

Where the wilderness still thrives

Scale

L/S

Team representative: architect/urbanist/landscaper**Location:** Lochau, Vorarlberg**Population:** 7,000**Strategic site:** 127 ha**Project site:** 8.1 ha**Site proposed by:** Municipality of Lochau**Actors involved:** Municipality of Lochau, City of Bregenz, Federal Province of Vorarlberg, Federal Agency for Water Management**Owner(s) of the site:** City of Bregenz, Federal Agency for Water Management**Commission after competition:** There is a definite intention to realise a redesign of the project site and involve the nominated team(s) in further processes.

INHABITED MILIEU'S CHALLENGES

In tune with the lake and the mountains, the small village of Lochau is nestled between the basic elements of nature: water and rock. Nature is deeply rooted in the lives of its inhabitants, providing opportunities and recreation from which everyone can benefit.

Nature, such as the topography of mountainous areas, can also be a limiting factor. In the case of Lochau, it determines the mobility corridor that runs along the coast. It is a significant barrier that separates the villagers from their beloved shore. How can the spirit of the lake be experienced more directly in the village? And how can the mobility corridor be softened to become an integral part of the urban fabric?

The residents of Lochau are very proud to live in such a beautiful place, but they are also aware of the economic pressures on the area. The excellent infrastructure links Lochau with the picturesque towns of Lindau and Bregenz, both just five minutes away. This additionally contributes to making Lochau a desirable place to be. Its popularity generates a lot of traffic and attracts many people. Its uniqueness is further enhanced by the fact that the entire Austrian shore of Lake Constance (28km) is open to the public and free of charge. Lochau has a marina, a Natura 2000 nature reserve and beautiful recreational areas on the water, making it a great place where many interests meet. How to balance and negotiate between economic pressure, intensified use, fragile ecosystems and vulnerable groups living in the area?

HOW CAN THIS PROJECT TEACH US THE JOY OF LISTENING TO NATURE, OF LIVING WITHIN A NATURAL SCHEME WHERE MAN IS ONE PART OF THE WHOLE?

HOW TO CREATE NEW NARRATIVES AND INSPIRE PEOPLE TO GET INVOLVED? HOW TO PROTECT AN INERT UNDERSTANDING OF SOLIDARITY IN A PLACE THAT IS INCREASINGLY UNDER PRESSURE ?



QUESTIONS TO THE COMPETITORS

The people of Lochau describe their waterfront as the most valuable, beautiful and important place in Lochau. A place that everyone identifies with, a place that is immensely precious to everyone.

Lochau has a marina with two basins. In between, on a small piece of land, there is a harbour building and an old ferry. Many villagers have fond memories of celebrations and parties on its decks dating back to the late 1970s, when the ferry was installed on Lochau land. By then, it was no longer fit for purpose as a boat, but it served well as a small local eatery and kiosk, selling snacks and ice-cream to bathers on the beach. Now corrosion and general deterioration are very advanced and renovation is too expensive. The aim of this European competition is to propose a new object and the way how it interacts with its surrounding landscape.

The overall task will be to create a place of inclusion, without barriers, where everyone is invited and can participate. Take inspiration from what already exists and mix in fresh ideas to create a vision of inclusiveness that, in its sum, will foster a new identity. The manageable size of the site and the very concrete task is an immense opportunity. It allows you to demonstrate at all levels - from overall concept to construction - what it means to be a planner who cares about our future.

Questions may arise: How to preserve the existing values of the site while expanding its uses? How to strengthen the performative power of the place? How to design a space that shelters inclusiveness? On a strategic level, the rhythm of the coastline and the connection to the village of Lochau should be studied.