



Socio-economic aspects of river restoration  
planning and implementation  
*Main lessons from a feasibility study*

Isabelle Alten

LIFE goodwater conference - September 21st 2023

# Main goals of presentation



INSIGHT INTO THE SOCIAL  
ASPECTS OF DAM REMOVAL



WITH HELP OF CASE STUDY IN  
LATVIA

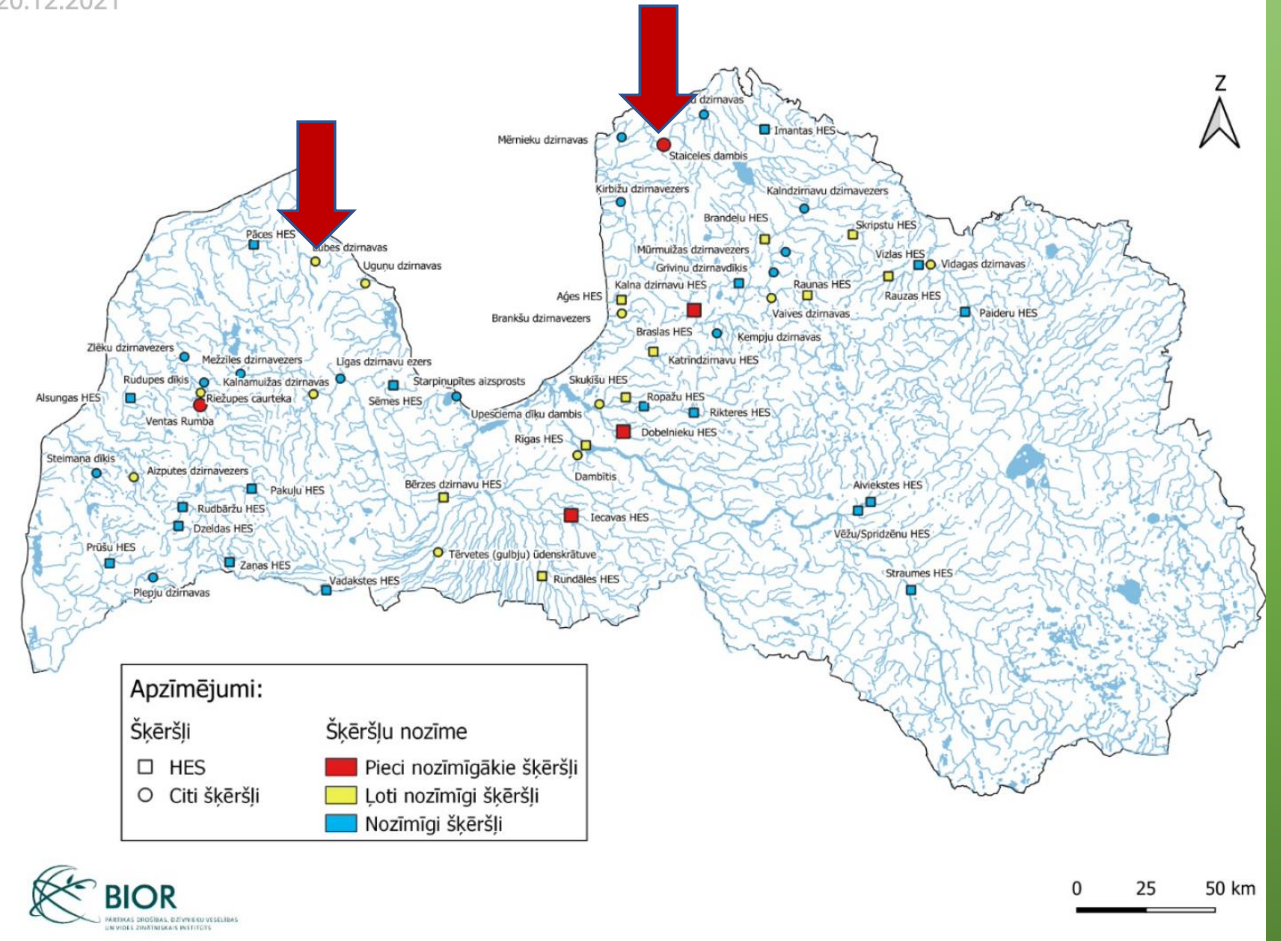


KNOW THE DO'S AND DONT'S  
REGARDING YOUR PROJECT

# Background of Latvia projects

- BIOR STUDY 70 DAMS
- 2 SELECTED FOR FEASIBILITY:
  - STAICELE PAPER FACTORY DAM (SALACA)
  - LUBE WATERMILL DAM (ROJA)
- COOPERATION DAM REMOVAL EUROPE AND BIOR

20.12.2021



# Previous approaches

- Staicele over past 20 years:
  - Several attempts of removing dam, plans and extensive elaborations
  - Failed due to disagreement owners and institutions
- New approach: inclusion vision of owners and other stakeholders



# FREQUENT OBSTACLES

An aerial photograph of a wide river winding through a lush, green landscape. The river is surrounded by dense forests and marshy banks. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. The overall scene is vibrant and natural.

- Many different involved organizations
- Attention to rural development seen as separate subject
- Lack of money
- Cultural heritage not connected
  - Communication is key!

# Timeline new approach

Extensive pre-research about topic



Get in touch with involved stakeholders



Find out which stakeholders are important in the process



Alter your first ideas and plans with new knowledge

*Do not underestimate the time this takes!*

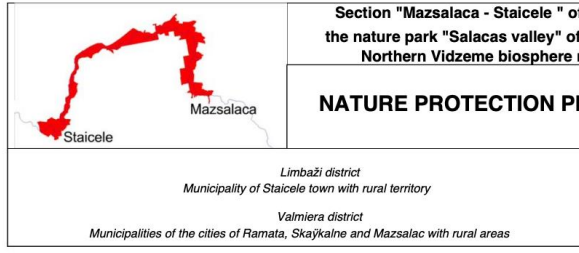
# Extensive pre-research about topic:

- Know about the background
- Have motivation clear
- Try to see the situation from the view of the locals
- Visit the site
