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Management of the countryside – a task for integral or departmental planning?

1. Introduction

Structural societal changes, especially in particular economic disciplines, have strong effects on the countryside. These changes are visible and recognisable, therefore we should use suitable methods of spatial management to eliminate them and adapt to development trends, both in agriculture and other activities present in the countryside. All European Union (EU) member states are aware of this fact, especially countries, in which structural changes in the countryside have been recognised by extremely negative spatial indicators. Countries that are successfully marketing their natural assets and countryside for tourism and leisure purposes, are aware of the issue, since unmanaged and poorly maintained areas with degraded villages could cause stagnation of tourism and leisure activities. To avoid such development methods for managing the countryside have to be tightly connected to the present agricultural and other sectors.

Structural changes, above all in agriculture as the dominant user of space, are manifested as extremely rapid changes to the agrarian landscape and villages, which are experiencing concentration of non-agricultural activities appearing alongside traditional ones. The small landownership structure, which has been maintained in Slovenia since the Second World War, a consequence of the land minimum, will quickly change after accession to EU. Thus many experts believe that small farms will collapse or change into »half-farms« (Erjavec et al., 1997; Kovačič, 1995), the physical image of which will be disused or empty outhouses and, above all, abandoning of previously extensively cultivated agricultural land (forest overgrowth).

For decades we have been witnessing the predominance of departmental and independent approaches to development in the countryside. In the future we should try to ensure passage from departmental and partial approaches to integral planning, since the methods and approaches to planning the countryside are created and even financially supported by various departments. Planning in the countryside is nevertheless very deficient (uncontrolled housing construction, agrarian operations, lack of land and communal policies etc.). The integral method of countryside development, besides agriculture, puts in the forefront development of leisure activities, environmental protection, settlement, new employment etc. All of these however demand the enforcement of new planning methods, with respect to all natural resources and not only for the development of settlements, but also municipalities and regions.

With the article I wish to bring to light issues in the countryside and to present a short review of the way in which the new laws on spatial management deal with the matter and how the issue is dealt with in other (departmental) laws, especially agriculture, since the latter has, according to EU guidelines, been proclaimed the countryside's guardian.

2. Normative management of the countryside in history

If we look to the past we can discern that development and management of the countryside was in the hands of the resident population. Through centuries this space was rearranged and adapted to, above all economic and residential uses, our ancestors operated in a way of creating ecologically varied and quality environments (Dubas Rene in Prosen, 1987), today known as cultural landscapes (Stritar, 1990). Thus the landscape is in its spatial elements the manifested relation between humans and nature (Ogrin, 1976). If in the past developments into nature were carried out sensitively, today this sensitivity has to be substituted by knowledge, ecological ethics (Glikson, 1971) and a beneficial normative arrangement.

In the period after the Second World War, when most of Europe was undergoing comprehensive renewal in the social, economic and spatial sense, certain European countries (Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Germany etc.) decided not to differentiate development planning of urban and rural areas. This was also proscribed in the contemporary normative acts (Zbirka, 1969). In Yugoslavia however, this was a time of pronounced orientation towards rapid industrialization and urbanisation of the prevailing agrarian society, thus all legislature, dealing with physical and urban planning was aligned towards creating strong urban centres with the simultaneous creation of new cities (laws from 1949, 1956 and 1958). Attempts by various authors (Mušič, 1947; Ravnikar, 1950; Sedlar, 1961), to comprehensively manage the whole territory were not respected or promoted. During the time of forced expropriation, arrondissement and re-parcelling in villages (Čepič, 1995) the image of Slovenian landscapes was tailored by departmental policies. Only the very modern and professionally sane laws adopted in 1967 (Law on urbanistic planning and Law on regional physical planning) proscribed for the countryside a legally passive category, so called »urbanistic order«, which was a supplement to the urbanistic programme, and was intended for urbanistic management of (rural) settlements and areas that weren't covered by other types of detailed urban planning documentation. The order proscribed the method of management and renewal of settlements, land use, utilities, conditions for building, especially displacement, function, heights and forms, sizes of building plots and other conditions, which an investor should meet, whenever the development or other activity would cause changes to the environment (Prosen, 1987). Apparently experts weren't united in the attitude that urbanistic orders were a kind of generalised urbanistic plan and already then the need emerged for establishing explicit development and management criteria for every particular settlement (Mušič, 1975). If we look back at the time we can establish that urbanistic orders probably started the extensive phenomenon of self-building, since the general societal development and living standard couldn't provide adequate quantities of homes. Maybe it wouldn't have been wrong if urbanistic orders were coupled with adequate communal and property policies, thus often the only and sufficient conditions for obtaining building permits were ownership of land and cartographic representation in the plans that the proposed building lies in the settlements expansion area. Some urbanists and planning experts name this phenomenon as »nodal urbanism« or »linear settlements« (Krtalić, 2000), which grow along roads of various categories.

