

Collaborative Local Landscape Planning as a way to integrate various development goals:

The case of Nørreå River Valley – experiences from the project ‘Regional landscape’

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Why is integration of goals and functions important?

- Many of the problems are interrelated and demand comprehensive solutions
- Increasing pressure on land in the countryside – more demands than the amount of available land area
- If several goals can be solved simultaneously – we achieve higher efficiency
- More attractive landscapes from a residential /rural development perspective if functions are integrated?

Within the field of Spatial Planning integration of goal and functions is a common, themes but the question is what type of planning approach is needed for solving cotemporary land use problems and conflicts?

Landscape Strategy Making – one possible answer

- Takes point of departure in the landscape understood as a 'wholes' and in place-bound resources
- Works with high citizen/actor involvement
- Works across sectors
- Is based on many different forms of knowledge – i.e. involvement is about more than citizen involvement
- Have as goal to coordinate and integrate - activities and policy goals
- Is development and action oriented
- Strategic in its approach ie. at some point priorities must be set - not everything is equally important

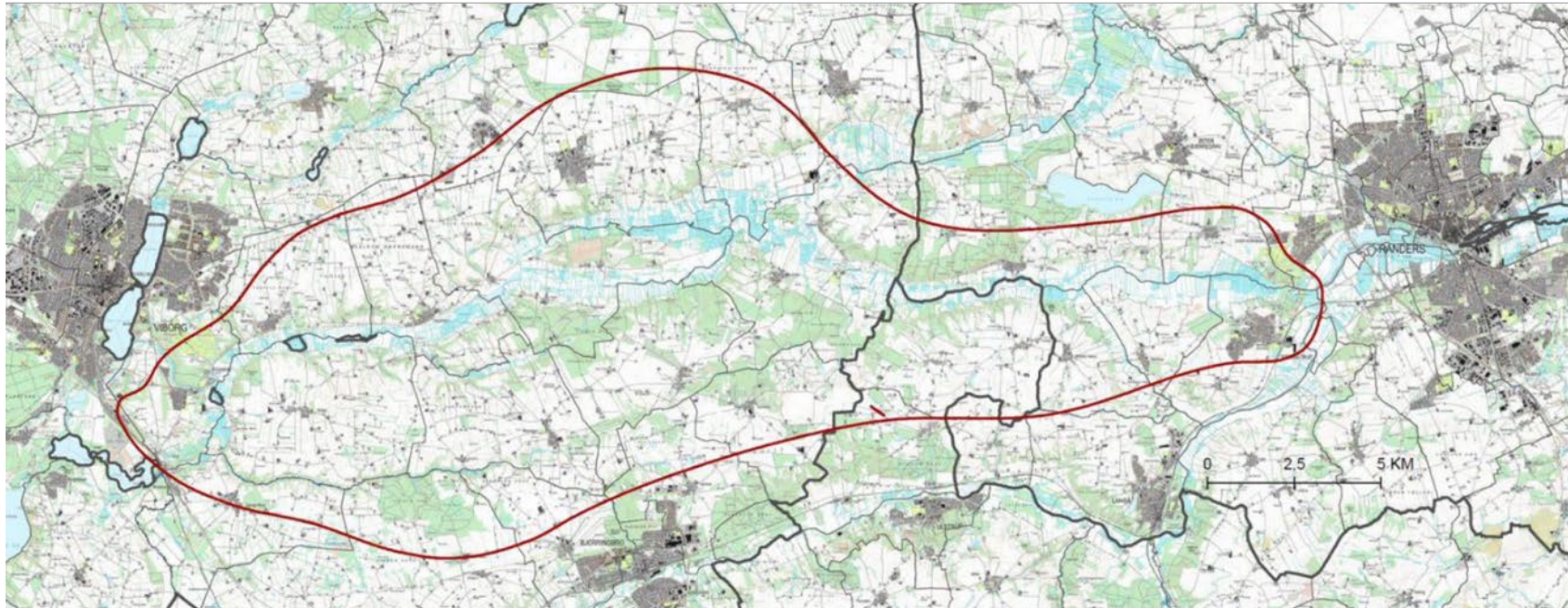
 A Landscape strategy:

Vision, development objectives, spatial principles plan, priority projects

Why a collaborative approach? – High complexity: no single solution, various perspectives, learning and acceptance

Nørreådalens – a river valley landscape in transformation

- Nørreåen (Nørre Stream) is 40 km long. The river only drops 4 meter from Viborg to Randers
- 3 Municipalities: Viborg, Favrskov, Randers.
- No regional plan covering the whole river valley.

