

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

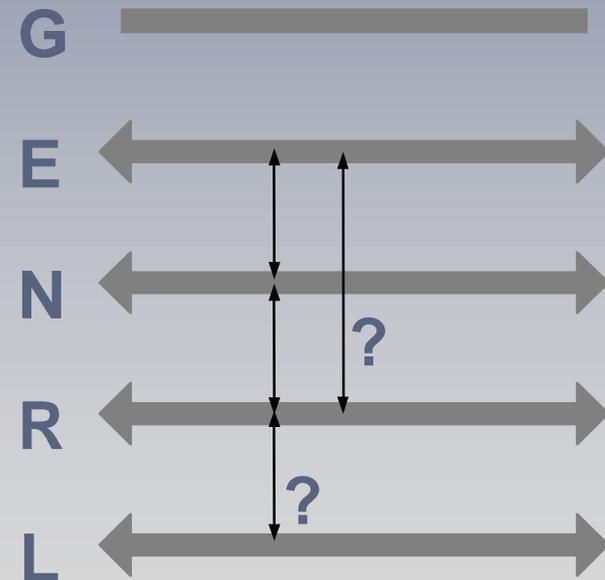
- **General objectives and horizontal principles introduced by the EU have led to important discussions and results:**
 - social equity, gender equity
 - environmental protection
 - climate, energy, transport, landscape, water ...
 - intercultural cohesion ...
 - ...
- **This innovative potential is 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 choice 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 a 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

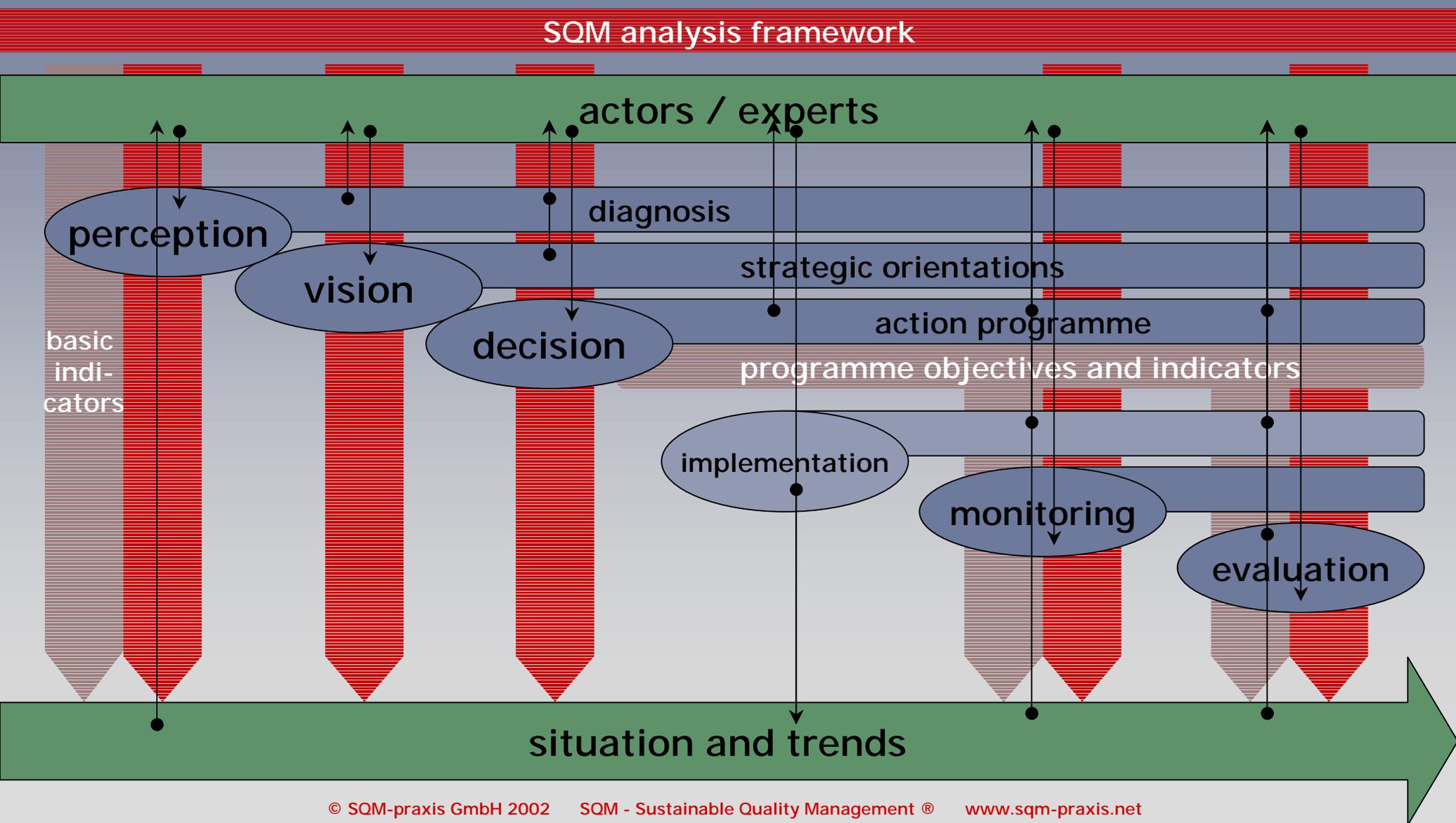
- diagnosis of situations
- strategy and programme development
- monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects
- SQM appraisal combining qualitative and quantitative analysis
- participative facilitation
- synthesis and visualisation
- training

