

Project Dear Landscape en tour (Sept. 2019)

For some years now, the Three Countries Park Project (an initiative of the Euregio Meuse-Rhine) has been collecting knowledge on landscape qualities within its cross-border region. However, the inhabitants' perspective on their natural surroundings is still missing.

For that reason, the Three Countries Park project group initiated Dear Landscape and commissioned Dear Hunter to gather insights across the Euregio Meuse-Rhine. It was the project's aim to become more aware of what matters to inhabitants and visitors in order to use the insights within landscape policy making.

In Dear Landscape, six locations and their surroundings have been mapped through intensive fieldwork and participant observation. Local issues and insights have been gathered: how do different municipalities in this Three Countries Park deal with their landscape? How is it made accessible? What are the distinctive qualities and how can they be used in a better way for the benefit of inhabitants and/or visitors?

Dear Landscape started in July 2017 with three locations: in Visé (Wallonia/Belgium), Vaals (The Netherlands) and Heers (Flanders/Belgium). One year on, three more locations were added: Sourbrodt (Ostbelgien, Belgium), Kempen-Broek (Flanders, Belgium) and Walheim (Aachen, Germany).

The final document, the Cartopological Landscape Sample Atlas of the Euregio Meuse-Rhine, compiles the results of the project as a whole. It contains the underlying maps and features soil samples taken locally, an analysis of the various soils and a comparative study on the quantities and ratios of the soil types throughout the locations, making it possible to compare local results.

The aim of this atlas is to enable learning from the experiences and insights gathered on the six locations, but also to offer an unusual way of comparing the perception of the landscape on the various locations. With regards to this, the atlas should reveal additional insights that are rooted in locality but at the same time thematically transcend it.

It does not require extensive knowledge of all locations, but it will be useful if one is familiar with a certain place to some extent. Therefore, we hope the project will encourage people to explore the locations they do not know (yet) and add to the understanding and knowledge of the euregional landscape.

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About Dear Hunter

Dear Hunter is a cartopological¹ research practice and produces alternative maps and atlases through qualitative fieldwork. Being a 'Dear Hunter', referring to the behaviour and methods of hunters, means that we thoroughly immerse in situations in order to understand them completely, mostly by living and working on-site for relatively long periods of time. Our maps contain local, specific, symbolic and 'intimate' knowledge. They offer a complementary perspective on an existing situation and lead to insights applicable within spatial, economic and cultural development.

¹ *Aiming at combining the use of anthropological methods with cartographic ways to translate experiences and insights into maps, Dear Hunter develops the discipline of cartopology.*