

Extended Abstract.

**Exploring the synergies between landscape and food culture, in pursuit of sustainable development.**

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Landscape over the world is to a great extent an imprint of humankind's different food cultures. Not only arable fields, forests, seascapes, lakes and rivers, plantations, clear-cuts for cultivation, coppiced woodlands for wood fuel, olive-groves, vineyards, pastures, gardens, orchards and allotments, but also iron mines and clay pits for pots and plates, road networks, fishing harbours, fish farms, distribution centres, vast greenhouse- and supermarket areas, etc., constitute past and present "food landscapes". With a world population of 7.2 billion in mid-2013 (UNFPA 2013), global food security is a critical issue. Production of large amounts of food is inevitable. The demands are also increasing with an increasingly growing middleclass in developing countries, who is communicating change in status and social position through for example increased meat consumption. Changes in lifestyle and land use in one part of the world are influencing landscape in another part of the world (Fairclough and Sarlöv Herlin 2009). In parallel to this there is an increasing awareness, particularly among western urban consumers, of the environmental and ethical consequences of a highly intense and industrialised food production such as greenhouse gas emissions, animal welfare and traceability issues, pollutions of chemicals and overuse of fertilizers, shortage of resources such as fossil fuels and water, and habitat loss and - fragmentation.

While the general view among landscape researchers is that intense food consumption and hence production generates (environmentally) unsustainable landscapes, other types of "food landscapes" are associated with a range of qualities such as beauty, identity, recreation, biodiversity and promotion of cultural heritage. The concept of a "virtuous circle", used by for example Selman & Knight 2006, Selman 2009, is one way of illustrating how different forms of production can create a favourable landscape, which make an area attractive to producers, who in turn would make efforts to create favourable environments. Landscape and food or gastronomy are often parts of the same "package of ideas" when marketed for tourism and experiences, often linked together as a way to contribute to mutually added values (Heldt Cassel 2003, Sims 2009, Ore and Kurhara 2013, Bessièrè 2013) and hence contributing to strengthen the rural economy, as expressed by the European

Landscape Convention (CoE 2000). Construction of idyllic food and idyllic sceneries is often used to sell a romanticised countryside for urban societies (Kizos in press) and landscape representations are often used in product labelling and advertisement for food and drinks.

The rapidly growing interest for food and cooking among the western middle class has together with environmental and ethical criticism spawned the demand and supply of organic, locally produced, or seasonal products (Hall and Gössling 2013). This includes products from so called alternative food networks (AFNs) such as farmers' markets, community supported agriculture and box schemes (Tregear, 2011). Chefs and restaurant owners are more commonly using "local" products on their menus (Herzog and Murray 2013). Landscape is often used as an argument to back up domestic agriculture. In for example Sweden, where the notion of "the open landscape" is highly valued in public awareness, and cherished in songs and lyrics, the Federation of Swedish Farmers – LRF, is actively promoting the slogan "Swedish farmers keep the landscape open". However, it is yet difficult for consumers to comprehend landscape outcomes of their consumption choices and of different policies. Notions such as "locally produced" can be ambiguous (DuPuis and Goodman 2005, Timothy and Ron, 2013), and does not necessarily mean any benefits for the environment or the landscape. Locally produced does for example not say whether ingredients (e.g. sugar), are transported from far away. Locally produced is mostly not the same as locally consumed. Artisan products with Controlled Appellation of Origin or other types of local brand products are widely exported and consumed elsewhere. There has also been recent critique against the labelling of local products, in the academic literature (McEntee 2010) as well by a leading food critic (i.e. Jay Rayner 2013) for being inequitable and unfairly geared towards above-average incomers.

What kind of food consumption and production is beneficial for our ideas about a "good landscape" is subject to different views, for example whether you are a rural enterpriser (a thriving rural economy), a landscape ecologist (positive effects from different land use methods on habitats and species) or if you value the landscape as a place for involvement, meaning, attachment, identity, culture, memories, scenery or experiences. There are initiatives for "food landscapes" aiming to promote a range of different functions and values at the same time, in order to achieve multi-functionality and often to encourage consumption and enjoyment of food as well as landscapes. In for example the UK, a number of more integrative initiatives have taken off during the last decade in order to develop environmental food marking that takes into account locality, landscape stewardship and landscape character (Trewin and Mason 2006).

While sustainability embraces 'the quality of human life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting eco-systems' (IUCN/UNEP/WWF 1991), quality of human life cannot be addressed without understanding the underlying cultural perspectives on food, habits, perceptions, and choices. As expressed by Bessièrè; "food production is associated with perception and a system of representations, therefore, in order to better understand the

basis of these production characteristics, it appears important to analyse the way in which we think of them and how we represent them” (Bessièrè 2013).

This study is a part of an interdisciplinary research project aiming to integrate cultural food studies with landscape studies in pursuit of sustainable development, considering all pillars of sustainability. We highlight the more holistic notion of landscape, rather than environment, when trying to understand and describe how food consumption can result in different outcomes on the surrounding. We will through examples from England, Italy, and Sweden and on different scale levels, examine how landscape and food culture can be explicitly linked in policy. For this we have combined observations during field studies, interviews and desk studies of research literature and policy documents, and numerous discussions as a part of an interdisciplinary discourse. Development of methods is particularly important as food cultural relationships with landscape haven't been analysed before. Among the examples is a cheese landscape in Piedmont, Italy; locality food initiatives in England and a national rural development project called “Sweden - the new culinary nation”. The latter is aiming to promote issues such as countryside development, animal health and welfare, food safety, environmental approaches and sustainable food production, and to some extent addressing also landscape issues. In these examples, selected on the basis of how landscape and food culture can be explicitly linked in policy, we highlight different landscape outcomes and consequences for sustainability and we discuss integrative practices under different local conditions.

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