

The Science and Practice of Landscape Stewardship

Edited by
Claudia Bieling and Tobias Plieninger



Improving the dynamic relationship between nature and human well-being is a pressing issue of our time. Landscapes embody this tight interconnectedness and serve as unique sustainability learning hubs, showcased by the global rise of place-based and holistic landscape stewardship initiatives. Incorporating these exciting developments, this book explores the principles of landscape stewardship and their function in fields such as agriculture, ecological restoration and urban green infrastructure. It provides insights into the challenges and the potential of landscape stewardship and identifies future paths for the science and practice of landscape-related sustainability efforts. Aligning analytical perspectives with practical applications, it brings together contributions from leading scholars and innovative models of landscape stewardship from all around the world, making it an essential resource for anyone interested in developing sustainable human-nature relationships.

Claudia Bieling is Professor for Societal Transition and Agriculture at the University of Hohenheim, Germany.

Tobias Plieninger is Associate Professor in the Department of Geosciences and Natural Resource Management, University of Copenhagen, Denmark.



'Landscape stewardship, nurturing the places where humans live and work, is the heart of sustainability. This pioneering book presents the intellectual framework for research and practical applications of landscape stewardship. It is critical reading for everyone concerned with place-based work for social-ecological systems.'

Steve Carpenter, *University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA*

'This book is the first comprehensive synthesis of the scientific foundations and practical implementation of landscape stewardship. Moving from concepts to practice, this outstanding volume acknowledges and celebrates the diversity of human-nature relationships and the multitude of understandings of landscape stewardship. It represents a ground-breaking and refreshing contribution that will help us to transit towards sustainability.'

Berta Martín-López, *Leuphana University, Lüneburg, Germany*

'Europe, Asia and many other parts of the world host valuable landscapes that have evolved through intensive long-term interaction between humans and nature. "The Science and Practice of Landscape Stewardship" provides evidence of an emerging trend toward bottom-up, multi-stakeholder collaboration in the management of these landscapes. Cutting-edge scholarly thinking and innovative case studies from land-use practice make this thoughtful and engaging volume a must-read for anyone interested in the future of cultural landscapes.'

Kazuhiko Takeuchi, *United Nations University and University of Tokyo, Japan*

Cover illustration (front): The Green Belt along the former Iron Wall provides opportunities for implementing landscape stewardship (here in Germany). Photo: Klaus Leidorf.

Cover illustration (back): Urban landscape stewardship at work. Photo: Katharina Geist (Gärtnervolk im Allmendegarten, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0).

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Bieling and
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Edited by

CLAUDIA BIELING

Institute of Social Sciences in Agriculture, University of Hohenheim, Stuttgart, Germany

TOBIAS PLIENINGER

Department of Geosciences and Natural Resource Management, University of Copenhagen, Denmark



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Claudia Bieling is Professor for Societal Transition and Agriculture at the University of Hohenheim, Germany.

Tobias Plieninger is Associate Professor in the Department of Geosciences and Natural Resource Management, University of Copenhagen, Denmark.

Contributors

Karen Alexander

Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies, University of Tasmania, Hobart, Australia

Kenneth Anders

Büro für Landschaftskommunikation, Bad Freienwalde, Germany

Erik Andersson

Stockholm Resilience Centre, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden

Per Angelstam

Faculty of Forest Sciences, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Skinnskatteberg, Sweden

Bleta Arifi

Faculty of Environment and Natural Resources, University of Freiburg, Freiburg, Germany

Claudia Bieling

Institute of Social Sciences in Agriculture, University of Hohenheim, Stuttgart, Germany

Ruth Brennan

Dublin, Ireland

Peter Bridgewater

Institute of Applied Ecology, University of Canberra, Canberra, Australia

Louise E. Buck

Department of Natural Resources, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, USA

F. Stuart Chapin III

Institute of Arctic Biology, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks, AK, USA

Elisabeth Conrad

Institute of Earth Systems, University of Malta, Msida, Malta

Finn Danielsen

NORDECO, Copenhagen, Denmark

Anna Degteva

International Centre for Reindeer Husbandry, Kautokeino, Norway

Marine Elbakidze

Faculty of Forest Sciences, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Skinnskatteberg, Sweden

