



Rural Territorial Development

European. Rural. Good?

Institutional design of territorial development approaches in Germany

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Institutional design of territorial development
approaches in Germany



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List of abbreviations

ADD	Aufsichts- und Dienstleistungsdirection (Supervisory and service directorate)
BBR	Bundesamt für Bauwesen und Raumordnung (Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning)
BBSR	Bundesinstitut für Bau-, Stadt- und Raumforschung (Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development)
BfN	Bundesamt für Naturschutz (Federal Agency for Nature Conservation)
BMBF	Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (Federal Ministry of Education and Research)
BMELV	Bundesministerium für Ernährung, Landwirtschaft und Verbraucherschutz (Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection)
BMU	Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz und Reaktorsicherheit (Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety)
BMVBS	Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Bau und Stadtentwicklung (Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development)
BMVBW	Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Bau und Wohnungswesen (Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Housing)
BMZ	Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development)
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
DLR	Dienstleistungszentrum Ländlicher Raum (Service centre for rural areas)
DVS	Deutsche Vernetzungsstelle Ländliche Räume (German National Network for Rural Areas)
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
EMR	European metropolitan region
ESF	European Social Fund
ESDP	European Spatial Development Perspective
GA	Gemeinschaftsaufgabe (Joint task: federal government/Länder)
GAK	Gemeinschaftsaufgabe Agrarstruktur und Küstenschutz (Joint task for the improvement of agricultural structures and coastal protection)
GEP	Gebietsentwicklungsplan (Subregional plan)
GRW	Gemeinschaftsaufgabe Verbesserung der regionalen Wirtschaftsstruktur (Joint task for the improvement of regional economic structures)
HARA	Raumordnungspolitischer Handlungsrahmen (Political framework for spatial planning)
HMWVL	Hessisches Ministerium für Wirtschaft, Verkehr und Landesentwicklung (Hessian Ministry of Economics, Transportation, Urban and Regional Development)
IfLS	Institut für Ländliche Strukturforchung (Institute for Rural Development Research)
IGO	Interessengemeinschaft Odenwald (Odenwald Community of Interests)
IKM	Initiativkreis Europäische Metropolregionen in Deutschland (Network of European Metropolitan Regions in Germany)
IRD	Integrated rural development
IRDS	Integrated rural development strategy

■	LAAW	Lokale Aktionsgruppe Altmühl-Wörnitz e.V. (Local Action Group Altmühl-Wörnitz)
	LAG	Local action group
	LEADER	Liaison entre actions de développement de l'économie rurale (Links between actions for the development of the rural economy)
	LPPT	Local public passenger transport
	LUBW	Landesanstalt für Umwelt, Messungen und Naturschutz (Baden-Württemberg State Agency for the Environment, Measurements and Nature Conservation)
■	MAB	Man and the Biosphere Programme
	METREX	Network of European Metropolitan Regions and Areas
	MKRO	Ministerkonferenz für Raumordnung (Ministerial Conference on Spatial Development)
	MLR	Ministerium für Ländlichen Raum, Ernährung und Verbraucherschutz (Ministry of Rural Areas, Food and Consumer Protection)
	MORO	Modellvorhaben der Raumordnung (Demonstration projects of spatial planning)
	MRN	Metropolregion Rhein-Neckar (Rhine-Neckar Metropolitan Region)
■	NRR	Nationale Rahmenrichtlinie (National framework directive)
■	ORA	Raumordnungspolitischer Orientierungsrahmen (Orientation framework for spatial planning)
	OREG	Odenwald-Regional-Gesellschaft mbH (Odenwald regional planning association)
■	PEPL	Pflege- und Entwicklungsplan (Conservation management plan)
	PLANAK	Planungsausschuss für Agrarstruktur und Küstenschutz (Planning Committee for Agricultural Structures and Coastal Protection)
	PLENUM	Projekt des Landes zur Erhaltung und Entwicklung von Natur und Umwelt (Regional programme (Baden-Württemberg) to preserve and manage nature and the environment)
■	REFINA	Research for the Reduction of Land Consumption and for Sustainable Land Management
	RDS	Regional development strategy
	RM	Regional management
	RTD	Regional territorial development
■	StMWIVT	Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Wirtschaft, Infrastruktur, Verkehr und Technologie (Bavarian State Ministry for Economic Affairs, Infrastructure, Transport and Technology)
	SUK	Stadt-Umland-Konzept (Urban-rural strategy)
■	TÖB	Träger Öffentlicher Belange (Body with a statutory consultative role)
■	UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
	UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
■	VRRN	Verband Region Rhein-Neckar (Rhine-Neckar Regional Association)
■	ZMRN	Verein Zukunft Metropolregion Rhein-Neckar ('Future of Rhine-Neckar metropolitan region' planning association)

Summary

This study explores the currently most significant regional development approaches in Germany that are explicitly territorial in reference. As a contribution to the **sector project** ‘Territorial Development in Rural Areas’, the study makes special reference to the **institutional framework** of these approaches, which is deemed to be of paramount importance in influencing regional stakeholders to direct their actions towards achieving the objectives of the approach concerned. In order to utilise the experience gained in Germany with regard to suitable forms of organisation of (integrated) territorial development approaches for the sector project, and to identify starting points that may be transferred to development cooperation, a total of nine current development approaches have been studied in detail. In addition to **regional development approaches**, the core funding of which is derived from the EU-financed development funds EAFRD and ERDF, this study also examines in greater depth the regional development approaches with a nature conservation focus such as biosphere reserves, PLENUM and large-scale conservation projects, as well as urban-rural cooperation schemes such as metropolitan regions, regional planning associations, and territorial development plans (see Chapter 2; Appendix 1).

Drawing on a comparison of the various approaches (see Chapter 3) and other pre-existing comparative studies, it was possible to identify a number of **success factors** which – provided that they are found in the regions and at programme level – facilitate development-enhancing programme implementation and thus also provide a useful starting point for discussions on possible transferability to the context of development cooperation (see Chapter 4).

Corresponding to the research dimensions on which the study was based, success factors for territorial development were identified for the following areas: origination context, organisational structure, project development and implementation, participation, and legal and financial embedding.

With regard to the **origination context**, at the regional level one must first consider to what extent the prerequisites exist for institutional continuity. Which of the region’s stakeholders are at all affected by, have an interest in and/or are in agreement about a particular development problem and, at the same time, have a vision or a sense of regional identity? By taking care at the programme level that the local development coalition can freely delimit the project region, local social capital can be optimally harnessed, and the autonomy and motivation of the regional level thus formed will be strengthened if, at the same time, financial and administrative decision-making powers are transferred to this level by transparent mechanisms for the duration of the programme-implementation period.

With regard to the **organisational structure** of the region’s development coalition, best results can be expected if the newly created committees/organisations can gain coordinated involvement from complementary stakeholders and avoid the duplication of structures already maintained by the region’s existing stakeholder spectrum and institutional fabric. It appears to be particularly desirable to establish a regional development agency that is independent of individual support programmes but coordinates them. In order to stimulate the necessary thought processes to this end at an early stage, a spatially and temporally phased co-financing approach can be taken at the programme level. Essential preconditions for broad participation include not only a problem-oriented delimitation of the region but also transparent organisational procedures. To ensure that any necessary changes to programme design can be recognised even once implementation is in progress, the programme architecture should also include an information system for near-term feedback of experiences from the regions.

A factor of major significance for successful **project development and implementation** in the regions is the regular meeting of the development coalition for the explicit purpose of systematically evaluating specific projects or development processes to date. In addition to a streamlined and focused project portfolio, the quality of regional management and process management can benefit significantly from self-evaluation, thematic focus groups and (supra-regional) networking meetings. With a view to establishing such a culture of learning, obligatory programme elements should include not only regular self-evaluation but also appropriate qualification measures for salaried and voluntary participants. Incentives to optimise the professionalism of process management in the regions can also be set by holding competitions between programme regions.

Without **local participation**, efforts of programmes to support self-sustaining development will lead nowhere. Preconditions identified in this study for the broadest possible participation include the effective public presentation of successes achieved and, importantly, clear and easily comprehensible processes in the regional development coalition's organisation. Insofar as the actual development and implementation of projects may need to draw on competences based outside the development coalition, e.g. the programme operator's authorising authority, the same applies to processes of that nature. It is generally useful at the programme level to assess the technical implementation requirements in the light of motivation-theory considerations, i.e. in terms of how civil society participation at the regional level can be increased, and to leave scope for adjustment. Additional success factors for broad participation at the regional level include the recruitment of high-profile project champions; keeping options open to involve new stakeholders, ideas and approaches at any stage; and having sufficient time and opportunities to achieve consensus on important steps and decisions in the regional development process.

Finally, the study also attempted to identify success factors for the **legal and financial embedding** of territorial development approaches. It would appear useful in this respect, both at the programme and regional levels, to codify clear guidelines regarding the distribution of powers within the local partnership and at the programme level as well as between these two realms. For programme implementation in the spirit of partnership between the region and the programme planner this should result in real scope for action and decision-making for a region's development coalition. As concerns the financial arrangements it is worth noting that in the European context it has proven expedient to link the allocation of funds to the development of qualified systems of objectives. Moreover, to ensure that even poorly capitalised development partners can be involved, the principle of upfront payments in project co-financing should be applied.

1 Background, objectives and approach

1.1 Background and objectives

The present study on the institutional design of territorial development approaches in Germany was prepared for the GIZ sector project 'Territorial Development in Rural Areas'. The aim of this sector project is to improve approaches and instruments of German development cooperation aimed at poverty reduction and support for sustainable development in rural areas with due regard for the partner countries' framework conditions, objectives and specific need for support. To this end, the project provides advice to BMZ, feeds advanced approaches into international discourse and pilots the implementation of these in selected partner countries.

In rural development approaches, the design of the institutional framework is of major importance because it provides the context within which, in the course of programme implementation, regional stakeholders are to be influenced to direct their actions towards achieving the objectives of the approach concerned. In Germany and in the EU there is a wealth of experience regarding the appropriate organisational structures for a diverse range of development approaches.

Therefore, the present study aims to describe and examine the institutional and organisational design of existing integrated territorial development approaches in Germany in order to gain insights as to the transferability of these approaches to the rural development setting in developing countries.

1.2 Approach and design of the study

The selection of territorial development approaches that were studied includes the currently most important regional development strategies which are explicitly territorial in reference and which follow multi-sectoral approaches of varying characteristics and intensity. In addition, the study took account of the regional Agenda 21 approach as well as the nationwide pilot projects 'Regionen der Zukunft' (Regions of the Future) and 'Regionen Aktiv' (Active Regions).

In order to assess the state of implementation in terms of the organisational design of territorial development approaches in Germany, the first step was to characterise the **principal line of action** taken in terms of the dimensions of origination context, objectives, strategic orientation, implementation, and legal and financial embedding (Chapter 2). To this end, documents and other sources outlining the particular strategic approaches were consulted, as were existing analyses and studies.

In order to gain a more detailed understanding of the implementation of the individual approaches, their realisation in the individual regions was studied in greater detail. The selection of these regions was based on the study team's experience, and sought to encompass both typical and best-practice regions. For each of the development initiatives, a compact case study examines the start-up conditions, objectives, eligible territories, fields of activity, organisational structure, organisation of project development and implementation, organisation of the involvement of different societal groups, the initiative's integration into the national and supra-national funding environment, and the initiative's statutory setting. The underlying data for the case studies were obtained from the initiatives' websites, their regional development approaches and from grey literature such as academic theses and other case studies.

The results of the case studies and the classification of the approaches in terms of policy fields were then used, in Chapter 3, to compile a comparative analysis of the development approaches.

Finally, in Chapter 4, conclusions are drawn on the institutional design of rural territorial-development approaches in the light of the experience gained in Germany and based on the comparison of the approaches, the case studies, and other studies.

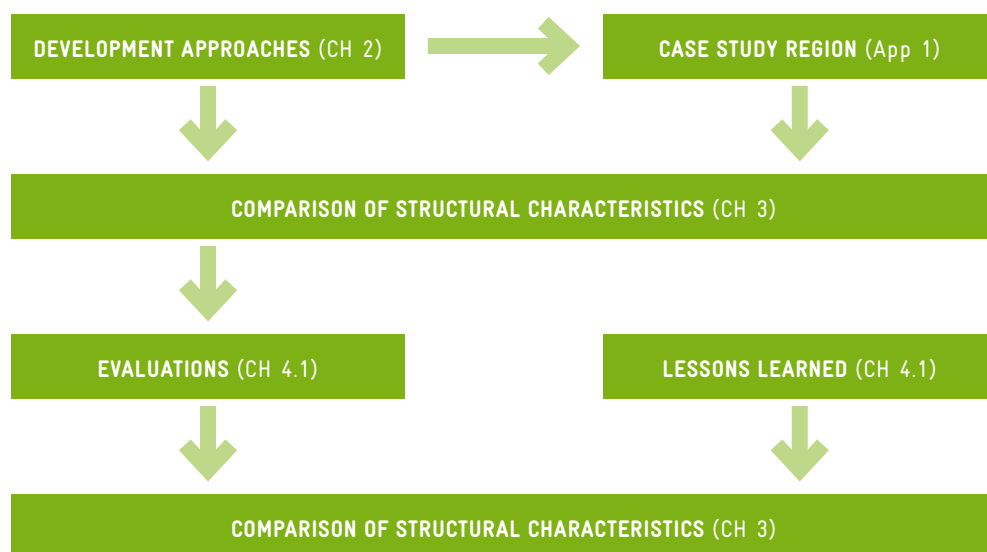


Figure 1: Methodology and study design

Finally, in Chapter 4.3 the question of the transferability of success factors to development cooperation is discussed, drawing on the results of an expert discussion at GIZ following the presentation of the final results of the study.

