"Vision Making" in cross-boarder regions dominated by natural assets

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Abstract - *This article explores methodological approaches to ecological transition-oriented conceptual frameworks and operational protocols for vision-making. In particular, it tries to answer one question: Which specific features should the process of Vision-making have when applied to a cross-boarder region which is both rich in natural assets as deprived of urban development oriented infrastructures ? To answer reference is made to a cross-disciplinary frame of references, from the fields of Environmental philosophy, geographic economy and planning. This choice is based upon the need for strategic thought and anticipatory visioning to base assumptions upon an holistic frame of reference, convening those disciplines that inform our understanding of the urban and environmental phenomena.*

Context of the research

This article is the outcome of a research process initiated by an expedition conducted in November 2023. The focus of the exploration was the geographical area of Lake Ohrid - UNESCO World Heritage Site and part of EU's Natura 2000 protected areas network. The expedition provided a first-hand, intimate connection to a geographic area which can be considered an "Earth's Witness territory", given its preservation state and its defining features: an extreme landscape, one of the world's oldest and deepest lakes, with a maximum depth of 288 meters, an average depth of 155 meters, and a surface area of 358 square kilometers, its inland ecosystem is a unique biodiversity hotspot, with over 200 endemic species. The research involved a collective geographical inquiry, during which information and visual documentation of the area's landscape systems and ecosystem components were gathered. Additionally, interviews were conducted with local institutional representatives and experts from Macedonia, Greece, and Albania, providing insights into the ongoing socio-economic and environmental dynamics.

Method and goals

This article dwells upon research and literature reviews that dealt with Urban-oriented visioning in EU urban contexts and North America, as well as on contextual knowledge gathered during the research-by-design, in situ phase of the inquiry, and on the authors' previous Vision-making experiences in cross-border regions characterized by extreme environmental conditions and social inclusion issues [1], [2]. The article, moving off the beaten track of Growth-oriented Planning, explores the emergent conditions a Visioning process should address—and embody when dealing with the future of naturalistic contexts. Promoting an evolutionary, cooperative and adaptative transformation of territories. I.e., a process of gradual deepening and strengthening of co-evolutive relations between living communities and their territory that is based on the "absorptive capacity" (C. Garner, D. J. Cohen & D. A. Levinthal) of the local natural and social systems and not on the exogenous application of economic boosters.

The article is structured in two parts :

(1) The introduction presents the notion of Vision Making, its relation to the Planning discipline and the contraints imposed by cross-boarder contexts dominated by natural assets. (2) The notes for Vision-Making address various aspects of the epistemic and methodological transition in planning practices. Part 2 is articulated in a general framework - illustrating the operational transition from the dominance of "The project paradigm", towards a "Care oriented process"; followed by thematic Protocols for the enactment of a Vision Making process.

Keywords - spatial justice, cross-border areas, transboundary governance, socio-economic disparities, Prespa Lake, environmental sustainability

Introduction

Visioning as a tool to navigate an uncertain future.

The process of Visioninng became popular in the aftermath of second world war in all those domains (economy, military studies, geopolitics and climate sciences) that implied the strategic foresight and anticipation of the future in order to prepare pathways for action. The interest for this emergent practice was popularized by futurologists such as De Jouvenal in France (Les Futuribles) and in USA by the Rand Corporation (A. Colonomos). In a moment in which Science had proved to be capable of making the difference in assessing world power dominance, Visionning could be read as a tentative to build a "scientific" approach to the definition of strategic action, replacing the primacy of political-economic guidance that had characterized early modernity. Nevertheless, the production of Visions is not relevant for its potential "pseudo-scientific" claims but rather because of the need to orient the collective action when dealing with our actions through time.

As such Visioning, it should not be understood as the project of an author for a plausible future but as a complex process informed by multiple actors, influenced by different frameworks of understanding of reality, and defined by the intelligence-s that are mobilized in an attempt to foresee potential futures and draw action upon these presumptions. As Davoudi et al. (2018, p. 101), notes: 'Spatial imaginaries are deeply held, collective understandings of socio-spatial relations that are performed by, give sense to, make possible and change collective socio-spatial practices. They are produced through political struggles over the conceptions, perceptions and lived experiences of place. They are circulated and propagated through images, stories, texts, data, algorithms and performances. They are infused by relations of power in which contestation and resistance are ever-present'.

