Introduction

The country between the Rivers Ruhr in the south and Lippe in the north and with the Emscher in the centre is originally neither a landscape – geographically nor a historically political unit.

The Ruhr was the industrial heart not only of Germany, but of all of Europe for more than 100 years. Industrialisation formed a whole area and influenced not only the urban area but specifically the development of the countryside. The result is a man-made, artificial surrounding (figure 1).

In the middle of the 20th century the industrial boom stopped. Industrial plants are no longer in use. A lot of people are unemployed. Since this time, we experienced a deep structural and social transformation in the Ruhr.

In 1898 the government of North Rhine Westfalia started the International Building Exhibition (IBA), to prepare a strategy for the ecological, economic and social development of the Emscher region (784 Km2). It was created for a term of ten years, to give an impulse for new ideas and projects. IBA was a forum to exchange ideas and experiences, for dialogue among all groups in society, for the detailed discussion of ideas and planning schemes.

The Emscher Landscape Park project

Within the framework of the International Building Exhibition (1989 - 1999) the Emscher Landscape Park was the central component of an integrated development strategy for the former industrial region. It was intended to create a new Regional Park, the Emscher Landscape Park – with a length of 70 Kilometres and about 320 square kilometres of land running from west to east through the Emscher Region (figure 2).

The five objectives for the Emscher Landscape Park are:

- Preserving the remaining leftover landscape
- Linking up the isolated, separate areas in the agglomeration
- Re-zoning separate areas as parkland
- Reaching agreements both regionally and locally on individual projects with a long-term perspective and
- Maintaining and managing the new open spaces in a permanent regional park association.

The aim is to improve the working and living environment for more than 2 Million inhabitants in the region.
The civil - and district administrations together with KVR\(^1\) (Association of Ruhr District Local Authorities) have been working on this massive exercise in landscape design within the framework of IBA since 1989. 17 Cities (Bergkamen, Bochum, Bottrop, Castrop-Rauxel, Dortmund, Duisburg, Essen, Gelsenkirchen, Gladbeck, Herne, Herten, Kamen, Lünen, Mülheim an der Ruhr, Oberhausen, Recklinghausen, Waltrop), 2 urban districts and KVR have formed 7 inter-municipal working groups to undertake the planning on the 7 green corridors running along a north-south axis. In each of the corridors there are anchored a lot of small projects but one great model project exemplifying the various themes adopted in the Emscher Landscape Park. Together with a new east-west-corridor, called the new "Emscher-valley", this will constitute the basic framework of the future Emscher Park.

The idea of a regional park system has a long history in the Ruhr region. Robert Schmidt, who was later to found the regional housing association, Siedlungsverband Ruhrkohlenbezirk (SVR), was the first to formulate the vision of a "national park" for the industrial district of the Ruhr. Taking up this earlier idea the individual north-south-corridors are being expanded and linked to a new east-west-corridor to form a complete park system of European Significance. The first decade of project development has finished. Until 2001 more than 300 Projects of different importance have been carried out. This is compatible to a plain of 3.300 football fields or 33 square kilometres.

During this first decade the IBA Company was the mediator of the Development, KVR was responsible for the master plan of the Emscher Landscape Park. After finishing the IBA, Project Ruhr (a new company to promote projects in the Ruhr area) took over the task of project management. They are working on the master plan 2010 together with all the other participants. The main point of the third decade will be the Regeneration of the Emscher River System together with the development of the new Emscher Valley.

The spectrum of landscape design in the Emscher Landscape Park is broad and its variety is important. The design canon for the Emscher Landscape Park was based on the deliberate incorporation of the industrial landscape, the aesthetics of industrial culture and the quality of nature in the industrial area. More than 150 years of industrialisation have left their mark on the region: mines, cooking plants and winding towers are impressive relics of a former area. Today the buildings are architectural witnesses explaining the history of the region. It was also important to create atmosphere, an identity and a feeling of home for the city dwellers and their industrial landscape. Beyond it 580 km new cycle and walking paths were built, for example the Emscher Park cycle path with 230 km and the Emscher Park walking path with 130 km. (figure 3).

**Finance**

With it Emscher-Lippe Ecology Programme the Government of North-Rhine/ Westphalia has created the necessary financial base for implementation of landscape projects until 2006 (2008) The range of projects in the Emscher Landscape Park stretches from the development of large areas of derelict land right down to small-scale activities such as the creation of biotopes or of planting trees. The Emscher-Lippe Ecology Programme is combined with structural development aid from the European

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\(^1\) The Kommunalverband Ruhrgebeit (KVR) is Germany's oldest association of local authorities. It is a public service body, with the right to self-administration. Since 1920 the KVR has been responsible for the overall planning and promotion of the Ruhr district, one of the most densely populated regions in Europe (5 million people). The main responsibilities are: urban and regional planning, urban construction, industrial settlement, public relation for the Ruhr district and ensuring that the Ruhr, remains a pleasant region to live in, and an attractive location for businesses.
Community (action plan for the coal fields). Between 1991 and 2000 (first decade) the government of North Rhine Westfalia and the EU (Aim 2) has financed over 270 projects with a volume of nearly 200 Mio. €. For the second decade, 2000 - 2006 (2008) the Government of North Rhine Westfalia and the EU finance nearly 70 Mio. € for new projects. The holder of the projects are the local authorities and the KVR.

