

P5 Reflection

Tomorrow's (P)ARK

Design the biggest continuous Nature and Landscape Network of North-West Europe

Anežka Vonášková
Steffen Nijhuis
Robbert Jan van der Veen

Examiner: Willem van der Spoel

Outcomes.

SRQ 1: How does Landscape connectivity impact biodiversity and ecosystem service, and what are the potential consequences of fragmentation?

At the outset, it is important to recognize that Nature operates as a cohesive system, where individual elements or ecotypes rely on one another. Nothing can be detached from this interconnected system. Since the beginning, the landscape has been naturally divided by rivers and mountains, which act as impassable barriers for certain species. However, even these metaphorical natural barriers become sources of life, manifested in the form of rivers flowing through lowlands. In other words, a barrier like a mountain brings about a flow and is connected to territories thousands of kilometers away, such as through a major or minor river. This specific case manifest what Landscape connectivity means. What are all factors of connectivity: biodiversity, species distribution and migration, ecosystem functioning & ecosystem Services.

Connectivity enhances ecological processes and ecosystem functioning. It enables the flow of energy, nutrients, and water between different habitats, supporting ecosystem processes such as pollination, seed dispersal, and natural pest control. Connected landscapes can also mitigate the negative impacts of disturbances or natural disasters by allowing for the movement of species to more suitable habitats, promoting post-disturbance recovery and ecosystem resilience which are the sources for ecosystem services.

Ecosystem services are the benefits that humans obtain from ecosystems. Landscape connectivity contributes to the provision of various ecosystem services. For example, connected landscapes support pollinators, enhancing agricultural productivity through improved crop pollination. They also facilitate the natural regulation of pests and diseases, reducing the need for chemical inputs. Additionally, connected habitats can enhance water quality and quantity by promoting infiltration, reducing erosion, and maintaining healthy watersheds. Access to recreational areas and cultural services, such as aesthetic value and spiritual well-being, can also be improved through landscape connectivity.

So, what is Landscape fragmentation then? It is the complete opposite of connectivity. It is a phenomenon that divides, cuts, and fragments this previously coherent biodiversity palette into small, segregated pieces. Even a minor spatial change, such as a road, can become an insurmountable barrier for a species on which others depend, potentially leading to a domino effect or genetic weakening of the island community. There are various types of fragmentation, including habitat fragmentation, patch fragmentation, edge fragmentation, linear fragmentation, perforation fragmentation, islandization fragmentation, or perforation fragmentation. Despite their visual differences, they all contribute to the same problem.

If we were to summarize how landscape fragmentation contributes to landscape connectivity and its consequences, we can mention at least five impacts: habitat loss and isolation, loss of species and genetic diversity, edge effects and altered microclimates, reduced ecosystem functioning, and loss of connectivity and disrupted migration. Overall, fragmentation can disrupt key ecological processes and reduce the overall functioning of ecosystems. Fragmented habitats may experience changes in nutrient cycling, reduced efficiency in pollination, altered patterns of seed dispersal, and decreased natural pest control. These disruptions can have cascading effects on ecosystem dynamics, leading to changes in plant and animal communities, and potentially compromising the provision of ecosystem services on which human societies depend. This loss of habitat reduces the available resources and living space for species, particularly those with larger home ranges or specific habitat requirements.

All this permeable system and mosaic have provided conditions for a wide range of animal species. **From all and more reasons Landscape connectivity refers to the degree to which landscapes facilitate the movement of organisms and ecological processes across space. It plays a crucial role in shaping biodiversity patterns and influencing the provision of ecosystem services and mainly connestivity is the natural source of life flow.**

SRQ 2: What are the most effective rewilding design strategies for promoting Landscape Connectivity and preserving Natural habitats.

The most effective rewilding design strategies for promoting landscape connectivity and preserving natural habitats involve a multifaceted approach. Firstly, establishing and maintaining ecological corridors that connect fragmented habitats play a crucial role. These corridors should be strategically planned to address the specific needs of target species and ensure continuous movement across the landscape. Secondly, implementing habitat restoration and conservation efforts, such as reforestation, wetland restoration, and the protection of critical habitats, helps to expand and safeguard natural habitats. It is important to prioritize the conservation of intact and high-quality habitats to maintain biodiversity and ecosystem integrity. Additionally, promoting sustainable land-use practices, such as minimizing habitat fragmentation through thoughtful infrastructure planning, mitigating human-wildlife conflicts, and incorporating wildlife-friendly measures, is essential. Furthermore, engaging in collaborative partnerships involving local communities, landowners, and conservation organizations fosters shared responsibility and support for preserving natural habitats and promoting landscape connectivity. By integrating these rewilding design strategies, we can enhance connectivity, protect natural habitats, and safeguard the valuable biodiversity and ecosystem services they provide.

