

A Strategy for Sustainable Development in the Pyrenees- Mediterranean Euroregion

Basic Guidelines

Report for the CADS, 2008

Francesc Morata (dir.)

Francesc Cots – David Roca

Institut Universitari d'Estudis Europeus

Why the PME?

- Founding Declaration:
“The Euroregion is intended to go beyond the central state’s development strategies to achieve the articulation of a common space oriented towards **sustainable development and environmental concern**”

Introduction

1. Cross-border co-operation in the EU and the Euroregions
2. The Spanish-French institutional context: the co-operation framework of the Pyrenees-Mediterranean Euroregion
3. The Pyrenees-Mediterranean Euroregion: key policy sectors and implications for SD
4. Basic guidelines for a common sustainable development strategy
5. SWOT analysis about the practicability of drawing up a sustainability strategy for the PM Euroregion

Conclusions

Aim and Assumptions

- Defining the functional pre-requisites in view of the formulation and the implementation of a joint strategy for SD in the PME
- Assumptions:
 - SD is a process that requires political will but also mobilization and management of societal capacities around common goals

What is the PME?

- A project of wide cross-border cooperation set up in 2004 and made of 5 regions:
Catalonia, Balearic Islands, Aragon, Languedoc-Roussillon and Midi-Pyrénées
- 14 milion people over 100.000 km²
- 17% of population and 14% of the joint GDP of France and Spain
- One of the 130 Euro-regions or equivalents

http://www.euroregio.eu/eu/AppJava/cat/vivir_en_la_euroregion/mapa_interactivo.js

The Euroregions

- The strongest example of cross-border cooperation borned at the end of the 50s
- The multiplication of the Euro-regions is a spill-over effect of European integration
- the very idea of integration is synonymous with the elimination of borders or the reduction of their economic, social and cultural impact

PME Objectives

- Enhancing economic, research and innovation activities in Southern Europe
- Attracting international investments
- Improving communications with Eastern Europe and the Med area, and integration within TEN
- Playing an outstanding role in the Euro-Mediterranean partnership
- Promoting **sustainable development**
- Boosting cultural and linguistic diversity

Implications

- These objectives have cross-cutting economic, social and environmental implications requiring an integrated approach (sustainability)

How to achieve it?

- The PME is not a new level of government, but a strategic agreement for enhanced cooperation
- The challenge is to put in practice sustainable policies involving the several levels of government
- The additional challenge is the involvement of societal actors
- How to achieve it? Through a MLG approach integrating public and private actors at the different levels (i.e. LA21, single regional SD strategies)

Why a Strategy for SD?

- The elaboration of a common strategy fosters cooperation between contiguous regions
- Transborder policy-networks mobilise and relate actors; they generate mutual trust and common interests
- A SD strategy is:
 - "a coordinated set of participatory and continuously improving processes of analysis, debate, capacity-strengthening, planning and investment"* (OCDE).

Benefits

- The benefits of SD strategies derive both from the likely outcomes in substantive terms, and the process itself, in terms of enhanced skills and collective learning:
 - 1) improving decision-making processes and effectiveness of sustainability-related public policies;
 - 2) mobilisation of human, financial and institutional resources aimed at attaining the SD targets;
 - 3) distributing and allocating resources appropriately;
 - 4) providing instruments for conflict resolution;
 - 5) building and developing the human and institutional capacities necessary for managing sustainability.

Institutional Pre-Requisites

- A clear long-term **commitment** is required at the highest political level.
- The strategy must seek a **consensus** regarding the vision of the future shared by the most representative actors of the Euroregion
- **Participation** by the different actors is one key features of the strategy
- Integrating economic, social and environmental goals by means of **horizontal coordination** within and between the different regions
- **Cooperation** among the different **levels** is important for making the strategy coherent.
- **Capacities** must be developed and strengthened: evaluation of institutional, human, scientific and financial capacities of public and private actors to tackle a strategy of such characteristics.

A step by step process

- The PM Euroregion is young. Therefore it is advisable to carry out specific activities aimed at increasing contacts before moving on to drawing up a full strategy (cross-border networks and forums, production and dissemination of informative material, common structures and knowledge with multiplier effects).
- Then it will be possible to move on to a longer term strategic approach. This might be the appropriate moment to set up a Sustainable Development Advisory Council for the PME.
- The PME's bodies and its leaders must act as policy entrepreneurs to mobilise resources and opportunities.
- Sustainable development through cross-border co-operation has the necessary potential to generate ideas, rules and values which can facilitate collective learning by all the actors as a basic ingredient of the institutional capacities.

Threats and weaknesses

- No any previous experience of Euroregional SD strategy
- The need for explicit political commitment
- Lack of support from both central governments
- Lack of technical and financial resources
- Lack of key actors public/private actors
- Lack of vertical and horizontal mechanisms of governance
- Institutional gaps between French and Spanish regions
- Different administrative traditions
- Lack of knowledge the key actors on either side of the border have of each other
- The PME has not yet assumed functions relating to all the matters linked to SD.

Opportunities

- Integration of economic, social and environmental concerns through a strategic framework
- Substantial progress with regard to supra-regional integration and coherence.
- Greater mutual knowledge and learning
- Joint information management
- Strengthening of the institutional and technical capacities necessary for moving towards sustainable development
- Greater capacity for influence in the EC's SD related networks and partnerships.

- Strengthening of cross-border co-operation
- A supra-regional contribution to the EU's SD Strategy.
- An incentive for local and regional initiatives already under way.
- Involvement of private actors in the joint definition of problems and co-responsibility in solving them.
- An example for other Euroregions