Tools

Internet-based online-tools

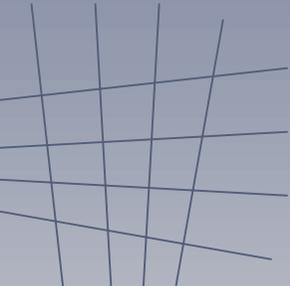
- *SQM.guide*: public guide to funding programmes
- *SQM.progman*: tool for managing funding programmes
- *SQM.project*: versatile expert tool for SQM-related projects
- *SQM.experience*: exchange of experiences

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



SQM – assessment framework

SQM - A professional tool based on simple questions:

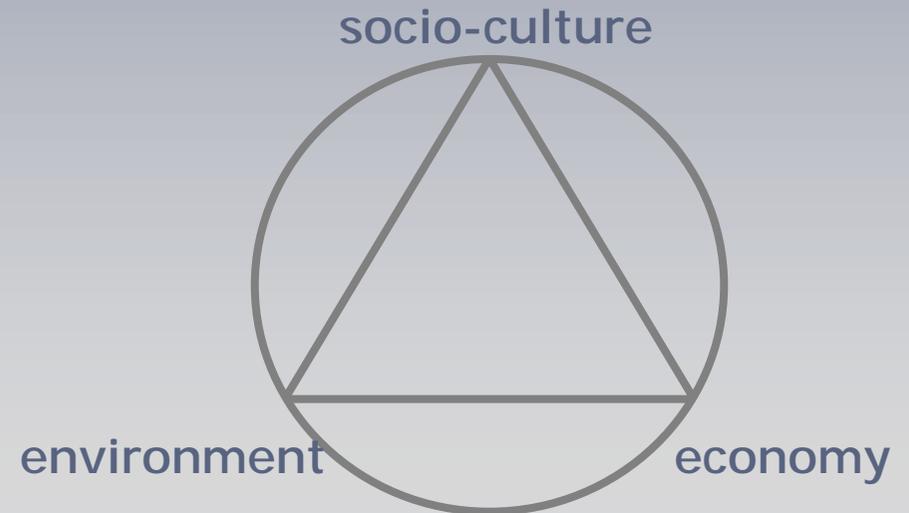
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- Which direction do we choose for our future?
ORIENTATION – The principles of sustainable development
 - Which are the societal forces and the capacities for co-operation?
SOCIAL POTENTIAL – The local key factors for sustainable development
 - Which 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

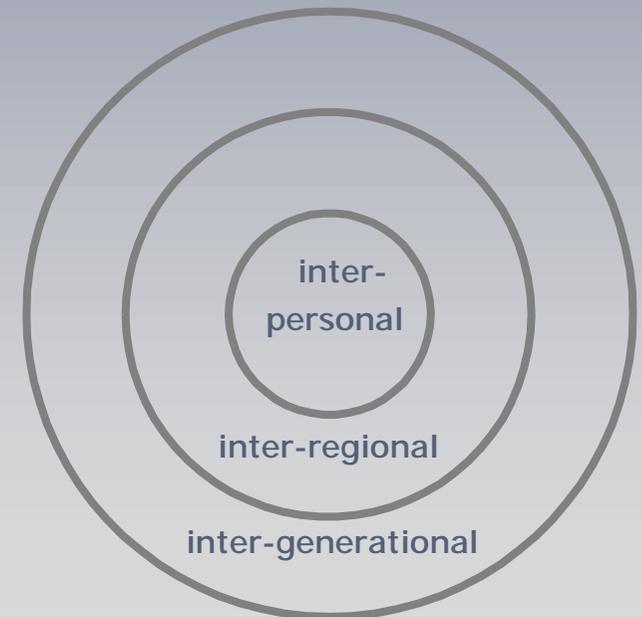


ORIENTATION: 10 Components of Sustainability: WHY?