SRQ 3: How can human experience of nature and Landscape be integrate into the design of continuous nature and Landscape network in North- West Europe, and what are the potential benefits of this approach?

The project includes three human activities that can significantly contribute to the establishment and acceptance of this landscape structure concept. The first activity is work, specifically the work associated with the care and effort required to manage agricultural fields, livestock, and natural wilderness areas. It also involves the maintenance of hiking trails, campsites, and regional ecotourism. All of these activities enable local communities to benefit and aim to provide a sustainable income locally, facilitating the transition between current activities.

Another activity is walking, which represents one of the pillars of ecotourism and has great potential to popularize and highlight the history and value of the landscape, as well as the genius loci of the places. Walking itself has a centuries-long tradition in the form of pilgrimage routes in places like Spain, Rome, or the Nordic countries. Unlike the search for a deity, **this journey initiates the exploration of a new relationship with nature**, understanding that we are an integral part of this breathtaking natural world. **Walking is perceived as a necessary process of personal transformation and perception in this context.**

The final human experience of this Ark is scientific knowledge, which is facilitated through local scientific teams spread across the entire territory of the new (P)ARK. These scientific teams are responsible for professional monitoring and evaluation, and based on this monitoring, conclusions are drawn regarding the best methods of care and implementation for the respective ecotopes. These centers will be located both in undisturbed zones, where human inactivity is necessary, and along viewing paths to educate tourists, locals, schools, and universities about the scale beyond the horizon that can be observed with the naked eye. In other words, education is provided to change public perception about the need for such a transformation, highlighting the wilderness areas that provide us with ecological services and resilience environment.

SRQ 4: What are the different types of Nature ecosystems present and how do they relate to the overall Biodiversity and Landscape connectivity in this Area.

Lower Saxony in Germany is known for its diverse range of ecosystems. Important and characteristic ecosystems include are: Coastal and marine ecosystems, wetlands, heaths, forests and grasslands.

Coastal and Marine Ecosystems: Lower Saxony has a coastline along the North Sea, featuring tidal flats, salt marshes, dunes, and estuaries. These coastal and marine ecosystems are important for migratory birds, fish species, and marine biodiversity in world scale.

Wetlands: Such as marshes, fens, and bogs. They can serve as natural filters, purifying water and providing habitats for various plant and animal species. They support biodiversity by hosting specialized wetland organisms and contributing to landscape connectivity through water corridors.

Forests: Lower Saxony is home to various forest types, including mixed deciduous forests, coniferous forests, and riparian forests along rivers. Forest ecosystems are key contributors to biodiversity, housing a wide array of plant and animal species. They enhance landscape connectivity by serving as corridors and providing shelter for wildlife movement.

Heathlands: The region contains extensive heathland areas, characterized by open, low-growing vegetation and unique plant communities. They provide important stepping stones for landscape connectivity between different habitats.

Grasslands: Traditional hay meadows, pastures, and heathlands are characteristic grassland ecosystems in Lower Saxony.

Grassland ecosystems support a variety of plant species and provide important habitats for grazing animals, insects, and birds.

Protecting and managing these ecosystems and maintaining landscape connectivity is essential for conserving biodiversity, preserving ecological integrity, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of Lower Saxony's natural environment.

GRQ : How can Landscape connectivity and Rewilding be used to design the biggest continuous Nature and Landscape Network of North- West Europe, and create a habitat for all species to share?

This project resulted in the formation of a new International (P)ARK, an international nature park created in response to a range of environmental issues that are leading to changing living standards and conditions on planet Earth. It was developed through a thorough study of landscape ecology and rewilding theory, guided by ideas borrowed from bioregionalism and degrowth theory, which further emphasize the necessity of a significant change in our way of life. This project takes the form of a systematic approach with flexible boundaries, not a perfectly defined blueprint, but rather an ongoing process. It offers a relatively abstract concept of a park that defines how we should work towards our future.