Martin Enghoff

NORDECO, Copenhagen, Denmark

Johan Enqvist

Stockholm Resilience Centre, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden

Lars Fischer

Büro für Landschaftskommunikation, Eberswalde, Germany

Kia K. Hansen

International Centre for Reindeer Husbandry, Kautokeino, Norway

Krista Heiner

EcoAgriculture Partners, Washington DC, USA

Lynn Huntsinger

Department of Environmental Science, Policy, and Management, University of California, Berkeley, CA, USA

Jasper Kenter

Laurence Mee Centre for Society and the Sea, Scottish Association for Marine Science, Oban, United Kingdom

Nette Levermann

Ministry of Fisheries and Hunting, Government of Greenland, Nuuk, Greenland

Eyðfinn Magnussen

Department of Science and Technology, University of the Faroe Islands, Torshavn, Faroe Islands

Svein D. Mathiesen

International Centre for Reindeer Husbandry, Kautokeino, Norway

Andreas Muhar

Department of Landscape, Spatial and Infrastructure Sciences, BOKU University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna, Austria

Tero Mustonen

Snowchange Cooperative, Lehtoi, Finland

Paul Opdam

Land Use Planning Group, Wageningen University, Wageningen, The Netherlands

Marianne Penker

Department of Economics and Social Sciences, BOKU University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, Austria

Christopher M. Planicka

EcoAgriculture Partners, Washington DC, USA

Tobias Plieninger

Department of Geosciences and Natural Resource Management, University of Copenhagen, Frederiksberg, Denmark

Chantal Ruppert-Winkel

Faculty of Environment and Natural Resources, University of Freiburg, Freiburg, Germany

Nathan F. Sayre

Department of Geography, University of California, Berkeley, CA, USA

Sara J. Scherr

EcoAgriculture Partners, Washington DC, USA

Nynke Schulp

Environmental Geography Group, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Brian J. Shaw

Faculty of Environment and Natural Resources, University of Freiburg, Freiburg, Germany

Dominik Siegrist

Institute for Landscape and Open Space, Hochschule für Technik Rapperswil,
Rapperswil, Switzerland

Øystein Slettemark

Ministry of Fisheries and Hunting, Government of Greenland, Nuuk, Greenland

Theo Spek

Centre for Landscape Studies, University of Groningen, Groningen, The Netherlands

Maria Tengö

Stockholm Resilience Centre, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden

Georg Winkel

European Forest Institute Headquarters, Joensuu, Finland

Karl S. Zimmerer

GeoSyntheSES Laboratory, Department of Geography, Pennsylvania State University,
University Park, PA, USA

Preface

Landscapes and their manifold contributions to human wellbeing offer fertile ground for sustainability studies. In our previous work, we were interested in understanding the patterns, processes, driving forces and impacts of landscape change, proposing social-ecological analysis frameworks. With this volume, we want to contribute to developing a more proactive landscape science. Rather than only observing or responding to landscape change, such landscape science explores and supports innovative and passionate stewardship of ecosystems and landscapes, thus reinforcing feedback loops between humans and nature. Our primary intention is to investigate, both academically and practically, how and why people act as stewards in a diversity of landscapes in Europe and beyond.

This book is a central output of the European project ‘Sustainable Futures for Europe’s Heritage in Cultural Landscapes: Tools for understanding, managing, and protecting landscape functions and values’ (HERCULES). Funding has been provided from the European Commission through Grant 603447 (7th Framework Programme). Much of our landscape stewardship thinking originated in discussions with HERCULES project partners, in particular with Chris Raymond, Brian J. Shaw, Marie-Alice Budniok, Matthias Bürgi, Nora Fagerholm, María García-Martín, Geneviève Girod, Thanasis Kizos and Julianna Nagy. First ideas on landscape stewardship were presented to attendees of a HERCULES workshop on ‘Landscape Stewardship: Integrating a broad suite of landscape values into rural development policies’ (European Economic and Social Committee, Brussels, 03.06.2015). Interaction with master students in our classes ‘Rural Landscapes – Management and Planning’ at the University of Copenhagen and ‘Landscape Change, Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Services’ (among others) at the University of Hohenheim further supported structuring our ideas around landscape stewardship.

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