



MZK-UK Brno



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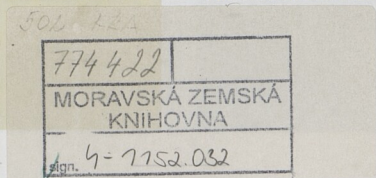
Landscape

Landscape is a complex of interactive ecosystems within a certain area. In practice we usually consider an area to be a landscape when its range exceeds at least several kilometres. A natural landscape is one which has evolved without human interference. However, such landscapes, save for minor exceptions (mountaintops, extensive peat bogs and so on), would be difficult to find in Europe. Cultivated landscape, developed through the interaction of natural factors and human activity predominates on our continent.

Similar to environmental aspects we can categorise landscape according to the human activity prevailing in it. More than half Czech state land is occupied by agricultural landscape focused on agricultural production. One third of Czech territory is taken up by forested landscape – i. e., cultivated forest. Mining landscape is well known e. g., the regions of Most and Ostrava (Mostecko and Ostravsko). Even human settlements form landscape, the settlement-industrial landscape.

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Water

Water is the most widespread substance on Earth as well as an essential condition for life. More than 97% of the world's water is bound within the oceans and salt water is to a large degree useless for humans. So humanity has to make do with the remaining three percent. This has been causing more and more problems in the last millennia. Fortunately no actual physical consumption occurs only so called "economical consumption". Contact with humans during the water cycle changes its qualities – colour, chemical impurities, temperature, etc. Water has a substantial self-cleansing ability and humans have not yet managed totally to expend it. As populations increase and demand rises, the total volume of consumed water also rises. Mankind still has water reserves but in some places water is becoming the limiting factor for further social progress. In the Czech Republic we cannot afford to waste water because we get the vast majority of our water from precipitation. This quantity is estimated to be about 94 km³ annually. We have already experienced lack of water in years of sub-standard precipitation. With global warming, lack of water will become one of the biggest problems for the Czech Republic.