To provide a clear conclusion to this research, I have decided to formulate symbolically seven principles that can contribute to the construction of a similar structure in the future. These principles should be systematically enriched through future research, aiming to provide a comprehensive framework for maintaining and enhancing biodiversity and creating a sustainable, thriving living space.

Identifying key corridors: Conduct a thorough analysis of the existing landscape to identify key corridors that can connect fragmented habitats. These corridors should consider ecological factors such as species movements, migration patterns, and dispersal abilities. By strategically designing and protecting these corridors, the network can facilitate the movement of species across large distances and promote genetic exchange.

Restoring and expanding habitats: Implement rewilding initiatives to restore and expand natural habitats within the network. This can involve reintroducing native plant and animal species, removing invasive species, and

implementing habitat restoration techniques. By creating diverse and interconnected habitats, the network can support a wide range of species and provide resources for their survival and reproduction.

Enhancing ecological processes: Promote ecological processes such as natural succession, nutrient cycling, and hydrological dynamics within the network. By allowing natural processes to occur, the ecosystem can become self-sustaining and resilient. This can include restoring wetlands, promoting natural flooding regimes, and encouraging the development of natural forest ecosystems.

Incorporate Urban environment:

Within the framework of the project, individuals or landscape and urban planning offices are encouraged to create strategic plans for the integration of cities into the structure of national parks. Urban ring corridors, green and blue infrastructure, and even plans for how woodlands could become urban are all necessary elements for anchoring and integrating urban structures with the surrounding areas. This means connecting biodiversity within cities with what exists outside.

Walking: Promote walking as a tool of how to fix our relation with the natural environment.

Walking plays a crucial role in the Tomorrow's Park project, as it embodies the essence of restoring our connection with nature, embracing local environments, contemplation, and fostering cultural bonds through shared pathways. Recognizing the importance of pedestrian movement, the project encourages active community engagement and collaboration. By prioritizing walking as a means of exploration and enjoyment, the project aims to create a vibrant network of pathways that facilitate the appreciation of nature, enhance physical well-being, and strengthen the bond between individuals and their surrounding landscapes.

Engaging local communities and stakeholders/ Operate, cooperate, communicate: Involve local communities, landowners, and stakeholders in the design and management of the network. Their participation and support are crucial for long-term success. Educate and raise awareness about the importance of landscape connectivity and rewilding, and foster a sense of stewardship among the people living in and around the network.

Collaboration and coordination: Establish partnerships and collaborations among various organizations, agencies, and institutions working in the field of conservation and landscape management. This can help pool resources, expertise, and knowledge to effectively design and implement the network. Coordinate efforts across political boundaries and sectors to ensure a cohesive and integrated approach.

Monitoring and adaptive management: Continuously monitor the network's effectiveness in promoting connectivity and supporting biodiversity. Implement adaptive management strategies to address any challenges or changes that arise. Regularly assess the network's ecological health and make necessary adjustments to ensure its long-term viability.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the evaluation of the design proposal highlights the importance of landscape connectivity in influencing biodiversity patterns, ecosystem services, and the overall functioning of ecosystems. The concept of landscape connectivity emphasizes the interdependence and interconnectedness of various ecological elements, fostering the flow of energy, nutrients, and water between habitats.

The outcomes demonstrate that landscape connectivity enhances ecological processes and ecosystem functioning, enabling the provision of essential ecosystem services. These services include improved pollination for agricultural productivity, natural regulation of pests and diseases, enhanced water quality and quantity, and access to recreational and cultural services. By promoting landscape connectivity, we can create a more resilient and sustainable environment that supports both ecological integrity and human well-being.

However, it is crucial to critically evaluate the use of specific boundaries, such as the one-kilometer buffer, as they may oversimplify the complexity of ecosystems. Future considerations should involve alternative shapes or configurations that better reflect the ecological dynamics and spatial relationships of the area.

Regarding rewilding design strategies, the most effective approach involves a multifaceted approach, including the establishment of ecological corridors, habitat restoration and conservation efforts, sustainable land-use practices, and collaborative partnerships. By integrating these strategies, landscape connectivity can be enhanced, natural habitats can be preserved, and biodiversity and ecosystem services can be safeguarded.

