

POLITECNICO DI TORINO
FIRST SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE
Master of Science in Architecture Construction City
Honors theses

**DESIGN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE LANZO VALLEYS: THE TERRITORY-
WOOD CHAIN**

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The aim of this thesis is to create a development strategy for the Lanzo Valleys (located in the Province of Turin, Fig. 1), based on the potential of the territory. The proposal concerns the enhancement of wood resource through the structuring of a "territory-wood chain with a return to the territory" and takes place within the European project AlpBC (Alpine Building Culture, ending in 2015), where the Lanzo Valleys were chosen by the Piemonte Region as a pilot area.

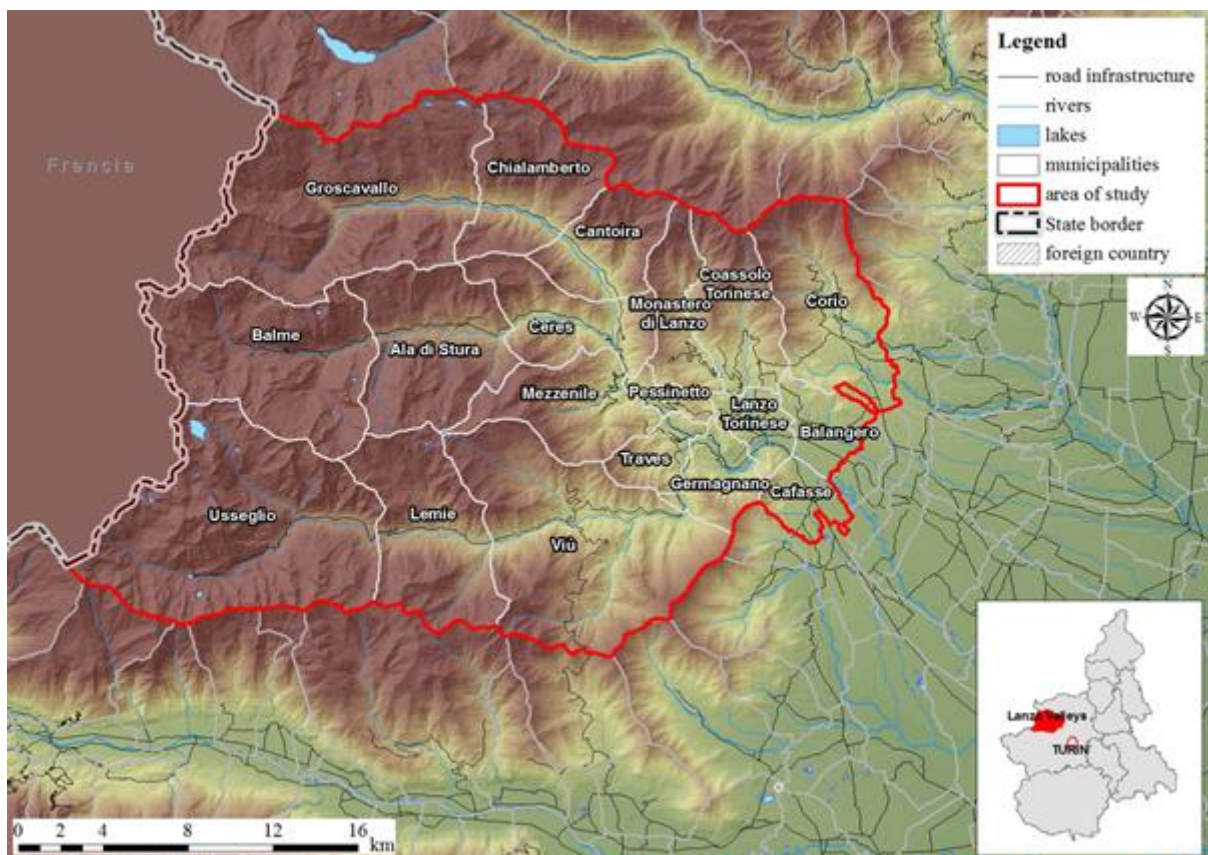


Fig. 1 – Map of territorial framework of the Lanzo Valleys (realized by the author, 2014)

The research starts with a study of the territory, through a demographic and socio-economic analysis and observing the quality of life (also conducting qualitative interviews with the population). Despite problems such as depopulation, decrease of services (e.g. education, health) or accessibility more difficult in the high valleys, this territory presents some opportunities that should be enhanced (including its proximity to Turin). In particular, the 41,77% of the territory consists of forests and there are 16 companies that have the “excellence in handicrafts” in woodworking sector recognized by the Piemonte Region.

After observation of some good practices, a development path was created, based on the wood resource, which connects different elements that can help to improve the quality of life and create new job opportunities.

The first result of this research is the identification of potential stakeholders (local governments, forestry companies, sawmills, craftsmen, sculpture schools and museums) and their involvement through interviews.

The second outcome is the design proposal of the "territory-wood chain", of which some parts already exist in the territory. However, it is necessary to create conditions whereby all the links in the chain are present and connected in a continuous and direct form. The first step is the sustainable management of local forests, essential to the production of wood and to ensure the multifunctional role of forests. In addition to illustrate the steps that make up the supply chain (Fig. 2), some strategies are proposed to promote local handicrafts and create new job opportunities, supporting artists, craftsmen and sculpture schools and giving the opportunity to teach and learn in the territory the profession of "craftsman woodworker".