With the enforcement of self-management social planning in the field of physical planning during the second half of the seventies (1976), abolishment of regional physical planning and adoption of new laws in the eighties on spatial management, building land and building, development in the countryside continued according to new social plans and spatial planning conditions. In view of the active role played by local communities in the document's preparation and later spatial components of social plans, they mainly expanded surfaces for housing development, despite all limits set for changing land use of agricultural land and protection of cultivation surfaces (first law on agricultural land, 1973).

Despite legally adopted planning documents on the national and local level, today we can establish that physical and urban planning have, in the sense of professional and scientific endeavour, during the last two decades of social planning experienced complete stagnation, not only in the countryside, but also and above all in urban centres. Despite the active role played by departments in preparing social plans, we never developed spatial components of such planning. Even agriculture, the largest user of space in the countryside didn't. The reason for such failure probably lies in the valid methodology of physical planning in Slovenia. Even today the discipline is simply and fully seen as the domain of particular professions (two in fact). Isn't this actually poor knowledge about the discipline? In countries with developed physical planning the general rule applies, that quality integral planning is the foundation of good departmental planning (Böckermann, 1999), which with respect to particular professions thinks integral and above all sustainable.

Despite deficient planning by sectors, large developments nevertheless happen, executed by departments instead of integrally. Changes and supplements to long-term planning documents prove the case. Space is suffering from all developments, even if given various names, such as countryside, open space, cultural landscape, agrarian landscape etc., while the professional argument is that all developments are affecting the countryside's development and societal development in general. Cleaning up this space will be necessary, but it will need sufficient political will and knowledge.

3. Management of the countryside since 2003

With the progress of legal science and particular disciplines a normative arrangement is being formed in EC countries whose goal is long-term vision of development for particular activities, which are aligned to the constitutional framework, directives of international associations and the EU. Any fundamental change of law is usually priorly tested in practice with independent pilot projects (Spatial Planning in Practice, 1994). After a decade of preparation and without prior testing in practice we have adopted our new laws, dealing with spatial management and building (Law on spatial management and Law on building, Official bulletin 110/2002).

According to the law's authors, the new legal arrangement is a major step forward towards the emancipation of the professional activity of physical and urban planning, which simultaneously ensures the constitutional framework and follows foreign practice, but above all enforces measures for

achieving planned development, equipping building land with utilities, regulating the practice of physical planning and establishing a spatial information system. The law on building has maintained some solutions from the previous one, which were seen in practice and by professionals as good, while the significant novelty is the permitting procedure, which is apparently much simpler.

The law on spatial management reintroduces three planning levels (state, region, municipality) and a hierarchy of planning documents, while acts are strategic and operative. The strategic documents are intended for guidance, while the operative or executive acts define land use conditions (municipal planning order) and building (municipal location plans).