The integration of human experience of nature and landscape in the design of continuous nature and landscape networks in North-West Europe offers multiple benefits. Activities such as work, walking, and scientific knowledge can contribute to local communities' engagement and support for the transformation of landscapes. By providing sustainable income opportunities, highlighting the history and value of the landscape through walking, and fostering scientific education, public perception can be changed, promoting the understanding of the importance of wilderness areas and their ecological services.

The presence of different nature ecosystems in the area, including coastal and marine ecosystems, wetlands, forests, heathlands, and grasslands, contributes to the overall biodiversity and landscape connectivity. Protecting and managing these ecosystems is crucial for conserving biodiversity, preserving ecological integrity, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the region's natural environment.

To design the largest continuous nature and landscape network of North-West Europe and create a habitat for all species to share, several principles are suggested. These principles involve identifying key corridors, restoring and expanding habitats, enhancing ecological processes, engaging local communities and stakeholders, promoting collaboration and coordination, implementing monitoring and adaptive management strategies, and incorporating urban environments. By adhering to these principles and continuously enriching them through research, a comprehensive framework can be established to support biodiversity, create sustainable living spaces, and ensure the success of future landscape connectivity and rewilding initiatives.

Reflection

Scope and academic relevance

This work is the result of a long search for a new structure of a national park. It was inspired by my fascination with the landscape, the perception of the landscape, as well as a fascination with natural systems, and most importantly, my longstanding question of whether landscape architects can contribute to new forms of national parks and nature conservation as such. Today, I know that our discipline has much to offer because in such difficult situations and times of uncertainty associated with environmental and social crises, it is certain that we need a comprehensive planning process that will involve diverse disciplines in the discussion. It also reminded me of the fact that no discipline should remain solely in the hands of one field because in the long run, it can become stagnant. For these reasons, landscape architects can stress a number of critical questions to ecologists and scientists, which, when answered and solutions found, can be incorporated into future designs for protection and its methods and forms. In the course of my research, I also recalled that one of the significant figures and founders of landscape architecture, Frederick Law Olmsted, contributed to the creation of a plan and the first model, predecessors to national parks. His groundbreaking Yosemite Report effectively created an intellectual framework for a national park system, which was initiated by Congress during the Civil War and other social unrest. Perhaps that is why now is an appropriate time to raise the critical question. Shouldn't this issue and the discipline of creating national parks be more integrated into the field of landscape architecture studies? I have answered this question for myself through this research, and I am convinced that it should be. **This project is applicable on both small and large scales. It is replicable at the level of Lower Saxony, as indicated by my map below, or even on a larger scale across the continent.**

Societal and environmental relevance

As a young generation growing up in a constantly changing world filled with more bad news than good, I wanted to create something that could make a difference in addressing the negative scenarios associated with biodiversity loss and climate change. Climate has always changed and will continue to do so, but what is urgent is how we have altered the climate through our practices and activities over the past 50 years. Given that climate change occurs on a long-term horizon, we are only now beginning to see the consequences of past decades and what awaits us in the future. The temperature increases in the next 20-40 years cannot be stopped. However, if we do not want living conditions on the planet to become increasingly unfavorable, we must start now to reverse the predictions of a +4 degrees Celsius rise, which would truly make parts of the world uninhabitable. This is the reality; we can no longer reverse everything through small-scale solutions. We must start building not just new houses, but also resilient natural environments that provide at least the conditions and climate to which we and our children have been accustomed. **Therefore, considering the significant changes that lie ahead, I believe that a project with such ambition can achieve a great deal and bring about many changes. What I appreciate about it is the offer of a precedent, to live in an environment that takes care of us when we, too, take an active interest in it and actively contribute to its quality.**

Evaluation of the design proposal

Design proposal showcases a visionary and comprehensive approach to Tomorrow's (P)ARK addressing ecological, social, and cultural aspects. It reflects a commitment to sustainability, biodiversity, and the creation of resilient landscapes that can inspire and serve as precedent for future projects.

The design proposal incorporates a one-kilometer buffer around the (P)ARK, it is important to critically evaluate the use of such a precise boundary. The decision to establish a specific distance may overlook the potential variations and complexities of the surrounding landscape. In the future, it may be necessary to consider alternative shapes or configurations that better reflect the ecological and functional relationships of the area. By embracing flexibility and remaining open to future advancements, the (P)ARK can evolve into even more inclusive and ecologically sensitive landscape.