Urban-rural strategies Rendsburg

Location of the investigated case studies in Germany

The case studies represent a selection of different territorial development initiatives in Germany. The implementation of the so-called institutional framework becomes more important in the development of rural areas. There are manifold experiences with the implementation of different territorial policies in Germany and the European Union. The conclusions in the study derive from the analysis of 11 case studies.

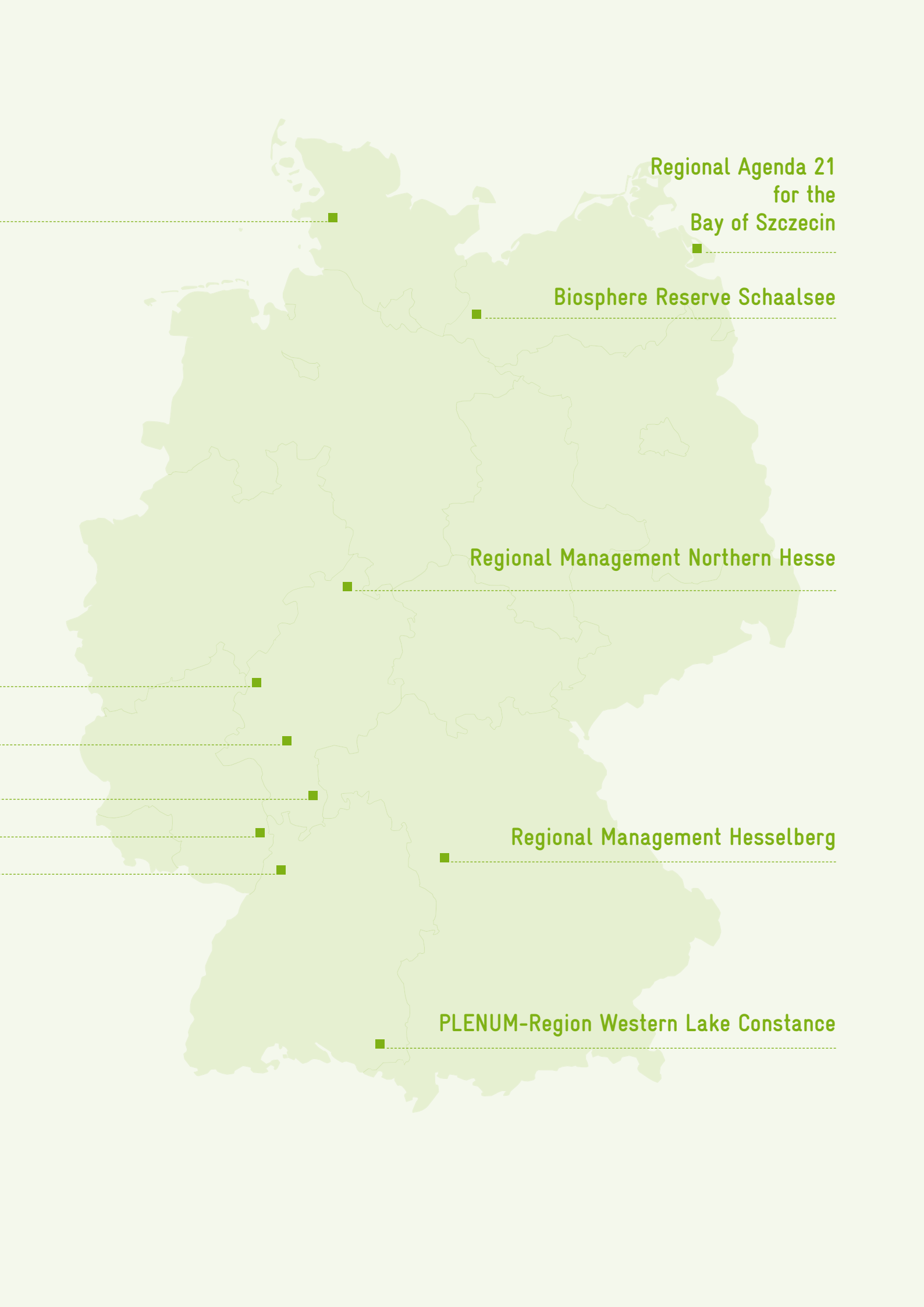
ILE Lahn-Taunus Region

Planning association Frankfurt

IGO - Odenwald Region

Metropolitan region Rhine-Neckar

Large Scale project in nature conservation Bienwald



Regional Agenda 21
for the
Bay of Szczecin

Biosphere Reserve Schaalsee

Regional Management Northern Hesse

Regional Management Hesselberg

PLENUM-Region Western Lake Constance

2 Territorial development approaches in Germany

2.1 EAFRD/CAP-financed regions

2.1.1 The LEADER approach

Origination context

The LEADER approach originated as a further development of rural development policy, which until the 1980s had been primarily growth-oriented and mostly consisted of sectoral aids to farmers. Politically, LEADER ('Liaisons Entre Actions de Développement de l'Economie Rurale' – Links between actions for the development of the rural economy) was introduced as a 'Community initiative' and supported under the EU Structural Funds. As an autonomous initiative, LEADER passed through three chronological and methodological phases: LEADER I (1991-1993), LEADER II (1994-1999) and LEADER + (2000-2006). LEADER I launched the new approach, LEADER II ensured its broad-scale application and LEADER + aimed at deepening the approach with the aid of pilot strategies and overarching themes. From 2007 the LEADER approach became 'Axis 4' of the EU co-financed rural development programmes (EAFRD) and was thus integrated into mainstream funding, i.e. LEADER has now become one of a number of rural development axes that are integrated into national or regional general rural development programmes and financially supported by the EU.

Community initiative of the EU Structural Funds

Objectives of the approach

LEADER is an approach aiming at sustainable development in rural areas, not only from the ecological but also from the economic, social and cultural points of view. Agricultural structural change is not its sole focus. As a relatively new way of encouraging activity and creating employment in rural areas, LEADER is a 'territorial' approach which places citizens' participation and the upgrading of local resources centre stage. The LEADER approach is primarily about showing how things can be done rather than prescribing what should be done.

Strategic orientation

For the 2007-2013 funding period, the LEADER approach is structurally embedded in the EAFRD which is divided into four axes. As part of the 2007-2013 support programme, LEADER is a horizontal measure to support the implementation of the objectives of axes 1-3. The latter are vertical support areas, operating side by side.

- Objective of Axis 1: Improving the competitiveness of agriculture and forestry
- Objective of Axis 2: Improving the environment and the countryside (includes agri-environmental measures; a major share of funding is devoted to implementing the Natura 2000 network of nature conservation areas)
- Objective of Axis 3: Improving the quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification of rural economic activity (e.g. village renewal programmes)

The fourth axis, LEADER, is horizontal in nature, i.e. it is to be used as a method for implementing the objectives of the three vertical axes. The LEADER approach is based on the following seven principles:

- Territorial, local development strategy
- Bottom-up preparation and implementation of the strategy
- Local public-private partnerships
 - Organisation of a local partnership termed a 'Local action group' (LAG), i.e. a permanent team of committed experts and stakeholders responsible for the preparation and implementation of a development plan with active involvement from the local community;

Improving the quality of life in rural areas

- Encouraging innovation
- Integrated and multi-sectoral actions
 - Multi-sectoral strategy including systematic efforts to establish connections between actions
- Network building
- Cooperation

If a region wanted to use the LEADER approach in the programming period beginning in 2007, by the start of the programme it had to submit a regional development strategy through the LAG to the responsible departments of the regional government at German federal state (Land; plural Länder) level. Most of the German Länder used some form of competitive selection process to establish which of the proposed LEADER areas would be funded. In the majority of cases, the LEADER areas had already been negotiated prior to the selection process (Elbe et al. 2007, p.9).

Implementation of the approach

During the 2007-2013 programming period there were 244 LEADER regions in Germany (DVS 2011). Both between the Länder and the EU Member States there were differences in how the LEADER approach was implemented: a number of the Länder (Saxony, Schleswig-Holstein, Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Hamburg, Saxony-Anhalt, Thuringia) applied the LEADER approach (in some cases in conjunction with implementation of the IRD approach) to their entire rural area, while in others it was only applied to parts of the rural area (Rhineland-Palatinate, Baden-Wuerttemberg, Bavaria, North Rhine-Westphalia, Lower Saxony, Hesse, Saarland).

Moreover, the strategic implementation of the LEADER approach also diverges among individual Länder: the principal differences arise from the fact that some Länder enabled innovative approaches while others focused on the implementation of 'mainstream measures' and the respective framework conditions, such as public co-financing by the Länder. Other differences are evident in the spectrum of measures chosen for implementation from among EAFRD Axes 1-3, and in the continuity of regional development initiatives.

Legal and financial embedding

Since 'Agenda 2000', i.e. the 1999 CAP reform, a distinction has been made between the 'first pillar' comprising the traditional export subsidies, market interventions, and direct payments to farmers, and the 'second pillar', i.e. rural development. In the 2007-2013 funding period, approximately 10% of the CAP budget is used to co-fund rural development measures under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) which was specifically created for this purpose (Elbe et al. 2007, p.5).

2.1.2 The IRD approach

Origination context

In addition to the EU co-financed EAFRD programmes, some of the Länder also use the 'Joint task for the improvement of agricultural structures and coastal protection' (Gemeinschaftsaufgabe Agrarstruktur und Küstenschutz, GAK) to support the development and implementation of multi-annual 'integrated rural development strategies' (IRDS). This integrated rural development (IRD) approach is jointly financed by the German federal government and the Länder under the GAK. As a funding principle, the IRD approach was first integrated into the GAK framework plan of the federal government and the Länder in 2004 (Gehrlein 2006, p.5).

Objectives of the approach

The aim of the measures is to contribute to the positive development of agricultural structures and sustainable strengthening of the rural economy (BMELV 2010, p.13). In particular, funding is intended to improve agricultural structures by safeguarding and developing the rural areas in the context of IRD approaches pursuant to EU Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 on support for rural development, i.e. by improving the quality of rural areas as places for people to live and work, by maintaining the countryside for recreation, and by safeguarding the natural environment and landscape. The objectives and requirements of spatial planning at the national (Raumordnung) and regional (Landesplanung) levels, the interests of nature conservation and environmental protection, and the principles of Agenda 21 must also be considered.

Strategic orientation

Eligible expenditure includes that incurred for the preparation of integrated rural development strategies (IRDS) with the aim of integrating sustainable agricultural and forestry practices into the process for strengthening the regional economy. IRDS describe development objectives, fields of activity, strategies and priority development projects based on an analysis of regional strengths and weaknesses. In addition, regional management (RM) for the initiation, organisation and monitoring of the implementation of rural development processes is also eligible for funding (BMELV 2010, p.13f.).

Some of the Länder (Hesse, Lower Saxony and Saxony-Anhalt) have combined IRDS and LEADER in such a way that full-coverage territorial rural development can be achieved. The most decentralised decision-making structures in the field of rural development can be found in Schleswig-Holstein. Since 2007, Schleswig-Holstein has been supporting up to fifteen LAGs as part of the 'Initiative AktivRegion' in the autonomous implementation of their development plans. A significant difference between LEADER and IRD is that priority axis 4 more clearly sets out the requirements upon local partnerships, territories, and development strategies (Tietz 2007, p.165). Nevertheless, IRD support can be regarded as a simplified LEADER approach; IRD does not prescribe the full list of instruments as set out under priority axis 4, but it does generally share the same objectives (Tietz 2007, p. 150).