If we return to the theme of this article, a possible important finding is that we have translated to mayors, municipal councils and local authority many responsibilities (e.g. location information, spatial instruments, municipal urbanist, urbanistic contract, planning conferences) concerning spatial management. In the countryside, besides the strategic act (Municipal spatial development strategy and landscape concepts), municipal planning orders will be adopted and also the possible odd location plans. By enforcement of the data-base (compendium of legal regimes, compendium of administrative acts, compendium on actual land use with economic public infrastructure), monitoring will be easier.

Maybe an important provision for the countryside is the old-new one, which states that new settlement should be directed into already settled areas, while development outside these areas can be exceptionally and only in certain circumstances permitted on agricultural land, the conditions for which will be stated in the municipal planning order. A brief review of the law gives a hint of possible establishment of order over spatial management with the new municipal planning acts. Nevertheless, second thoughts do emerge, whether municipalities are capable to accept and carry out all the tasks required by the law in a foreseeable time and whether mechanisms for control over decisions taken by municipal councils and mayors exist. Only time will show whether we are capable of implementing all the demands in the law and whether we have really obtained a progressive normative regulation for planning, which can ensure spatial development and which can compare to European practices.

Subjects of physical planning (departments, sectors) when dealing with development are obliged to respect international agreements (e.g. transport) and particular EU directives (e.g. agriculture), while simultaneously leading and guiding visions of development on the national level. The methodological question is, how to enforce particular departmental demands within the framework of comprehensive or integral spatial development and how to enable development by sectors, without losing comprehensiveness. In continuation we will present a brief overview of EU guidelines dealing with the development of the countryside and how they can affect spatial development in Slovenia.

4. EU directives for development of the countryside

The entire policy and guidelines for development of particular activities in the EU are based on the document named Agenda 2000. Even development of agriculture and the

Physical planning within the bounds of law

countryside are equipped with directions and guidelines, created on the basis of preliminary analysis of prevailing conditions. Agenda 2000 for agriculture and the countryside has three key directions for development. They are (Schlagheck, 1999):

- Strengthening agriculture and forestry. Important measures are support for modernisation of agricultural economies, as well as production and marketing of quality high-value agricultural goods. Hereby profitability of agricultural economies has to be boosted with support for settlement of young farmers and improved regulation concerning early retirement. Since forestry is an important and essential factor of the countryside, supportive measures for this activity also have to be introduced, as long as they are ecologically sensible.
- Improving competitiveness of the countryside. Important goals of these measures are improving the quality of life in countryside municipalities and diversification of new activities. In conjunction alternative sources of income and employment possibilities for farmers and their families have to be established.
- Environmental protection and maintenance of countryside heritage. Agrarian environmental measures have to support environmentally friendly cultivation procedures. These measures are the only binding element of the new generation of programmes for countryside development and are a decisive step towards the recognition of the multi-functional role of agriculture. According to Agenda 2000 environmental interests are even stronger, the recent compensations paid to farmers in less developed areas will now be distributed even in areas where agriculture has become subordinate to specific environmental limitations.

Some EU member states, for example Germany, have termed these guidelines for countryside development and agriculture as the New EU policy for the countryside (Schlagheck, 1999), which in a simplified interpretation contains three strategic goals:

- Increased competitiveness of European agriculture with rationalisation and modernisation of agricultural economies and production units;
- Comprehensive development of the countryside supported by infrastructure measures, re-parcelling and rehabilitation of villages, as well as diversification of services, e.g. tourism or village crafts;
- Support for better environmental acceptability, e.g. abandonment of cultivation or extensive cultivation.