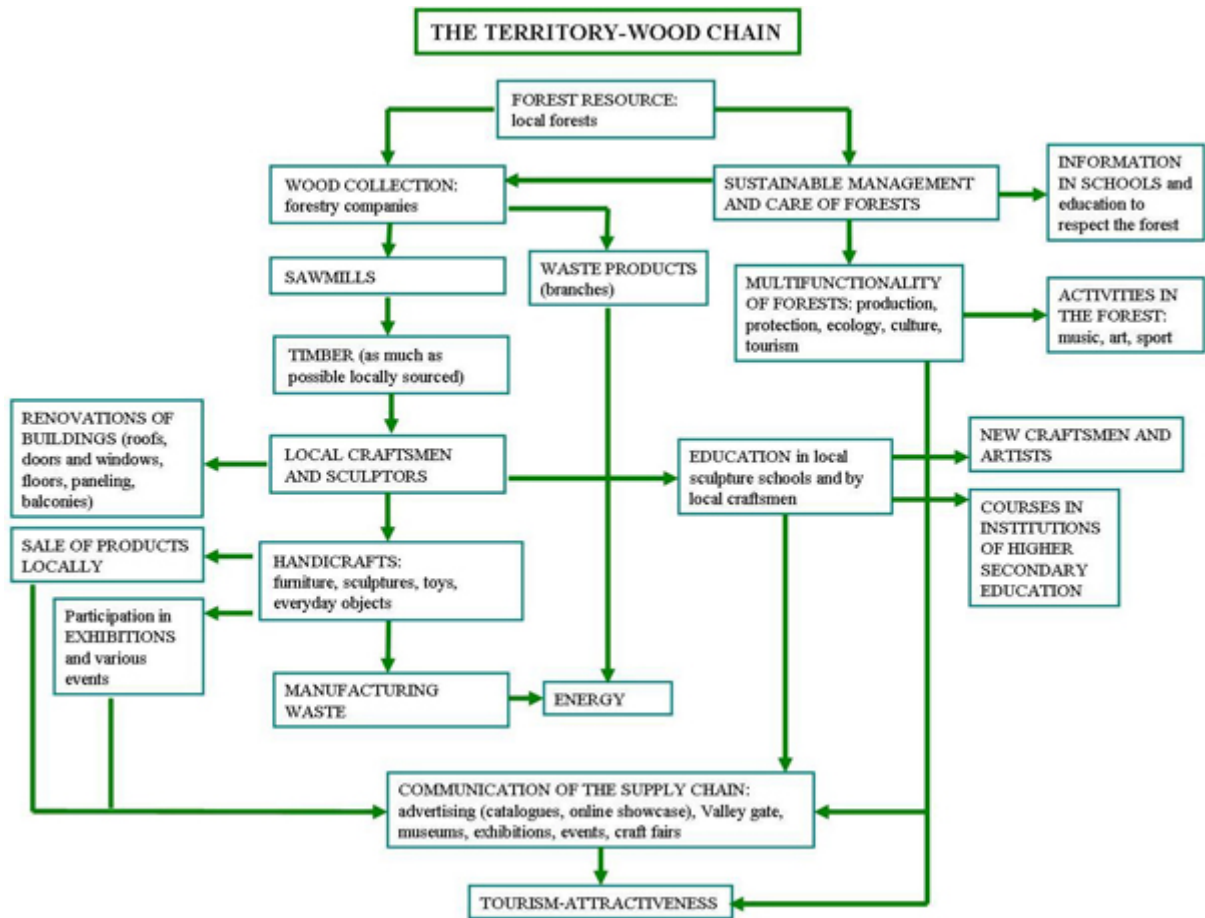


Fig. 2 – Diagram of the territory-wood chain which is proposed

The final result is the proposal for some instruments to communicate the supply chain. The first concerns the collaboration with local museums to promote an image of the territory related to wood, through exhibitions and conferences or supposing the expansion of the museum structure to accommodate a section of current wood production.

A second proposal is the creation of a "Valley gate", which would be at the same time a symbolic entrance to the valleys, a tourist information point and a container of services for the promotion of the territory (e.g. conferences, exhibitions, educational activities, sale of local products). The structure could also accommodate a "permanent exhibition on wood and handicrafts of the Lanzo Valleys" to promote the local supply chain from the forest to the finished product. The idea is to locate the "Valley gate" in Lanzo Torinese, which is a place of reference as well as entry into the territory of the valleys. The P.R.G.C. has destined an area for "tertiary new plant", in which it could be possible to restructure the existing abandoned farmstead or at least reuse the already occupied area and keep the green area in front, avoiding any new soil consumption (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3 – Extract from the table P3c of the P.R.G.C. of Lanzo Torinese and aerial view of the suggested area to the "Valley gate" (indicated in both images by the red circle)

The final proposal for the communication of the supply chain is the creation of a website where craftsmen, artists, associations, sculpture schools and museums of Lanzo Valleys can insert for free their contact details and information.

In conclusion, the "territory-wood chain" could support the demographic and economic development of the Lanzo Valleys, but it must be supported by a series of actions to reduce the problems that are present on the territory.

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