**Look out and park maintenance**

During the ten years between 1989 and 1999 the development of the green framework Emscher Landscape Park began (figure 4). After 1999 the planning and realisation are going on. In 2001 all participants worked on a new action-program called “ELP 2010” (here you can find action points for the future). The public finance is certain until 2006. The state NRW wants to promote the projects together with the European union with 70 Mill. €. In the third decade it is the aim to build up regional park maintenance. As in the planning process so far, regional park management, decentralised maintenance and local participation are to cooperate and provide mutual support while the Emscher Landscape Park enterprise gets underway.

**Rebuilding of Emscher River System**

The River Emscher flows 70 kilometres from east to west through the northern Ruhr Area. It became an open space sewer 100 years ago, when the population grew by hundreds of thousands and industry started to increase. Until now it is the main part of the over ground sewer system for more than 2 million inhabitants. In the future, this river will be a symbol of the ecological regeneration of the whole region (figure 5).

This guideline project is tightly connected to Emscher Landscape Park. During the next 15 years landscape development in the surroundings of River Emscher depends on the progress in rebuilding this wastewater stream.

**Exemplary projects**

**Shrubbery garden House Ripshorst** -
Is a new park in the Emscher Landscape Park on an agriculture place, just in the middle of the town of Oberhausen. It will be a park, which shows the historical development and the beauty of the trees in this area from before the ice age up to now.
One of the important parts of this park is a new bridge for hikers and bikers over the Rhine-Herne-Shipcanal. The park contains the “house of nature” (figure 6) and since 1999 this house is the site of the Central Exhibition of the Emscher Landscape Park

**Duisburg-Nord Landscape Park**
The landscape park in North Duisburg is an outstanding example of a landscape park shaped by industry. The heart of the park is a disused Thyssen Steelworks - a unique historic setting, and now a place of industrial heritage and at the same time a venue for different leisure-activities. It covers about 200 hectares, mainly brownland. The conservation of testimony of the industrial era and the growth of spontaneous vegetation play a major rule in the parks design. Combining these with new design elements formed a park that can be seen to embody a new direction in European garden art. Information boards and signposting indicate various routes around the park (including the Emscher Park Cycle Parkway), such as the industrial history and natural history trails Point of the Route of Industrial Nature.

**Garten Osterfeld - OLGA Park - Oberhausen** The OLGA Park in Oberhausen is yet another example of the transformation of an industrially formed landscape into an industrial landscape park. New routes and bridges link the built-up area with the regional greenbelt B of the Emscher Landscape Park. The realisation of this park started in 1996 and the park was opened in springtime 1999. The park has a size of 25 hectares.
Nordstern Landscape Park
The grounds of the former Zeche Nordstern coal mine have been turned into an outstanding example of an industrial landscape park. Along with the Nordstern commercial park, attractive landscape and park design were first presented here within the framework of the federal garden show in 1997 (figure 7).

The park is situated in Gelsenkirchen at the Rhine-Herne-Ship canal. The concept for the Nordstern Park integrates several of the central working spheres of the IBA - Emscher Park: Finding new uses for industrial and colliery sites and the architectural monuments they contain. To create modern commerce, services and a science park under the motto of “Working in the Park” with the following quality goals: landscape quality, urban development quality, architectural quality and ecological remodelling of unused industrial sites for leisure-seekers. The park has a size of 100 hectares.

Mechtenberg Landscape Park
The planning covers a 290-hectare area in the urban triangle of Bochum, Essen and Gelsenkirchen at the southern end of the regional greenbelt C. In order to make this important recreational area in the immediate vicinity of the cities more attractive for the population, various design and accessibility measures were carried out.

Lakeside Park Lünen
This former industrial area in Lünen features abandoned brickworks, a waste stone heap and an old refuse tip. There are large subsidences and the river Seseke was an open sewage canal banked by dikes. It was redesigned for the Landesgartenschau Lünen 1996 as a recreational landscape with various uses. The park also included the historically significant park surrounding Schwansebull castle. Lünen Lakeside Park forms the core of the Seseke Landscape Park. The park has a size of 63 hectares.