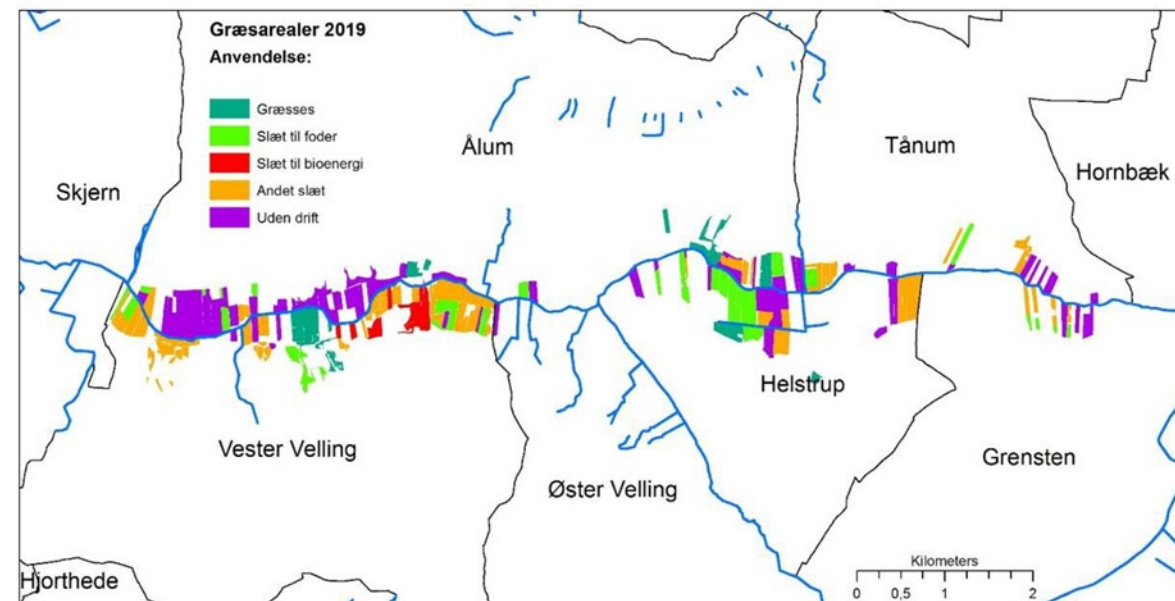
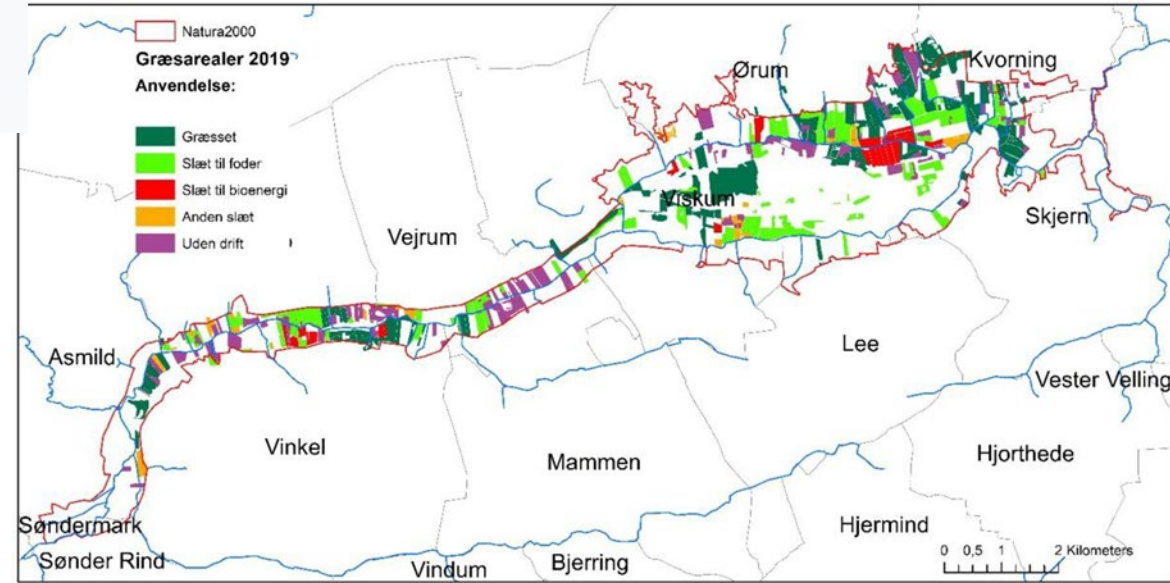