Goals for developing the countryside and implementation of common agricultural policy are stated in the principles of article 39 of the contract and EU directive No. 1257/1999 (Thomas, 2002). The countryside development policy is oriented towards renewal and strengthening of competitiveness of the countryside, while the goal is preserving existing and creating new employment, not only dealing with the agricultural market, but the local economy in general. Measures for the promotion of countryside development are:

- Improving the structure in agricultural units and in the field of production and distribution of agricultural products;
- Redirecting and new routes for agricultural production potentials, introduction of new technologies and improving quality of production;
- Support for non-food production;
- Sustainable forestry;

- Diversification of activities aiming at development of complementary and alternative activities,
- Preservation and strengthening of carrying social structures in the countryside;
- Development of economic activities and maintenance of employment aligned to better use of existing own potentials;
- Improving living and working conditions;
- Preservation and support for high natural values and sustainable environment-friendly farming;
- Diminishing differences and support for equal possibilities for men and women, especially support for actions initiated and carried out by women.

The framework measures are stated in article 33 of the EU directive No. 1257, in chapter IX »Support to adaptation and development of countryside areas«, which are implemented in the following fields:

- Land improvement;
- Re-parcelling,
- Development of main and supplementary activities for agricultural production units,
- Sale of quality agricultural products,
- Equipping with services for basic provision of the countryside population and economy,
- Rehabilitation and development of villages and protection and maintenance of countryside cultural heritage,
- Diversification of activities in the agricultural and para-agricultural areas, thus creating new income possibilities,
- Management of agricultural water resources,
- Support for tourism and crafts,
- Environmental protection tied to forestry and agriculture, care for the landscape and improved protection of animal life,
- Renewal of agricultural cultivation potential damaged in calamities and the introduction of suitable preventive instruments.
- Financing techniques.

From the listed measures it is clear that some of them are in fact measures of physical planning and land management, which have general significance for the development of a certain place.

Since spatial management carried out to improve the agrarian structure and development of the countryside doesn't necessarily imply agrarian operations, the new term describing the activity, which has been accepted worldwide, is »land management« (Magel, 2003). To achieve the set goals in the countryside, quality land policies have to be devised that include national (or municipal) measures, which affect the quantity and quality of land use and the property market, but also represent the general framework conditions for particular actions. The goal of land policy is above all to enable society to reach a higher social level.

Practise has shown that development plans for the countryside can be executed only if adequate implementation mechanisms are devised, which also include the subject of obtaining and managing countryside properties. The earlier mentioned land management system for the development of the countryside and improvement of the agrarian structure contains these tasks (Kötter, 2001):

- Define and equip land purposefully;
- Devise a new systems of rights and burdens pertaining to land;

- Provide accessibility to land for private owners and support privatisation;
- Execute comprehensive and departmental plans concerning land surfaces;
- Resolve conflicts in land use and harmonise interests.

Germany in particular has well-developed instruments for improving agrarian structures and countryside development, which benefit development of land management, namely:

- Agrarian structural development planning: comprehensive development of the agricultural sector and countryside development – guidelines, strategies and programmes of measures;
- Law on re-parcelling: procedures for land management for countryside development;
- Rehabilitation and development of villages: villages as separate living, working, social and cultural phenomena in a decentralized settlement system;
- Agricultural harmonisation law: determining and rearranging ownership relations in new regions.

In view of improving the agrarian structure many European countries developed pertaining land policies in the countryside, policies for the rehabilitation and renewal of villages and policies for spatial management with re-parcelling methods and other methods and approaches. These various methods took some time to evolve, which doesn't mean that in Slovenia we are incapable of executing various tasks put before us by EU, but also devising our own guidelines for developing the countryside and agriculture.

During the recent years the significance of land management has additionally changed, mainly because of agrarian and environmental political circumstances. Countries adopted suitable guidelines for spatial management and development of the countryside, reorganised responsible bodies and ensured financial resources for executing EU and national guidelines. These we have to produce immediately. We have to enforce the integral approach to countryside development, which ensures preservation of countryside specifics that are a living and working environment with self-referential significance on one hand and a natural, cultural and leisure space on the other, thus strengthening mutual ties between cities and the countryside.

