The Danish Land Consolidation tradition

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Morten Hartvigsen
moha@orbicon.dk
Phone: +45 23613731
www.orbicon.dk

Sundby Lake restored through land consolidation
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Danish land consolidation has its roots in a land reform launched in the 1780s (enclosure movement)

Oster Skerninge village near Slagelse before (left) and after land reform (right). Agricultural land belonging to one agricultural holding enhanced.
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Historical development

• The first "modern" land consolidation law was adopted in 1924.
• The procedures are today basically the same as after an amendment of the law in 1955.
• The traditional objective of land consolidation projects has been agricultural development through the reduction of land fragmentation and enlargement of farm sizes. State support for this type of projects stopped in 2006.
• From 1990 the objective of the law broadened (tool for nature restoration and other public initiated projects).
• Since the late 1980s, land consolidation has been a key instrument for voluntary implementation of a large number of nature restoration projects and contributed to implementation of Water Framework Directive and Natura 2000 Directives.
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Characteristics of Danish land consolidation

- Participation in land consolidation is voluntary
- Local committee of stakeholders participate in the re-allotment planning
- Land valuation as a combination of relative value and market price
- The re-allotment planning can be described as a "chain of exchanges and selling and buying transactions"
- Relative short duration of projects (in total 2-4 years)
- Supported by the State Land Bank
- The potential for multi-functionality is not realized
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The land consolidation process

PROPERTY PRE-STUDY
- Land ownership map
- Landowner interviews
- Assessment of landowner interest and project costs

INITIATIVE FOR LAND CONSOLIDATION SUBMITTED TO MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES

INITIAL PUBLIC MEETING
- Election of committee of stakeholders
- Decision on project area
- Decision on date of implementation

RE-ALLOTMENT PLANNING
- Valuation
- Negotiations with landowners and stakeholders
- Permissions from other legislation
- Draft re-allocation plan (Plan 2)
- EIA screening

PROJECT APPROVAL AT JUDGEMENT MEETING
- Preparation of judgement
- Presentation of draft re-allocation plan (Plan 2) for land consolidation commission and the public
- Project approved by commission

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION

PREPARATION OF REGISTRATION
- Necessary surveying in field and marking of new boundaries
- Documentation

REGISTRATION
- Final re-allocation plan (Plan 2) registered in Cadaster and Land register

2-4 months

6-18 months
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Illustration of the land consolidation process

1) 

2) 

3) 

4)
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Example of traditional land consolidation – “Lydum-Nr. Nebel”

Part of Plan 1 (before LC)  Part of Plan 2 (after LC)
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Example from Skjern River Nature Restoration – nature restoration of 2,200 ha during 1987-2003

Part of Plan 1 (before LC)  Part of Plan 2 (after LC)
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Rodding Lake restoration project

Plan 1 (before LC)  Plan 2 (after LC)

Example of multi-functional land consolidation and land consolidation planning being supported by the State Land Bank
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At the same time space for agricultural development and nature restoration

One agricultural holding participating in Vilsted Lake nature restoration (920 ha) before (left) and after (right) land consolidation
Land mobility is essential in a voluntary approach

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Available knowledge and capacity

Available land pool

The local agricultural structure

After Sørensen 1987