Implementation of the approach

The delimitation of regions and the interaction between the LEADER and IRD approaches respectively are not clearly regulated in either the EAFRD Regulation or the German national framework directive (Nationale Rahmenrichtlinie, NRR, which incorporates the national GAK provisions). These aspects were left to the Länder, which brought about a number of very different solutions. Generally speaking one can distinguish the following models in Germany (Tietz 2007, p.165):

- Coexistence of IRD and LEADER regions (Bavaria, Lower Saxony, Saxony and Saarland, Hesse)
- Differently sized regions (Saxony-Anhalt, Rhineland-Palatinate)
- Preparation for and augmentation of LEADER (Hamburg, Thuringia)
- Transitional solution (Schleswig-Holstein)

With a view to implementing the NRR, eight of the Länder offer support for IRDS and five Länder additionally support regional management (RM) (Tietz 2007, p.151f.).

Conserving the development of rural areas as places for living, working, nature and recreation

The integrative character of the IRD approach also varies from one German Land to another (Gehrlein 2006, p.58f.): while in Baden-Württemberg eligible measures under GAK (such as village renewal, land consolidation or the construction of agricultural roads) that have been funded independently of each other are only formally combined under the IRD strategy, some other Länder (Brandenburg, Saxony-Anhalt, Saarland) also combine thematic areas and fields of action that go beyond agriculture and forestry in the strict sense (cooperation with trades, crafts and commerce, support for rural tourism) or use IRDS or RM (Rhineland-Palatinate, Bavaria) to tackle thematic areas and fields of action going beyond the GAK support spectrum (e.g. business development, resource and energy management, social issues, education and culture, land use and residential-area development, transport, environmental protection and nature conservation, etc.).

Legal and financial embedding

In accordance with Germany's federal structure, support for rural development is provided under the development programmes of the individual German Länder. In most cases the GAK measures form the core of these Länder programmes. However, in order to be in compliance with the EU provisions as set out in the EAFRD Regulation, they must be submitted to the EU for approval in the form of a national framework directive (NRR) to conform with the programmatic structure of the EU fund. The NRR is therefore basically a version of the GAK framework plan, as agreed by the federal government and the Länder, in a format which complies with the legal provisions of the EAFRD Regulation and its Implementing Regulation. Apart from EU financial support, the Länder can thus also draw on national co-funding to finance GAK measures and their IRD approach.

*Co-financing
by national and
EU-funds*

2.2 ERDF/GRW-financed management facilities

2.2.1 Regional management in the context of Allianz Bavaria Innovative

Origination context of the approach

From as early as the mid-1990s, Bavaria has been supporting and overseeing more than 30 regional management initiatives at different levels under its state development policy. Since late 2006, an improved regional management instrument has become one of the two 'pillars' of the Bavarian state government's initiative 'Allianz Bayern Innovative', the other pillar being a cluster approach (StMWIVT 2008). The Bavarian state government started the cluster offensive in order to allow small and medium-sized enterprises, in particular, to draw practical benefit from the cluster approach. Bavaria has set up or extended cluster management teams in 19 particularly important fields of competence of the Bavarian economy, the aim being to intensify networking between enterprises, research institutions, service providers and investors operating within the regional state.

Regional management (RM) as the second, regional pillar is intended to complement the cluster offensive's sector and expertise-oriented approach. This is in keeping with the State Development Programme (Landesentwicklungsprogramm) which emphasises the importance of cross-sectoral development processes and the need to support these, and which views RM as an appropriate instrument to this end.

*Cluster
management
to intensify
networking*

Objectives of the approach

The aim of regional management, i.e. the second pillar, as a development approach based on regional stakeholders, is cross-sectoral and regional network building, which is achieved by supporting and reinforcing existing endogenous development potential in the regions across sectoral boundaries. RM sets out to activate and support the capabilities and resources that exist in sub-areas of the regions, as a contribution to maintaining equality of living and working conditions throughout the whole of Bavaria.

The networks are intended to inspire and nurture innovation and creativity, to sustainably strengthen autonomous development in the sub-regions and to make optimal use of the potential existing in these areas.

Regions decide on their development priorities and fields of action

Strategic orientation

Since it was positioned as the second pillar of the Allianz Bayern Innovative initiative, RM has been on offer in the entire state of Bavaria.

The initiative to establish a regional management facility must be taken by the individual regions themselves, on the founding principle of a voluntary, bottom-up approach. The successful implementation of the regional manager's tasks requires political support for sustainable networking. Therefore, it is important that the rural district's chief administrator or other political representatives drive forward, sustainably support, steer and authorise RM. The spatial scope of a region for the purposes of RM may encompass anything from communal alliances, initiatives at the rural district (Landkreis) level to initiatives covering larger sub-regions at the higher level of the government region (Regierungsbezirk). RM may be organised as part of existing structures, e.g. the rural district administration, or take other legal forms such as associations or limited companies.

The regions autonomously decide on their RM development priorities and fields of action (business, innovation, employment, demographics, education, tourism, culture, health, and others).

Regional management is intended to establish regional cross-sectoral networks in the rural and urban districts and should particularly involve persons representing the interests of business, politics, and administration.

Central to this approach, therefore, are the interlinkages between regional management (regionally based approach, cross-sectoral and inter-disciplinary, cross-sectional, project and network orientation), potential networking partners (local initiatives, universities of applied sciences, chambers and guilds, associations, business, science, service providers, investors) and initiators / authorisers (political representatives/steering groups).

By way of guidelines for the regions, the state development authorities have issued recommendations in the form of a strategic framework (the main points of which are: analysis of the local context, formulation of a framework of objectives, identification of appropriate organisational and personnel structures, detailed project plan including costing and financing, and identification of linkage and network partners, e.g. in industry, commerce, trades and crafts, administrations, higher education institutions, associations, local initiatives, LEADER groups, Agenda 21 groups, lobby groups, chambers and guilds, etc.). Using this strategic framework as a guide, the individual regions – with support from the state development authorities – are intended to derive and develop their own individual and specific action plan. This action plan is the baseline for the implementation phase of the RM.

All regional governments mandate a 'Representative for Regional Management and Regional Initiatives' in their state and regional planning divisions in order to provide additional professional assistance to the regional management initiatives and to integrate them as satisfactorily as is possible into the superordinate spatial context. These contacts inside the administration support the regions in the drafting of their applications, during the application process, in results monitoring, and as consultants on the content of RM. The Economic Development division of the given administration is in charge of issuing notifications of the success or otherwise of applications.

Regional management facilities are assigned the following tasks:

- To develop and implement defined projects in the regions,
- To establish, maintain and bring together a network of contacts in existing public initiatives and institutions, businesses, chambers and guilds, associations, etc.,
- To foster the active transfer of opinions, knowledge and expertise,
- To steer regional projects towards support programmes at the EU, federal government and Länder levels,
- To organise or take part in events on issues significant to the region,
- To be involved in the flow of information in the 19 clusters of the first pillar of the Allianz Bayern Innovative initiative.

Implementation of the approach

As of 1 November 2008, seven regional management initiatives were in their conceptual phase and 22 in their implementation phase.

Legal and financial embedding

The integration of the 'Joint task for the improvement of regional economic structures' (GRW) into the ERDF is based on the same logic as the integration of the 'Joint task for the improvement of agricultural structures and coastal protection' (GAK) into EAFRD programming. The financial basis for regional management is therefore drawn from both EU and national funding.

2.2.2 Regional management in Hesse

Origination context of the approach

The regional management approach at the level of Hesse's economic regions receives ERDF funding for the preparation of regional development strategies, regional management and regional marketing. It has contributed to the establishment of regional management initiatives for Central Hesse and North Hesse respectively. In addition, several activities are funded under the support scheme entitled 'cooperation networks and cluster management' which has been available since 1 January 2005 and is a component of the 34th framework plan for the 'Joint task for the improvement of regional economic structures' as adopted by the responsible federal government/Länder planning committee (HMWVL 2007).

Objectives of the approach

In order to accelerate regional development processes and widen their base, financial support is available for a limited time for the establishment of a permanent regional management facility taking the form of a joint operative unit.

Strategic orientation

The chief tasks of regional management facilities are to develop and implement integrated regional development strategies, to start up processes of consensus building, to establish (inter alia) regional networks, alliances, collaborative projects and innovation clusters, and to mobilise hidden regional employment and growth potential. Regions that have established a functional regional management initiative may additionally receive a regional budget. In the area of 'cooperation networks and cluster management', joint-task (GA) funds can be used to support commercial investments to create and secure employment as well as business-related infrastructure projects in disadvantaged areas. Eligible costs include those incurred by the beneficiaries for the establishment of joint structures and for the implementation of network management in the start-up phase. The partners and businesses involved must provide adequate financial contributions, covering a minimum of 30% of project costs.

*Main task
is to mobilize
hidden regional
employment and
growth potential*

Current status of implementation

In Hesse there is currently one ERDF-funded regional management facility, i.e. the Regional-management Nordhessen GmbH.

Legal and financial embedding

The integration of the 'Joint task for the improvement of regional economic structures' into the ERDF is based on the same logic as the integration of the 'Joint task for the improvement of agricultural structures and coastal protection' into EAFRD programming. The financial basis for regional management is therefore drawn from both EU and national funding.

2.3 Regional development for nature conservation

2.3.1 The Biosphere Reserve approach

Origination context of the approach

Biosphere reserves are the main instrument of the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme, an intergovernmental scientific programme launched on 23 October 1970 at the 16th Session of the UNESCO General Conference. The idea to establish biosphere reserves originated at a 1974 meeting of a UNESCO specialist working group which set out the objectives of biosphere reserves to include the protection of genetic resources and ecosystems and to engage in research, monitoring and education. In 1995, the 28th Session of the UNESCO General Conference adopted the Seville Strategy and the Statutory Framework for the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, placing both the MAB Programme and the World Network on a new conceptual basis. In 2008 the Madrid Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves was adopted, setting out the programme for 2008-2013. These documents establish criteria and minimum requirements for the inclusion of new members into the World Network. For example, in 1996 the German MAB National Committee adapted the Statutory Framework and the attendant reforms to its national situation, and used them to formulate national provisions and criteria for designation. The national set of criteria was revised between 2004 and 2007 (Deutsche UNESCO-Kommission 2011).

Objectives of the approach

With the biosphere reserve model, the UNESCO offers interested regions the opportunity to introduce and test new models of living and working in a structured and well established context. As internationally representative 'outdoor laboratories' and model regions, their aim is to reconcile the interests of environmental protection and economic development and promote the coexistence of man and nature. The inhabitants of biosphere reserves should be constrained as little as possible in their activities and encouraged by means of model projects and public awareness raising to re-evaluate their economic systems with reference to sustainable development, and to recognise that the sustainable economy does not necessarily entail restrictions but may generate growth and additional income.

Strategic orientation

Biosphere reserves are designated by UNESCO with nominations being forwarded by the countries concerned. The local population of a nominated area must be involved in the application for biosphere reserve status. Additional criteria for designation are that the area must be characteristic of a specific landscape type and that it must seek to establish a framework strategy to guide its development towards becoming a model region for sustainable development. In return, biosphere reserves gain access to international and national networks for the exchange of experience and best practice. UNESCO does not provide financial support. The status of each biosphere reserve is subject to a periodic review every ten years under a review mechanism.

Biosphere reserves are divided into three zones. Each zone is subject to different provisions and the zones must be clearly designated or identified in the landscape: the core area is a strictly protected area for the ecosystems and landscapes it hosts, for their plant and animal species, and for biodiversity. Access to the core area is generally permitted solely for research, monitoring, and education. According to the German criteria for biosphere reserves, the core area should constitute a minimum of 3% of the entire area. Ideally the core area is surrounded by a buffer zone to protect it from external impacts. Activities compatible with the conservation objectives, such as green tourism or organic farming, can take place in this zone. Under the German criteria for biosphere reserves, the core area and the buffer zone combined should constitute a minimum of 20% of the entire area. In most biosphere reserves the largest share of the reserve is taken up by the transition area, where generally all types of land use and economic activity are permitted. However, these transition areas have a very significant multiplier function, for here the targeted support for model projects is used to promote and develop sustainable patterns of production and consumption throughout society and the economy.

„Outdoor laboratories“ for innovative methods to reconcile the interests of environmental protection and economic development

Pursuant to the Statutory Framework, biosphere reserves must additionally make provisions to protect ecosystems, landscapes, species and genetic resources, to foster socio-culturally and ecologically sustainable economic development, and to support research, monitoring, education and information exchange. Over the coming years, the Statutory Framework will be further developed based on the Madrid Action Plan adopted in February 2008.

Current status of implementation

As of June 2010 there were 15 biosphere reserves in Germany. All 15 territories are recognised and designated by UNESCO and are, at the same time, secured under German law. Not taking marine areas into account, these biosphere reserves cover almost 3% of Germany's territory. The concrete objectives of biosphere reserves may vary in emphasis, depending on their individual character. The objectives include, for example:

- Safeguarding ecologically important sites and entering into conservation management agreements,
- Enhancing the tourism profile with a focus on 'green' and/or high-quality tourism,
- Establishing regional marketing structures,
- Converting to ecologically compatible farming and forestry practices,
- Species and habitat protection measures,
- Strengthening education for sustainable development,
- Establishing a research and monitoring programme,
- International cooperation,
- Addressing demographic change in the rural area,
- Climate change mitigation

Legal and financial embedding

Biosphere reserves are governed by the rules laid down by UNESCO and by national conservation legislation.

