



9th Pan-European Green Belt Conference

31st October – 03rd November 2016 in Koli, Finland

Spatial dimension of the European Green Belt – Session 4

Session 4 focuses on the further development of the spatial dimension of the European Green Belt. This paper gives an overview about the background and the current analysis of the spatial dimension of the Green Belt in the frame of the project "European Green Belt as part of Green Infrastructure" supported by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation with funds of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety.

Case Study "Definition of the spatial dimension of the European Green Belt"

In 2013, EuroNatur and BUND Project Office Green Belt developed the **case study "Definition of the spatial dimension of the European Green Belt"** in the frame of the project "Advancing the European Green Belt Initiative" supported by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation with funds of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety.

With regard to the further development of the European Green Belt Initiative, especially regarding Green Infrastructure, a clear **definition of the spatial reference is necessary**. On the one hand this will make it possible to define the **action space of the initiative**. On the other hand this definition is also necessary to **ensure the support** for the whole initiative. Only when stakeholders are named clearly, they are able to identify themselves with the European Green Belt and actively campaign for it.

In this context it is important that the spatial delimitation is a **geographical localization** of the European Green Belt, meaning a planning area, in which the activities of the initiative are concentrated. The goal is therefore not to classify the entire European Green Belt in a certain delimitation as a protected area nor to acquire all areas within the Green Belt.

Results of the case study 2013:

For a useful spatial definition of the European Green Belt a **combination of natural aspects in a wider sense and administrative aspects** is advertised. One has to take into account though that the realization of the delimitation of the entire European Green Belt should be possible with reasonable expenditure.

The **NUTS-classification**, which was designed as a consistent, coherent system for the subdivision of the territory of the EU, could be used as criterion for the administrative aspect.

For the natural aspects the criteria of **protected areas** could be used.

Furthermore, a spatial analysis is necessary to test the practical realization of the proposed criteria. It is important to elaborate whether there are more criteria beside the protected areas and administrative units to make a meaningful and practicable distinction of the spatial scope of the European Green Belt.

Spatial Scope Analysis 2016

In the frame of the **project “The European Green Belt as part of Green Infrastructure”** implemented by EuroNatur, BUND Project Office Green Belt and BUND Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, the proposed method in the case study “Definition of the spatial dimension of the European Green Belt” is tested.

Through a spatial scope analysis the suggested criteria “protected areas” and “administrative units” are examined regarding whether they can be applied to the entire Green Belt, among other things in respect of the available databases. The aim is to visualize the spatial relations in different scenarios and to identify a Potential Green Belt Area.

The spatial analysis based on the two criteria “protected areas” and “administrative units” has three main steps. The three steps of the analysis will be explained and illustrated below with the help of the example of Austria. This spatial analysis was conducted for all 24 countries along the European Green Belt.

Criterion: Administrative Unit (AU)

When choosing the level of the administrative unit of the NUTS-classification, one has to consider the different purposes of the delimitation, such as identifying specific decision makers. The levels NUTS 3 and LAU 1 as decision level seem to be useful in this respect.

Thus for each country two different scenarios for a Potential Green Belt Area are elaborated, based on:

- NUTS 3
- LAU 1 (if not existing LAU 2 or none)