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)

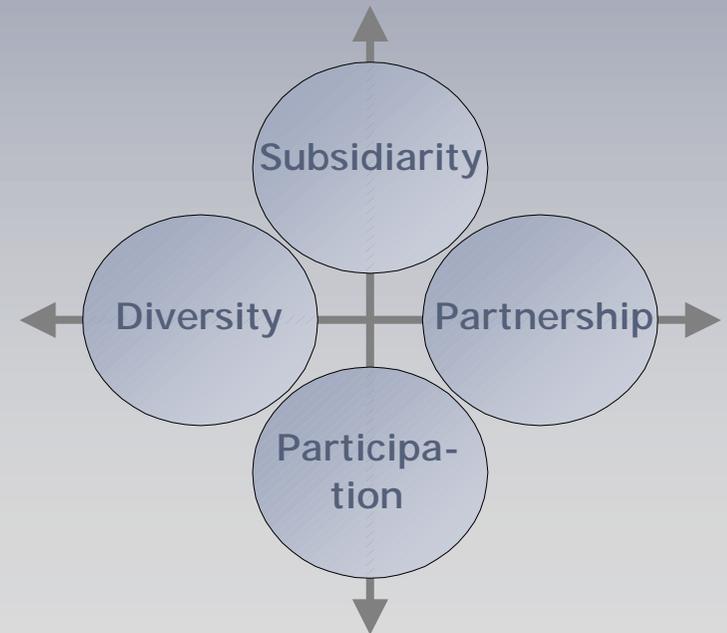


ORIENTATION: 10 Components of Sustainability: HOW?

Which basic approaches can help us?

Systemic Principles

7. Diversity
8. Subsidiarity
9. Networking / Partnership
10. Participation



SQM: The analytical framework

ORIENTATION:

Components of sustainable development

- O1 Environment
- O2 Economy
- O3 Socio-culture
- O4 Inter-personal equity
- O5 Spatial equity
- O6 Inter-temporal equity
- O7 Diversity
- O8 Subsidiarity
- O9 Networking and partnership
- O10 Participation

ACTION DYNAMICS:

Transformation levers

- D1 Enhancing problem understanding
- D2 Open collective learning
- D3 Negotiation and co-decision
- D4 Creation of a shared vision
- D5 Client orientation
- D6 Result orientation

SOCIAL POTENTIAL:

Key factors

- P1 Perception of a variety of development approaches
- P2 Creativity and innovation in an entrepreneurial culture which emphasises responsibility towards the community
- P3 Capacity to cope with complexity and ambiguity and to anticipate change
- P4 Openness to enrich the own culture and enhance multicultural cohesion
- P5 Discovery and re-encoding of territorial specificities and local knowledge
- P6 Ability of each to reach their optimum level of attainment and fulfilment
- P7 Fractal distribution of competence using the counter-flow principle
- P8 Autonomy of strategic decision making within a facilitating infrastructure
- P9 Primary reliance on own resources without compromising the ones of the others
- P10 Shared value system taking into account environmental, socio-cultural and economic interdependencies
- P11 Social cohesion
- P12 Opportunities and room for equitable interaction
- P13 Capacity of creating a shared vision
- P14 Integration of social and technical skills into the innovation process
- P15 Access to information and to the arena of dialogue and debate
- P16 Multiplicity of interactions, enhanced by local animators

Synthesis and visualisation: example of a profile

ORIENTATION		S	W	O	T
O1	Environment	●●	●●	●●●	●●●
O2	Economy	●●	●●	●●	●
O3	Socio-culture	●●●	●●●	●●	●●●
O4	Equity between individuals	●●	●●●	●●●	●●
O5	Equity between territories	●●	●●●	●	●●
O6	Equity between generations	●	●●●	●●	●●●
O7	Diversity	●	●●●	●●●	●●●
O8	Subsidiarity	●●●	●●●	●●	●●
O9	Networks / Partnership	●●	●●●	●●●	●●●
O10	Participation	●●	●●●	●●	●●●

SQM – Examples of projects

1998: Towards Sustainable Development: Experiences and Recommendations of seven European Regions. PACTE programme.

