



# Sustainable Futures for Europe's Heritage in Cultural Landscapes:

Tools for understanding, managing, and protecting landscape functions and values



Photo: Berta Martín López



This project has received funding from the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration under grant agreement no 603447

FP7, Collaborative Project  
1 December 2013 – 30 November 2016



**HERCULES** seeks to empower public and private actors to protect and sustainably manage cultural landscapes that possess significant cultural, socio-economic, historical, natural and archaeological value, at a local, national and Pan-European level.



„The major grand challenges facing our society are embedded in landscape: climate change, energy needs, health and safety, food security, urbanisation and migration.” (ESF 2010: 1)

„Landscapes and regions are exactly the right scale for sustainability. Local ecosystems are commonly transformed in days or years, whereas land mosaic transformations usually occur incrementally over generations. Humans avoid long-term planning and decisions, whereas sustained human-land interactions require them. Large area is a surrogate for long term.” (Forman 1995: XVIII)

## **Cultural landscapes represent the “combined works of nature and of man” (UNESCO 2008)**

- The unique feature of the cultural landscapes perspective is that it considers human as integral elements of landscapes
- Cultural landscapes have been shaped by people and their activities
- In Europe, a result of these long-lasting interactions has been the gradual development of multifunctional cultural landscapes
- Traditional land use practices sustain a range of economic, social, and environmental services as well as elevated levels of biodiversity



The overarching goal of this transdisciplinary research project is to increase understanding of drivers, patterns, and values of European cultural landscapes and to use this knowledge to develop, test, and demonstrate strategies for their protection, management, and planning.

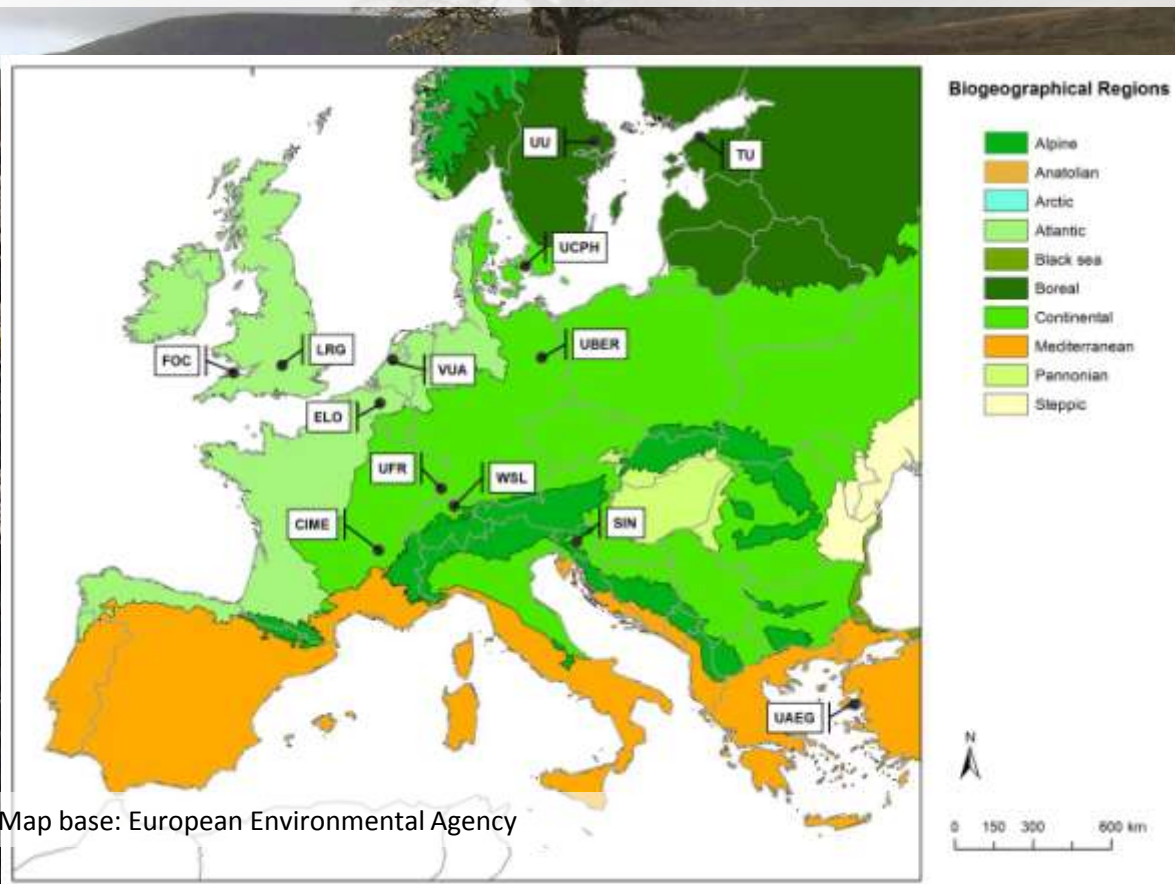
**The objectives of the project include:**