To achieve these guidelines and enforce sustainable development in the countryside political will is necessary at various levels (region, municipality, village), adequate instruments will have to be developed etc. Therefore, sustainable countryside development demands participation of all planning subjects, since space is a limited commodity and comprehensive development implies the enabling of development of all activities by clearing and resolving conflicts. The law doesn't contradict the stated goals and measures, which are departmental and signify social and spatial development of the countryside. The question remains however, how will we achieve all these goals and measures upon accession to EU?

5. Methods of spatial planning of the countryside

New methods of physical planning of the countryside have to be established or developed, backed by EU guidelines (common agricultural policy, which includes countryside de-

velopment), Slovenian development programmes, laws and particular sectors (departments). As was mentioned earlier, Agenda 2000 and pertaining directives have given agriculture as an economic discipline, multi-functionality, sustainability and competitiveness. Agriculture is being given new tasks concerning care, maintenance and development of the countryside, but it is incapable of achieving everything alone since the tasks exceed competences of its' particular department and have wider social significance. This means that agriculture has to achieve partnerships with other departments, and vice versa. This directive necessarily involves introduction of suitable planning methodologies, which are so far missing in Slovenia.

Another task deals with introducing new functions and activities to the countryside without conflicts. A comprehensive and/or integral approach is needed for development, with respect to directed planning, negotiation in planned development and introduction of planning and project management, as well as finding links between the regional and local.

Development of the countryside and agriculture, as was already said, is gaining an increasing quantity of important goals, not only in Slovenia but also in Europe, which have to be respected in physical planning of countryside development. Alongside its' production function, agriculture has been given above all, important ecological and social functions. Amongst the production functions today is production of energy, resources and healthy food products (which are reflected as regional added values), support for investment in the countryside, employment etc. The ecological function is seen as care for the cultural landscape, protection of particular cultural landmarks, integral environmental protection, ensured ecological income, support for regional products etc. The social function is seen as ensuring social culture, manifested as tradition and village lifestyle, protection of regional identity and strengthening of respect for the village community etc. (Grabski-Kieron, 2002). The mentioned goals and guidelines are important and should be integrated in the development of methods for planning the countryside.

Because competitiveness of European agriculture is manifested as increased growth of particular farms, which need adequate location conditions for development, but without hindering other rural population, the definition of criteria for development of perspective farms is direly needed. Professionals in both agriculture and physical planning have raised the issue. Pertaining rules will have to be set for detailed planning of particular farms and management of agricultural land for perspective and other farms.

The number of farms involved solely with farming is diminishing, as is the interest for farming. The countryside is becoming a desired space for living, thus speculation with agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes (especially housing) but also implementing goals of diversification with new activities and providing new employment, are highly pronounced. Uncontrolled development and excessive use of agricultural land for non-agricultural uses can imply degradation of the cultural landscape. Concentration and urbanisation of the countryside, the dilapidation of built heritage, vacated buildings, extensive surfaces etc., demand from the authorities and professionals new planning approaches related to the property market and settlement policy. These are important tasks in the sense of preserving and developing the nation's identity.

Problem regions, which show undesirable age and education population structures, are generally a consequence of jobs available in nearby mainly urban centres, thus the policy of spatial management has to change. It can change by developing interesting and attractive programmes for regional development that are tied to countryside development. Partial and departmental development are outdated, therefore integral approaches on the regional level are essential, with respect to ownership and family property, which are the basis for development in the countryside. Thus a goal emerges, whereby solutions for development and guidelines for establishing local countryside centres have to be found, coupled with adequate land and communal utilities policies and the introduction of controlled building supported by re-parcelling and other methods of land management.

Therefore, to achieve the established policy of integral development of the countryside instruments of land policy have to be developed. They should be founded on simultaneous improvements to ownership and property structure in the agricultural cultivation space and tied with development and transformation of village settlements, obtaining necessary surfaces for leisure, ecological buffer zones etc.