- Know the legal situation of the site

## Šmits: Mazās HES Latvijas upēs ir jājauc nost

Ziņu aģentūra LETA

20.jan



## Salaca – Staiceles pērle

Staiceles Lībiešu muzeja Pivālid vadītāja Indra Jaunzeme cauri pilsētai tekošo Salacu dēvē par Staiceles pēri un likteņpieti. Tās klātbūtnē bija viens no noteicošajiem faktoriem, kādēļ tie cēla papīrfabrikā, kas savukārt radīja pilsētu. Tajā ir arī upes vārdā nosaukta iela. Vasarās tūristus, vadot par upi Salacas tramvajā, pieceļ Vairis Kuzins. Arī laivotāji upi iecienījuši. Pēc Alojas novada TIC aplēsēm – pērn bijuši apstiprināti 4000 laivotāju, tostarp arī nakts airēšanas maratona Salacas maucienas dalībnieki. Tradicionāli tiek rīkoti svētki Staiceles vimbā, kad copmaņi sacenšas par vimbū karāja godu, jo ne tikai stārķis, bet arī vimbū ir Staiceles simbols.

## Lepojas ar savu

Aloja ir vienīgā starp četriem mūspuses novadiem, kur reizi divos gados rīko Uzņēmēju dienas. Parasti tā izvērsas par svētkiem. Alojas sporta hallē rīkotājā izstādē ar daudzveidīgu produkciju un informāciju par sniegtajiem pakalpojumiem iesaistās vairāki desmiti uzņēmēju. Notikums ir iedzīvotāju plaši apmeklēts. Dienas garumā tam nodrošināta vispusīga programma ar koncertiem, pašu uzņēmēju prezentācijām, apbalvojumu pasniegšanu lielākajiem nodokļu maksātājiem un darba devējiem. Pašvaldības darbinieki gādā, lai viss labi izdotos. Tas prasa uzņēmību, laiku, arī līdzekļus, bet galvenais – kontaktu ar līdzmiejniekiem. Tomēr vienmēr atzīts, ka šo tradīciju ir vērts turpināt. – Mēs cieņām savus uzņēmējus. Viņi rada materiālās vērtības, dod cilvēkiem darbu un faktiski palīdz pilnīgai pašvaldības budžeta. Uzņēmēju dienas mēs parādām viņiem godu, apbalvojam, nostiprinām kontaktus un ļaujam saprast,