Yet Visioning is often relegated to an ancillary role in the processes of strategic planning, corresponding to a phase of spatialized and visual communication (often presented as democratization) and idealization of strategic choices developed in previous opaque technical and administrative processes. As V. Balz and V. Lingua note – this resolves in the confirmation of hegemonic geographical perceptions, confirming existing planning regimes or biases. In order to move beyond this condition, we should imagine the future "as a cultural fact" to be understood through the interaction of three fundamental human urges : imagination, anticipation, and aspiration (Appadurai 2013). These three aspects are also key to the construction of Visions in planning processes and suggest that the Visioning phase, within the scope of a broader planning process, should be charged with more relevance, being solicited throughout the process, starting from its early stages of reflection.

Vision Making in Urban Planning

Vision-making allows us to move into the future, within our minds, at first, and - as a consequence - within physical reality through our actions. If we take a step aside from practice in order to observe Vision Making from an epistemic point of view, we can recognize that the Vision Making process is articulated in the successive phases that characterize any "design process" : attention, intention, action. Yet, Vision Making, by transforming the creative act of projection into a process expands these steps in various dimensions. In terms of time, it structures successive stages of elaboration, revision, feedback, and implementation. In terms of authorship – it integrates different strategic intelligences, involving discussion and negotiation. In terms of space, it integrates elastic and broader perimeters, enabling us to imagine complex systemic relations.

The operative notion of Vision-Making in planning has been the object of many litterature reviews and comparative studies, involving process in EU [3] and North America [4]. Based on the analysis of this corpus of studies, we observe that Vision Making can take on different roles depending on the operational context in which it is understood. We can affirm that the elaboration of a Vision can play a different role in the planning process depending on the contextual operative conditions, respectively constituting [5]. A complement to

planning processes already underway, there where the plan has been constituted as a fragmented aggregation of disparate instances in search of a unified readability, of an a-posteriori "coherence" or, as french would say, a "mise-en-récit" to transform spatial intentions into a federating and motivating political message.

A sketchy anticipation of the long term, allowing for the hinging of the processes of "plan review" in tracks of shared goals and pre-identified spatial themes. A tool that complements and accompanies the supra-ordinate, large-scale planning process, focusing on local-scale spot-strategies. This happens in those contexts in which a large-scale, long-term strategic plan is allready available and what is needed is rather to integrate strategies for smaller areas to be developed on a fast schedule without compromising the time frame of the supra-ordinate plan (Aachen Kompas - KH STUDIO & RHA). Visioning can be used to produce and compare multiple and alternative future Visions, in order to inform policymaking with an anticipatory and predictive comparative tool. We can recall the numerous experiences conduceted in EU in recent years, concerning for example : the future of the Raandstaadt (C. Salewski, L. Boelens), the Ateliers for the Grand Paris (AIGP), the more recent Ateliers for the Phase out of Lusatia in Germany (Leibnitz Institute, KH STUDIO). These and other experiments resulted in collective laboratories of strategic inventiveness, allowing to compare different Scenarios and Ideas of the future, stemming from very different interpretations of territorial identities and potentials.

Vision Making in cross-border contexts dominated by natural assets

Applying the culture of Vision-Making to nature-based contexts presents both the opportunity to draw upon a vast body of experiences and the challenge of tailoring these approaches to the unique characteristics and complexities of local territories.

In cross-border realities dominated by natural assets, and more specifically along the borders of the post-war opposing geopolitical blocs, borders have separated and isolated communities, slowing down the usual development phenomena. This has defined a condition in which different country sequences correspond to different levels of development and complexity in economic and social phenomena. In these contexts, however, the low critical mass of infrastructure and urbanization has left room and relevance for the preservation of natural systems of elevated environmental value.