Landmarks
The stone dumps and slack heaps are typical elements of the landscape in the Ruhr area and part of the industrial heritage. Within the framework of Emscher Landscape Park several heaps were designed by artists and landscape architects. Now dumps and heaps are important points of identification for the inhabitants and landmarks in the Region, visible from far away. For example:

Haldenereignis Emscherblick / Tetrahedron
Slag heap "Beckstrasse" raised between 1969 and 1993.
KVR is the owner since 1997. This slag heap is called "Emscher View". The name was programmed, because the visitors enjoy a wonderful bird eyes view from the top of it. The earlier black and ugly heap changed into a green hill. Several paths direct to the top at 65 m high. You can also use the "Diretissima", a stair with 387 steps. On the top of the heap there is a huge steel pyramid, called "Tetrahedron" (figure 8). Inside the construction. There are 3 viewing platforms, the highest in 38 m, linked with stairs and fastened with steel ropes. The architect used the materials steel and stone, which are a symbol for the industrial history of the region. In the night the pyramid is illuminated. In spite of the enormous dimensions the construction seems to be light and elegant.

Schurenbach Tip in Gelsenkirchen
In 1998, Richard Serra created a landmark that displays tremendous unyieldingness, both in the real and artistic sense. On climbing to the treeless heights of the Schurenbach tip, the first sight of the "Bramm für das Ruhrgebiet" (Slab) involuntarily brings to mind the uncanny encounter with the monolith in Arthur C. Clark’s 2001 - A Space Odyssey. The 14.5 m high rolled steel slab crowns the Schurenbach tip and as a landmark it underscores the convex silhouette of the treeless spoil heap, while in shape and material it recalls the industrial products of this region.

Parkways Emscher Landscape Park - Cycle Path
The creation of easy access and more points of interest in the built up industrial environment was the idea behind the development of the Emscher park cycle and walking path. Running along a northern and southern route, the cycle path covers nearly 230 kilometres from Duisburg to Bergkamen,
whilst the walking path offers 130 kilometres of routes, also crisscrossing the region. Both path systems are signpost and integrated in the whole cycle paths of the region (figure 9).

**Evaluation of achievements and failures**

The International Building Exhibition was the offer to restore the old industrial Region, to remove location disadvantages and to improve the ecological, social and urban conditions in the Ruhr district. The aim was to build examples in the different working fields to give a mighty impulse for durable (dauerhaft) change.

Emscher Landscape Park was and still is a massive exercise in landscape design. During the first term of ten years (1989-1999) it was intended to achieve the planning preparation and carry out exemplary projects.

Within the second decade (2000-2010) we succeeded in establishing the implemented structures. The inter municipal working parties are working continually. With the support of public promotion, the projects can be realized step by step.

The main point of the 3rd Decade (2010-2020) of implementation will be rebuilding River Emscher and at the same time landscape development in the new Emscher valley.

This strategy succeeded in main points. Today, 14 years alter starting the work we can present astonishing progresses.

The essential Achievements are:
The system of open spaces is becoming a new structural framework (Gerüst) for the Region step by step. The Main Parts of this framework are:

- The system of walking and cycle path
- Several different kinds of open spaces
- The industrial nature route (as a part of industrial heritage)
- And the route of landmarks (figure10).

All together the 17 communities, Emscher Cooperative and KVR has realised about 300 different open space projects up to now. This is a solid foundation for a new landscape quality in the Emscher Region.

On the other hand there is still a lot to do. The substantial Failures are:
During the last years different holding models were suggested and discussed. But until today we have not succeed in furnishing a regional holding for Emscher Landscape park. This circumstance depends on the difficult political and administrative situation of the Ruhr. Thus a durable care and maintenance of the individual projects are not satisfyingly organised and the question of the sustainable quality assurance arises inevitably. The first step in this direction is the installation of the working group for Emscher Landscape park cycle track. In this point we experience the first regional holding for an important Project.

But in the long run it is substantial to find a holding construction Emscher Landscape Park that will manage planning, maintenance and public relation and which is responsible for coordinating the participants and the finance.

**Masterplan 2010**

During the 1st decade the development of Emscher Landscape Park was supported by the International Building Exhibition effectively. Alter the final presentation the situation changed. Now in the 2nd decade this task must be taken over by Project Ruhr. Masterplan 2010 will be both, the timetable and yardstick for the further development of Emscher Landscape Park. Finally Masterplan will formulate
an updated picture of the spatial and strategic situation of the Park development (figure 11).

The process of Leitplanung and Rahmenplanung must proceed in consideration of the changing conditions. The main point will be the regional and durable co-operation of all participants. Until now, Emscher Landscape Park has not ben established at all, especially during this time of economic recession.

The Masterplan should be a process to find both new pictures and visions for the park, and strategies which will ensure the quality and brightness of the projects.

This process began with the conversation of all participants at the end of last year.

The next steps are:
- Formulating new development yardsticks in co-operation with all participants
- Concretising the spatial planning
- Main point of development will be the new Emscher Valley tightly connection with rebuilding River Emscher
- Suggestions for new projects and new park surfaces