The international Statutory Framework for Biosphere Reserves was adopted by UNESCO in 1996. The Madrid Action Plan applies during the 2008-2013 period. The German MAB National Committee was mandated by UNESCO and by the BMU to adapt the set of criteria for biosphere reserves to the German situation. This set of criteria for the recognition and evaluation of German UNESCO Biosphere Reserves was last reviewed by the German MAB National Committee in 2007. UNESCO requirements are limited to compliance with the list of criteria and acceptance of the Seville Strategy.

In Germany, biosphere reserves are initially also designated under Länder legislation. Once they are officially recognised by UNESCO they become part of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, allowing them to engage in information exchange and partnerships. Responsibility for the fifteen UNESCO Biosphere Reserves in Germany and their recognition and evaluation based on uniform criteria lies with the German MAB National Committee under the aegis of the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN). Nature conservation in Germany falls within the jurisdiction of the Länder. Framework legislation is drawn up by the federal government in consultation with the Länder.

Biosphere reserves in Germany are secured by law under the terms of the Federal Nature Conservation Act (BNatSchG), Art. 25 of which defines a Biosphere Reserve. UNESCO is not in a position to provide financial support for biosphere reserves. However, formal recognition by UNESCO may help in drawing down funds from other sources. In Germany, biosphere reserve administrations are usually paid for by the exchequer (Fürst et al. 2006, p.160). Funding over and above this is also acquired from other support programmes (e.g. LEADER, large-scale conservation projects).

2.3.2 PLENUM

Origination context of the approach

PLENUM is the acronym of Projekt des Landes zur Erhaltung von Natur und Umwelt (state project for the preservation of nature and the environment). This project is the outcome of intensive strategy debates in Baden-Württemberg's state conservation authorities in the early

Development of economic incentives for the maintenance of forms of land use that are compatible with the requirements of nature conservation

1990s. At the time it was becoming apparent that, despite the designation of extensive nature reserves, no major advances had been made in halting the decline of most of the plant and animal species in need of protection. This was also resulting in many conflicts with land users and with the municipalities. PLENUM is a regional development project with a conservation focus, made available by the state of Baden-Württemberg since 1995 with the aim of protecting and developing natural and cultural landscapes. The project commenced as a pilot project in Isny/Leutkirch and has since been extended to five PLENUM areas since 2001 (LUBW 2004).

Objectives of the approach

PLENUM aims at conservation-oriented regional development in selected areas by initiating innovative pilot schemes in farming, tourism, marketing, nature conservation and environmental protection. In this context it is particularly important that as many partners as possible come together in the schemes to form a network. The project's strategy is to develop economic incentives for the maintenance of forms of land use that are compatible with the requirements of nature conservation.

The Baden-Württemberg State Agency for the Environment, Measurements and Nature Conservation (LUBW) lists the following objectives of PLENUM: sustainable development and capacity building in the regions, protection and enhancement of biodiversity in large-scale representative cultural landscapes, and voluntary conservation efforts in cooperation with the local communities.

Strategic orientation

The approach of PLENUM is to pursue nature conservation objectives in the wider landscape using the instruments of regional development, thus complementing 'traditional' instruments of nature conservation (cf. Kullmann and Gehrlein 2005). The state-wide PLENUM strategy is implemented under the aegis of the Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Transport (until 2010: Ministry of Rural Areas, Food and Consumer Protection, MLR). The ministry decides on all fundamental issues such as the establishment of a project area, the continuation of a project, the financial framework, consultations with other ministries, and external presentation. The central steering and coordination unit is based at the Baden-Württemberg State Agency for the Environment, Measurements and Nature Conservation (LUBW) in Karlsruhe. Since 2000, PLENUM has been extended to include a total of five project areas. To this end, the rural districts concerned had to submit an application for funding under PLENUM and a regional development strategy for their area to the ministry in charge. Consideration was only given to rural districts where significant parts of the project area consisted of core areas of nineteen regions in Baden-Württemberg that had been identified as areas of special conservation interest. Hence, they were regions for which individual conservation objectives had already been defined. The regional development strategies (RDS) to be submitted by the districts identify eligible areas and specify and expand on the general PLENUM objectives in greater detail. Financial support is provided for the individual PLENUM head offices and for individual projects under different headings.

Conservation efforts are supported, in particular, in farming, forestry, marketing, tourism, environmental education, and renewable energy sources/the green economy. In the PLENUM areas, projects along the entire value chain which directly or indirectly impact positively on nature conservation can avail themselves of 'seed money', provided that certain conservation criteria are met. Therefore, these conservation measures are not imposed from above but developed at grassroots level, and can receive PLENUM funding, provided certain conservation criteria are met. Applicants can access professional advice at their local PLENUM head office. A regional PLENUM advisory board with representatives from all interest groups decides on which of the proposed projects will be funded. Another important component of PLENUM is networking between regional stakeholders.

Achieving economic viability by conservation efforts

In conclusion, it can be said that PLENUM aims to achieve economic viability by means of rather than in spite of conservation efforts, based on the principles of voluntary participation, involvement of all land users, networking, establishment of regional economic cycles, and help in the form of 'seed money' but not continuous funding.

Current status of implementation

Based on habitat mapping and the state's species protection programme, the LUBW in cooperation with the nature conservation and landscape management authorities at the government-region level along with a scientific advisory board identified an overall eligible area consisting of nineteen core areas comprising both nature reserves and characteristic cultural landscapes.

The PLENUM strategy is currently being implemented in five project areas within this overall eligible area, which covers 13% of the state's territory. These project areas are Allgäu-Upper Swabia (from 2000), Western Lake Constance (2001), Reutlingen District (2001), Kaiserstuhl (2002) and Heckengäu (2002).

Legal and financial embedding

The legal basis of PLENUM funding is the landscape management directive (Landschaftspflege-Richtlinie) enacted by the former MLR. During the current funding period both state funds and EAFRD funds are being used to support this initiative. The normal funding period is seven years with the potential to extend funding for a further five years.

2.3.3 Idee.natur/chance.natur

Origination context of the approach

The national competition 'idee.natur' is part of a strategy to optimise the federal support programme for large-scale conservation projects, 'chance.natur'. Since 1979 this programme has been used by the German federal government to support selected regions in safeguarding natural areas and landscapes that are of representative importance for the nation as a whole, and hence in need of special protection. In order to optimise Germany's 'Federal government programme for establishing and safeguarding valuable components of nature and the countryside that are of representative significance for the nation as a whole' (in short: Support programme for large-scale conservation projects – 'Förderprogramm Naturschutzgrosso-projekte') through accompanying rural development measures, the Federal Environment Ministry (BMU) and the Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection (BMELV) jointly initiated the nationwide competition entitled 'Large-scale conservation projects and rural development' or 'idee.natur'. The competition was announced in July 2007 by the BMU and BfN in cooperation with the BMELV (BfN 2007).

Objectives of the approach

The aim of the competition is to develop exemplary models of cooperation between land users and conservationists and to swiftly implement the best of these projects.

The project ideas put forward should represent exemplary, convincing and innovative ways of linking sophisticated conservation efforts with rural development, or new approaches for implementing large-scale conservation projects in urban/industrial areas. Ideas of the latter type offer means of exploring opportunities for nature conservation in industrial and metropolitan areas.

Strategic orientation

Project proposals were to focus on one of the thematic areas previously under-represented in the federal government programme, i.e. 'Woodlands' or 'Peatlands', or on 'Urban/industrial landscapes'. One of these habitat or landscape types must be characteristic of the core area of the region for which an application is made, and it must be of national importance.

The competition was a two-phase process. In the first phase applicants were asked to provide an outline of their proposed idea. In the second phase, the ten winners of the first phase were given the opportunity to develop their idea into an integrated project application. Five projects were then selected from all the submissions made in the second phase. The practical implementation of the proposed project is also a two-phase process, as is the norm for large-scale conservation projects. In the first phase of a large-scale conservation project a conservation management plan, detailed on a plot by plot basis, is developed as the basis for the implementation of the required measures. Following the plan's adoption by common agreement, the measures are implemented in the second phase. The plan's term may be up to 12 years. In a shared funding arrangement, the federal government provides a maximum of

*Innovative ways
of linking
sophisticated
conservation
efforts with rural
development*

75% of the cost, and the Land and the body responsible for the project together contribute the remaining 25% minimum. Responsibility for these projects usually lies with the rural districts, towns, municipalities, conservation organisations or administrative authorities. In the case of the 'idee.natur' competition winners, supplementary funding for rural development measures can already be drawn down from the BMELV during Phase 1, provided that the measures can reasonably be expected to harmonise with the required conservation measures. This is to ensure early 'visibility' of results of the project's implementation in the region.

The funding made available by BMELV relates to projects to implement the integrated project application, and to the personnel and non-personnel costs of the regional management facility established for that purpose. BMELV funding is not granted for measures which can be funded under other support programmes (e.g. GAK, LEADER, Länder programmes).

Current status of implementation

The five winning regions of the 'idee.natur' competition are located in Bavaria (Allgäuer Moorallianz, Schwäbisches Donautal), Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania (Nordvorpommersche Waldlandschaft), Saarland (Landschaft der Industriekultur Nord) and Thuringia (Hohe Schrecke). The winners were selected in a two-phase process from amongst 122 applicants who had submitted project outlines. Project implementation commenced in July 2009 with the first mediation phase for the preparation of the conservation management plan. As part of the 'chance.natur' support programme for large-scale conservation projects, which has been in existence since 1979, a total of 75 large-scale conservation projects with a total area of more than 3200 square kilometres have been funded to date.

Legal and financial embedding

The funding for 'chance.natur' is generally provided from the budget of the Federal Ministry for the Environment (BMU). The German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) is responsible for specialised support as well as for the organisational and budgetary implementation of the support programme (BfN 2011).

More than EUR 50 million will be invested in the five winning regions over the coming ten years, with the Federal Ministry for the Environment (BMU) providing approximately EUR 36 million for project implementation. BMU funding to the sum of several million Euros per large-scale conservation project can be spread over a period of up to twelve years. A further EUR 5 million are provided by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture (BMELV) for rural development support. BMELV funding of up to EUR 5 million for flanking rural and regional development measures will be paid out over a period of five years. BMELV funding for regional development measures is limited to rural areas.

The local bodies responsible for the projects and the Länder will provide a further EUR 15 million approximately.

Winner projects of the competition „idee.natur“ will receive financial support during implementation of the projects

2.4 Urban-rural cooperation approaches

2.4.1 Metropolitan regions

Origination context of the approach

The concept of European metropolitan regions in Germany had already been conceived in the Orientation Framework for Spatial Planning (Raumordnungspolitischer Orientierungsrahmen, ORA) and the Political Framework for Spatial Planning (Raumordnungspolitischer Handlungsrahmen, HARA) in 1993 and 1995 respectively. In their Political Framework for Spatial Planning of 1995, the Ministerial Conference on Spatial Development (MKRO) identified six agglomerations of outstanding national and international importance in the German system of cities as European Metropolitan Regions (EMR). The 1999 European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) highlighted the special significance of metropolitan regions for the balanced and coherent development of the EU territory and emphasised their overall exceptional importance. In 2006, the MKRO adopted new guiding principles and strategies for spatial development in Germany

(Leitbilder und Handlungsstrategien für die Raumentwicklung in Deutschland) which credit the metropolitan regions with playing an important role in Germany's development pursuant to guiding principle no. 1, 'Growth and Innovation'. Moreover, the new guiding principles called for greater consideration to be given to the concept of metropolitan regions in national and EU sectoral policies by the authorities in charge of spatial planning at the national and regional levels with a view to improving the competitiveness of the Germany economy (BBSR 2011).

Objectives of the approach

From the spatial planning point of view, metropolitan regions are regarded as being of great importance for growth and innovation, safeguarding social infrastructure, resource conservation, and cultural landscape development. In particular, metropolitan regions are expected to contribute significantly to growth and innovation.

From the point of view of the metropolitan regions themselves, their common objectives are to be tagged as major regions with a focus on growth and innovation and to be positioned as such in the European context, based on close cooperation with business and commerce, science, municipalities, Länder, the federal government, and ultimately also the EU.