- Assessing and synthesizing the existing knowledge
- Performing targeted case-studies
- Developing tools for landscape observation and modelling
- Providing a strong and unified vision of „pathways” toward protecting heritage in cultural landscapes
- Designing recommendations for landscape policy and practice



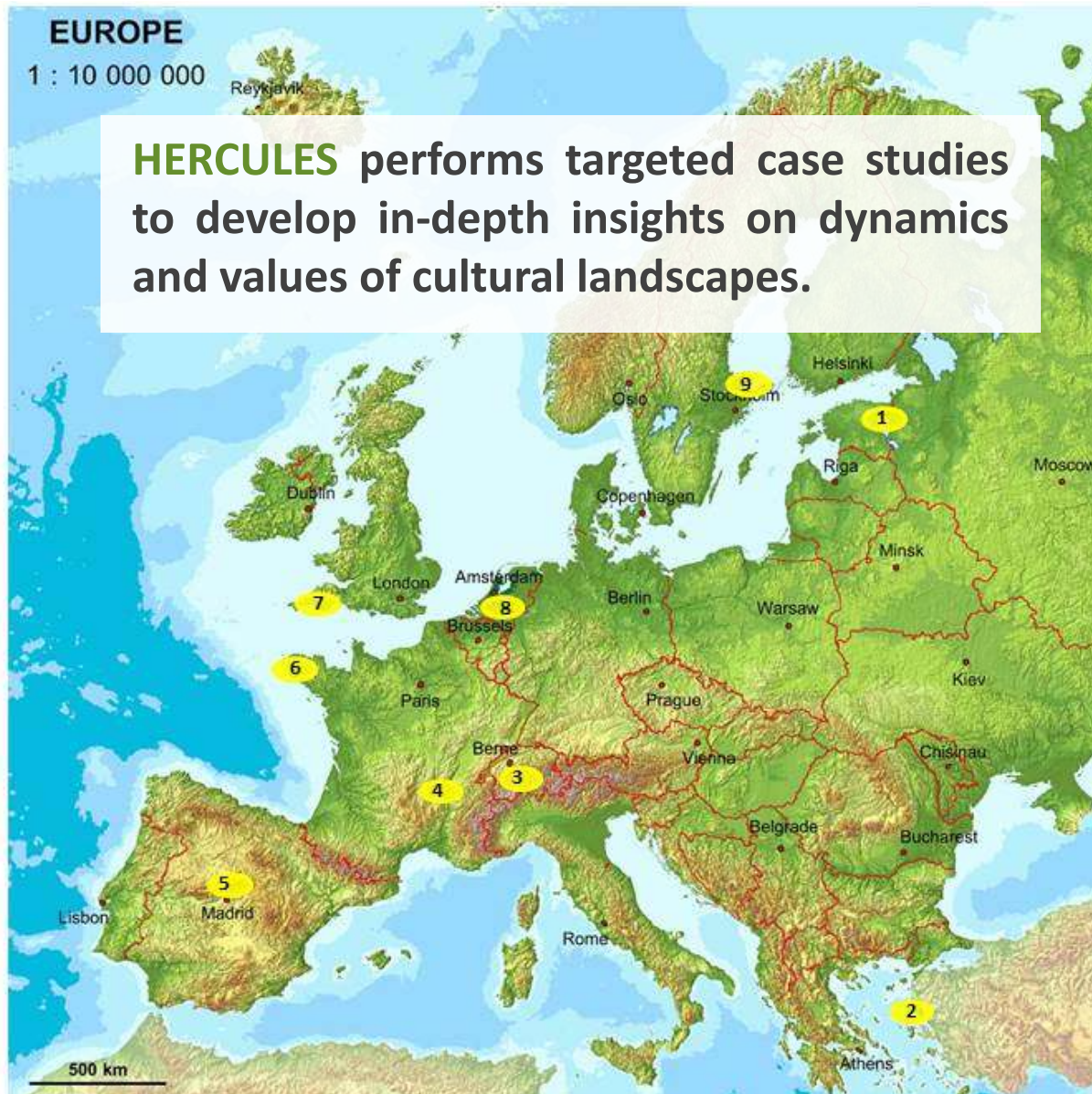
# HERCULES Consortium

**HERCULES** brings together 13 partners representing European universities and research institutes, small and medium-sized enterprises and non-governmental organisations, all of whom are experts in landscape science and practice.



- Humboldt Universität zu Berlin (DE)
- University of Copenhagen (DK)
- CIME - Innovation Management and Environment Consulting (FR)
- European Landowners' Organization (BE)
- Forest Communication Network Ltd (UK)
- Landscape Research Group (UK)
- Sinergise (SI)
- VU University Amsterdam (NL)
- Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research – WSL (CH)
- University of Freiburg (DE)
- Tallinn University (EE)
- The University of the Aegean (GR)
- Uppsala University (SE)