This contextual condition renders traditional economic and spatial planning methods ineffective or even dangerous in terms of preserving subsistent environmental values. In fact, policies of infrastructure and expansive development, aimed at creating a virtuous circle of accessibility-growth-investment, often promoted with the contribution of international bodies (such as EU funds), risk increasing the phenomenon of polarization and territorial shrinkage, encouraging the migration of entire social clusters instead of creating new ones (QUOTE!!!). In addition, infrastructure policies embedded in contexts of structural laxity also risk compromising local environmental values and encouraging speculative and uncontrolled development, resulting in significant damage to large-scale environmental systems. To avoid the tyranny of a reductive economic perspective, it is helpful to develop alternative methods of Vision Making. These methods must help synthesize the complexity and uniqueness of local realities,
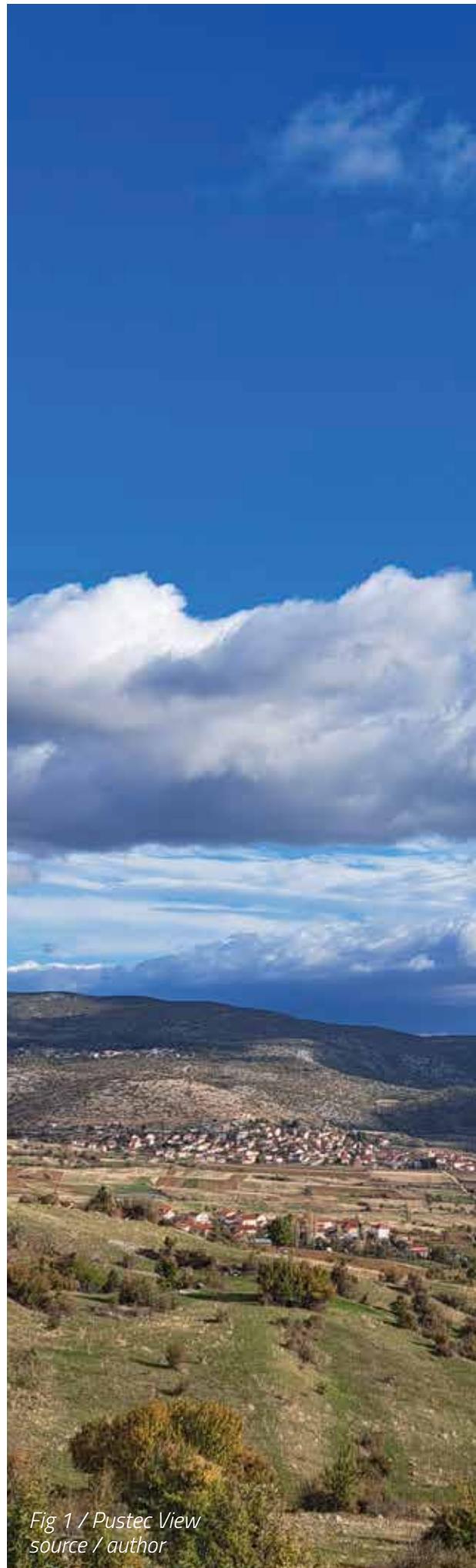
Fig 1 / Pustec View
source / author

addressing specific strategic questions :

Should territories that differ from urban realms evolve beyond the traditional growth-dependent models? How can we identify and experiment with forms of development that prioritize local autonomation, robustness and resilience?

How can shared systemic perspectives that go beyond the limits of sectoral policies for expansive infrastructure be supported and substantiated

How can spatial policies be coordinated among neighboring countries? Which role can the environment play? How can we foster horizontal integration and improve the governance of territorial dynamics?

How can territorial integration (EU policies and funding) be coordinated with the self-determination needs of local communities? How can we ensure a socially just and equitable transition, empowering local endogenous voices to inform proposals for supra-ordinate governance levels?

How to make Local autonomy (food, energy, digital) an advantage for regional and national systems ?

Notes for Vision Making

Adapting Visioning to cross-border areas dominated by natural assets requires a methodological and conceptual transition, a change in our perspective, which prepares the shift in our operative protocols. This transition can be broken down into a series of interconnected steps, each representing different facets of the same framework of understanding. These steps are not organized hierarchically but are complementary aspects of a unified perspective, much like the faces of a prism.

From the project to the process of care

Dealing with living territories

The very notion of "project" is inadequate to describe the multi-actorial, expansive and integrative heuristic dynamic of Visionning applied to natural areas. The term "Project", in its latin Ethimology, restitutes the idea of "throwing – beyond", illustrating the ambition to overcome a current "situation" with a "designed-desired one", in which human intelligence blueprints the image of a desired future. In the Urban world, we transform existing areas via new infrastructures, new programmatic offers, and new flows. Though we might just be experimenting the illusion of self-realizing profecies, this process fits in the administrative and edificatory machinery of cities.