Relation between research and design

The research-through-design methodology employed throughout the project demonstrates a commitment to generating new knowledge and pushing the boundaries of traditional landscape architecture practices. The testing of different options and learning from others' experiences further enriches the design process, ensuring a robust and informed approach.

Site visit and firsthand observations have clearly informed the design decisions, allowing for a deep understanding of the site's characteristics, constraints, and potentials. This attention to detail and contextual sensitivity is evident in the proposal's responsiveness to the specific site conditions and its ability to enhance the overall ecological value of the area.

Ethical reflection towards the complicated reality

In the pursuit of establishing the Tomorrow's (P)ARK, a grand vision of a vast international Nature Park, it is crucial to pause and reflect on the complex ethical considerations that arise from this ambitious endeavor. This reflection delves into the multifaceted aspects of the project, contemplating issues such as the recognition of nature's rights and the integration of cities into the nature landscape network.

First and foremost, it is imperative to acknowledge the inherent value of nature itself. Nature, with its intricate ecosystems and diverse species, possesses an inherent worth that extends beyond its instrumental value to humans. Just as humans are protected by laws and rights, it is a pertinent ethical question whether nature should be granted legal rights as well. Recognizing nature's rights would signify a paradigm shift, acknowledging that we are but one part of a larger interconnected web of life, and that nature deserves protection and consideration in its own right.

In the context of creating the biggest continuous Nature and Landscape Network in North-West Europe, the integration of cities into the network presents both challenges and opportunities. While it may be challenging to envision cities being fully included within the network in their current form, there are ways in which urban areas can be integrated into the broader landscape and contribute to the conservation and enhancement of natural ecosystems. One approach is to prioritize green infrastructure and urban planning strategies that incorporate natural elements and biodiversity into the fabric of cities. This can include the creation of green corridors, urban parks, rooftop gardens, and the preservation of existing green spaces. By integrating these elements, cities can become stepping stones or nodes within the larger landscape network, providing habitats, connectivity, and ecological services for various species. This approach can help mitigate habitat fragmentation, promote urban biodiversity, and enhance the overall resilience of the network.

Additionally, cities can play a vital role in raising awareness and fostering a sense of environmental stewardship among their residents. Through educational programs, citizen science initiatives, and community engagement, cities can contribute to the understanding and appreciation of nature and the importance of landscape connectivity. This, in turn, can lead to behavioral changes and a collective commitment to sustainable practices both within and beyond urban areas.

The creation of Tomorrow's (P)ARK also necessitates confronting the ethical implications of land use and resource allocation. As we prioritize the preservation and restoration of natural habitats, difficult decisions may arise regarding competing human needs and economic interests. It is vital to engage in inclusive and participatory decision-making processes that take into account the perspectives and concerns of local communities, indigenous peoples, and various stakeholders. By valuing diverse voices and considering the social and economic implications, we can strive for a balanced and equitable approach that respects both human well-being and the integrity of the natural environment.

Balancing the decision of which nature to create, especially in relation to historical landscapes and the inclusion of human presence for the preservation of ecosystems like heathlands, is a complex ethical question. Inclusive and participatory decision-making processes involving local communities, indigenous peoples, scientists, conservation organizations, and government representatives can help address this issue. Recognizing the cultural and ecological significance of historical landscapes, it is crucial to engage with communities and respect their traditional knowledge to determine appropriate measures for preservation while considering the needs of the people living in and around these areas. For ecosystems requiring human involvement to prevent disappearance, finding a balance between natural processes and intervention is essential, considering ecological requirements, scientific research, and local community input. Decision-making should also prioritize biodiversity conservation, ecosystem processes, and resilience, integrating ecological, cultural, and social values. By fostering transparent and collaborative approaches, we can strive for harmonious and sustainable relationships between humans and nature, ensuring the preservation of historical landscapes and promoting biodiversity conservation.

Ultimately, the creation of Tomorrow's (P)ARK is an ambitious and transformative endeavor that demands careful ethical reflection. It requires us to recognize nature's intrinsic value, explore new relationships between cities and nature, engage in inclusive decision-making processes, and prioritize sustainability and resilience. By embracing these ethical considerations, we can strive towards a future where humans and nature coexist harmoniously, ensuring the preservation of biodiversity, the provision of ecosystem services, and the well-being of both present and future generations.

