Assessing Sustainable Development
- The SQM approach

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Structural Funds and Innovation

- **Structural Funds are intended to bring innovations**
  - in man-made capital
  - in human capital
  - in social capital

- **In a long-term perspective, social capital innovations have proved to be the most important ones, but they are**
  - mostly underestimated
  - often unintentional
  - far from exploiting their whole potential
Formal requests by the EU lead to innovation in governance

- Considerable changes in national and regional governance have been brought about by the EU requests:
  - to define general development objectives
  - to establish regional development strategies
  - to introduce transparent decision making mechanisms across several levels of policy making
  - to include all relevant actors
  - to monitor progress
  - to evaluate potentials and achievements

- The EU push for new forms of governance is important, but often incoherent, hesitating and far from using its full potential
Contents requests by the EU lead to widen the perspective

- General objectives and horizontal principles introduced by the EU have led to important discussions and results:
  - social equity, gender equity
  - environmental protection
  - climate, energy, transport, landscape, water …
  - intercultural cohesion …
  - …

- This innovative potential is far from being fully exploited since EU objectives are often unknown to SF beneficiaries

- SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT is the most comprehensive system of general objectives which could include nearly all previously discussed ones
EU Structural Funds inevitably require new forms of multi-level governance

- Structural Funds have a high need to legitimise their existence
- Setting of objectives, monitoring and evaluation across several levels are essential for legitimisation
- The number of levels involved requires new forms of objective-oriented coordination and management
- The concept of subsidiarity is becoming essential for structuring the increasingly complex relationships between the different levels and actors
Structural Funds:
Subsidiarity for multi-level governance

- At least four levels are involved
- Complex negotiations
- Need to cope with different administrative cultures
- Need to cope with different contexts in European regions
- Need to maintain a coherent policy
- Need to monitor implementation and to evaluate results
The EU must fight for new forms of governance

- The Structural Funds show: the EU has no chance but to insist on the development of new forms of governance

- The white book on governance insists on
  - openness
  - participation
  - accountability
  - effectiveness
  - coherence

- Old governance forms such as tayloristic command-and-control or feudal clientelism are threatened by these developments
Sustainability: A «regulative idea»

- Sustainability is not a simple rule but a general idea (reconciliation of humanity and nature) which has to be interpreted

- Sustainability should be regarded as a "regulative idea" in the Kantian sense - of the same kind as "freedom", "justice" or "health“

- Making sustainability tangible requires:
  - an interpretation based on procedures
  - the consideration of concrete contexts
  - the assessment of contrary developments and interests
Sustainability: The new challenges

- INTEGRATION
  - consider different dimensions of development simultaneously
  - look for win-win solutions

- OPENNESS TOWARDS THE FUTURE
  - conserve potentials and resources
  - improve ability to learn, encourage innovation
Sustainable Development:
Defensive and constructive approach

- **Defensive approach**
  - emphasises the conservation of resources and potentials
  - is based on minimum demands
  - tends towards a sectoral, additive point of view

- **Constructive approach**
  - gives prominence to the ability to learn and to be innovative
  - emphasises the importance of win-win solutions
  - strives for integrated and structural changes
Sustainable Development: A new paradigm

- **Crisis of tayloristic approaches**
  - in industry
  - in science
  - in politics and administration

- **An integrative view is necessary**
  - across time
  - across space
  - between different administrative levels
  - between disciplines

- **Consideration of different dimensions at the same time**

- **A learning process that will take decades**
Assessing Sustainable Development in a dynamic and multifaceted Europe

- **SD is about developing a new perception:**
  - SD is a multidimensional concept: the integration is more than the sum of sectoral approaches
  - SD is an open process: you can always do better, yardsticks change as your experience grows
  - SD requirements depend on the specific context: conditions, opportunities and priorities vary considerably across Europe

- **Challenges for the assessment of SD:**
  - How does one ensure an integrated approach?
  - How does one account for changing views? How does one encourage innovation?
  - How does one account for the differences between European regions and cultures?
Assessing Sustainable Development: Supporting a learning process