Vacated farms are a specific problem caused by structural changes in the countryside. They are seen as a value, not only by their owners but also by society. Another issue is being constantly raised, which is the positioning of new farms on village edges or just their out-houses. What will then happen with vacated buildings in villages? We are confronted with this dilemma constantly, whenever we encounter declining farms, the trend for transition of farmers to semi-farmers, the trend for intensified activity of particular farms, the trend for income combinations on farms and the changed economic structure in individual farms. In EU countries these spatial, social and economic problems are resolved in various ways. One of the possibilities is changing farms into building land for new development or demolishing the farms and changing the place into a village green. Another possibility is to maintain farms in their buildings on the same site or in distant buildings as semi-farms, the buildings can become homes for non-farming families, manufacturing units can be placed in the former farmhouses or a combination can be arranged of residential and manufacturing functions in distant former out-houses. These possibilities unfortunately bring with them numerous problems, such as disturbances and pollution caused by manufacturing, limitations to growth, unsuitable or oversized buildings for non-agrarian families etc. (Weber, 2002). These problems are real and demand specific approaches in rehabilitation and renewal of villages, which are possible only when coupled with instruments of land policy.

6. Conclusion

Our opinion is that in physical planning and countryside development in Slovenia we are dealing with a rather unrecognised working method, neither the former, nor the present planning laws haven't given the field special emphasis although we are aware that during the nineties of the last century various dedicated budgetary resources and particular EU funds (e.g. SAPARD) were introduced and developed for countryside development and management. Such developments weren't understood neither by departmental laws nor the integrative law on spatial management,

we didn't even develop a working methodology, although foreign experts did offer assistance. Therefore, in this field, we have a lot to do.

For former socialist countries the common knowledge is that planning was quite developed, but there were no instruments for implementing plans. This article points out issues and methodological approaches for countryside management, but it doesn't answer the question, whether the countryside should be dealt with integrally or by departments. The answer should be a short one – both. Development has to be planned and the directions carried out by departments.

Alongside the development of agriculture in the countryside, other activities also have to develop. An important fact is that without good agriculture, even tourism and other activities cannot be developed. Therefore in countryside development it is nevertheless necessary to primarily respect demands and needs of agriculture, but simultaneously not forget about other important functions (settlement, leisure, ecology, landscape quality etc.). Methods for planning the countryside, which have to evolve from departmental plans, have to include the spatial component.

Based on conducted analyses, research of particular departmental guidelines and above all, EU guidelines, the new law and solutions from developed European countries, a completely new methodology will have to be created for physical planning and countryside planning in Slovenia, which will be positioned amongst the defined contents of planning acts on the local level. Departmental laws will nevertheless have to be modernised as well, especially those dealing with physical development, which don't respect integral spatial management or its sustainable aspects (e.g. law on agricultural land). Even the new law on spatial management didn't pay much attention to the countryside, as if our two million nation lives in cities and not almost 6000 settlements. We should have learnt something from the past and from our neighbouring countries. In developed democracies the strengthening of democracy can be seen only and singularly on the local level, i.e. in the design of ones' own living environment. This is possible only when the spatial unit of management are the settlement (village) and its' functional space. This however is not respected by any of our laws, neither the new law nor the departmental laws, although this is the most commonly used method of planning the countryside in Europe.

If settlements and their functional areas represent spatial entities (e.g. village communities), then this means that the fact has to be recognised in the hierarchy of planning documents and all local and private interests respected. Moreover the constitutionally protected right to ownership of property has to be respected, meaning that we are not dealing only with implementation acts on the local level, but a mixture of planning (strategic) and implementation provisions. In some legal systems of European countries this mixture is being dealt with as the fourth level of physical planning (besides national, regional and municipal) and has translated it to departmental laws and laws on spatial management, with the condition that all needs for land (plots) are respected, whatever the planning level. Most countries undertake such actions with so called integral re-parcelling schemes, whereby contemporary re-parcelling is in fact an agglomerate of physical planning, legal, organisational, economic and technical measures, which are executed by the state to improve natural, economic and ecological conditions of living and

working in the countryside, including management and rehabilitation of village settlements (Miladinović, 1997). Re-parcelling is seen in some countries as an extreme measure for the implementation of pending goals of land and development policies, thus they are done democratically and with extreme sensitivity. If we want to do the same in Slovenia, changes in the legal, financial, organisational, and technical sense will have to be brought about.