Yet, in naturalistic "Milieus", using the ordinary lenses of Design Strategies risks neglecting the proper comprehension of contextual values and compromising local long-lasting capitals and resources.

Nature does not stand as a "tabula rasa" to the project, it can be rather recognized as a project in itself, or, as a "juridical Subject", offering a radical constraint to our actions (M-C. Maffei), one that could almost push us to imagine the very exclusion of the human presence, reduced to the condition of carefull visitor, a bit like we witness it today in the Pustec area, on the Albanian side of lake Ohrid. Vision Making here demands to tune in with a long-term chain of causes and consequences, which built systemic relations among different living communities, and represents a form of "contextual intelligence" grounded in a long term memory of natural systems. Visions should thus emerge from the understanding of territorial co-evolutions of humans and milieus, understanding transformation as an enhancement of the robustness and complexity of these systems of relations (S. Conti, C. Magnaghi, C. Younés).

Fig 2 / Lake of Pustec

What was once identified as a Project thus comes to ressamble to an act /process of "Care giving" or "Territorial Curatorship", focused on the attentive observation, selection, preservation of what is "allready there" and on the enhancement of existing assets as condition for the habitability of the territory for the vast community of the living community.

Reading Vision-Making as a process of Care enacts what the philosopher Hans Jonas defined as the "Principal of Responsability", an idea that also lies at the core of the Burtland Report (1987). This idea is not only an ethical principle, to which one might adhere or not, but a practical guidance to move into the future, in which each action corresponds to a chain of consequences.

From Fragments to the Whole

Making ground for coherent action, there where frontiers have fragmented communities and cultures.

The notion of "Whole" has often been used by planners to identify the frame of reference, the scene of action onto which the vision of the future is projected. It defines a domain, selecting and excluding the "other from itself", and at the same time it federates, unites elements, into a coherent ensemble.

Historically, this notion has been associated with the finitude of the city, with its walls and moats, opposing the human-designed world, the ideal Babel, to the wild world of the outskirts. A binary opposition, radical and simple. In the last century, the scope of "wholeness" has expanded as did the epistemic relationship between humankind and the environment. With the emergence of models of planetary ecology, such as Lovelock's "Gaia hypothesis," Michel Serres's "Bio-Gea" or B. Ward and Buckminsterfuller's "space-ship earth," the notion of "wholeness" has been increasingly employed to think of humans in a larger system in which their "projecting" faculties encounter the limits dictated by other forces and intelligences at work.

The human project is no longer sufficient unto itself; in order to think about the future and operate in the "age of complexity" (T. Jörg), tools are needed to relate to an overall, emerging "project" that cannot be fully understood and mastered, but requires dialogue, negotiation, and care.

In cross-border contexts, defining the reference sphere of "wholeness" is a starting point for any strategic effort. Identifying spatial and cultural commons helps bridge spatial and socio-economic fragmentation. Defining a cross-border regional "wholeness" built upon specific environmental features encompasses an integrative and collaborative approach. The romantic image of a "Lake as Microcosm" as delivered by S. A. Forbes in 1887, considering the lake as "a world in itself", helps us look prospectively at the Ohrid lakes system as a public space defined by its natural assets, a territorial unit, in which diverse actors could express themselves, recognize their shared membership in a living community, and find a common voice. The concept of "Wholeness" can also be defined, from the perspective of economic geography, recurring to Friedmann's and Weaver understanding of territorialized systems. Here the Whole emerges from the intricate interplay between spatial and physical data intersecting with various abstract spaces. Each of these spaces represents a distinct dimension of economic and social organization. Specifically, we encounter:

Common Cultural Space: A shared cultural context that shapes perceptions and behaviors.

Common Political Space: The arena where political processes unfold and decisions are made collectively.

Common Economic Space: The domain of economic activities and transactions.

These dimensions, like sectorial domains, coexist and interact within a territory. It is through their overlapping interactions that we discern the natural and historical essence of a territorialized community.

Tracing and articulating these dimension in a coherent whole makes the site visible – it makes it exist – it defines a palimpsest on which future visions can be built.

source / author

Builiding a "Knowledge Landscape"
The contribution of immaterial assets and tacit knowledge to make the whole robust and resilient.

When defining a cross-border territory and endowing it with a strategic Vision, it is essential to reconstruct its intangible background, identifying and enhancing the history of socio-cultural human presence on site.