- **Sustainable Development must be regarded as a continuous learning process**

- **Learning continuously changes the perspective concerning:**
  - what could and should be done (objectives)
  - how it could and should be done

- **Assessments can help in learning what should be done:**
  - by analysing a situation
  - by identifying alternative developments and actions
  - by specifying and revising objectives

- **Assessments can help in learning how to do better:**
  - by monitoring progress towards set objectives and by refocusing actions
  - by considering the different dimensions of development
  - by comparing different approaches
  - by exchanging experiences between different contexts
SQM - Sustainable Quality Management

- a comprehensive system for assessing Sustainable Development
- based on the concept of Quality Management
- provides a general framework but allows for different interpretations of Sustainable Development
- a tool for interregional and intercultural communication
- a tool for interdisciplinary communication
- a tool for managing transformation and learning processes
# SQM - Sustainable Quality Management ®

**a modular system for a variety of users**

## Concepts
- Sustainable Development as regulative idea and dynamic process ...
- Quality Management of development processes, evaluation ...
- Subsidiarity as a central concept of governance ...

## Framework
- **the SQM analysis framework**
  - ORIENTATION: 10 Components of Sustainability
  - SOCIAL POTENTIAL: 16 Regional Key Factors
  - ACTION DYNAMICS: 6 Basic Transformation Levers

## Methods
- diagnosis of situations
- strategy and programme development
- monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects
- SQM appraisal combining qualitative and quantitative analysis
- participative facilitation
- synthesis and visualisation
- training

## Tools
- Internet-based online-tools
  - *SQM.guide*: public guide to funding programmes
  - *SQM.progman*: tool for managing funding programmes
  - *SQM.project*: versatile expert tool for SQM-related projects
  - *SQM.experience*: exchange of experiences

SQM – Sustainable Quality Management:
use of SQM-appraisals over the whole policy cycle

SQM analysis framework

- **perception**
- **vision**
- **decision**

**actors / experts**

- diagnosis
- strategic orientations
- action programme
- programme objectives and indicators

**implementation**

**monitoring**

**evaluation**

**situation and trends**
SQM - assessment framework

SQM - A professional tool based on simple questions:

• Which direction do we choose for our future?
  ORIENTATION – The principles of sustainable development

• Which are the societal forces and the capacities for co-operation?
  SOCIAL POTENTIAL – The local key factors for sustainable development

• Which levers could be used for reorienting development?
  ACTION DYNAMICS – The transformation levers
ORIENTATION: 10 Components of Sustainability: WHAT?

What do we want to sustain?

Development dimensions

1. Environmental dimension
2. Economic dimension
3. Socio-cultural dimension
Which conflicts of interest are the motives?

Dimensions of equity

4. Social and gender equity (inter-personal)
5. Equity between regions (spatial)
6. Equity between generations (temporal)
Which basic approaches can help us?

**Systemic Principles**

7. Diversity
8. Subsidiarity
9. Networking / Partnership
10. Participation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORIENTATION: Components of sustainable development</th>
<th>SOCIAL POTENTIAL: Key factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O1 Environment</td>
<td>P1 Perception of a variety of development approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O2 Economy</td>
<td>P2 Creativity and innovation in an entrepreneurial culture which emphasises responsibility towards the community</td>
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<tr>
<td>O3 Socio-culture</td>
<td>P3 Capacity to cope with complexity and ambiguity and to anticipate change</td>
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<td>O4 Inter-personal equity</td>
<td>P4 Openness to enrich the own culture and enhance multicultural cohesion</td>
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<td>O5 Spatial equity</td>
<td>P5 Discovery and re-encoding of territorial specificities and local knowledge</td>
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<td>O6 Inter-temporal equity</td>
<td>P6 Ability of each to reach their optimum level of attainment and fulfilment</td>
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<td>O7 Diversity</td>
<td>P7 Fractal distribution of competence using the counter-flow principle</td>
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<td>O8 Subsidiarity</td>
<td>P8 Autonomy of strategic decision making within a facilitating infrastructure</td>
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<td>O9 Networking and partnership</td>
<td>P9 Primary reliance on own resources without compromising the ones of the others</td>
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<td>O10 Participation</td>
<td>P10 Shared value system taking into account environmental, socio-cultural and economic interdependencies</td>
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<th>ACTION DYNAMICS: Transformation levers</th>
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<td>D1 Enhancing problem understanding</td>
<td>P11 Social cohesion</td>
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<td>D2 Open collective learning</td>
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<td>D3 Negotiation and co-decision</td>
<td>P12 Opportunities and room for equitable interaction</td>
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<td>D4 Creation of a shared vision</td>
<td>P13 Capacity of creating a shared vision</td>
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<td>D5 Client orientation</td>
<td>P14 Integration of social and technical skills into the innovation process</td>
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<td>D6 Result orientation</td>
<td>P15 Access to information and to the arena of dialogue and debate</td>
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<td>P16 Multiplicity of interactions, enhanced by local animators</td>
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Variable complexity of the analytical framework