May this ethical reflection inspire thoughtful discourse and guide us towards an ethically and ecologically sound path in shaping our shared future.

Limitations

While the project of establishing a vast international Nature Park and implementing rewilding practices holds significant promise, it is important to consider some potential limitations and challenges that may arise. Securing

sufficient funding for such a large-scale endeavor can be a major constraint, as costs associated with land acquisition, habitat restoration, infrastructure development, and ongoing management can be substantial. Resistance from stakeholders, such as local communities and industries reliant on natural resources, may arise due to concerns over economic impacts and land-use conflicts. Navigating through complex policy and legal frameworks at various levels can present challenges, requiring comprehensive reforms to support rewilding initiatives. Additionally, ecological limitations, including soil quality, suitable habitat availability, and invasive species, may restrict certain areas for rewilding. Building public support, fostering community engagement, and addressing misconceptions through effective communication and education strategies are vital for success. Robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks are necessary to assess ecological, social, and economic outcomes, but they require expertise and resources. By acknowledging and proactively addressing these challenges, the project can strive for greater success and sustainability in achieving its conservation goals.

Recommendations

In terms of recommendations for future studies, it is advisable to engage with international institutions actively involved in related issues, such as Rewild Europe and IUCN, to gain valuable insights and collaboration. The increasing trend of international collaborations on large-scale corridor restoration and the elimination of borders through nature connections should be embraced. Associations focused on rewilding policy and implementation can provide valuable inputs and background information on suitable areas for these initiatives, facilitating discussions on implementation possibilities.

Additionally, forming a multidisciplinary team of students is recommended to navigate the complexities of this large-scale design effectively. Later students can focus separately on a smaller-scale area, allowing for a more focused and detailed analysis, enabling the team to provide comprehensive information and tackle the abundance of data and challenges involved.

Calculation and business plan need to be introduced to show the true costs of it, can help to overcome some of the limitations.

What did I learn?

The study and creation of the Tomorrow's (P)ARK project have taught me a great deal and have tested and challenged me in terms of my future career. One of the most valuable lessons I have learned is the concept of design through spatial scales. I have never worked at a continental level before. Familiarizing myself with the vastness and diverse contexts of different regions has been both enlightening and humbling. It has broadened my perspective and deepened my understanding of the complexities involved in designing for large-scale environments.

Moreover, the project has highlighted the importance of collaboration and interdisciplinary teamwork. Engaging with experts from various fields, such as ecology, landscape architecture, and community development, has exposed me to different viewpoints and methodologies. It has reinforced the idea that effective design solutions arise from the synergy of diverse expertise and collective knowledge.

The exploration and examination of historical landscapes and their potential integration into the project have also been enlightening. Recognizing the significance of these landscapes and considering their preservation within the context of rewilding initiatives has prompted me to reflect on the delicate balance between human intervention and natural processes. It has emphasized the need for thoughtful and inclusive decision-making processes that take into account ecological, cultural, and social values.

The greatest lessons I have learned have come from weaving the entire narrative together for the very first time. It began with an unwavering fascination and deep-rooted connection to the natural world. This profound bond affirmed the power and intricacy that joy in a subject, one that resonates with your soul, brings to a project. Thus, I wish to gently inspire anyone who lingers upon these words to grant their imagination and personal fascinations the freedom to soar and dance.

Overall, the experience of working on the Tomorrow's (P)ARK project has been a transformative journey, pushing the boundaries of my professional growth and challenging me to think critically and creatively. It has instilled in me a sense of responsibility and a commitment to designing for a sustainable and inclusive future. I am grateful for the opportunities it has provided and look forward to applying the knowledge and skills I have gained in my future career endeavors.



The Changing Perception of Nature: A Journey Through Time

At the very beginning of this entire project, and during official presentations, I mentioned how fascinated I have been with the history of the transformation of understanding and perceiving the Nature within the context of art and societal thought since my Secondary school. As part of my studies, I aimed to demonstrate how this paradigm shifted during certain cultural developmental phases. Ultimately, I wanted to show how the entire project and the idea of a new form of national park could contribute to changing the understanding of this life platform and, through strong intervention, rectify this relationship.