ka lepojamos komercdarbības Celma. Katru reizi ir vienu reizi. Vi

2022. gada 29. decembris, Nr. 252

## Latvijas Vēstnesis



LATVIJAS REPUBLIKAS OFICIĀLAIS IZDEVUMS

OP 2022/252.3

Kultūras ministrijas rīkojums Nr. 2.5-1-202

Rīgā 2022. gada 23. decembrī

### Grozījumi Kultūras ministrijas 1998. gada 29. oktobra rīkojumā Nr. 128 "Par Valsts aizsargājamo kultūras pieminekļu sarakstu"

Izdots saskaņā ar Ministru kabineta 2003. gada 29. aprīļa noteikumu Nr. 241 "Kultūras ministrijas nolikuma" 9.11. punktu

Pamatojoties uz Ilkuma "Par kultūras pieminekļu aizsardzību" (turpmāk – Likums) 14. panta devīto daļu un izvērtējot Nacionālās kultūras mantojuma pārvaldes (turpmāk – Pārvalde) iesniegto Valsts aizsargājamo kultūras pieminekļu saraksta grozījumu projektu, Kultūras ministrija ir konstatējusi:

1. Pārvalde ir iesniegusi Kultūras ministrijā rīkojuma projektu par dzīvojamu ēku kompleksu Rīgā, Jēkaba ielā 3/5, Mazā Pils ielā, Pils ielā 20, Pils ielā 22, izdališanu no valsts nozīmes arhitekūras pieminekļa "Dzīvojamu ēku komplekss" (valsts aizsardzības Nr. 6544) un Pārvaldes pārskaitīto Valsts aizsargājamo kultūras pieminekļu sarakstā iekļauto valsts aizsargājamo kultūras pieminekļu atbilstību valsts nozīmes, reģiona nozīmes vai vietējās nozīmes kultūras pieminekļa kritērijiem.

3. December 20, 2007

Environment protection

## European river restoration guru Svet evaluates ZBR's performance



On Monday and Tuesday, the Northern Baltic Biosphere Reserve (ZBR) organized an international (Baltic countries + Denmark + Sweden) seminar with a trip to nature park of the Interreg III B project Promoting refined management and monitoring of boundary protected areas in the territory of northern Livonia as support for local employment, in which scientists shared their experience of restoring rivers in the Baltic Sea region. About 80 interested people took part in the event. ZBR deputy director Andris Litiņš noted with satisfaction that the participants were really personalities.

The lecture River restoration - science, art or simply expertise in the theoretical part of the seminar at the Ministry of Environment was delivered by his part-time teacher, river restoration guru Bert Lange Madsen from Denmark. A. Litiņš also read books written by a Dane, which he used in the work to be done this summer - the reclamation of Salaca. We have already written about the river reclamation carried out in the last two summers in ZBR. In Salaca, a total area of about 40 ha was reclamation in 2006, and this year - 20 ha, including in the lower reaches of Jaunupe. Specialists have recognized that this is the most important river reclamation work in the Baltics this year. It is important that fishermen have proven with numbers that this project to environmentally friendly and brings real benefits to fisheries, as the number of baby salmon has increased at least twice. Normunds Riekstiņš, head of the State Fisheries Administration, also took part in the seminar with interest. Mārtiņš, parliamentary secretary of the Ministry of Environment, opened the conversation.