# 9 study landscapes

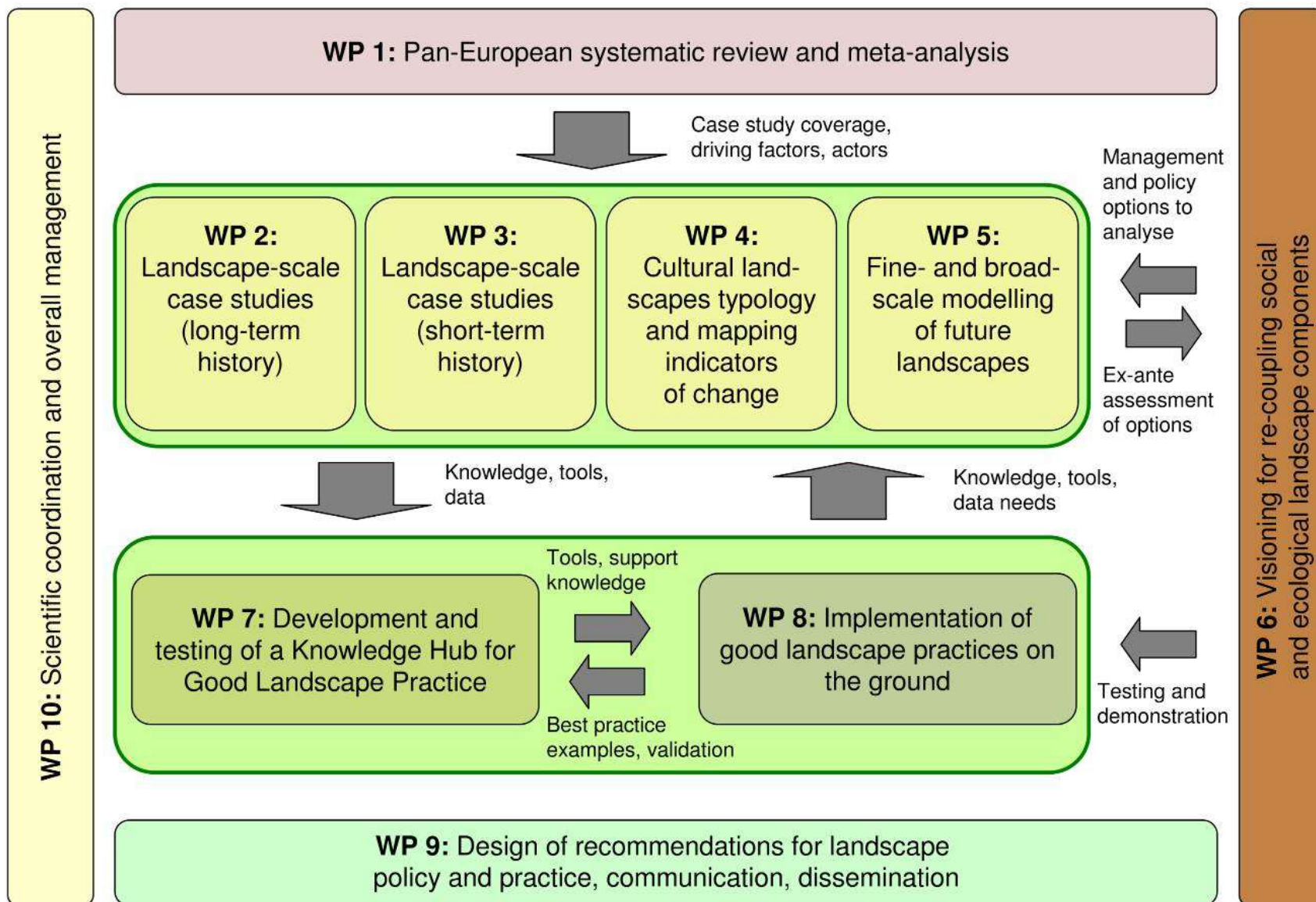


## HERCULES study landscapes

- 1 Vooremaa / Kodavere / Lake Peipsi (Estonia)
- 2 Petrified forests and agroforestry landscapes of Lesvos (Greece)
- 3 Obersimmental (Switzerland)
- 4 Rhône-Alpes area (France)
- 5 Upper Lozoya valley (Spain)
- 6 Parc Naturel Régional d'Armorique, Brittany (France)
- 7 South West Devon (UK)
- 8 Rhine- Meuse area (Netherlands)
- 9 Uppland (Sweden)



# Work structure





**HERCULES** designs and implements a Knowledge Hub for Good Landscapes Practices.

**The Knowledge Hub as a Europe-wide platform will:**

- enable landscape practitioners, managers, users, policymakers, and the public to exchange knowledge and acquire new and applicable insights
- foster learning and exchange on landscape practices
- allow users to
  - systematically assess strengths and weaknesses of the various practices presented
  - identify their appropriateness for specific contexts and tasks
  - provide information on outcomes for different actors under various scenarios of landscape change
  - gather practical information on ways to initialise and foster implementation

**HERCULES** develops strong policy relevance for a broad range of policies and strategies that impact on landscapes.

**Such policies include among others:**

- Common Agricultural Policy
- EU Cohesion Policy 2014-2020
- Green Infrastructure Strategy
- EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy
- Water Framework Directive
- National policies and regional planning

**HERCULES** tests and informs the further refinement of existing guidelines such as

- European Landscape Convention
- Guidelines developed around the UNESCO World Heritage Convention



**HERCULES tests and informs the further refinement of the European Landscape Convention.**

**In regard to**

- An expansion of scope to include all landscape aspects and landscape types
- An increased emphasis on public participation
- A focus on designing measures appropriate for different contexts and scales
- Encouragement of support for capacity-building

**HERCULES** is determined to develop advanced technologies and tools for mapping, diagnosing, protecting and managing cultural landscapes in rural areas.

**Expected results of HERCULES are the following:**

- A meta-analytic database of literature and expert knowledge on cultural landscape transformation
- Well-documented case studies on the long- and short-term histories and change in cultural landscapes
- A Pan-European cultural landscape typology and map, validated by citizen engagement through crowdsourcing
- New modelling approaches to assess future landscape developments and policy impacts on cultural landscapes
- A roadbook for the management of heritage values in landscape sensitive to diverse environmental and societal contexts



# Follow our activities

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