I am convinced that one of the reasons why we, as an advanced society, allow these destructive processes of destruction is the subconscious and real loss of this primal connection to our surroundings. I hope that this call for attention will stimulate thoughts and initiate change in many individuals. And even though we still cannot travel from Amsterdam to Copenhagen, I hope that you will soon venture out into nature and experience, just like I did during my visit to Lower Saxony, the sublime. But what does it mean? To feel sublime is to be swept away, captivated by the resplendent majesty, the indomitable vigor, and the enigmatic allure of the world that enfolds us. It is to be enmeshed in an ethereal communion with a realm surpassing our ephemeral existence. A heightened state of awareness unfolds, suffusing our senses, stirring our souls, and unveiling the very essence of our perception. I believe that working with such sentiments, immersing oneself in the experience and amplification of the beauty and interconnectedness of the landscape, can particularly aid landscape architects in elevating awareness of its splendor and the imperative to protect our Earth.

In medieval times, nature was perceived as a mystical realm, a divine creation known as Eden. It was regarded as something extraordinary, untamed, and God-made. Nature's beauty and abundance were seen as manifestations of the divine, invoking a sense of wonder and reverence.

With the rise of cities and the industrial revolution, the perception of nature shifted. The landscape was viewed as a source of livelihood, providing resources for the growing urban populations. Nature became intertwined with human needs, as forests were cleared for timber, rivers harnessed for energy, and land cultivated for agriculture. The landscape became a means of survival and sustenance.

As industrialization progressed, the perception of nature transformed further. The pursuit of profit and wealth took center stage, and the landscape became commodified. Nature was exploited for its resources, treated as a source of income and money. The relentless drive for progress and economic growth overshadowed our deeper connection with the natural world, as humanity began to resemble the mythical Leviathan, consuming and transforming the environment.

Hand in hand with the industrial revolution came the first signs of awakening to the need for environmental protection. Some individuals recognized the negative consequences of human actions on the natural world. Voices advocating for conservation and preservation emerged, warning of the potential loss of irreplaceable natural treasures and calling for a more harmonious relationship with nature. And this happened already 100 years ago!

In the mid-20th century, a profound shift in perception occurred when humans witnessed the first photo of the Earth from space. This iconic image, often referred to as the Blue Marble, revealed the planet as a fragile and interconnected entity. It evoked a sense of unity and vulnerability, prompting a collective realization of the Earth's finite nature and the need to protect and cherish it.

As history unfolds, numerous other stages of development have shaped our understanding of nature. Each era brought forth new discoveries, advancements, and challenges that influenced our perception. From ecological awareness and biodiversity conservation to the recognition of indigenous wisdom and the importance of interconnectedness, these stages have added layers to the complex narrative of our relationship with the natural world.

In contemplating the history of our perception of nature, we find ourselves reflecting on the loss of our primary connection to our surroundings. From the mystical Eden to the commodification of nature, we have traveled a path that has brought both progress and consequences. As we navigate the challenges of the present and envision a sustainable future, it is essential to rediscover our deep connection with nature, to reclaim our reverence and appreciation for the extraordinary and mysterious world that surrounds us. By doing so, we may yet find a way to restore balance and harmony between humanity and the natural environment, reweaving the threads of our fragmented relationship and embracing a more profound sense of unity.

Let me transport you to a realm where imagination dances with possibility, where Tomorrow's (P)ARK project unveils its poetic tapestry. It breathes life into the very essence of landscapes - an invitation to wander, to tread softly upon the earth, embracing the wisdom of LOCAL COMMUNITIES and their nurturing touch. It whispers of a harmonious union, where NON-INVASIVE PRACTICES become a sacred symphony, entwining humanity's vibrant threads with the tapestry of nature's grand design.

Within this realm, national customs converge, painting vivid strokes of biodiversity, each stroke a masterpiece in its own right. It cherishes the magic of connection, recognizing that even amidst bustling cityscapes, we are part of this extraordinary tapestry.

Embrace this vision, for it holds the power to reshape our world, to interlace hearts and souls, and to reawaken our profound comprehension of the intricate web that binds us all. Let these utopian dreams materialize, carrying forth their purest intentions, for we are not mere spectators, but active weavers of the unfolding story of our planet.

Sincerely
Anežka

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anežka', written in a cursive style.