



Lake Lausitz

international Workshop
Cottbus, 2001

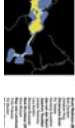
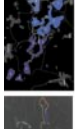
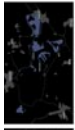
Lead projectteam with
Christophe Girot, Zürich and
Attika Architects, Amsterdam

*IBA Fürst Pückler Land
area: ca. 15000 ha
final water surface: ca. 5500 ha*

The team was to develop ideas for a chain of lakes in Niederlausitz: more than ten lakes which are a product of the lignite mining between Senftenberg, Hoyerswerda and Schwarze Pumpe. Now that the mining operation has been halted, the landscape is in a process of recultivation. The concept of a chain of lakes, already developed during GDR-times did not seem strong enough for us to serve as a base for the envisioned tourism and prospects of life in this new landscape. We are searching for possibilities to create ONE lake, a concept that would exploit the potential of the promise of water.

The remaining holes fill with the rising groundwater and create a promise for the new landscape. The necessary larger-scale watermanagement and the shared history of the new grounds can be a base for the development of a unique landscape. The existent knowledge of the population on the construction of landscape will enable the enhancement of these potentials and an understanding of the task as a challenge to find innovative – not restorative – approaches.

The disparent lakes, the villages, and cities boarding these new waters are all trying to take up the challenge of the new enterprise. Traditional culture meets newly cultivated grounds. Villages are finding new identities for themselves and a plethora of new ideas are growing under the high pressure of time until the grounds are turned over to the people. The connecting of the remaining holes of the mining operation into one lake is a vision, which as a personal and political strategy will bring together and exponentiate the hopeful ideas and developments along one Lake Lausitz. However, it is also a vision which necessitates the tangible decoding of the emerging landscape. The vision of the ONE lake thus also requires the continuation of the reshaping or construction of the landscape.



Topography

How can the topography set an impulse for the new landscape? The topography will have to show its final effects after the water-level has risen to its final state. Through mining different grounds and water-edges were made: filled ground – terra nova – which forms a soft edge towards the new lakes and the grown soil – terra firma – which shapes a hard, steeper edge. These differing conditions can be used to apply innovative means and techniques for example in architectures and to develop a tangible structure of the reworked mining landscape. The earth-movements which are still active in the area have to be used now to enhance the singularity of Lake Lausitz. Accentuated shore-forms of the characteristically high slopes on the banks and the creation of a variety of high-points in the flat landscape of Lausitz also have to be a part of this.

Water

How can we make use of the water?

The post-mining landscape is characterized by its new waters. Obviously the lakes in the remaining hole are part of it but also a long-term wide-spanning water management which regulates the filling of the lakes and the regeneration of the water-quality. As characteristic elements the necessary connections between the lakes can be developed into identities and impulses for the new landscape. These spatially active connections also have to be used for innovative ideas for the handling with the hydrological situation of Lake Lausitz. Regenerative water-fields, locks, canals, and wide connective waters thus become a signaling network of a uniquely constructed Lake Lausitz.

Forest

How can we create uniqueness in an artificial forest?

The monocultural afforestation of the terra nova – the filled ground – is a characteristic spatial aspect of Lake Lausitz. The diligent use of this spatial strength can enable a fascinating, dramatic experience of landscape. Dramatic vistas through breaches, uncovered highpoints from which one has a sight of the spread forest- and waterbodies, and the introduction of other productive forest-cultures create a differentiated landscape, which, however, separates itself from the surrounding, grown cultural landscape.

Settlement

For whom do we create new forms of living?

The development of the region cannot build on a day- or even seasonal tourism. New forms of settlement will have to guarantee impulses for a restructuring over the whole course of the year. This restructuring process has, in the first instance to be conceived for resident people. It will have to develop attraction to new settlers as well. To sustain the existent quality of the sparsely populated area, and in order to improve it, the new forms of settlement should refer to existing settlement structures. An extension is selectively feasible in exposed situations which offer optimal and extraordinary conditions linked to infrastructure, soil-conditions, waterspaces and solar exposition. A special role has to be attributed to the water-edge, which – at more than 300km length – should be allocated to private settlement. The challenging conditions of the water and the ground can thus foster extraordinary and qualitative solutions, which can attract development beyond a vague idea of seasonal tourism.