Major policy issues to be handled in the river valley – related to climate change, urbanisation processes, agricultural development and biodiversity decline

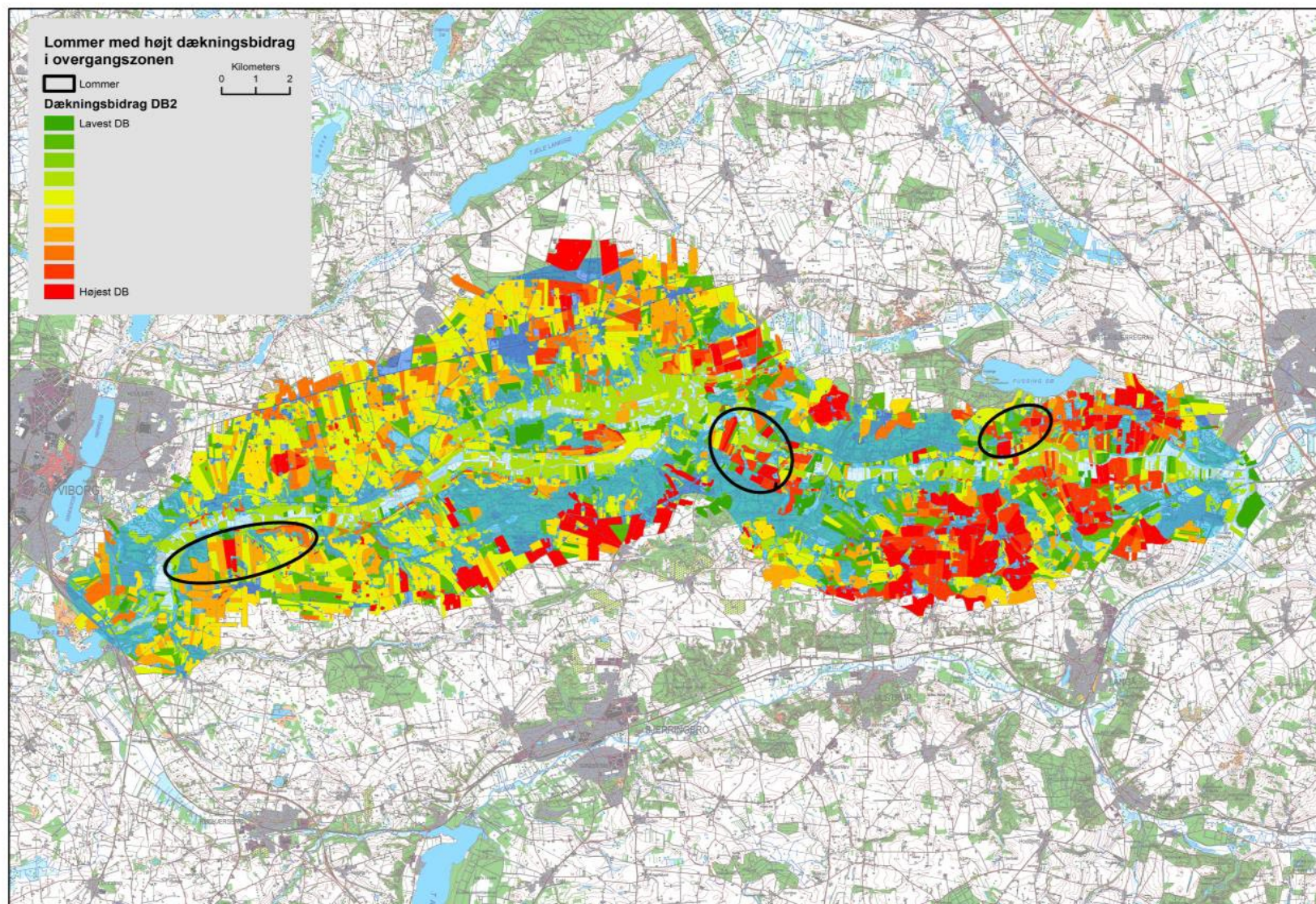
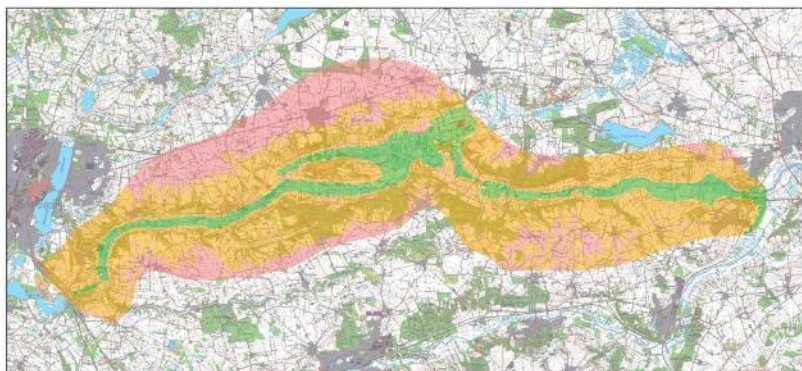
- Run offs and loss of nutrients from large fields on the plateaus
- High water table and flooding - due to increased rainfall and breaking down of the peat soils
- Climate gas emissions from the wetlands
- Land use changes which changes the aesthetic, heritage and nature values of the area
- Lack of recreational accessibility and facilities
- Urban development in some areas and village decline in others
- Installation of renewable energy plants
- Complex governance situation: Several sectors, more municipalities, many different local actors/organizations