This multilayered process can be articulated in different domains, in order to understand and illustrate the way local communities inhabit the land, their economies of scale, their interdependence with natural and urban surroundings.

A process of orderly recollection of multidomain knowledge referred to a same context allows to augment our comprehension of "the whole" under other key aspects, describing the many dimensions of co-evolution and inter-dependence of local communities with local ecosystems. Under the apparent image of a fragmented territory, a palimpsest of cross-boarder coherence, continuity and relationality emerges.

As an example we can mention how unveiling common threads and techniques in building traditions can unify our understanding of cross-boarder societies, as well as prove the strong relation of building materials with local geology. We can observe how different communities and different traditions use natural assets and agricultural techniques to sustain local autonomy and develop regional economies. Even cultual and cultural traditions can follow a similar path for recollection and analysis.

"Wholeness" is thus configured as a mental and knowledge landscape, the structuring of which makes it possible to define new material and immaterial commons, as well as to define capitals whose value lies in the ability to represent the memory of local social presence.

Assessing "systemic intelligence" – for a trans-scalar and inter-policy approach
Using complexity in order to optimize the impact of emergent strategies.

Traditional public policies and urban plans delineate specific spatial perimeters and thematic boundaries for action (e.g., social, education, green areas). While necessary, this approach alone falls short in governing complexity and is generally used to foster growth-oriented strategies aiming the performative augmentation of specific quantiative indicators. This approach to policy definition seems based on the mechanic destructuration of complex issues into linear mono-thematic protocols for action.

Cross boarder territories and their ecosystems though, require to use a different logic. Quoting R. Ackoff, we can say they demand to move from an "Age of machines", to an "age of systems" in which the retroactive impact of human actions on nature and viceversa are taken into account – assessing the circular interdependence between the observers/designers and the complex systems they act upon. Relationality becomes the key : between particular and general, between local and global, between distinct themes and goals. In this framework, Vision-Making processes can significantly impact reality when grounded in systemic intelligence, providing tools to go beyond the binary logic of spatial and disciplinary enclosed perimeters. By reasoning in terms of trans-scalar goals, it is possible to read and design local action (whether active or veto) in relation to its impact on larger systemic scales of space and time. Citing our case-study we can imagine scenarios that apply systemic intelligence in Transcalar terms – thinking beyond spatial perimeters : Limiting groundwater pollution on the Macedonian front, allows a return on investment that benefits the entire water supply chain of a vast territory in Albania. This implies to locally restructure landscapes and water cycles.

Structuring local mobility in a soft, local network of corss-boarder pathways and roads allows to drastically reduce new transit-flow, defining key points for shared services and protecting pristine

territories from speculative development and suburbanization.

Similarly, when thinking in terms of cross-policy optimization we can envision transformative actions that allow 1+1 to equal 3. Transforming local landscapes can be a way to implement, with one investment, a new public space structure, local mobility, local water management, and new economies derived by agricultural diversification. On another level, when facing the challenge of programming areas inhabited by a different populations in different moments of the year – "sharing oriented" multifunctional service hubs can serve the needs of local communities for educational purposes, visitors service hubs, university congress facilities. Adopting "Systemic intelligence" in a care-oriented framework means to cooperate with the force (and inertia) of nature to maximize the positive impact of human led action.

Scenario-based strategies, a parliament of ideas for an open future
Defining a strategic direction while insuring adaptability and collective decision taking.