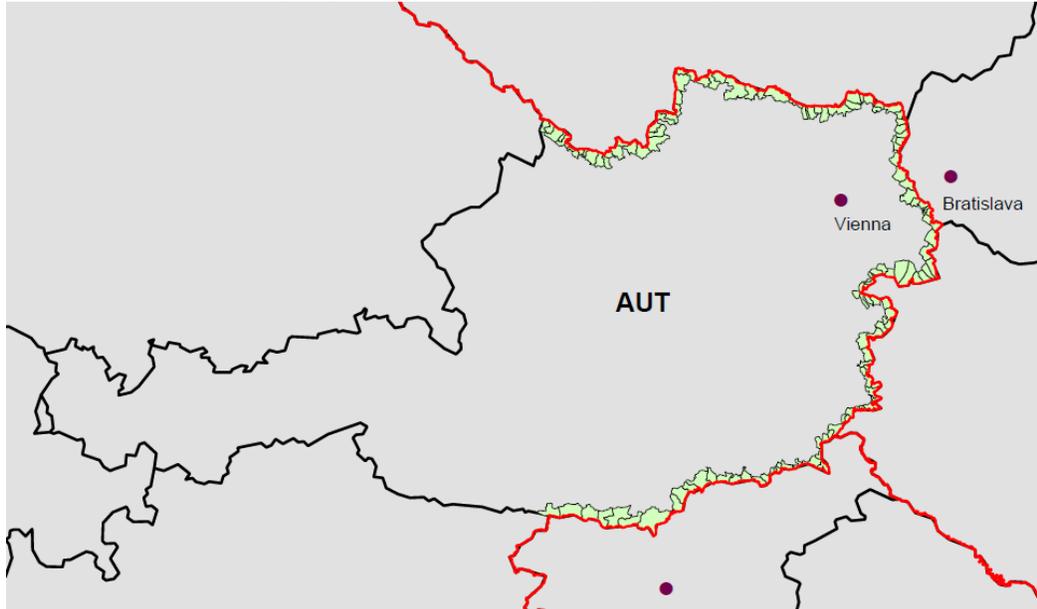
NUTS level	Definition
NUTS 3	Minor regions/cities
LAU 1	Associations of municipalities
LAU 2	Municipalities

Analysis step 1:

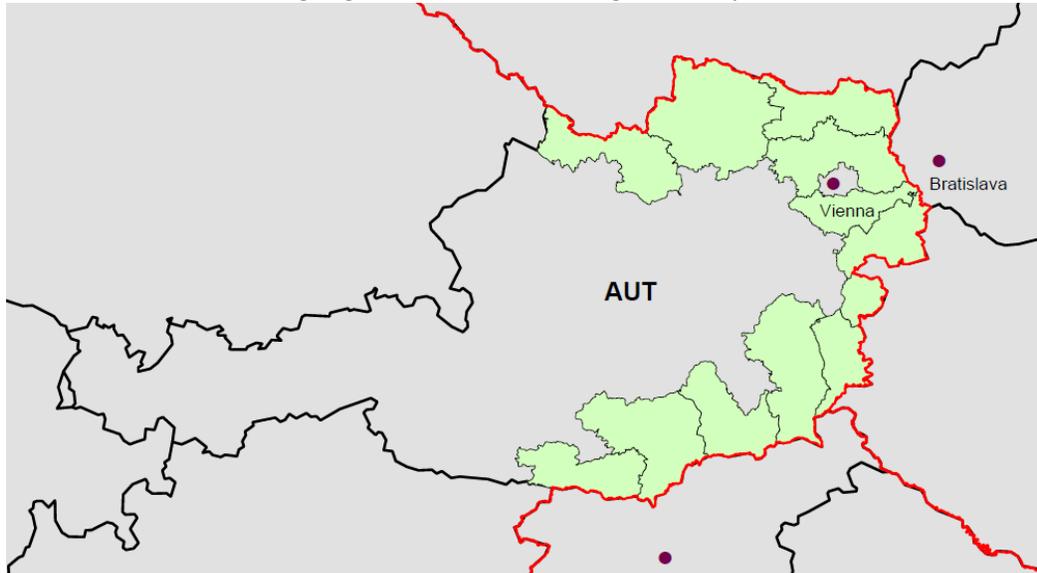
The administrative units for each country directly at the country border – thus along the Green Belt Line – are chosen as part of the Potential Green Belt Area for each scenario.