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

SQM web tools

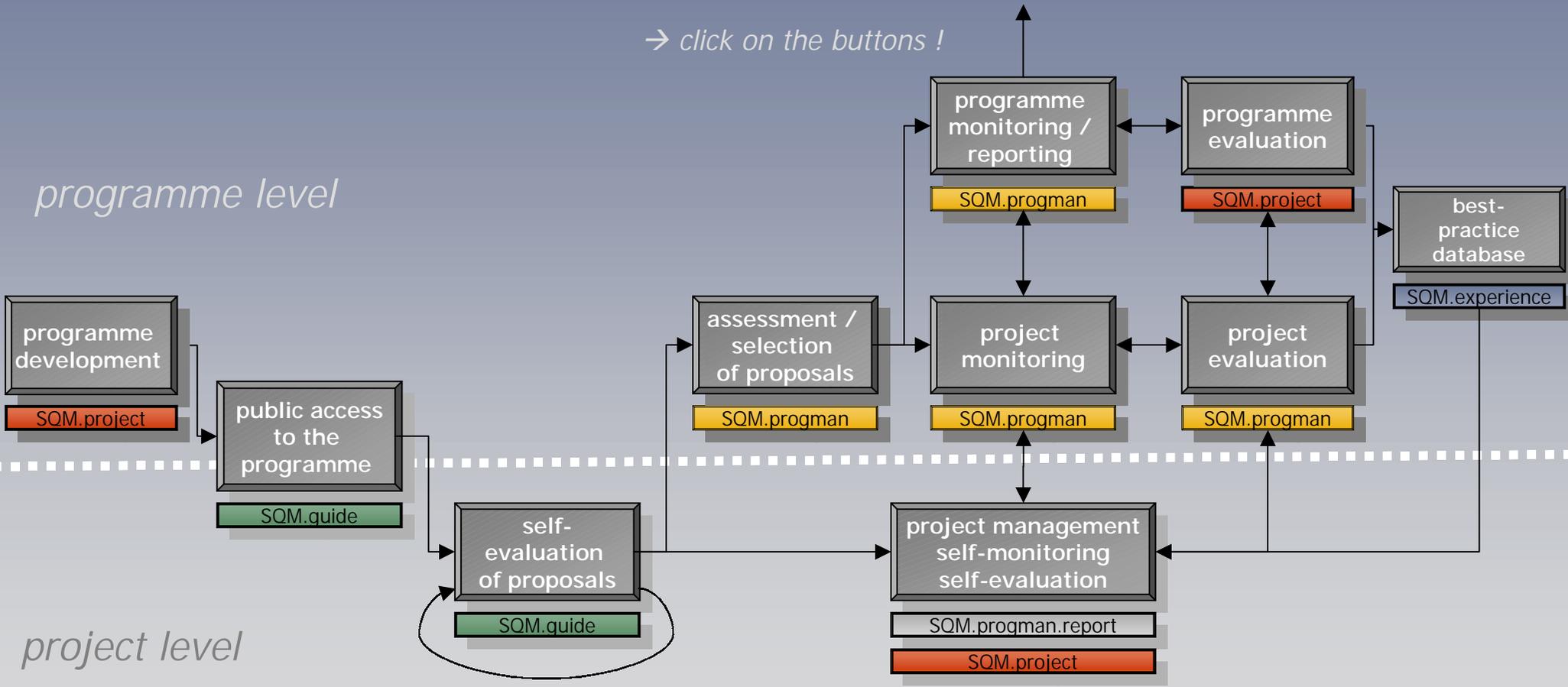


Use of SQM tools in the context of public subsidy programmes

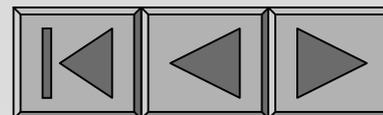
→ click on the buttons !