- The complexity of the analytical framework must be adapted to the groups using it
- The complexity can be increased step by step during the process
- The first three aspects can be used to give momentum to public debate
### Qualitative and quantitative assessment assessment:
The SQM/ SWOT assessment sheet

**O1 Environment**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Qualitative Assessment</th>
<th>Quantitative Assessment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>attractive landscape</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>River project</td>
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<th>Weaknesses</th>
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## Synthesis and visualisation: example of a profile

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<td>O5 Equity between territories</td>
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1998: Development of procedures for the consideration of SD criteria in the awarding of Structural Funds. Saxony (D)

1999: D2MiP: a DG Regio pilot project in Midi-Pyrénées (F) concerning the participatory development of local Objective 2 programmes. Evaluation by DG Research.

2000: Proposal Agenda 21 in Florence

2001: SQM.guide MiP: Internet-based programme guide for the Midi-Pyrénées structural funds with auto-evaluation facility for project proposals

2001: D2ParcsMiP: Programme development for three Regional Natural Parks in Midi-Pyrénées

2002-04: INNESTO: EU research project concerning “Sustainable District Logistics”
Obstacles

- The issue of Sustainable Development is intrinsically linked to the issue of new forms of governance
- Learning to think in objective-oriented processes takes a long time
- Transparency concerning objectives, decision making and results, participation and accountability are often meeting resistance
- However: innovative local or regional actors seize the opportunities for change
- A clear position of the EU commission concerning objectives and governance principles is essential
SQM tools for programme management: the general objectives

- reinforcement of the orientation towards Sustainable Development
- support for and simplification of the programme management (project application and selection, monitoring, reporting, evaluation...)
- improved transparency of programmes and procedures
- stronger consideration of the programme objectives
- higher quality of project proposals
- support for project management
Use of SQM tools in the context of public subsidy programmes

→ click on the buttons!
Online guide through complex support programmes

- Detailed presentation of the programme in a hierarchical structure
- Search for programme elements of possible interest to the applicant

Self-evaluation of project proposals by the applicants

- Specific questionnaires for the individual programme elements
- Evaluation with regard to the programme objectives
- Evaluation with regard to Sustainable Development
- A rough automatic analysis of the evaluation gives hints for improvements

SQM.guide - A tool for facilitating the emergence of good projects
SQM.project - a tool for developing and evaluating programmes

- flexibly configurable tool for experts
- versatile use in all projects concerning the management of sustainable development processes
- particularly useful for the development and evaluation of complex multi-level programmes
- flexible use of the SQM analysis framework and of question libraries and indicator systems based on it
- support for different appraisal procedures
- project management functions, team communication
- simultaneous use in different languages
Evaluating with the SQM system: gains in efficiency and quality

- The SQM approach to SD encompasses all basic objectives and horizontal principles of European policies
- The structured and comprehensive overview brings added value compared to usual Terms of Reference
- Qualitative appraisals facilitate communication between actors and experts and bring reliability where hard data are missing
- The multicultural approach facilitates communication
- Additional efficiency gains are possible by using the SQM analysis framework over the whole lifecycle
- The tool SQM.project improves efficiency and transparency in defining, managing and presenting the evaluation process
Building the SQM network: investors, users, certified partners
Further Information ...

www.sqm-praxis.net

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