cooperation in situ



- Determination of the landscape section and the actual location together with landscape architects, IUCN and partners in situ.
- Each station will be particularised and constructed in a one week workshop with project partners, professionals and artisans, involving also the local population.
- The local and regional marketing strategy on both sides of the border is supported in cooperation with the organisations and partners in situ.
- Supra-regional marketing via website and internet shop, newsletters, organisations, lobbyists and project partners.
- Accompanying implementation methods on design and content level together with the project planners. Initiation of three international BEE-FREE conferences (one per section).
- Local, regional and pan-European public relations.
- Documentation by integrating regional contributions into a publication and exhibition concept, in cooperation with all project partners.



.photographs: Helga R.Heilmann, BEEgroup

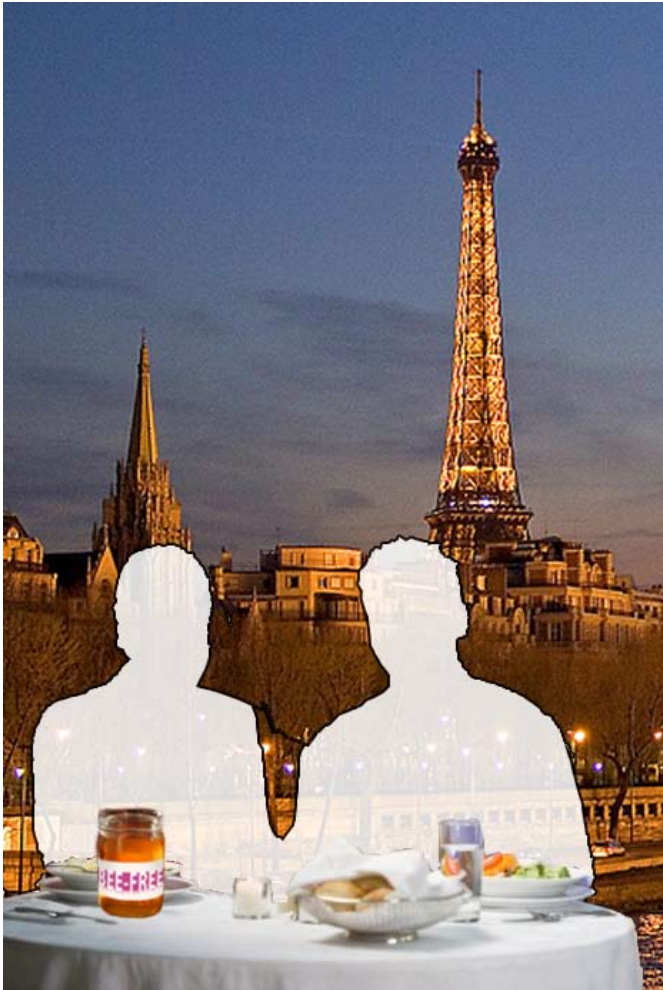




Public Impact

The dispersion of public awareness differs between local service and international effective coverage by publications as well as the product being honey. Within these two horizons of activity, the establishment of the label BEE-FREE is realised according to the principles of sustainable development, involving and presenting contributions from local sponsors and partners.







The Green Belt Initiative

The Green Belt initiative has the vision to create the backbone of an ecological network, running from the Barents to the Black Sea. It spans some of the most important habitats for biodiversity and almost all bio-geographic regions in Europe.

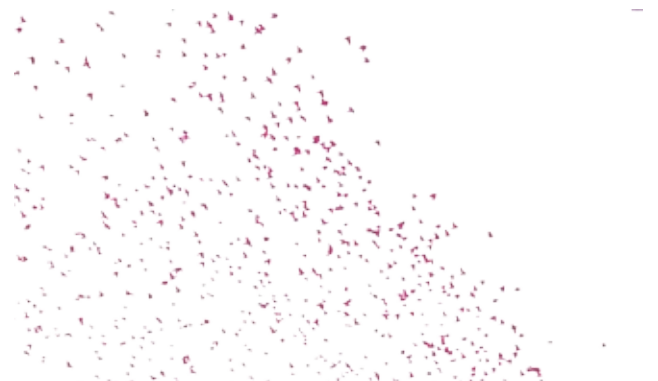
In large sections it runs along the former Iron Curtain – one of the most divisive barriers in history – and it symbolises the global engagement for joint, cross-border activities in nature conservation and sustainable development. In addition, the initiative aims to harmonise human activities with the natural environment and to enhance the possibilities for self-determined socio-economic development in local communities.

IUCN

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) supports the development of scientific nature conservation by leading projects in field work and field studies worldwide while also building a platform for actors from various sectors and background engaged in the development and implementation of methods, rules and best practice. This engagement comprises work on all species of flora and fauna on the planet; all kinds of ecosystems – the occurrence of various natural habitats on earth; and a whole range of meaningful ecologic and sustainable developments.

The BEEgroup

The association bee research Wuerzburg; registered association supports research and brokers knowledge regarding the honey, linking the international community in apian research. It pursues its goals by active research, support of external active research, professional training of members and the organisation of knowledge imparting methods in the field of apian research. The focus lies on research, basic research, research for health as well as practice-oriented research on the honey bee



Yuji Oshima

Media artist, born 1969 in Japan. Studied in Le Fresnoy. Studio National des Arts Contemporains. Tourcoing, at the Erg Institut Supérieur Libre d'Arts Plastiques, Brussels and the Tama University of Art, Tokio. Scholarship for La Seine, Paris, 2003-04 from the POLA Art Foundation of Tokyo, from the Dena Foundation and the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris.

Yuji Oshima focuses on socio-critical studies on social phenomena such as parasitism, imitation and mimicry. He challenges principles and is on the look-out for alternative systems of organisation. Yuji Oshima works in public areas, where his art projects return to the place of inspiration.



Portrait and Self-Image bauchplan

Landscape architecture and urbanism. Our interest is aimed at the commonplace, the process-like and the search for the hidden potentials of public and private free space. The intention is to explore phenomenons and translate them into specific rooms of possibilities. The constructed result is directly linked to its development process.

The exposure to socio-political flows and temporal aspects in landscape architectural designs are understood as part of culture. Design and use are interpreted as creative, out-of-phase acts of observation. Reality becomes a reading of environment. Three aspects have a super-ordinate meaning for us: the concept as a mission derived from understanding of access to a location and its phenomenology; space as a room of possibilities with specific qualities; and the atmosphere as a staged high intensity sequence of spirit.





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