K. Popper used the metaphor of Clocks and Clouds, to refer to the unpredictable nature of complex system, a notion particulary usefull to define the espistemic condition of the Planning and Vision-making effort when applied to the anticipation of territorial dynamics. Following his metaphore we can recall that clocks are neat, orderly systems that can be understood through reductionist methods. They are predictable and can be taken apart and reassembled, much like a mechanical clock. Clouds - in contrast, represent complex, irregular, and unpredictable systems. They cannot be easily reduced to simple components or rules. Popper used this metaphor to illustrate the challenge of scientific prediction and the limits of knowledge. While some aspects of the world can be predicted with precision (clocks), others remain inherently unpredictable and complex (clouds). This distinction is crucial in his philosophy of science, particularly in the context of his principle of falsifiability, which is a criterion for distinguishing scientific theories from non-scientific ones. The "future as cloud" concept suggests that the future is inherently uncertain and unpredictable, much like the ever-changing shapes and movements of clouds. It emphasizes the idea that while we can make educated guesses about what might happen, the complexity of variables
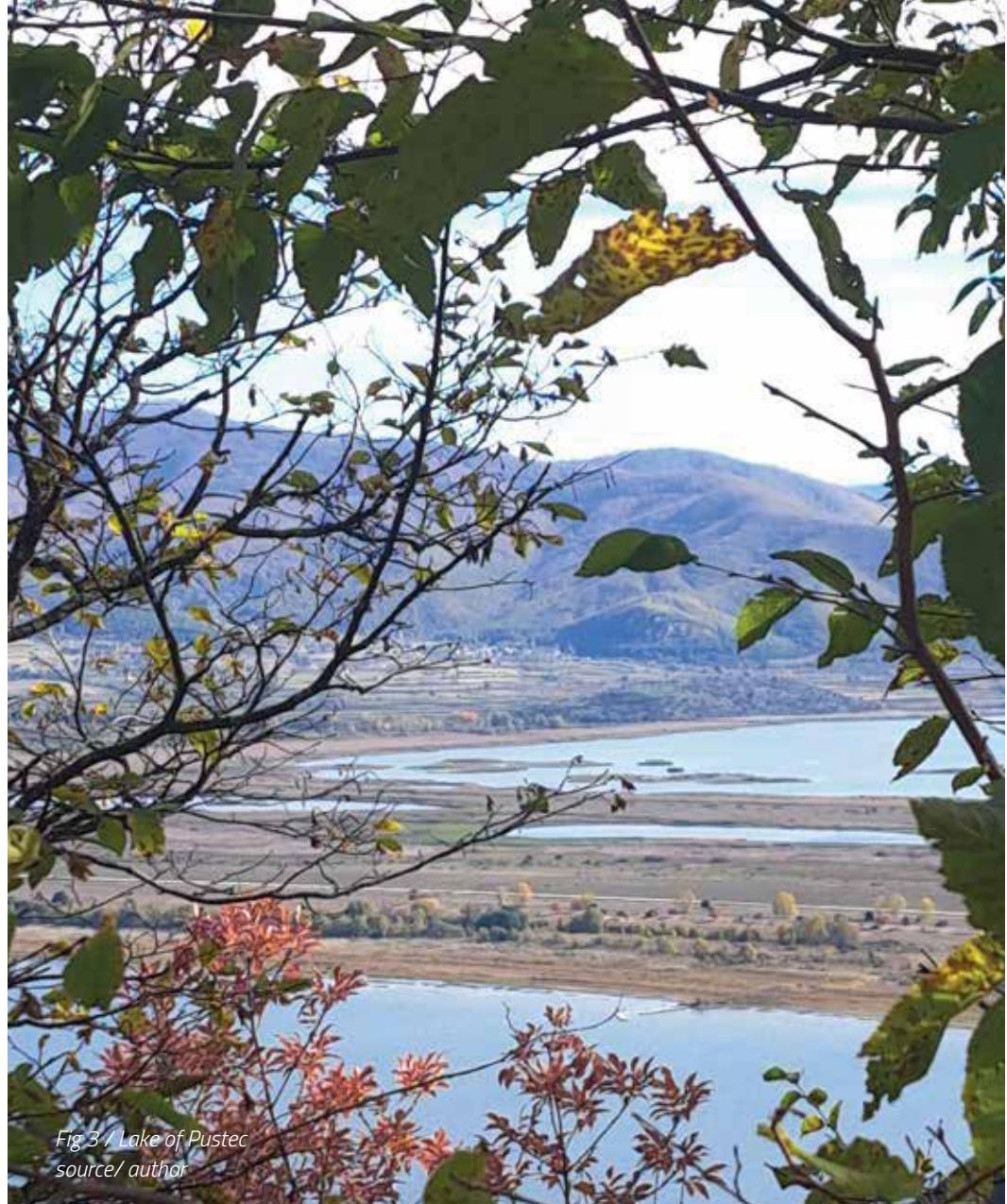
Fig 3 / Lake of Pustec
source/ author

involved makes it impossible to predict the future with absolute certainty.