Metropolitan regions shall be tagged as major regions with a focus on growth and innovation

Strategische Ausrichtung

The MKRO defines metropolitan regions as 'large economic areas containing one or more urban cores and the associated immediate and more distant surrounding areas with which they are interconnected and which, at the metropolitan periphery, border other metropolitan regions.' Consequently, the spatial development concept of the metropolitan region is essentially being developed based on the regions themselves (BBSR 2011). Demarcation, organisational structures and areas for cooperation are left to be resolved by a competition for successful models of metropolitan-regional self-organisation. It is therefore critical how policy-makers at the state or local levels respond to this offer by the MKRO, how they integrate it into their development plans and programmes, and whether they utilise it as a new discursive framework for spatial policy options and actions. In Berlin-Brandenburg for example it can be seen that, in addition to the basic 'groundwork', guiding principles and enforceable instruments are now used to clearly position the region as the home region of the national capital, in conjunction with a European perspective (Ludwig et al. 2009, p.186). Meanwhile the Nuremberg metropolitan region has firmly established a 'Council of the Metropolitan Region', composed of delegates from the regional administrative bodies and with cooperative implementation structures. However, the major expansion in the area for which the Council now shares responsibility, including a large proportion of rural areas, is presenting challenges concerning the internal integration of the aims of this supra-regional partnership, which need to be addressed.

In general it can be said that areas where there is experience and a long tradition of intensive and large-scale regional cooperation (e.g. regional spatial planning) the above experiences are put to use and existing models of organisation are borrowed as 'germ cells' or expanded upon (e.g. in Berlin-Brandenburg, Frankfurt/Rhine-Main, Hamburg, Munich, Rhine-Neckar, Rhine-Ruhr, Stuttgart). In contrast, due to their polycentric structures and the high proportion of rural areas, the metropolitan regions Hannover-Brunswick-Göttingen-Wolfsburg, Bremen/Oldenburg in the north-west, Halle/Leipzig-Saxony Triangle and Nuremberg have developed entirely new models of metropolitan governance.

While at the political level metropolitan regions consist of administrative units, they see themselves not as new administrative units but as common reference frameworks for projects and for positioning purposes. Depending on the projects and issues at hand, individual metropolitan regions can thus display 'variable geometries' (BBSR 2011).

Current status of implementation

At present there are eleven metropolitan regions as identified by the Ministerial Conference on Spatial Development (MKRO). These are Berlin-Brandenburg (the capital region), Hamburg, Bremen-Oldenburg in the north-west, Hannover-Brunswick-Göttingen-Wolfsburg, Rhine-Ruhr, Frankfurt/Rhine-Main, Rhine-Neckar, Stuttgart, the Nuremberg European Metropolitan Region, the Munich European Metropolitan Region Initiative and Halle/Leipzig-Saxony Triangle. In these eleven designated EMRs a dynamic development of intra-regional cooperation is evident (BBSR 2011) the new guiding principles and strategies for spatial development are now consistently applied to state and regional planning (BBSR 2009).

Legal and financial embedding

In terms of their legal embedding it must be noted that as entities construed from guiding principles metropolitan regions do not have legally binding functions. However, their legal embedding varies strongly from case to case depending on the governance model applied. In financial terms it can be noted that to date there are no support programmes specifically tailored to metropolitan regions either at the German national or EU levels. However, European funding is available, for example, at project level for the extension of the Trans-European networks (TEN) and the associated cooperation mechanisms (König M. 2007, p.58). In addition, the federal government is funding pilot projects on spatial planning which aid the process of establishing a variety of governance models in large-scale partnerships and other forms of cooperation in the metropolitan regions.

In the 1990s, funding was provided (inter alia) for metropolitan regions such as Hamburg under the Regionen der Zukunft (Regions of the Future) pilot research programme. The current pilot research programme entitled Überregionale Partnerschaften (Supra-Regional Partnerships) supports a variety of governance approaches in metropolitan regions as well as specific cooperative projects (BBSR 2009).

A spatial planning instrument for cooperation within urban regions

2.4.2 Urban-rural strategies

Origination context of the approach

Urban-rural strategies (Stadt-Umland-Konzepte, SUK) are an important instrument for supporting intermunicipal cooperation in Schleswig-Holstein. The approach was developed in the context of area development planning. It was introduced as early as the mid-1990s as a spatial planning instrument for cooperation within urban regions (cf. Diller 2005). On this basis, the Rendsburg area developed what was an informal 'mayoral roundtable' into a formalised cooperation between thirteen municipalities, based on common objectives and principles, contractual arrangements and a solid committee structure. The 'Rendsburg Model' is considered to be an outstanding example nationwide, especially with regard to its approach to the reconciliation of interests, and the structural fund established in this context. In 2004 the 'Rendsburg Model' was included in the research area 'Innovative projects for regional development' as a (federal level) 'Demonstration Project of Spatial Planning' (Modellvorhaben der Bundes-) Raumordnung, MORO).

The cooperation entitled ‘Lebens- und Wirtschaftsraum Rendsburg’ (Rendsburg – a space for livelihoods and economies) served as a blueprint for the urban-rural strategies (SUK) for Pinneberg and Elmshorn, amongst others. As part of the REFINA pilot project established by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), the SUK for Pinneberg and Elmshorn will further develop their approach to the reconciliation of interests by adding qualitative components, with the overall aim of reducing land consumption by reinforcing interior/infill development.

REFINA is a national research programme as part of Germany’s Sustainable Development Strategy. Its objectives are the reduction of land consumption and sustainable management of the land base. Every day a total of 120 ha of open space in Germany are consumed for new building construction or transport infrastructure. The aim is to reduce this figure to 30 ha per day by 2020 (Institut Raum & Energie 2011).

Objectives of the approach

The central idea of urban-rural strategies is to plan and guide coordinated development that ensures the best possible delivery of services by consolidating all the potential available in both the urban centre and its surrounding area.

The **aim** of the **urban-rural pilot strategy** under REFINA is regionally coordinated land-use planning including the qualitative optimisation of the regional stock of land and sites, the reduction of land take, and intermunicipal (monetary) reconciliation of interests. This is based on the testing and development of an integrated urban-rural strategy involving durable and robust cooperative structures.

Strategic orientation

The former subregional plans focused primarily on balancing residential and commercial development between the urban centre and its surrounding area as well as on transport issues and open space development. In contrast, the more recent plan types also take up development policy issues with a specific bearing on combined urban/rural performance improvement, such as regional image, economic development, tourism, commercial enterprise development, recreational and cultural offerings, public utilities, social infrastructure, and administrative organisation. Moreover, demographic change also requires the urban centres and their surrounding areas to overcome new challenges.

The strategies are not being devised and imposed by superordinate authorities but are initiated by the municipalities on a voluntary basis. Prior to this, the urban and rural areas need to arrive at the understanding that they share a common destiny and have the will to take common action. Preconditions for the success of urban-rural strategies are therefore considered to be their voluntary nature and an individual and flexible approach.

Current status of implementation

In addition to the SUK for Pinneberg and Elmshorn, well-cemented regional cooperative structures evolved in the Rendsburg and Flensburg regions in particular. Rendsburg took innovative steps towards benefit/burden-sharing while the Flensburg region developed advanced approaches to large-scale cooperation with municipalities in the second fringe.

Legal and financial embedding

The basis for success is a contractual agreement between the participating municipalities on ‘fair and just reconciliation of interests’. In line with the multi-sectoral nature of this approach, such agreements cover several municipal fields of activity. The two urban regions Elmshorn and Pinneberg in Schleswig-Holstein received financial support under the BMBF’s REFINA research programme and from the development fund for the Hamburg Metropolitan Region. This allowed them to initiate, develop and consolidate their intermunicipal cooperative approach over a period of three years.

Channelization of all potentials the city shares with its rural surrounding

2.4.3 Planning associations

Origination context of the approach

Regional planning associations are a particular type of regional planning institution and are generally the main authorities in charge of regional planning. In Bavaria for example, eighteen regional planning associations were established for individual planning regions in around 1973, based on the 1970 Bavarian State Spatial Planning Act. Such a regional planning association (Regionaler Planungsverband) is an assembly constituted of a region's municipalities and districts, in the legal form of a statutory corporation. Other names applied to institutions of this type in Germany are 'regionale Planungsgemeinschaft', 'regionaler Zweckverband' or 'Regionalverband' (Schmitz 2005, p.968).

Such approaches to intermunicipal cooperation in spatial planning have been documented at least since the late 19th century with the introduction of the 'Zweckverbände' (literally: special-purpose associations) (Beier und Maten 2007, p.26). Early examples include the 'Zweckverband Grossberlin' (1912) for the Greater Berlin area and the 'Siedlungsverband Ruhrkohlenbezirk' (1920), a planning association for the Ruhr region.

Objectives of the approach

These statutory corporations of self-government, set up as a Zweckverband for one particular purpose or as a Mehrzweckverband with a wider range of functions, are each tasked with specific local responsibilities. In the case of regional planning associations their responsibility is to coordinate spatial development in a particular region.

Strategische Ausrichtung

Conceptual work on regional planning has always involved a degree of control over regionally important projects up to and including partial or full responsibility for such projects, particularly in the conurbations/agglomerations (Rhine-Ruhr, Rhine-Main, Rhine-Neckar, Hanover, Brunswick, Stuttgart, Munich). Whereas in the past such projects fell under the scope of regional transport, recreation, or waste management, the focus has now shifted to include regional marketing and regional management. This shift is also reflected in occasional changes to the official organisational structures, the scope of responsibilities and the names applied to the regional associations: for example, the settlement association 'Siedlungsverband Ruhrkohlen-bezirk' became the municipal association 'Kommunalverband Ruhrgebiet' and later the regional association 'Regionalverband Ruhr', the single-purpose 'Zweckverband Gross-raum Hannover' was transformed into the current association 'Region Hannover', the rural outskirts association 'Umlandverband Frankfurt' is now called 'Region Frankfurt Rhein-Main', and the predecessor of the 'Verband Region Stuttgart' was named the 'Regionalverband Mittlerer Neckar' (Schmitz 2005, p.968).

In a number of the urban regions, primarily informal structures are being established or extended; in some cases these complement existing regional institutions. Some typical fields of work include networking of stakeholders from business, politics and administration, location marketing and regional marketing, improving transport links, and technology transfer. The Bonn/Rhine-Sieg/Ahrweiler region is a good example of intensive and successful informal cooperation. However, some regions with advanced cooperative structures also strengthen their formal public-law structures. In this context a distinction must be made between the association models ('multiple-purpose' associations in charge of spatial planning, local public transport, promotion of economic development etc.) and their advancement towards regional statutory corporations (regional authorities with a comprehensive scope of responsibilities). Some regions are developing models based on networks or holdings as countermodels to fixed regional structures. Their aim is to combine the benefits of network structures (flexibility, openness towards new partners and responsibilities) with efficient internal steering and consistent external representation. A good example of this approach can be found in the Rhine-Main area where such efforts have been made (Prieps 2005, p.1102).

Current status of implementation

The Stuttgart Region is an example of a highly developed type of regional association. On the national scale, Hanover Region is setting new standards for metropolitan-regional reorganisation with its statutory, district-like structure and a comprehensive spectrum of responsibilities.

Networking of stakeholders from business, politics and administration

Reflections on the future development of the institutional design of planning associations have also been given a new impetus with the concept of metropolitan regions described above. The planning association for the Frankfurt/Rhine-Main agglomeration, for example, is planning to reorganise itself as a regional association which comprehensively represents the region.

Legal and financial embedding

In terms of their legal status, common models for the exclusive participation of municipalities include the (informal) working group and the (formalised) Zweckverband. Where there is a greater involvement of civil society stakeholders, other models include unincorporated or incorporated associations (Vereine) and, in some cases, foundations or public limited companies. The most formalised model is the regional administrative authority (Regionalstadt, i.e. an association between a core urban area and its suburban hinterland, or Regionalkreis, i.e. an association between a rural district and a town constituting a district in its own right, e.g. Hanover Region) (Fürst and Knieling 2005, p.533).

The main source of funding in most cases is pro-rata subscriptions from association members.

2.5 Agenda 21 processes

Origination context of the approach

Agenda 21 is a global programme of action for sustainable development agreed at the June 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED, Earth Summit). In 2002 the German Federal Government agreed a National Sustainability Strategy to implement Agenda 21. The objectives and indicators set out in the National Sustainability Strategy are to serve as a guide for political and societal stakeholders in Germany and to initiate Agenda 21 processes for sustainable development.

The basic objectives and elements of a Local or Regional Agenda 21 are also derived from the global Agenda 21 action programme. The nationwide 'Regions of the Future' competition described in Chapter 2.6.1 was one of the principal efforts to initiate and give continuity to Regional Agenda 21 processes, which is why Diller (2002, p.75; p.86) assigns this approach i.e. to the spatial planning policy field.

Objectives of the approach

The three pillars of the guiding vision of sustainable development on which Agenda 21 is based are the establishment of sustainable economic structures, social justice, and the protection of natural resources.

The focus of the desired development process is on social justice, economic prosperity, and ecological and global responsibility.

