

## **Ten-year plan for sustainable development of territories organized in countries, agglomeration communities or commune communities.**

Since the Earth Summit in Rio, the global society became aware that, in spite of all of technologies' exploits to mitigate the destruction that our mode of development inflicts on the planet at a social, ecological and cultural level, these technologies go against practical buffers linked to the extraordinary complexity of the biosphere.

Diagnostic elements show that progress and projects that try to improve our conceptions and our practices exist, but that the practice of excessive development tends to impoverish the ecosystems and excludes populations.

Within local societies, residents' participation in the development of their territory has lead, in the past few years, elected officials and citizens to ponder on the question of which development model they desire.

This question is motivated by a few interrogations:

- Does our territorial project compromise the capacity of our children's or grandchildren's generations to meet their needs or does it strengthen it?
- Does our country's charter (or community project) sufficiently take into account the deprived social categories? Does it support the efforts of change for a sustainable world?
- Does our global project endanger the natural systems, which increases our health hazards and those of our fellow citizens of the world?

### ***The legitimacy***

The local implementation of a ten-year plan for sustainable development contains several profitable prospects:

- It perpetuates the process of mobilization and committed reflection between elected officials and the civil society by strengthening its forward-looking dimension
- It integrates steps of Agenda 21 by expressing a determinedly ascending dimension and stemming from territories that are organized inter-municipally and sometimes in life pools
- It relies on the participative experiences of countries (development councils...) and inter communal cooperation that have set up citizen councils or animate commissions that are open to the public
- It develops the consideration of the issues linked to the ecosystems often forgotten in the technical-economic choices made during the signing of the country's contracts or postponed to a later date in the decisions made by inter communal cooperation
- It creates, by the announcement of its implementation, a local "air intake" towards scattered forces that already operate in the sense of the environmental issues' considerations
- It allows the evaluation and the updating of the charter and the programming documents, notably by the search for recommendations intended to remedy action programs considered very fragmented or much too divided.
- It offers the possibility to set up public debate procedures (and possibly permanent areas) for situations of significant local tensions connected to continuous opposition of conflicting interests, without third party mediation.

The announcement of this request for proposal during the 5<sup>th</sup> *Universités de Pays* aroused diverse positive reactions coming mainly from territories to whom this project would re-launch the participative process by putting them more in line with the future and in sustainable prospects.

### ***Reference criteria***

We are suggesting reference criteria without trying to be exhaustive. We wanted to give frameworks to the players responsible for the animation of sustainable development plans.

The mentioned criteria are part of an important perspective that integrates the principles of sustainable development.

They mainly take into account the achievements and limitations located during current initiatives by shedding light on the improvement factors of the player systems set up such as evaluated by the promoters of the present tender.

These criteria are useful to players or authors of the local sustainable development project, whether it is in the construction or improvement of the global territory project or in the elaboration of each of the contractualized actions for the ten coming years.

- **Resident's participation:** And thus of all the players involved directly or indirectly in the life of the territories: elected representatives, technical experts, scientists, administrators, socio-professionals, associations, residents... Widely committed these last years with a certain number of regulatory measures, the mobilization of residents, if it is not considered as an ethical necessity, is made compulsory by the complexity of local issues. Indeed, we have a hard time imagining how an appropriate methodology could disregard the expertise (mastering of the use) that emanates from users or citizens confronted daily with a problem in their life and their space. It is the residents and the citizens, the users and the players that are concerned by all the phases of the territory project and of the action plans that it contains: the information and the mobilization of the inhabitants, the collective construction of a diagnosis, the implementation of a project, and the actions and their evaluation.

To ease this practice, the territory will resort to debate for crucial subjects.

The criteria include the acquisition of a collective capacity to debate and, consequently, of learning methods of public expression, particularly for the categories that are not used in doing so.

Because the principle of responsibility is the main factor in its elaboration, the sustainable development plan will try hard to describe a process of progressive accountability, built over ten years, by the players, citizens and inhabitants.

The information, the consultation, the collaboration, the representation and the decision (joint decision) are conceived as steps or elements of this wide process of involvement / responsibility called participation.

- **A prospective process:** Commune community projects - when they exist - and the country's charter bring to light local players difficulties to make a commitment in a prospective process.

Such a process supposes the definition of an arrival and a departure point. On one hand, the point of arrival is the collective expression of the shared representation of the ideal territory, the territory desired in ten years. So it consists in a stimulated imagination exercise animated by a third party allowing to describe - by means of speech, maps, photos, figures - the territory as the participants would want it to become, considering the

transformation issues of the society which they bear, i.e. the goals that they wish to attain at completion.

On the other hand, the point of departure of this process is the diagnosis. The issue of participation explained in the previous paragraph takes on its full dimension in this shared diagnosis exercise: Include every category of concerned population every day for each of the crucial problems recorded on the territory. These problems – and not the needs – concern living conditions, access to housing, to transportation, to health (a healthy diet) to education, to culture, the pressure on the environment, the capacity to undertake local players (savings, accompaniment, drive and recognition of innovation, training...), the sustainability and the creation of new jobs which require the local situations to improve... To establish a connection between the diagnosis and the goal, the process supposes an update of various collective transformation issues. It is with the help of these issues that the local players can build development scenarios to be debated in diverse public places in order to exercise their collective capacity to debate hypothesis of change or improvement of territory life and to exercise their capabilities of choosing a shared future.