Example Austria

Scenario 1: All LAU 2 (light green) for Austria along the European Green Belt are chosen



Scenario 2: All NUTS 3 (light green) for Austria along the European Green Belt are chosen



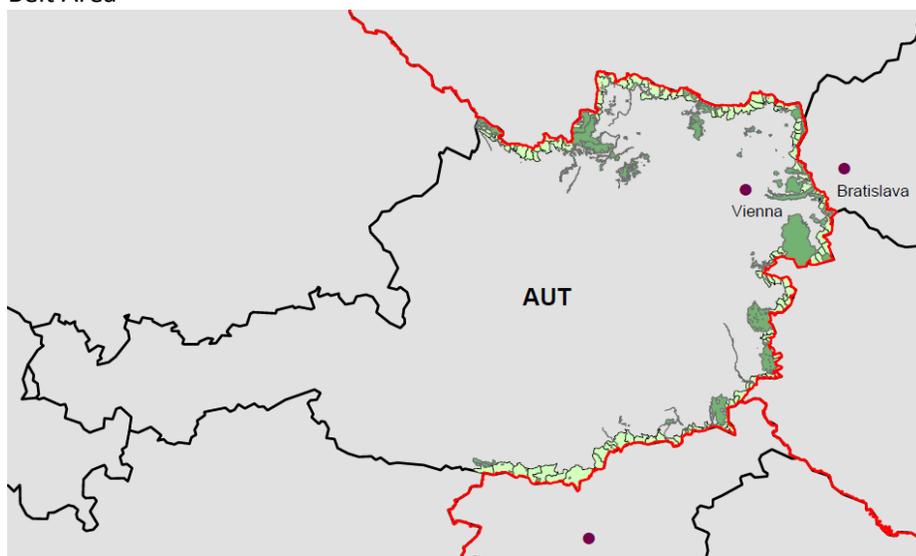
Criterion: Protected area (PA)

Analysis step 2:

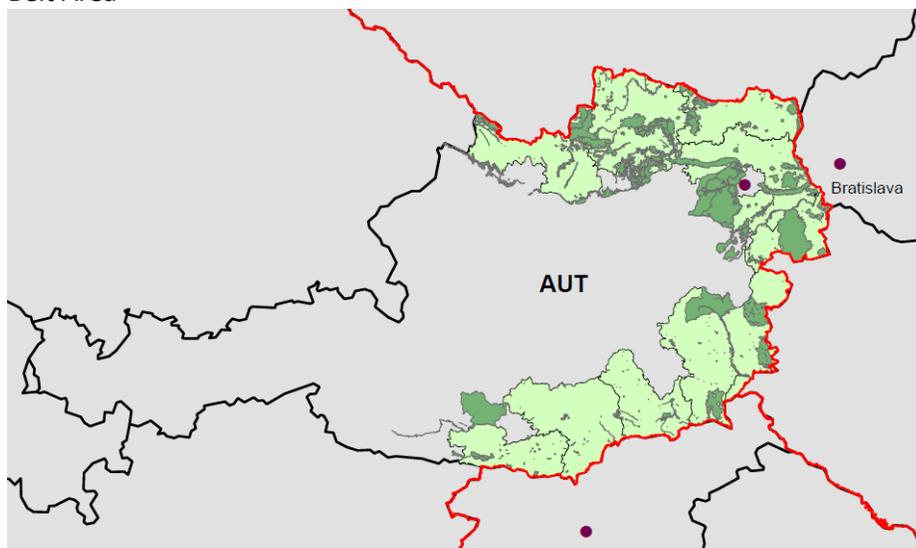
Based on the chosen administrative units during step 1, all protected areas which are located at least partly in the administrative units are chosen as part of the Potential Green Belt Area. The protected area will be chosen in full size, even if they extend beyond the chosen administrative units.