Strategic orientation

Many of the problems, objectives and solutions outlined in Agenda 21 concern the local level and must be addressed at that level. Therefore, Chapter 28 of Agenda 21 specifically highlights the participation and cooperation of local authorities. Every local authority is asked to adopt a Local Agenda 21.

Each local authority is encouraged to enter into a dialogue with its citizens, local organisations and private enterprises and adopt a local Agenda 21. Through consultation and consensus-building, local authorities are to learn from citizens and from local, civic, community, business and industrial organisations and acquire the information needed for formulating the best strategies. The process of consultation is to increase household awareness of sustainable development issues. Local authority programmes, policies, laws and regulations to achieve Agenda 21 objectives are to be assessed and modified, based on local programmes adopted. Strategies can also be used in supporting proposals for local, national, regional and international funding.

The process of consultation and consensusbuilding increases household awareness of sustainable development issues

Local Agenda 21 concerns almost all areas of local authority action. Depending on the initial situation and specific problems in the local community, the local authorities in consultation with the local people select different priorities for their Agenda 21 process. However, a universal quality requirement of Local Agenda 21 is that it must integrate ecological, economic, social, and global considerations of municipal development. Intensive public awareness initiatives should inform the public of the objectives of Agenda 21.

Similarly, regional Agenda 21 processes can focus on all aspects of sustainable development (Diller 2002, p.86). To this end the global and very general objectives of Agenda 21 are tailored to the regions' requirements. The success of Agenda 21 processes is thus greatly dependent on the initiative of the local activists. Regional Agenda 21 processes are often long-term processes involving the development of guiding visions and ideas, acquisition of project funding, implementation of projects, motivation of fellow citizens and dealing with sensitivities. An Agenda 21 process is therefore ideally composed of numerous dialogues, ideas and activities in any given region.

Current status of implementation

The implementation of the Agenda 21 approach at the regional level was primarily advocated through the 'Regions of the Future' competition. Examples of regional development initiatives that still label themselves Agenda 21 initiatives include, for example, the Regional Agenda 21 for the Bay of Szczecin (Regionalna Agenda 21 Zalew Szczeciński), the Local Agenda 21 for the Schaalsee area, the Local Agenda 21 for Brandenburg, the Local Agenda 21 for the Lake Constance area, the Agenda 21 for Saxony-Anhalt, the Agenda 21 for the Eurodistrict Regio Pamina, the Agenda 21 for the Börde region and the Agenda 21 for the Hildesheim region.

Legal and financial embedding

In accordance with the principle of municipal self-government as guaranteed by Art. 28 of the German Constitution, towns, municipalities and districts may decide to establish an Agenda 21 at their own responsibility. The Federal Government supports Local Agenda 21 processes both with institutional framework measures and by funding pilot projects, commissioning research projects, and providing planning aids. The Federal Government is involved in close cooperation with the municipal umbrella organisations (Deutscher Städtetag, Deutscher Städte- und Gemeindebund – German Association of Towns and Municipalities und Deutscher Landkreistag – Association of German Districts) to advance Local Agenda 21 processes. The implementation of Agenda 21 is generally relying on public and private sector funding within a given Land.

2.6 Pilot projects

2.6.1 Regions of the Future ('Regionen der Zukunft')

Origination context of the approach

The nationwide 'Regions of the Future' competition ('Regionen der Zukunft') was initiated in 1997 by the then Federal Institute for Regional Geography and Regional Planning (BfLR; now BBR) on behalf of the then Federal Ministry for Building, Urban Development and Spatial Planning (BM Bau, now BMVBS). The competition was held as part of the 'Demonstration Projects of Spatial Planning' action programme.

Objectives of the approach

The stated basic objectives of the competition, as announced by the BBR at the start, were sustainable spatial and residential area development (BBSR 2011b). The declared purpose of the competition was to extend the regions' scope for action to achieve these objectives and to promote regional Agenda 21 initiatives in Germany through the development of self-supporting structures for sustainable regional development (Wiechmann et al. 2004, p.3f.).

Strategic orientation

The competition challenged the regions to both develop ideas and implement them (BBSR 2011b). Participating regions were asked to cooperate amongst each other and with their regional stakeholder networks to develop strategies to find and extend their scope for action towards sustainable spatial and residential area development and to implement initial projects. There were no restrictions in terms of the territorial demarcation or organisational constitution of the applicant regions.

The competition sought approaches or projects aiming at, for example, improved safeguards for maintaining open spaces, more efficient energy and material flows, or support for innovative environmentally friendly enterprises (Wiechmann et al. 2004, p.4; BBSR 2011b). At its core, the approach combines the sustainability idea with a cooperative regional development strategy (Wiechmann et al. 2004, p.16). Participants were expressly asked to engage in inter-regional cooperation and to exchange ideas. Special emphasis was given to improved dialogue and cooperation processes between local authorities and the regions' citizens. Participating municipalities were expected to enter into dialogue with their citizens and engage in intermunicipal cooperation with the competent regional planning authorities and also with private stakeholders (BBSR 2011b).

During the course of the competition the regions were given technical/professional and organisational support by the BBR and by IFOK, a communication and strategy consulting firm. Both the exchange of experiences and the technical/professional support were expected to help ease the regional approaches towards greater sustainability.

Concepts for the development of strategies to find and extend the scope for action towards sustainable spatial and residential area development

Current status of implementation

The competition commenced in September 1997 and closed almost three years later with the presentation of awards at the URBAN 21 World Conference on the Future of Cities in Berlin in July 2000. A total of 87 regional networks had applied for participation and ultimately 25 of these received the following awards (joint placements):

First Prizes (8): Hamburg Metropolitan Region, Greater Brunswick Area, Chemnitz-Zwickau Economic Region, Pilot Region Märkischer Kreis, Rhön Region, Cham, Cooperative Region Lake Constance/Upper Swabia, Freiburg/Breisgau-Hochschwarzwald-Emmendingen

Second Prizes (13): Eider-Treene-Sorge, Mecklenburg Lake District, Hanover EXPO Region, Aller-Leine Valley, Southern Lower Saxony, Northern Thuringia, Südraum Leipzig Region of the Future, Industrial Garden Realm Dessau/Anhalt-Bitterfeld-Wittenberg, Starkenburg, PAMINA, Stuttgart, Munich

Third Prizes (4): Prignitz-Oberhavel, Havelland-Fläming, EUREGIO, Frankfurt-Rhine/Main-Wiesbaden

Subsequently, these 25 award-winning regions formed the focal point around which the 'Network for Regions of the Future' was able to develop. This network had been initiated by the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Housing (BMVBS) following the end of the competition. The aim of the network was to provide a platform for the intensive exchange of experiences. This pilot project assisted the regional networks until 2003. Other important elements of the network included the project website (www.zukunftsregionen.de) and specialist events on a variety of topics. In addition, eight of the pilot regions received individual professional coaching.

Legal and financial embedding

In terms of financial embedding it is important to note that the BBR did not offer any material incentives or monetary awards for participation (Wiechmann et al. 2004, p.4).

Models for the reorientation of consumer and agrarian policy

The approach is based on the idea of 'helping people to help themselves' through the shift of decision making into the regions itself

2.6.2 Active Regions ('Regionen Aktiv')

Origination context of the approach

The 'Active Regions – Shaping Rural Futures' competition ('Regionen Aktiv – Land gestaltet Zukunft') was launched in September 2001 by the then Federal Ministry of Consumer Protection, Food and Agriculture (now BMELV). It was designed as a pilot and demonstration project for 'future proof' rural development under the German National Sustainability Strategy (BMELV 2008).

Objectives of the approach

The aim was to find pilot regions that could implement the four objectives 'consumer focus', 'nature-friendly and environmentally compatible agriculture', 'strengthening rural areas and creating additional sources of income' and 'strengthening urban-rural relationships' and could thus serve as models for the reorientation of consumer and agricultural policy. The intention was to strengthen the regions, combine forces, utilise synergies and employ innovative and efficient approaches in order to create 'learning regions' and programmes. The projects to be supported had to make a coherent contribution to realising regional development strategies (RDS) rather than serving individual sectors or implementing individual projects in isolation.

Strategic orientation

This pilot programme was designed as a competition. The regions were first competing for being selected as model regions. In the implementation phase they were in competition for limited funding from the 'performance reserve' and for the title of 'Project of the Month'. In pursuit of the objectives listed above, stakeholders in a model region were to come together in a regional partnership to draw up an integrated rural development strategy based on their region's specific strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities (Elbe et al. 2007, p.10). Both during the phase of preparing the RDS and during the three-year implementation phase the regions received back-up support through a programme office set up by the Federal Ministry.

The Regional Partnerships provided the organisational basis for implementing the programme. They were the principal decision-making bodies and had the power to decide on the boundaries of their regions for the purposes of the programme, and they decided which of the projects would be funded from their allocated regional budget (Federal funding of approximately EUR 2.1 million per model region). All model regions availed of a regional management as the executive body of and service provider for the regional partnership.

The overall approach was based on the idea of 'help for self-help' while the steering approach followed the five principles of **regionality, partnership, reflexivity, integration and competition** (Elbe et al. 2007, p.17). These principles were to be implemented by transferring decision-making powers to the regions, with the Federal Government only defining a steering framework while detailed control was left to the regions. The programme thus represents a shift from the traditional approach of subsidising individual projects to programme support for the implementation of a development strategy for an entire region. The novelty of the steering approach adopted in this programme was this consistent transfer of steering functions and responsibilities, as well as of the resultant obligations, to the 18 model regions. In procedural terms this shift was reflected in the (honorary) regional partnerships being the core decision-making bodies and the full-time regional management being the region's core service provider. The new division of responsibilities was also evident in that the Federal Government's role was limited to setting objectives and assessing progress while the regional partnerships were responsible for selecting projects to be implemented. It was further evident in financial terms – with a regional budget to fund integrated projects – and in administrative terms – with a regional public body (Abwicklungspartner) responsible for financial management and budget administration.

Current status of implementation

Out of more than 200 applications a jury selected 18 regions in a two-tier process. The selected regions were representative of the diversity of rural areas in Germany and included remote and structurally weak areas, regions with strong urban-rural interlinkages, as well as regions with favourable conditions for development.

Between 2002 and 2005 the regional development structures and networks were established in the regions and a wider scope in terms of the different fields of activity was achieved. On 31 December 2005 funding ceased for the implementation of projects financed through the regional budgets (on average approximately EUR 2.1 million per model region) which had supported a wide spectrum of projects.

The extension of the 'Active Regions' programme in a second phase (2006-2007) was designed for the regions to focus on a 'core issue' which was to be addressed using the value-adding partnership approach. The aim was a shift from supporting the establishment of partnership structures in the regions to their valorisation (Elbe et al. 2007, p.13), which was also reflected in a change in the rates of funding compared to the first phase (degressive support of regional management, match funding for all projects) and levels of funding (EUR 150,000 per region and year for projects and an additional 25,000 for consultancy).

As part of the 'Active Regions' programme a total of 1,347 projects were realised in the 18 model regions. After 2007 many of the 'Active Regions' became LEADER regions.

Legal and financial embedding

A total of EUR 56.3 million in Federal funds, EUR 5.5 million in other public funds and EUR 23.3 million in private funds were used to finance measures in the first and second phases of the programme. This gave rise to follow-up investments of approximately EUR 99 million made by other public bodies and private investors (BMELV 2008, p.8).

Between 2002 and 2005, i.e. in the first programme phase, the Ministry provided a total of more than EUR 50 million for the implementation of the model regions' regional development plans alone (Elbe et al. 2007, p.11).



3 Comparative analysis of the development approaches

Table 1: Synopsis of the approaches studied (Part 1)

Approach	ELER / GAK	
	LEADER	ILE
AD 1 Conceptual framework		
Originator	EU	Federal Government/Länder cooperation (Planning Committee for Agricultural Structures and Coastal Protection – PLANAK)
Time period	from 1991	from 2004
Current political cycle	2007–2013	2007–2013
Current policy field	'Second pillar' of EU agricultural policy (EAFRD)	Joint task (Federal State/Länder) (GAK)
Key document	EAFRD Regulation	GAK Framework Plan
Key stakeholders implementing the approach	Authorising agency, LAG, LAG-Management	Authorising agencies, Regional management
Scope	EU	Länder
Objectives	Integrated development of rural areas based on fixed areas of support measures	Integrated rural development with stronger roots in the agricultural sector
Typical territories eligible for participation	Normally regions of up to 150,000 inhabitants, comprising a number of rural districts with commonalities in socio-cultural, economic terms and/or sharing cultural landscapes	Rhineland-Palatinate: 2–5 associations of municipalities with 30,000 – 50,000 inhabitants
Typical fields of action	Tourism, regional marketing, preserving cultural landscapes, renewable energy sources, village renewal, rural infrastructure, social infrastructure / demographic change	Sustainable agriculture and forestry, regional economy, similar to LEADER
Current number of initiatives	243	143 (nationwide)

In the previous chapter the various programmes were discussed in terms of their conceptual approach. This chapter will take a more detailed look at how they compare in terms of their institutional design. In addition to the explanations contained in Tables 1 and 2 below, Appendix 1 contains case studies in the form of short profiles which illustrate how the different approaches have been put into practice (available only in German).