The seminar was also attended by such an important person as the secretary of the coalition of non-governmental organizations of the Baltic Sea environment, the Coalition for a Clean Baltic, Gunārs Kozaris from Sweden. On the second day - the day of the trip to Salaca - the Salaca paper mill clean was also visited, for which this coalition also advocated five years ago. It turns out that in 2002 the picture of the dam with on the cover of a booklet prepared by the coalition about the cleanest spots around the Baltic Sea. At the time when Salaca HPP was discussed, the coalition submitted an official request to the Latvian government to explain the situation, and this did not allow solving this issue, so to speak at the time.

The company Salacas būve, which manages this responsibility, concluded the interlocutor. The event was also attended by quite prominent persons not only from Latvia, but also from the environmental protection circles of Lithuania and Estonia. The leaders of the Baltics + Baltic's A. Litiņš. The secretary of the NGO, ranked in the representation of the 23rd, 25th and 27th in the event opens up new ways for further cooperation.

It is a fantastic feeling - to meet my "guru" in the matter of river restoration, from whom I've learned so much, and to show him our performance, - said the deputy director of the Northern Baltic Biosphere Reserve Andris Litiņš from the left. In the picture, which was taken in the foggy weather on the Salaca dam, are the secretary of the coalition of non-governmental organizations of the Baltic Sea environment, the Coalition for a Clean Baltic, Gunārs Kozaris from Denmark.

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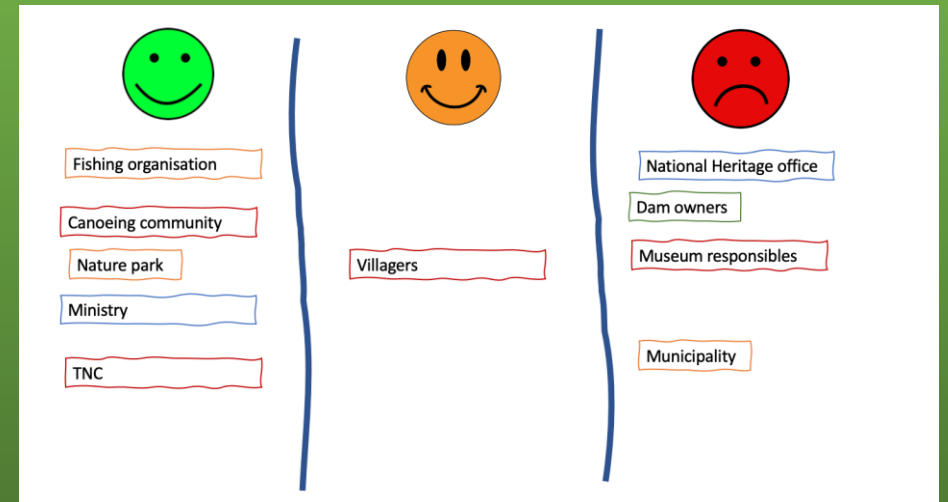
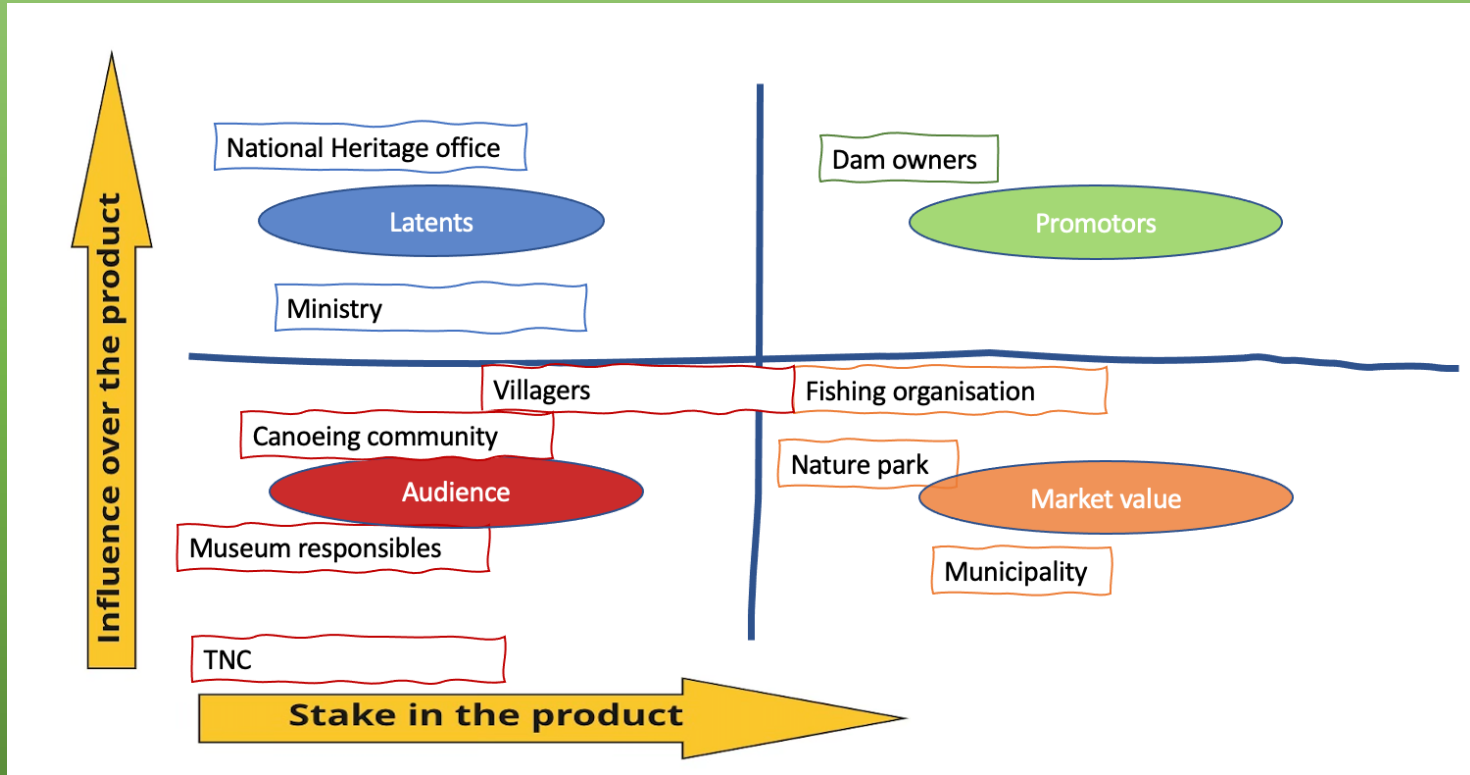