Example Austria

Scenario 1: Based on the chosen LAU 2 (light green) along the Green Belt, all protected areas (dark green) which are located at least partly in these AUs are chosen in full size as part of the Potential Green Belt Area



Scenario 2: Based on the chosen NUTS 3 (light green) along the Green Belt, all protected areas (dark green) which are located at least partly in these AUs are chosen in full size as part of the Potential Green Belt Area



Result: Potential Green Belt Area (PGBArea)

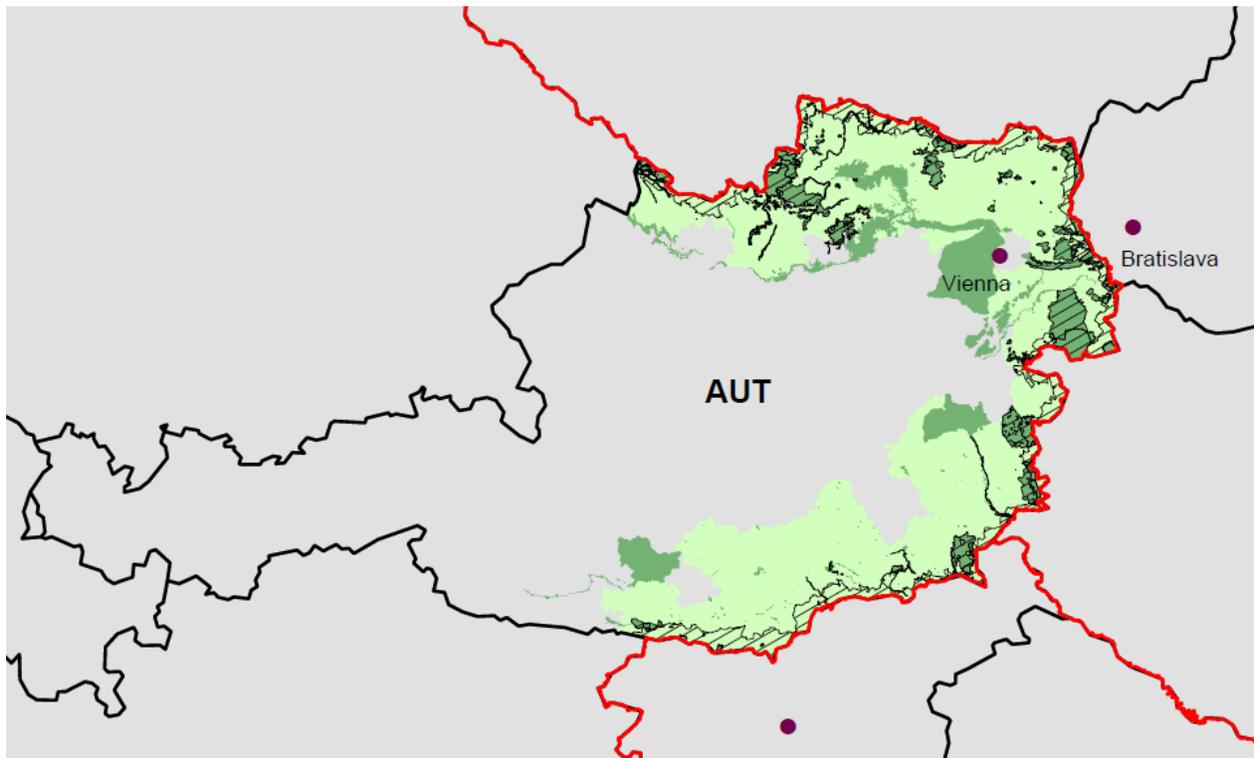
Analysis step 3:

The identified administrative units according to analysis step 1 as well as the protected areas according to analysis step 2 together result in the Potential Green Belt Area.

Example Austria

Scenario 1: The Potential Green Belt Area is based on the AUs of the LAU 2 level directly along the border of Austria (light green) as well as all PAs (dark green) – see only hatched area in the map

Scenario 2: The Potential Green Belt Area is based on the AUs of the NUTS 3 level directly along the border of Austria (light green) as well as all PAs (dark green) – see total green area in the map



Session 4 during the Pan-European Conference

During this session the results of the spatial analysis will be presented in detail for each country. Parallel working groups will be formed for each section of the European Green Belt with the regional coordinator as moderator.

In addition, the working groups will collect and discuss open questions regarding the two scenarios of a Potential Green Belt Area.