Important results from the interview survey of 200 landowners/farmers in the river valley:

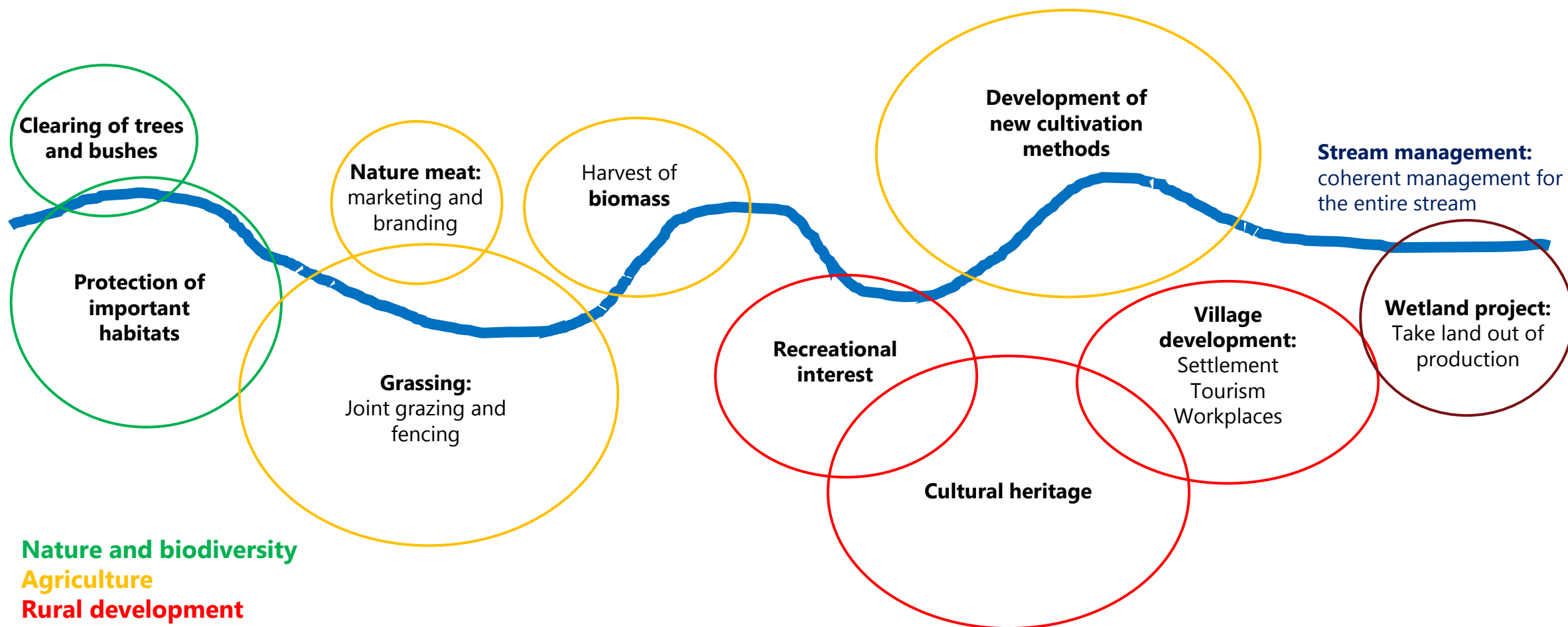
- Around 80% experience flooding on their own property every year
- The number of grazing animals (cows, sheep, horses) is decreasing
- An increasing proportion of meadow areas are abandoned (25%) and overgrow - a problem for biodiversity and for aesthetics
- There is a need to promote extensive grazing and/or rewilding in the river valley
- Great interest in joint initiatives



The river valley is used for agriculture and forestry, but extensively used. The standard gross margin is relatively low in the bottom of the valley.



The various interests in Nørreå River Valley



- **Nature and biodiversity**
- **Agriculture**
- **Rural development**
- **Climate and nutrients**
- **Stream management**

A common challenge for the landowners – an increasing amount of water



Changes in the presence of water - more frequent floods, changed water levels, increased rainfall - challenge the values and identities associated with the local places.

The agricultural interests

The appearance of landscape

The Biodiversity

Conflicts about how to understand of the increasing amount of water

- Bad maintenance of the stream by the municipality
Solution: digging out the stream and better maintenance
- The breaking down of the peat soil makes the soils more wet together with the increased rainfall – no simple solution, how can we learn to live with more water

A conflict management workshop was arranged to:

- Reach a common situation description
- Formulate objectives for future water management

Strategy process – a comprehensive participation process