EFRE / GRW		Agenda 21
Regional management in Hesse	Regional management in Bavaria	Regional Agenda 21
EU and Federal Government/Länder cooperation	Bavarian Ministries of State for - Economic Affairs, Infrastructure, Transport and Technology; - State Development and Environmental Affairs	UNEP
from 2002	from 2006	from 1992 (first implementation of projects from 1998)
2007-2013	For 3 years in the 2007-2013 period	2012: Rio+10
EU cohesion policy (ERDF), Joint task (Federal State/Länder) (GRW)	ERDF/GRW, 'second pillar' of Allianz Bavaria Innovative	Sustainable development
ERDF Regulation,	ERDF Regulation, GRW Framework Plan, State Development Programme, Allianz Bavaria Innovative	Agenda 21
GRW Framework Plan	Regional management	Administration, civil society
Regional management	Bavaria	172 signatory countries of Agenda 21
Hesse	Improvement of regional economic structure, cross-sectoral support to foster endogenous development potential in the regions	Implementing the principle of sustainability: meeting the needs of the present – taking environmental, economic and social aspects into account – without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
Large-scale economic regions (in Northern Hesse: 5 rural districts)	Mostly alliances comprised of individual municipalities under the aegis of the rural district	Rural district
Business development, cluster management	Business development, cluster management, similar to LEADER	Environment, social affairs, economy
1	22 (29)	At regional level only a few autonomous initiatives remain (peak phase: 1998-2005)

Table 1: Synopsis of the approaches studied (Part 1)

Approach	ELER / GAK	
	LEADER	ILE
AD 2 Organisational structure		
Typical executing agency	LAG	municipalities
Typical legal status of executing agency	Statutes/Articles of Association without legal form, limited liability company (GmbH), incorporated voluntary associations (e.V.)	Regional administrative bodies form an executive board without legal form
Time of constitution of executing agency	At the latest at the start of a funding period	In the 2007-2013 period at the time of making the application
Characteristic entities	Local Action Group (LAG), working groups for particular projects or fields of action	Executive board, working groups for particular projects or fields of action
Membership/staff of above entities	10 – 40 members	Executive board: 3 – 6 Working groups: 10-20 members
Other important organisations / committees	Regional Management	Regional Management
AD 3 Projektentwicklung und -umsetzung		
Orte der Ideenentwicklung	Arbeitsgruppen, verwaltungsnahe Zivilgesellschaft	Vorstand, Arbeitsgruppen
Orte der Projektauswahl	LAG	Vorstand
Orte der Projektumsetzung	Projekträger	kommunale Projektträger
AD 4 Participation of societal groups		
Arenas for participation	Regional fora (development of RDS), LAG, working groups, Project groups	Regional fora (development of IRDS), working groups, project groups
Mode of decision-making	LAG: Decisions taken by majority (ideal: consensus)	Board decisions (taken by majority, ideal: consensus)
Participating spectrum of stakeholders	Administration, business development, economic and social partners	Local authorities, administration, civil society
Dominating section of the population	Politics and local government	Local government
Trend-setting stakeholders	Regional Manager, authorising agencies	Steering group, regional management
AD 5 Financial and legal embedding of the initiatives		
Origin of funding for organisational structure	EAFRD / GAK funds from the relevant state programme	EAFRD / GAK funds from the relevant state programme
Origin of funding for project implementation	EAFRD/GAK, ERDF/GRW, ESF, executing agency	EAFRD/GAK, ERDF/GRW, ESF, executing agency
Legal preconditions for allocation of funding	Draft proposal by LAG, approval by authorising agency	Dependent on support programme, approval of authorising agency
Legal basis of the initiative	EAFRD Regulation via state programme	GAK Framework Plan GAK Ordinance and EAFRD Regulation via state programme
Example	Odenwald	Lahn-Taunus

EFRE / GRW		Agenda 21
Regionalmanagement Hessen	Regionalmanagement Bayern	Regional Agenda 21
Northern Hesse Regional Management	District Council Offices, regional planning association, college/ university projects	District administration, civil society initiatives
Limited liability company (GmbH)	Incorporated voluntary association (e.V.), limited liability company (GmbH), regional administrative bodies	No legal form
2002	In the 2007–2013 period at the time of making the application	At the time the initiatives commence (since 1998)
Executive board, head office, project teams	Executive board, working groups for particular projects or fields of action	Head office, working groups
26	Head office: 2 Working groups: 10–20 members	max. 1
Networks of Excellence	Regional Management, cluster management	Working groups
Executing agency	Working groups, executing agency, regional management	ditto
Authorising agencies for the support programme	Authorising agencies for the support programme	ditto
Executing agency	Regional management, executing agency	Administration, various
Committees of the organisations, cluster networks with their own structures	Regional fora (development of RDS) working groups, project groups	Regional fora, working groups
Shareholder decisions	In the region: Decisions taken by majority (ideal: consensus)	Consensus
Business people (or their lobbies), public banks (Sparkassen), politicians	Administration, politicians, economic sector	Interested citizens
Politics, private sector economy	Administration, private sector economy	Interested citizens
Private sector representatives	Regional management	Civil society, environmental and social stakeholders
ERDF / GRW	ERDF / GRW	District
various support programmes in the different areas of the cluster networks	various support programmes in the different fields of action	District, volunteerism
Dependent on support programme	Dependent on support programme, approval of authorising agency	Decision by district assembly, none
ERDF / GRW via state programme	ERDF / GRW via state programme	General commitment by signatory countries
Northern Hesse	Hesselberg	Bay of Szczecin

Table 2: Synopsis of the approaches studied (Part 2)

Approach	Regional development for nature conservation		
	Biosphere reserve	PLENUM	chance / idee.natur
Originator	UNESCO	Baden-Württemberg State Agency for the Environment, Measurements and Nature Conservation (LUBW)	BfN/BMU
Time period	from 1976	from 1991	from 1979
Current political cycle		since 2001 (EAFRD: 2007–2013)	Large-scale conservation projects are implemented in 2 phases with a planning phase of max. 3 years and an implementation phase. Total project term can be up to 12 years.
Current policy field	Nature conservation, sustainable resource management, education for sustainable development	Nature conservation / regional development for nature conservation	Nature conservation / regional development for nature conservation
Key document	UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme; national guidelines for biosphere reserves	PLENUM Strategy issued by the Land	Guideline for the provision of funding
Key stakeholders implementing the approach	Administration	Rural districts	Regional administrative bodies, foundations, voluntary associations, nature conservation associations
Scope	Global	Baden-Württemberg	Germany
Objectives	To introduce, within a structured framework, new models of living and working that advocate the reconciliation of the interests of environmental protection and economic development as well as the harmonious coexistence of man and nature; preservation of representative cultural landscapes	To maintain and enhance biodiversity in large-scale, representative cultural landscapes through the valorisation of nature and landscapes (regional products, tourism etc.)	To establish and safeguard valuable components of nature and the countryside that are of representative significance for the nation as a whole
Typical territories eligible for participation	Large-scale landscape units	Landscape unit, rural district	Physiographic region
Typical fields of action	Environmental education, landscape management, tourism, nature conservation, regional marketing	Environmental education, tourism, landscape management, agriculture, renewable energy sources	Landscape management
Current number of initiatives	Germany: 15 (16)	5	5 idee.nature areas, 74 large-scale conservation projects (chance.natur)

Urban-rural cooperations			
	Metropolitan region	Planning association	Urban-rural strategy (SUK)
	EU and MKRO	Spatial planning authorities at the national and regional levels	Regional spatial planning authority for Schleswig-Holstein
	from 1993	from c. 1912	from early 1990s
	Definition as new guiding vision since 2006		The relevant reference model (Rendsburg) originated in 2004
	Spatial planning, regional development for economic and business development	Spatial planning, regional planning	Subregional planning, intermunicipal cooperation
	MKRO guiding vision, regional strategy papers	Ordinance on Associations	Cooperation agreements between relevant municipalities
	Regional policy, economic sector	Policy, administration	Local policy, administration
	EU and Germany	Länder	Schleswig-Holstein, especially Rendsburg, Elmshorn, Pinneberg
	To be tagged as major regions with a focus on growth and innovation and to be positioned as such in the European and international context	Regional planning: supra-regional consultation and planning of infrastructure and spatially relevant development	To plan and guide coordinated development that ensures the best possible performance of services by consolidating all the potential available in both the urban centre and its surrounding area.
	Agglomerations and their and the region with which they are interlinked	Spatial planning region, government regions, planning areas across Länder boundaries	1-2 towns/cities and up to 11 surrounding municipalities
	Business development, culture, location marketing, spatial planning	Preparation of a regional land use plan	Balancing residential and commercial development, transport and open space development, regional image, business development, tourism, commercial development, recreational and cultural offers, public utilities, social infrastructure, administrative organisation
	11 nationwide	Specifically in Bavaria (18), Saxony (5), Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania (4), Frankfurt/Rhine-Main	3 sensu stricto

Table 2: Synopsis of the approaches studied (Part 2)

Approach	Regional development for nature conservation		
	Biosphere reserve	PLENUM	chance / idee.natur
Typical executing agency	Länder administration, voluntary association, limited liability company (GmbH),	District administrations (3), limited liability companies (GmbH) (2)	Rural districts, towns/cities, municipalities, conservation organisations, administrative authorities (Zweckverbände), voluntary associations, foundations
Typical legal status of executing agency	see above	see above	see above
Time of constitution of executing agency	continuous; primarily around 1990	2001 – 2003	continuous
Characteristic entities	Administrative agencies	Advisory board, PLENUM team (regional management)	Head office
Membership/staff of above entities	2 – 20	c. 3	c. 2
Other important organisations / committees	Supporting associations ('Friends of...')	Advisory board, project groups	Working groups providing project back-up
Ideas are developed by ...	Administration	Executing agency, working groups	Expert reports, consensus-building process
Projects are selected by ...	Administration	Advisory board	Working groups providing project back-up
Projects are implemented by ...	Administration	Executing agency	Head office
Arenas for participation	Participation processes	Working groups for particular projects or fields of action	Working groups providing project back-up
Mode of decision-making	Administrative decision	Committee decision	Administrative decision and approval (Land and Federal Government)
Participating spectrum of stakeholders	Environmental education, tourism, agriculture and forestry, nature conservation	Environmental education, tourism, agriculture and forestry, nature conservation	BfN, regional administrative bodies, conservation associations, land users, land owners
Dominating section of the population	Nature conservation, environmental education, tourism	Agriculture and forestry, nature conservation, tourism	Nature conservation, agriculture and forestry
Trend-setting stakeholders	Nature conservation authorities	PLENUM teams, committee	Nature conservation authorities

Urban-rural cooperations			
	Metropolitan region	Planning association	Urban-rural strategy (SUK)
	Spatial planning authorities, voluntary associations, association, administration	Association	Municipalities
	Regional administrative body, incorporated voluntary association (e.V.), limited liability company (GmbH)	Statutory corporation	no legal form
	primarily during the period 1995-2005	Continuous	since 2004
	Regional forum, economic development agency, management facility	Association's assembly (in part), planning committees, association's administration	Committees, regional conference
	2 - 20	10 - 150	none of its own
	Supporting associations ('Friends of...')	depends on other aims of the association	none
	Ranging from executing agencies to planning divisions	Politics, administration	Committees, administration
	Executive board	Association's assembly, committees	Regional conference
	Ranging from administration private citizens	Administration	Administration, executing agency
	Regional fora, committees, supporting associations	Association's assembly, committees	Regional conference
	Ranging from political coordination to directives		By unanimous vote, each municipality having the same number of votes
	All societal groups	Administration, politicians, bodies with a statutory consultative role (TÖB)	Politicians, administration
	Politicians, private sector representatives	Politicians, administration	Politicians, administration
	Politics and commercial sector	Politics, state and regional planning	Politics, working committee

Table 2: Synopsis of the approaches studied (Part 2)

Approach	Regional development for nature conservation		
	Biosphere reserve	PLENUM	chance / idee.natur
Origin of funding for organisational structure	Land	Land, districts	Federal Government, Land, executing agency
Origin of funding for project implementation	Land, accompanying schemes, such as LEADER and similar programmes	EU/EAFRD, Land, executing agency	Federal Government, Land, executing agency
Legal preconditions for allocation of funding	Länder allocation, programme-specific rules	Landscape management directive for Baden-Württemberg	Administrative guideline on large-scale conservation projects
Legal basis of the initiative	Länder legislation (nature conservation), UNESCO rules for approval	Decree (Land)	Administrative guideline on large-scale conservation projects
Example	Schaalsee	Western Lake Constance	Bienwald



Urban-rural cooperations			
	Metropolitan region	Planning association	Urban-rural strategy (SUK)
	Various support programmes, municipalities, foundations, supporting associations	Primarily municipalities, various support programmes	Support programmes, municipalities (Rendsburg structural fund)
	Specific requirements of support programmes	Association statutes,	Municipal agreement,
	Depends on the region, state treaty, often agreements between administrations	various support programmes	specific requirements of support programmes
	Rhine-Neckar	Ordinance on Associations	Cooperation agreement
	Rhein-Neckar	Frankfurt	Rendsburg



4 Conclusions on the institutional design of RTD approaches

Previous chapters have described individual approaches and their characteristics. This chapter will first provide a concluding summary of the **advantages and disadvantages** of the as yet only individually considered approaches, based on assessments and studies available to date.