For this reason, Visions should not be seen as blueprints, but as dynamic and adaptable kompasses to navigate through time. In order to grant flexibility and responsiveness to uncertainty, it becomes necessary to asses Visions on a palette of optional futures, and to constantly update these forcasting and anticipatory hypothesis through the dialogue process. Working with Scenarios allows this open navigation. Scenarios can be mobilized in Co-design initiative and help qualify the Vision Making process as a permanent "parliament of ideas" – a tool that accompanies actors and communities in the definition of their territory through time, defining a vision, realizing it in part, updating thorugh time. Confrontation with opportunities, challanges and potentials is an effort that is better done constantly, than the episodic result of political epiphanies, elections or the opening of financial lines. Care and strategic design can ally in this process by recurring to the tool of comparative Scenarios. Scenario-planning allows to :

Compare alternative answers/futures to predictable challanges.

Compare the risk impact and desirability of alternative lines of development and transformation. articulate programs, ecosystemic changes, mobility and housing transformation in synthetic territorial visions that organize a hierarchy of objectives and pathways for project enactment.

Asses the impact and responsability of specific actors in the development of processes.

Scenarios are used in medecine, war studies, economic geography, and it all those disciplines that envision the control of complex systems through time from a perspective of what the american political scientist H.A. Simon defined as "Bounded Rationality", i.e. the perspective of a planning or decision-making observer who faces limitations in terms of : Inherent complexity of the challanges – such as dealing with natural systems evolution; Cognitive capability - human intelligence having finite cognitive resources; Time contraints – decision makers operating within time limitations.

For this reason, scenarios should be seen as a process oriented tool, in which, through time, anticipated futures are (1) evaluated following different (divergent) frames of references; (2) serve as guidelines in specific time-frames; (3) actualized, corrected or radically revised during a constant follow-up processes.

Institutional intermediaries – mobilizing actor-relational intelligence
A project-oriented cross-boarder Governance.

As P-C. Palermo points out, the real opportunity that visioning could offer to planning processes lies in the ability to coordinate the strategic views of entities and social bodies operating in the same territories but at different spatial and administrative levels (Palermo 2020). Visioning could thus be used as a tool to redefine governance of complex phenomena in the absence of a pre-established political or governmental frame of reference. When the institutional scenario is fragmented, vision making can allow to envision and anticipate the strategic potentials of governance rescaling – reshaping.

In the past, some emblematic experiences have been conducted to envision strategies related to territorial entities that had no precise administrative or political status. This is the case of the Ateliers International du Grand Paris and the Ateliers Laustiz Raumlabor 2050, two processes dealing with territories whose dynamics are well identifiable but which are not framed by a corresponding territorial authority or by a limited perimeter of competence. These processes, though deprived of a direct administrative implementation, have served as test models that inspired other European urban institutions to launch similar processes (Grand Geneve, Grand Luxembourg, Rheinisches Revier post-coal region, etc.). Like vast metropolitan areas, cross-border territories are also characterized by a form of political and governance "indeterminacy". In the previously mentioned cases, specific intermediary organisations, NGOs, or inter-actorial associations are set up to carry out the visioning process, acting as the hub of an inter-institutional dialogue involving the different levels of government of the territory and, together, those of an open community of potential actors. This intermediary action creates a platform for cooperation and co-creation of strategies that anticipates the possible evolution of government institutions in a context of political experimentation.

Defining a shared "event horizon" for planning actions allows to define, through balancing and negocaiations, the governing configuration which can most effectively "make it real". As V. Balz and V. Lingua recall :

"Governance rescaling (...) can imply the re-distribution of responsibilities, roles and resources among actors and changes in horizontal and vertical cooperation. It can also be reflected in the redefinition of territories, which cover small or large portions of land and where hard statutory regulation or softly defined planning guidance applies."

Co.design–mobilize collective intelligence and knowledge
Mobilizing social energy and intelligences for a just transition.

In order for Vision Making to incarnate a process towards a just transition, it is key to integrate local populations and external actors in a common "prospective framework" allowing to build a common dialogue on desires, expectations, fears and opportunities. Co-design is an effective tool to organize collective decision making when dealing the transformation of space. Multiple international experiences have proven the capacity of such kind of process to build social bound and responsiveness in contexts of extreme natural and social conditions [2] making local communities feel empowered and responsible for their decision making process. Co-design approaches are also often used in Strategic Vision-Making in the EU context allowing to :

- develop a shared prospective diagnose.
- share a same operative framework for "cost-impact-responsibility" circularity.
- develop, and evaluate alternative potential futures.
- motivate, negotiate and engage all actors via one same process.