Table 1. Major activities in the landscape strategy process of NRVA.

Time	Activity	Major outcome
Spring 2021	Four public lectures on geography	in the future of the river valley and get answers to questions about nature, outdoor life, water, and agriculture
Summer and autumn 2021	Public presentations of the strategy	helps to create interest in implementing the priority projects
Autumn 2021	Presentation of the final strategy to the public	

Approx. 400 actors participated in total – including the interview survey

30 people participated in the strategy group which developed the strategy

The outcome of the conflict workshop

Better understanding of the conflicts and interests

Inclusion of different types of knowledge
-both professional and practical knowledge-
resulted in joint in learning about the water and the stream

They management to

- agree on a common description of the water situation
- acknowledge that there is high degree of interdependency among the stakeholders
- formulate a goal for the future management of the stream:

The management of the stream and the flow of water through the river valley must be carried out in balanced consideration of agriculture, nature and climate change.

"We managed to go from the conflicts surrounding the flow of water to saying that other issues are just as important" (Quote project manager Viborg Municipality)

The final strategy



A common vision:

Together, we will protect Nørreådalens varied and magnificent nature and cultural landscape. The River Valley will be developed into a coherent area of national and international importance. This must be done through a collaborative governance of the values, and with the Nørreå as our common waterway from Viborg to Randers. A nice place to be.

