



Alpine Industrial Landscapes Transformation

Project Handbook

Partners and Pilot Sites

- 1 Eisenerz
Steiermark/AT
- 2 Borgo San Dalmazzo
Piemonte/IT
- 3 L'Argentière-la-Bessée
Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur/FR
- 4 Tržič
Gorenjska/SLO

84
Vaucluse
c.a.u.e
Conseil d'architecture, d'urbanisme
et de l'environnement

LAMORO
AGENZIA DI
SVILUPPO

POLITECNICO
MILANO 1863
DIPARTIMENTO DI ARCHITETTURA
E STUDI URBANI

TUM
Technische Universität München

TU
WIEN
raum simlab


Steirische Eisenstraße

Univerza v Ljubljani
Biotehniška fakulteta

BSC
Poslovno podporni center Kranj
Regionalna razvojna agencija Gorenjske

zavod

0 50 100 Km

Base map: Interreg Alpine Space
cooperation area



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Interpretations of the seemingly worthless

PROF. DR. UDO WEILACHER

"When you look at it, it looks like any other piece of land. The sun shines on it like on any other part of the earth. And it's as though nothing had particularly changed in it. Like everything was the way it was thirty years ago. My father, rest his soul, could look at it and not notice anything out of place at all. Except maybe he'd ask why the plant's smokestack was still. Was there a strike or something? Yellow ore piled up in cone-shaped mounds, blast furnaces gleaming in the sun, rails, rails, and more rails, a locomotive with flatcars on the rails. In other words, an industry town. Only there were no people. Neither living nor dead."

This excerpt from the science fiction novel "Roadside Picnic", written in 1971 by Boris and Arkady Strugatsky, describes a mysterious landscape of industrial ruins near Harmont, a fictitious city in Canada. The legendary film "Stalker" (1979) by Andrei Tarkovsky is based on this novel. The Stalker is a guide, helping foreigners to explore the strange brownfield site in search of miraculous and unique objects. The inhabitants of Harmont not only profit from brownfield tourism, but gain fascinating knowledge from their exploration of the area. In this fifty-year-old novel a wrecked industrial zone has an enormous potential for the future.

For many decades, it was common to either neglect brownfield areas and let them rot down or to dismantle all remnants of industrial use and create almost faceless clean areas. These strategies have changed in the recent, and it is not by chance that "Stalker" is often cited when searching for new interpretations of the seemingly worthless. It remains a challenge today in planning and design to activate the largely hidden economical, ecological and social potential of abandoned landscapes. Many of them are important reserves for development, especially against the background of globally increasing land consumption. Around the world we find a variety of successful industrial transformation projects in

densely populated metropolitan areas. In Germany, the five-square-kilometre Ruhr area, populated by approximately 5 million people, is one of the best-known conversion projects, and the 230 hectares Landscape Park Duisburg-Nord is a pioneering example of an innovative transformation of a former steel mill.

It seems that sufficient knowledge has now been gained to solve complex transformation problems in post-industrial areas. However, this assumption is not quite right. Although each industrial production process, whether aluminium smelting, cement or steel production, is technically almost identical and requires the same infrastructure, the ecological, economic and social context of industrialization varies greatly from site to site. Every landscape, with its topography, its specific soil, water and climate conditions, has a most decisive influence on industrial development. The Alps are characterized by very specific natural conditions that have a direct and far-reaching impact on people's lives. It is therefore obvious that industrial conversion in this rather sparsely populated high mountain region has to follow different rules than in the densely populated lowlands of European metropolitan regions.

At first sight the Alps are often assumed to be a magnificent landscape, shaped by the forces of nature, used in suitable areas for agriculture and by tourists for various outdoor activities. Only the valleys seem to be partially characterized by settlements, commercial areas, motorways, railways and so on. This simplistic perception ignores the fact that the Alpine region is one of the largest industrial regions in central Europe, a very powerful landscape with a long history of exploitation of its natural resources, and heavy industrial activities. The Alps are a highly dynamic energy landscape, not only continually shaped by enormous geological energies, but also characterized by a high level of relief energy, which

figure 1: Landscape park Duisburg-Nord, Germany
figure 2: Brownfield in Leoben, Austria



intensifies all natural processes, from climate to erosion dynamics. Industries in the Alps had to take these energetic landscape characteristics into account from early on when constructing technical infrastructure and utilizing the natural resources, especially the omnipresent power of water. It would be grossly negligent to underestimate these inherent energies in the process of brownfield transformation, especially since global climate change is currently boosting energy levels and in so doing is significantly stimulating the dynamics of change in the Alpine landscape.

trAILS is about the transformation of Alpine Industrial Landscapes, AILS, striving to take the aforementioned specifics of a unique landscape as well as the Alpine way of life into account. We would like to introduce sustainable planning

strategies that can be used by local and regional actors in Alpine regions when converting former industrial locations into good working and living environments. Such a complex task needs to take the local economic, ecological and social context into account and cannot be mastered by a single expert alone. We are therefore very pleased that, when initiating the project in 2017, we were joined by committed project partners in the regions and at renowned universities. The result of this successful team collaboration is presented in this publication, encouraging regional and local actors and stakeholders to get started and take the conversion of brownfield sites into their own hands. We would like to use this opportunity to thank all project partners, sponsors and friends for their invaluable contributions and their outstanding commitment over the years.