- **A global transformation project:** one of the criteria for building a sustainable development project consists of agreeing on one or several goals for the territory project. It is a sharing of values expressed by social group representatives and/or people that are most implicated in this evolution that allows the creation of transversality between different action projects.

The territory's sustainable development project integrates the time required to achieve its objectives; it demands the implementation of bridges between diverse actions contemplated in terms of improvement of economic return (innovation and capital gain), of social equity, eco-systematic adaptation and cultural identity. Without a doubt, the description of this plan, at the conclusion of a few months of evaluation of recent actions and of development of new actions, will have to differentiate, on one hand, the actions that can rapidly be fulfilled with the mobilization of financing (for example, with financial Round Tables gathering the usual financial partners and new partners due to the nature of the new orientations chosen), and on the other hand, those that require societal transformation, and thus, the implementation of medium-term educational processes. Finally, educating citizens on the mastering of local development tools can be considered as a development lever over medium and long term.

- **A democratic process:** Blockages exist at the local level because the questions that cause them are deemed difficult or complex. To avoid putting aside what seems difficult to resolve, the sustainable development project initiators will try to build a system where operation "breakdowns" will first be updated (for example, set up of citizen councils in commune communities or set up of parity committees made of public interest groups or mixed labour unions and development councils in Countries). Secondly, if this revelation fails to create a collective process between antagonistic interest defenders, the Plan may resort to the implementation of Public Debate procedures such as the National conference on climate change or *the Conférence citoyenne sur le traitement et l'élimination des déchets ménagers et assimilés* (ref. Smictom des Chatelets in St Briec 2003). Progressive research for a local functioning plan bringing closer district committees or micro-territories, elected representatives, civil society and technicians, is the way towards a deliberative democracy where the implication of each is indispensable throughout the process to elaborate plausible solutions, since no group of scientists or technocrats will ever settle the durability challenges by deciding for others.

- **Evaluation:** The references to which the criteria of a more sustainable development lead encourage the review of traditional evaluation indicators, to modify them and to add new ones. For example, beyond the indicators assigned by the calculation of the GDP or of a type of local GDP, we shall try to measure the progress made and to be made locally in the way we live everyday and live together, in the access to food and drinking water, in the quality of care, culture and education, in local programs management methods, in respect of constraints linked to the balances of the ecosystems, social utility...  
Players can refer to the usual methodological tools to build these new indicators: The legitimacy that gives the opportunity to measure the coherence of sector-based issues between themselves and actions established, the efficiency that examines appropriateness of objectives versus the goal to achieve and supposes the search for a variety of indicators that are specific to each territory, the efficiency that accounts for the appropriateness of the results obtained with the implemented measures. Players will also be able to attempt measuring the impact that the end-purpose of their action has on the representations of the local population (i.e. does a public debate procedure have an impact on the obtained "consensual" result or on the way to proceed, eventually reproducible?).  
The permanent evaluation exercise is a tool created by players to measure the validity of their actions, to adapt their objectives and to ask themselves other questions related to parameters that they may have forgotten or underestimated.

The five criteria described above are complementary and interdependent; complementary because the improvement of one of them improves the others or some of them towards a more effective group, and interdependent because the evolution of one of these criteria modifies the others or some of them towards a more or less harmonious system. (Remember that these two principles regulate the life of the cell, the life of the body and of the human mind, the life of relations between people and with their environment. They are important life principles, they can be used as a guide to implement the territorial animation system.)

### ***Fields of Activity***

Territories choose activity fields according to the importance given by players and the consulted population. The criteria defined above will be learned at the moment of choice of the activity fields. Here is a non-comprehensive list for information only:

Housing and accommodation

Transportation and mobility

Agriculture and food

Water and air

Education and training

Economical development (including joint economy) and employment

Decentralized cooperation and economical solidarity

Integration and social equity

Human, animal, and environmental health

Energies

Citizenship and cultural identity

Reduction, treatment and elimination of household and industrial waste

Players' organizational methods to further expand activity fields may vary from one to another. The connections established between these various sectors will allow the emphasis on transversal actions as well as the various players to meet and learn to work together. Being from different sectors, they do not often have the opportunity, which is harmful to the emergence of the new parameters, which requires a sustainable development approach.

***Terms of implementation***

***Before December 23<sup>rd</sup> 2004, letters of intention to be sent to the President of the Universités de Pays***

- For agglomeration communities or commune communities, presidents send mail clarifying their wish to make a commitment in the implementation of a ten-year plan for sustainable development (eventually co-signed by the president of the citizen council or of local representative structures)
- For countries: Letters of intent can be addressed, either by the president of the public structure (mixed labour union, GIP or Commune Community), or by the president of the development council, or cooperatively by both presidents.

***Before January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2005, sending of a document describing*** the actors organization terms to fulfil the ten-year plan for sustainable development during 2005. This description contains a short history of the recent collective and institutional constructions to elaborate a territory project, a description of the collective organization choices to elaborate a ten-year plan for sustainable development in 2005 and, if applicable, the terms of external support chosen and a calendar showing the research steps for financing.

***At the beginning of February 2005,*** the territories chosen are informed by the inter-territorial association of the *Universités de Pays* of the possible methodological suggestions made by the Accompaniment Committee and the dates reserved in 2005 for the meeting seminars of the experimental territories (without a doubt, a day during the 6th *Universités de Pays* in Redon, at the beginning of June, and 2 consecutive days towards the end of the calendar year).

*For more information:*

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