General objectives:

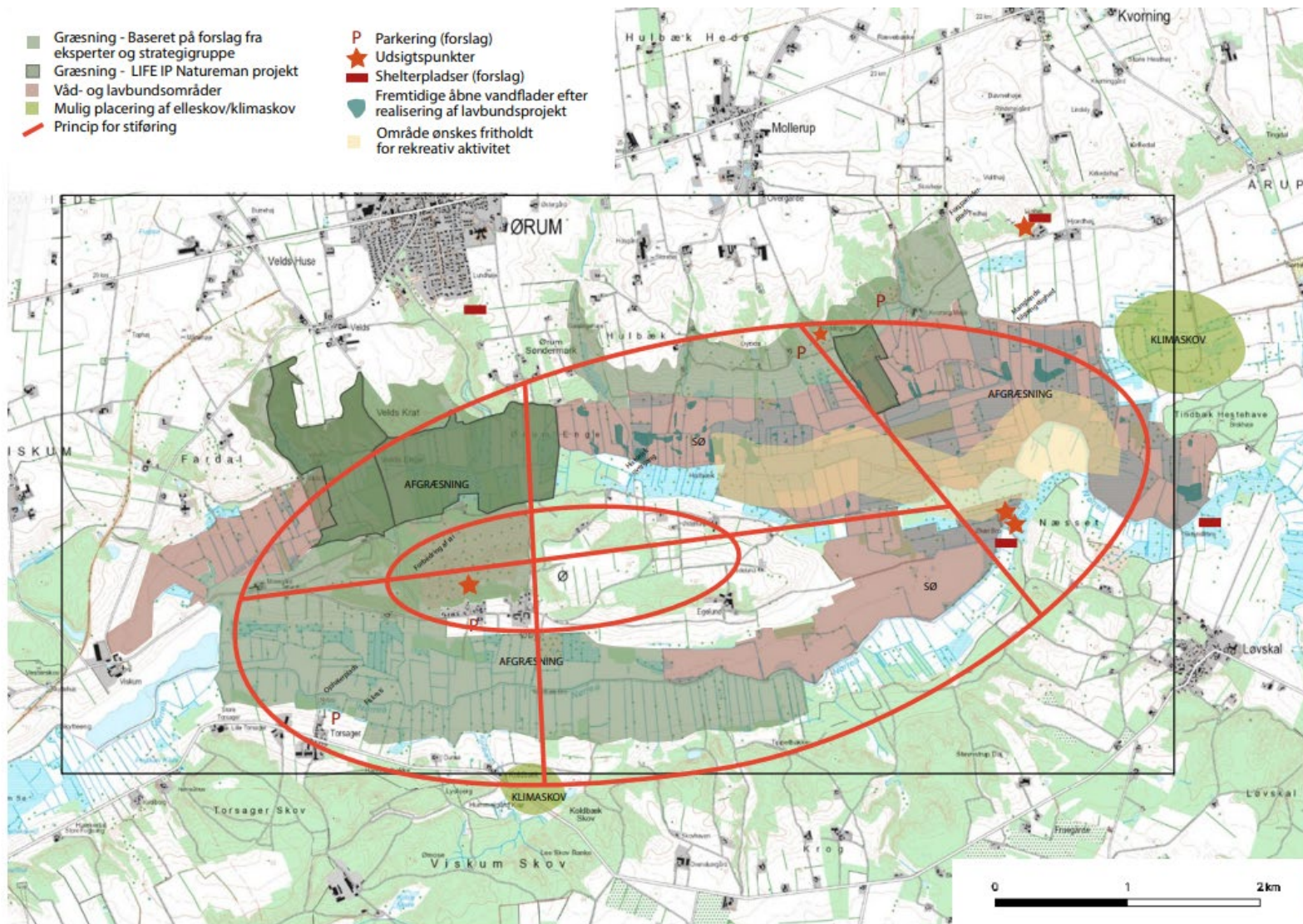
A. The landscape qualities – a relatively open river valley with a mosaic characterized by agriculture and nature – must be protected and developed with support for e.g. grazing of extensively managed grasslands and implementation of wetland projects, where consideration for nature and outdoor life is also taken into account.

