History as a source for understanding todays landscape
Ingrid Sarlöv Herlin, SLU, Sweden
”The aim is not to freeze the landscape but to manage future changes in a way that enhances diversity and quality” (ELC)
“Knowledge of the past is an extension of our memory”
(Rentzhog, 2014)
• Landscape change and a historical perspective
• Reading the material and living landscape
• Dealing with intangible landscape values
• Conclusions...
Urban green spaces and structures

• contribute to increased quality of life
  – More resilient cities; a healthier and more restorative environment and as social arenas
  – Improved biodiversity conditions
  – Mitigate climate change impacts and better performance of other ecosystems services

Taksim Gezi Park Istanbul

Cemetery in Manhattan New York
In many countries, biodiversity and nature conservation have a strong power, for historical reasons.
Reading the living and material landscape

• Being able to read the landscape as a text is about legibility and readability; awareness, understanding and experience.

• “the language of landscape exists with its own syntax, grammar, and metaphors, and that we put ourselves in danger by failing to learn to read and speak this language”. Anne Whiston Spirn.
How to study; (changes in) land use, field pattern, buildings, settlement pattern?

- Historical maps
- Archives (texts and old photos)
- Old surveys
- Names of rivers, towns, villages, settlements, forests, etc, can tell about the age and origin of the landscape
- Areal photos & satellite images
Historic land use - landscape changes

1815

1910-1915

1940s

Today
Checklists for the design of a multifunctional management plan…

- The area in regional context for people,
  - i.e. population, housing pattern, infrastructure, accessibility

- Present land cover and land use

- Landuse history and cultural history; Landscape changes
  - land use, field pattern, buildings, settlement pattern
  - Cultural elements; stonewalls, stone mounds, boundaries, etc
  - Historic use and distribution of species
  - Living elements (old trees, plants),
  - Values that are attached to identities, meanings and perceptions

- Landscape Character
- Historic Landscape Character

- Social and Aesthetic values
  - Recreational values
  - Visual characteristics
  - Accessibility (on different scale levels)
  - Pedagogic values
Checklists for the design of a multifunctional management plan...

- Landscape coherence and distribution of landscape elements in space and time (Landscape ecology)

- Ecological functions on site level;
  - Habitats qualities, Corridors qualities

- Soil types and geology
  - Nutrient status

- Landform

- Hydrology

- Wildlife, biodiversity,
  - Plants and animal occurrence

- Woody species composition and three-dimensional structure, age structure,
  - Vegetation classification (types)
  - Aesthetic values
  - Species competition; Dynamics- Stability
    - Management input

- Production values

- Ecosystem services
Laponia, the steering committee
Salva questo paesaggio, mangiando la Pasta dei Coltivatori Toscani.
“Exploration between relationships between locality foods and landscape character!”

- Locality food

linking food with flavor from the characteristic landscape / habitat (eg heathland) where the food is produced, with the identity of a specific location (for example, heather honey from Dartmoor).

(Carol Trewin and Laura Mason 2006.)
Pigs from the New Forest, linked to over thousands of years of traditional management, a prerequisite for conserving the forest.
Some reflections...
• “a look at the history can make us understand how our thinking about landscape protection, management and planning have emerged during the development of the modern society, why there are differences between countries, and why we are where we are today”
Conclusions;

- History gives a perspective to understanding landscape changes
- The underlying driving forces maybe very similar today and in the past but with different magnitudes
- Landscape changes are the result of humans desires and believes
- We need experts who can understand complex connections and interpret multiple sources, for example to read landscape and to engage with stakeholders
- Intangible and tangible landscape values can be closely linked
- To acknowledge intangible landscape values means we are getting closer to the nation of “landscape as perceived by people”
- People want to reconnect to landscape through for example food, this could be pure storytelling or more or less relevant
- Landscape history is one of the most exciting common grounds for involving everyone!
What about tomorrow’s landscape?
Thank you for your attention!