Co-Design methodologies enable a collective process of learning, decision-making and enactment. In this regard it is key to involve local communities from the earliest stages of Vision-Making processes, integrating them, for example, in the processes of building cognitive frameworks through "Citizen Science" and participatory processes. The opportunity is that of collecting and turning explicit, the body of Tacit knowledge communities and actors consider as a given. This allows contextual knowledge and sensitivies to

impact on the project.
In this framework planning experts are no longer authors of a vision, but maieutic guides that orient and articulate collective inputs.

Starting from Landscape – a tool for co-evolution

The "care paradigm" making space.

In order to make Vision Making more effective, numerous experience suggest to augment its discursive, dialogical and political dimension, with hands on experiences. It is the case of many projects of urban and territorial transformation (Europan, Ateliers des territoires, Post-coal Zukunftagentur, etc) in which the enactment of collective actions on public space give a spin and activate real trasformative processes by showing that - yes, it is possible to bring a change. From this perspective, Landscape can represent a key ally.

Landscape is a notion, by which man synthetizes the image of natural ecosystems and of human-to-nature relations. Thinking territorial evolutions under the guidance of landscape can thus focus on the environmental performativity of human led actions. Starting from Landscape helps assessing the holistic dimension of the Vision, it integrates the notion of Care in all phases of the Vision-Making effort: from its conceptualization – as projection of an adaptative metamorphose of inherited values, to its actual enactment, through the programming of maintenance strategies and service provision. Landscape-based strategies offer a tool to integrate the very different temporalities of the (slow) evolution of natural systems with the (fast) transformations of social ensembles and built units. Planning through landscape holds the double advantage of being a fast tool to make and show change, boosting confidence while kickstarting processes, while, also securing the progressive co-evolution of new interventions with the overall context, through different stages of maturation. In specific cases, such as the Ohrid area, Landscape care, is also a competency locally available, given the cultural and productive agricultural background of local populations. This enables for a direct mobilization of local forces in the transformative project.

When it comes to the identification of specific spaces and areas of intervention, it is recomedable to focus on those areas that hold an ecosystemic protective and connective capacity by transforming which it is possible to enhance the robustness of the overall environmental system. Some general considerations can be made on specific connective landscapes, in particular :

The reinforcement of Buffer areas, their complexification and extension, allows to better protect the core of ecosystemic units, and accompany their potential adaptations. Buffers, if considered as linear systems can also serve as bio-diversity corridors.

Agricultural fields rescaling through the insertion of pathways and plantational grids is a way to valorize existing pathways. This allows to use the agricultural grid as a system of public shaded pathways, to define smaller units, and give a new inhabitable, hybrid scale to previously monofunctional areas.

The agricultural lands diversification allows to move from mono-cultures to a richer palette of products, with the double advantage of enriching the soil and fostering a wider palette of local products. This implies to move away from industrial models and embrace bio-sourced practices.

Villages limits and inner areas are caracterized by the informal presence of green areas and plantation.

Augmenting and enhancing the porosity of the soil, and the presence of vegetation in these areas has both a micro-climate advantage as a the capacity to bring organic coherence to the image of informal semipublic spaces via the qualification of placettes and meeting points as of the linear margins of built areas – defining them.

Landscape systems can also integrate a technical dimension: natural water-management systems, soil regeneration reservoirs, authonomous energy devices, augmenting the provided services.

Conclusions

Our methodological exploration illustrates that Vision-making, when applied to cross-boarder contexts dominated by natural assets, demands to develop original methods and protocols.

The methods configure the act of forecast and anticipation as a collective, care-oriented, process, based on the mobilization of latent endogenous ressources and values.

Under these conditions, vision making processes constitute a form of "politics by design". Holding the capacity to indicate a new actorial horizon for governance reshaping. In the absence of pre-existing governance bodies, this demands for the identification of intermediary institutions capable of orienting actorial energy and multylayered institutional dialogue.

The dimension of ecosystemic relations, and consequently, of landscape-based strategies, as envisionned in the protocols, lie at the core of the project of space and are used to federate the material and immaterial dimensions of the territory. The Frameworks and protocols presented in this article are an euristic model, the application of such methods shall allow to update, correct and expand this hypothesis.

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