Some experts claim that we will be challenged by many tasks on our way to Europe. Even the tasks presented in this article aren't simple, but they could be carried out faster, if there would be more respect for professional and scientific approaches and if there would be more dialogues between particular creators of departmental and integral policies. Tending ones' garden is fine for the individual, but bad for the community.

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For sources and literature turn to page 39.

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Slovenian and European legal stipulations concerning protection and rehabilitation of river corridors

1. Introduction

Management and care for rivers and streams are part of the activities tied to water management, which are typically divided between societal development interests, such as management of water regimes for the protection of life and property before contingencies, the provision of potable water, needed for sustaining the population, the provision of technological water needed in production processes, and environmental protection demanded by society, which is becoming increasingly aware that natural and slightly changed man-made river corridors are becoming rare ecological landscape structures, which need protection or renewal if necessary. By applying water management actions and measures (e.g. regulation of riverbeds, flood control measures and improvements to agricultural land in influential areas of river corridors), which societal development constantly demands, we have in fact changed the hydro-morphological dimensions, patterns and natural substances of numerous river corridors, but mainly relieved rivers and streams off their influential areas of hydro-morphological processes along the riverbeds. Therefore contemporary

doctrines of managing surface waters are proposing the returning of formerly taken surfaces along the riverbeds back to the domain of hydro-morphological processes within the river corridors.

New scientific and expert findings about care for river corridors and the demands by civil society for environmental protection and active participation in decision-making about environmental and spatial issues led to new legal definitions for the field of watercourse ecosystem protection and rehabilitation of rivers and streams. They were stipulated in the European water directive: Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (The European Parliament and the Council, 2000). The mentioned categories were legally defined also in Slovenia with the Law on environmental protection (1993), Law on preservation of nature (1999) and finally Law on water management (2002a). We have to point out that the Law on water management had to undergo a decade of preparation, during the nineties of the last century, i.e. during the period of creation of the EU water directive. Preparation of the Slovenian law triggered a wide professional discussion even in the field of establishing water surfaces (Mikoš, 1994; 1995a; 1995b), and simultaneously saw the transition of foreign experiences to practise in rehabilitation of rivers and streams (Mikoš and Kavčič, 1998a; 1998b; 2000).

Reintegration of lands in influential areas of former river corridors predicts changes in ownership and use of riparian lands, therefore besides efficient environmental guidelines and water management and ecological engineering provisions and planning, stipulated in the previously mentioned laws, adequate integration in planning acts is also essential, as stipulated in the Law on spatial management (2002b). Execution of river corridor rehabilitation is stipulated in the Law on building (2002c).

2. Triggering legal regulations concerning rehabilitation of river corridors

The fundamental legal provision specifying rehabilitation of river corridors is article 102 of the Law on water management (2002a), which proscribes improvement of hydro-morphological conditions of surface water and renewal of hydro-morphological processes in river corridors:

Article 102
(Improvements to hydro-morphological conditions of surface water)

- (1) *Because of desired improvement of destroyed natural balance in water and riparian eco-systems of surface waters and poor water conditions, above all on artificial and significantly changed water bodies, the state also ensures execution of measures for improving the dynamics of natural water processes.*
- (2) *Measures for improving the hydro-morphological condition include rehabilitation and reestablishment of structure and form of a water body, which affect improvements to its' chemical and ecologic condition.*