# Get in touch with involved stakeholders

- Listen first, before putting your own ideas at front
- Do not forget some stakeholders are not in your own “bubble”
- Find out who is important in the process where you did not think of immediately
- Get every stakeholder involved



# Find out which stakeholders are important in the process



# Alter first ideas and plans with new knowledge

- Communicate these with stakeholders
- Try to be creative in new solution
- Include opinions of local stakeholders
- Keep in touch and communicate ideas with other experts in the field
- Check feasibility of plans with experts



# Communicate the project

- Explain the need of the project
- Communicate the ideas with locals
- Keep space open for new ideas
- Work together with important involved institutions

**ISABELLE ALTEN**

*"Pasaules zivju migrācijas fonds" pārstāve,  
"Aizsprostu likvidēšana Eiropā" projekta pētniece*



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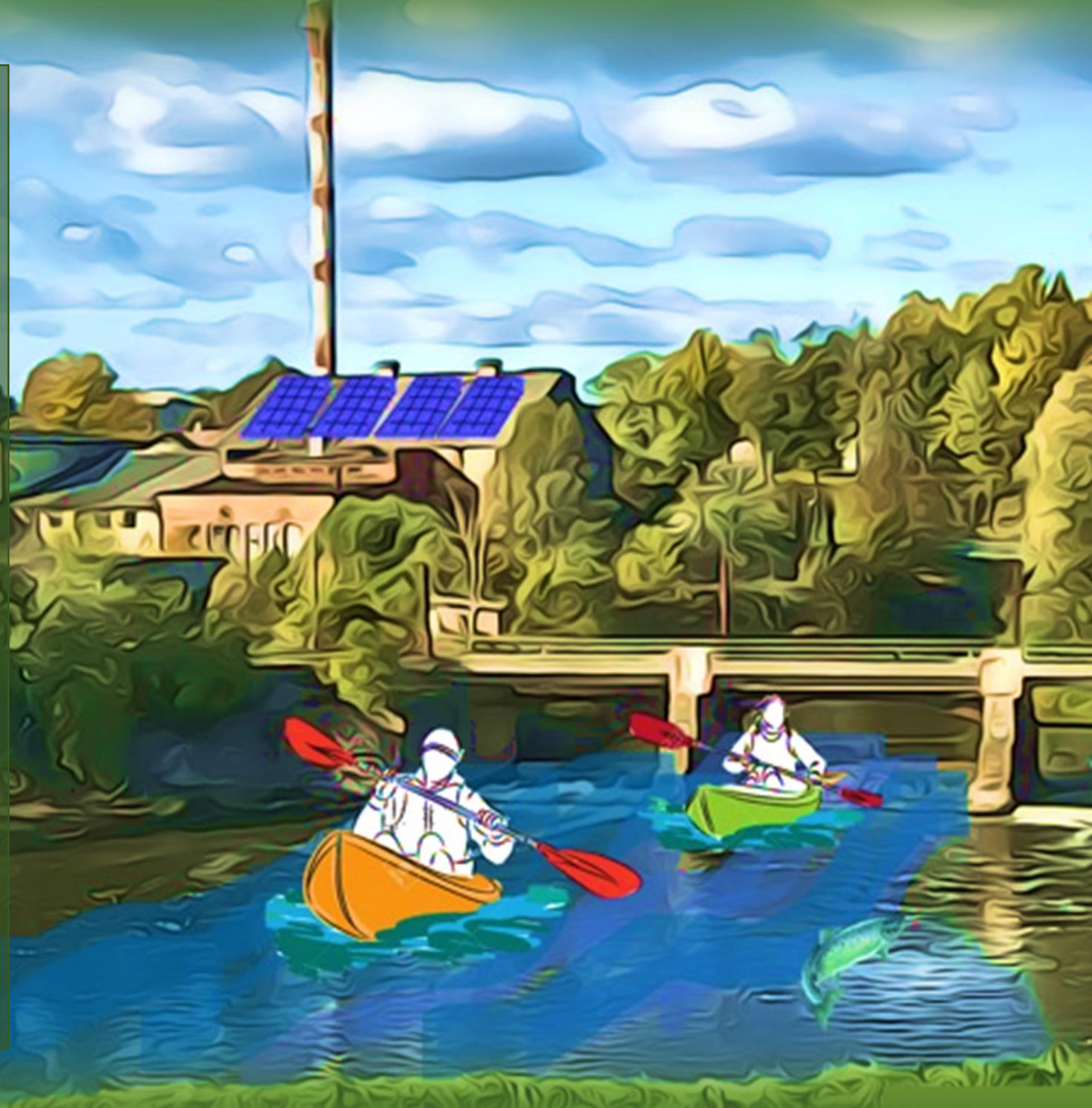


Education in local school - Staicele pamatskola

# Conclusion & solution:

- Feasible? **Yes**
- If create a project based on:
  - Combining restoring the fall of Staicele with restoring the ecological value

Both large potential in succes



# Main lessons

## How to deal with your project?

*Isabelle's vision. Feel free to add or question parts by own experience and please let me know!*

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Do not stay focussed on differing solutions

*Try to find out the underlying motivation*

Working together is very  
important

*Get in contact with all institutions and  
stakeholders involved*



# Conclusion does not have to mean consensus

*For a difficult case, there is no need to lower  
the bar for the original goals*

Opposing ideas are not always  
“wrong”

*Try to also look into perspectives of the  
opposition*

No directly visible result does not mean the effort is useless

*Some projects require some time and all political, social and economic winds in good direction.*

*Projects can also help other projects.*

A proper socio-economic investigation  
requires a lot of time

*Make sure to make space for it, as it is highly  
needed*

# Questions?

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LinkedIn®