B. The management of the stream and the flow of water through the river valley must be carried out in balanced consideration of agriculture, nature and climate change.

The final strategy

- More specific objectives were made for agriculture, nature, water management, the recreational infrastructure and communication
 - But no spatial plan/principles was formulated to concretize the objectives
 - The strategic projects is mostly formulated at objectives: 'the nature content on relevant slopes is increased'
 - A local strategy process was suggested for a specific site along the river valley and was implement alongside the completion of the regional strategy
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- Establishment of a landscape council with the participation of municipalities, landowners and interest and civic associations with objective to working for the implementation of the objectives of the strategy including formulation of concrete projects – to be started in spring 2024

The local strategy – goals and priorities in terms of land use and projects



Vision

The landscape shall develop into an accessible and varied river valley landscape characterized by wetlands, forests and agricultural areas with rich nature and landscape values

The plan should work as guidance for a multifunctional land consolidation process



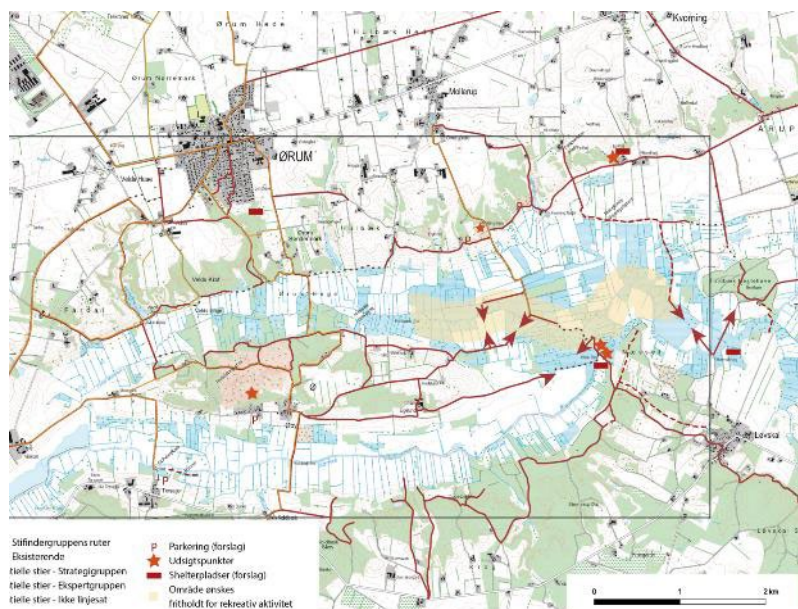
Two Land consolidation projects – multifunctional and climate wetland

Climate –wetland:

- 420 ha
- 65 mill DDK
- April 2021- April 2024

Multifunctional project

- 180 ha 2021-2023 – better nature management
- In total 600 ha have been redistributed



Learnings and Conclusions

Landscape strategy making works as a planning approach in planning for regional landscape and in situations with high complexity in terms problems and land use interests

- Joint learning/understandings and over all development objectives can be reach
- But is it difficult/too complex to point out specific areas for new land uses/projects

Landscape strategy making on a more local scale can more easily do that – more knowledge about the land and the concrete land use interest

- Farm-land owners have many interests:
 - Production oriented: some are happy to get rid of wetland areas others are not – they just want to get rid of the water. However, if the economic compensation is good, they can be persuaded
 - Hobby oriented: Hunting interests etc. - are often not interested in getting rid of land
- An increasing uncertain among farmers concerning 'legal' the future use of the river valley make them hesitating in relation participating in wetland or other land use projects (solar panel, they can earn much more money, competing subsidy schemes, CO2 tax) -this is barrier for collaborative planning projects
- Collaborative planning takes time but can contribute to efficient transformations when successful.

Tak for opmærksomheden!