programme level

project level

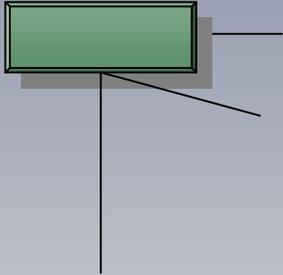


programme cycle

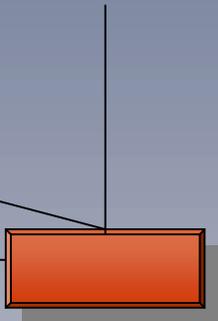


SQM.guide – a tool for facilitating the emergence of good projects

- **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



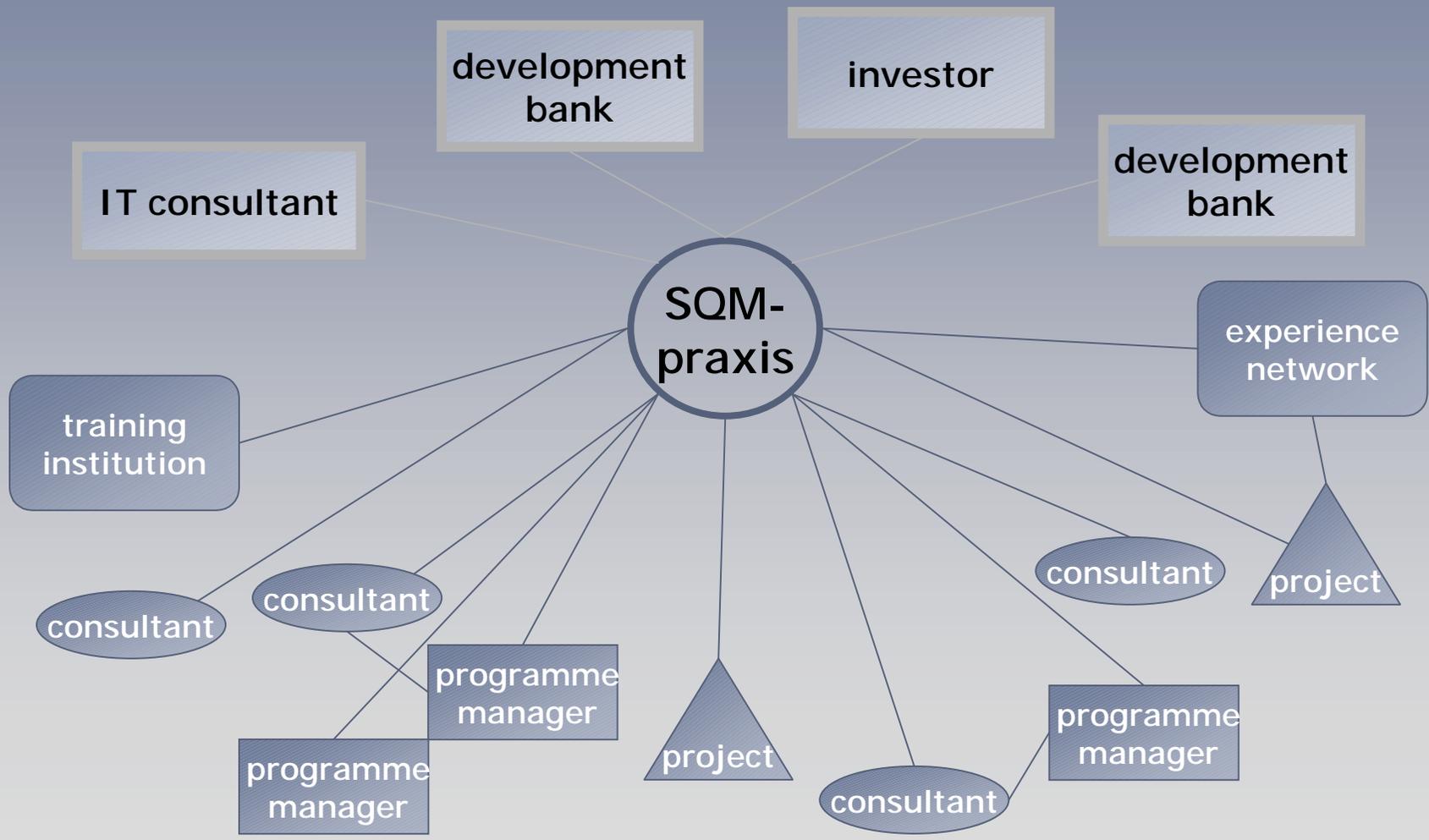
SQM.project – a tool for developing and evaluating programmes

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- 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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