

## **Walkable floormaps in different European ULLs**

*In collaboration by ULL Aarhus and ULL Velika Gorica, 31 March 2023*

### **The Aarhus ULL**

In spring 2022, four floormaps were created by UFZ with input from the City of Aarhus departments for the Aarhus ULL. The individual maps were designed for different areas of interest at different scales and different sizes. The large map illustrating Aarhus municipality is used for governance and planning discussions hosted by the Technical and Environment Department. More local maps at refined scale are being used in teacher education at the VIA University College. These floormaps have become an important tool for training and awareness raising among children and in the educational setting. In addition, the floormaps have shown great potential in governance.

During five workshops with public policy makers and planners, the floormaps and associated processes were examined and developed to adapt the floormap format to local governance. In the policy making and planning for a climate resilient, inclusive and greener city, the floormaps offer a unique opportunity for materializing the objectives and visions of public governance. The sheer scale implies that connections and networks, distances and proximities become a corporal aspect of developing the city. Furthermore, the floormaps encourages collaborative dialogue and development of policies across different policy sectors. When facilitated, this offers a platform for formulating coordinates public interventions across e.g. biodiversity, urban liveability, climate adaptation, social equity, health and wellbeing, and education, thus also stimulating experiential and collaborative policy learning. Moreover, the floormaps can serve to enhance the opportunities and inclusiveness of participatory processes that engage citizens in designing urban green, blue and built-up spaces of the cities.

In Aarhus municipality (Aarhus ULL), we experienced that walkable floormaps have the potential to bring professionals together on the map and stimulate mutual discussions on issues stemming from different sectors of public administration. A large map covering the whole municipality and showing blue and green structures was used for several workshops where professionals from different parts of the municipal administration participated. This floormap was also used to communicate water and nature planning issues from the administrative level to the political level.

A common finding from the workshops is, that the visual scope and the physicality of a large floormap makes people curious and allows a more holistic and spatially-oriented dialogue. In contrast to normal meeting formats, dialogue becomes quite vivid and interactions across sectors more 'informal' as participants appear less afraid of losing their agendas. Thus, the map helps to foster discussions across sectors.

From our experiences in Aarhus we emphasize, that the map in its present form has great value when discussing strategic topics and planning topics at the beginning of e.g. a planning process. We have not yet tested the map in later stages of planning processes or in citizen involvement processes, but we expect the map to be useful especially when involving citizens and other stakeholders.



*Map of Aarhus Municipality area (5 x 7m) exposed at Aarhus Municipality*



The map at a scale of 1:5,500 was presented at Aarhus Municipality. It was used in a REGREEN internal meeting, aiming to discuss several NBS implementation sites around Aarhus and their spatial linkages. It was also used in a meeting of the Head of Departments at the Aarhus Municipality as a tool for political and planning strategies. Later, this floormap was open to the staff working in the municipality, with more discussions ensuing. Here, not only the stakeholders from Aarhus municipality and other partners from REGREEN were present, but also people from other departments working at the Aarhus Municipality, talking about their recent and forthcoming projects in the city.



*A floormap focusing on the area around Aarhus harbour at the Aarhus VIA University College*

A set of three much more detailed maps were presented in teacher education (geography) at the Aarhus VIA university college. Student teachers at different stages of training explored ways of using floormaps as a pedagogical tools for teaching. They discussed possible ways of interacting with the maps in a teaching context, and ways of using the maps to present research topics in their spatial dimensions. This second set of maps consisted of three maps at a scale ranging from 1:750 and 1:1,500.





*A map interview*

## The Velika Gorica ULL

Two floormaps of Velika Gorica municipality were presented at the tourist information centre as part of the 6<sup>th</sup> REGREEN internal project meeting in May 2022, and later at a public event in the town hall of the ULL.



*Walkable floormaps in Velika Gorica ULL on display in the tourist information centre*

Both events included discussions across REGREEN WPs. The latter event, where the map was also accessible to general public in the town hall, included stakeholder engagement. The map was used also for a Policy Workshop on the governance aspects of NBS in WP6 to engage with policymakers/stakeholders on the implementation and governance of NBS approaches. One of the floormaps has found its permanent and quite central place to further discuss spatial planning in the city. In November 2022, the map was used for WP5 activities in the educational sector in three elementary schools to discuss the educational benefits when using floormaps. The additional map is being used in regular work at the elementary school for students to familiarise themselves with the city, its nature, and broader area. The larger the map is, more engaging it is to the stakeholders that participated in the workshops.





*Walkable floormaps in Velika Gorica ULL on display at a public event in the city town hall (left)*

Both maps were presented in combination with QR codes linking to various NBS projects around the city and with transparencies showcasing parts of the land cover map developed within the REGREEN project to enhance understanding of local contexts and interdependencies in a spatial manner.