Following on from that, **recommendations** will be given **on the institutional design of Rural Territorial Development approaches from the German point of view**, i.e. based on results of the 'Active Regions' project.

4.1 Assessment of the approaches and lessons learned

4.1.1 Regional development approaches

The first set of lessons learned is derived from the combined experiences of the regional development approaches funded under the EAFRD (Leader, IRD) and ERDF (Allianz Bayern Innovative, Hesse). The comments refer in particular to LEADER as many of the systematic lessons learned are primarily based on this programme.



Attractiveness

The conceptual added value of these approaches resides in their focus on identifying local solutions tailored to achieving local problems with the aid of a bottom-up approach. While with top-down approaches national or regional authorities decide on measures and criteria for project selection and on the eligibility of projects for funding, with bottom-up approaches these responsibilities are transferred to the local partners. The underlying idea of LEADER and ERDF regional management approaches is that they do not put forward a set of standard measures but that they are methods to mobilise and implement individual and innovative development initiatives in local communities. The target group of these approaches is the regional civil society. One anticipated side-effect of this focus is the initiation of self-sustaining development processes.



Weak points

During the current political cycle, criticism of LEADER has focused i.e. on the fact that the potential of LEADER characteristics has not been fully exhausted by the LAGs (ER 2010, p.55), thus jeopardising the added value of the approach.

According to a recent report by the European Court of Auditors, a de facto **top-down** system has been imposed, as contrary to the Commission's guidance most managing authorities (in Germany at the Länder level) require LAGs to implement the common rural development programme measures (ER 2010, p.59). While this may make LEADER easier to control, it limits the scope for innovative local strategies and hence limits the potential added value that justifies the LEADER approach. The report also criticises practices observed in some LAGs, such as grant decisions being made by only a handful of people and often to their own organisations. According to the Court of Auditors, the Commission and the Member States have tolerated the lack of robust procedures to avoid all risk of **conflict of interest** at the level of the LAGs, despite the fact that these weaknesses echo those observed in previous LEADER programmes.

Other weaknesses in the design of the programme relate to the fact that the **development strategies** served as little more than an application to the managing authority for funding (ER 2010, p.55) and that few of the LAGs monitored or reported on their performance in achieving their strategy objectives.

From a budgetary point of view the Court of Auditors also pointed out that LAGs did not have due regard to the need for fair and transparent procedures or **efficiency** (ER 2010, p.56), particularly in awarding grants for projects that were already under way, or even completed, before the grant decision was made (ER 2010, p.56). In some cases, their objective appears to have been to spend the maximum amount possible (to secure the outflow of funds), rather than to achieve the maximum results possible. Moreover, the prescribed monitoring and control measures, especially for very small projects, proved to be rather inflexible. The ensuing delays did not only result from requirements imposed by the EU but also from the Member States' requirements.

Recommendations, candidates for success factors

In order to realise the added value of the LEADER approach compared to mainstream funding by following the key features of the approach, both the Commission and the Member States must apply **stricter requirements**. According to the European Court of Auditors, the Commission's efforts to date of addressing persistent weaknesses with encouragement, guidance and recommendations have not proved effective. The Court of Auditors recommends (ER 2010, p.58ff.) that the Commission ensure that the EU-level legislation provides sufficient clarity on the **standards** required in the specific case of LEADER. This would replace the need for divergent operating rules at programme level, simplify procedures, improve consistency and provide clear control standards. These control standards should relate in particular to the selection of projects being based on documented assessments that demonstrate the soundness and fairness of the decision in terms of consistent and relevant criteria. These control standards should further ensure that the partnerships are not dominated by the local authorities at project selection meetings. The Court of Auditors proposes that a member of the LAG's assessment or selection decision-making committee should make a written declaration of any professional or personal interest in a project proposal and that a member who has such an interest should not participate in any way in the assessment or selection process, and should not be present during discussion of the project proposal. The Court of Auditors is of the view that the Member States should require LAGs to **account** for achieving their local strategy objectives, for achieving added value through the LEADER approach, and for the efficiency of the grant expenditure and the operating costs (ER 2010, p.60). Even at the stage of selecting the regions much attention should be given to the quality of the strategies submitted.



The measures outlined should achieve greater transparency due to the documentation of project assessments and selection procedures and thus contribute to avoiding direct or indirect conflicts of interest. If in the future, LAGs also managed to truly involve their local communities and successfully initiate local projects by **creating greater awareness**, this would also increase prospects of achieving the desired self-sustaining structures. This in turn would also provide a greater justification of the costs involved in establishing the LAG as the implementation level for the valorisation of local potential, in addition to the costs arising in the administration and paying agencies for processing, monitoring and control.

4.1.2 Regional development approaches for nature conservation

This section summarises the lessons learned with regard to the 'biosphere reserves', 'PLENUM' and 'large-scale conservation projects' approaches. Some additional observations on Regional Agenda 21 processes will also be made; while these are conceptually broader in their thematic orientation, in practice they have, more often than not, a conservation focus.

Attractiveness

In particular in the cases of the PLENUM and biosphere reserve approaches, the conceptual attractiveness of regional development approaches for nature conservation is based on the tangible links between preserving landscape segments of special conservation interest and support for economic land use to safeguard these areas. Due to the fact that biosphere reserve management in Germany is primarily in the hands of public administration, biosphere reserves can also function as long-term platforms for cross-district cooperation.





Weak points

While the 'biosphere reserves', 'PLENUM' and 'Regional Agenda 21' approaches are conceptually quite advanced, practical implementation in some respects falls short of the objectives set. For example, many measures taken in biosphere reserves deal with environmental education while the area of sustainable resource management has thus far mostly been addressed through tourism projects and marketing projects for regional products. In addition to an extension of the remit of biosphere reserves and the range of issues they address in keeping with the 'protection through use' principle outside of the core areas, there is a need for better coordination between spatially overlapping regional development initiatives (Gehrlein et al. 2007, p.102).

This also addresses the key shortcoming of support for large-scale conservation projects which in the past has only covered expenditure directly related to nature conservation and landscape management while accompanying measures such as in the field of regional development for nature conservation were not eligible. The evolution of this approach towards idee.natur shows that attempts are now being made to actively include such accompanying economic measures into the support for nature conservation.



Recommendations, candidates for success factors

Through project development and acquisition of funding, biosphere reserves should develop into competent partners and advocates of sustainable resource management. Biosphere reserve administrations should establish activities in the area of business development, including the required expertise, in order to achieve greater appreciation and acceptance in the region as well as with regard to explicitly economic issues of sustainable development. The benefits of existing relatively 'hard' institutionalisation could thus be combined with effective coverage of the complete 'sustainable economy' field of action.

4.1.3 Regional planning and intermunicipal cooperation

The third and last sub-section of this chapter will provide a summary assessment of planning associations, urban-rural strategies and metropolitan regions in terms of the lessons learned in the course of their implementation. All three approaches can be understood as expressions of intermunicipal cooperation, i.e. of cooperation between regional administrative bodies at the levels of cities/towns, municipalities and rural districts.



Attractiveness

The conceptual attractiveness of intermunicipal cooperation lies in the fact that the municipalities concerned get the opportunity to tackle schemes that for material, spatial or financial reasons could otherwise not be realised by an individual municipality or town. However, more and more often the added value simply arises from the fact that intermunicipal cooperation may be a precondition to obtaining funding from the EU, the Federal Government, or the Land.

A survey carried out in 2004 by Hesse's Business Development Agency 'Hessen Agentur GmbH' amongst towns and municipalities in the state (HMWVL 2006, p.23ff.) has shown that a wide range of municipal fields of action are suited to cooperation. Those that were identified as being particularly well suited included cooperation between sections of the administrations, cooperation in the area of recreation and tourism, joint use of infrastructure, the operation of intermunicipal industrial estates, and cooperation in business development and location marketing.

With a view to urban-rural strategies and metropolitan regions a positive point is the fact that their conceptual design provides for the systematic expansion of the fields of action and that the policy fields of urban development and rural development which are often considered in isolation are, in principle, brought together in these approaches. Especially the very broad approach taken in the metropolitan regions allows for a multitude of formal and informal regional initiatives to come together, including the relatively new field of international competitiveness. A further advantage of intermunicipal cooperation is the often 'hard' institutionalisation and solid financial basis, e.g. based on pro-rata subscriptions. In the case of planning associations this type of set-up ensures long-term financing and thus establishes a durable regional development partnership.

Weak points

Principal weaknesses of intermunicipal cooperation include an often strong fixation on administrative boundaries and the dominance of politics and administration.

Other perceived impediments of intermunicipal cooperation in Hesse primarily include differences in the performance capabilities of potential cooperation partners as well as a loss of citizen involvement and freedom to arrange their affairs (HMWVL 2006, p.28).



Recommendations, candidates for success factors

The multitude of forms of intermunicipal cooperation show that interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral cooperative networks cannot tackle complex issues such as demographic or economic structural change through one-off actions but need to employ comprehensive and integrated approaches. In the future, intermunicipal cooperation should therefore be regarded as a strategic approach and should not just be limited to one or two individual projects of narrow scope (HMWVL 2006, p.82). In many instances, the broadening of intermunicipal cooperation in terms of its content, e.g. with a view to rural depopulation, would appear to be both warranted and welcome. This would require a culture of cooperation for which a solid basis of trust can only be generated by way of fair reconciliation of interests and reliable partnership (durability!). Depending on the field of action, different degrees of 'hard' or 'soft' institutionalisation should be chosen so that the benefits of the different types of institutionalisation, such as outlined in the example of the Rhine-Neckar metropolitan region, can be utilised in conjunction. This culture of cooperation also requires cooperation with the citizens and with (small and medium) enterprises, as the municipalities are faced with ever more stringent budgets and rely on citizen participation; long-term effective development can only be achieved with the involvement of all influential societal groups. In turn, this requires flexible spatial arrangements for the cooperative space in line with the object of cooperation. For reasons of efficiency and effectiveness, consideration should be given to more large-scale development strategies that establish the connection between development objectives and tangible projects. This ensures that the strategies and fields of action pursued by the different initiatives are inherently consistent or, ideally, are even coordinated.



4.2 Success factors for implementation of the approaches at regional and national programme levels

In the following, each of the success factors inferred from the present study, and later confirmed in the course of research accompanying the 'Regionen Aktiv' pilot project, will be presented in relation to the regional level first. Conclusions will then be drawn for each analytical dimension as to the framework conditions that influence the success of national-level programming. These, again, can be inferred from the above discussion of the various territorial development approaches and have subsequently been confirmed in the course of the 'Regionen Aktiv' in-process research (cf. Böcher and Tränkner 2007, pp.110ff.).

4.2.1 Origination context

Conclusions for the regional level

One success factor in the regional context is the existence of a development problem that is recognised by many stakeholders and exerts a certain pressure while unresolved. People are consequently impelled to join forces to seek solutions. A characteristic of regional problems that offer starting points for integrated rural development is that many people in the region feel **affected** by them, are **interested** in solving them, and at the same time, possess a marked sense of **regional identity** which favours collective action. Other favourable qualities in the origination context are **agreement** on the problems to be solved and the existence of a guiding vision or model that is accepted by all participants in the regional development process as a shared basis for action.

Conclusions for the national programme level

The basic preconditions for a stakeholder-based regional development process thus amount to motivation and a sense of responsibility and self-responsibility. Arising from these conditions, the committed efforts of volunteers are often indispensable, particularly in the early phase of a development process when little progress would otherwise be made. To harness this local social capital, the programme architecture should, firstly, allow the emergent local development coalition to **freely delimit the project region**, and secondly, should transfer **financial and administrative decision-making powers** to that coalition. Setting up a regional budget for the population groups involved at local level, and allowing them to decide on an autonomous local partner to take responsibility for financial matters, creates institutional and spatial proximity between that partner, the development coalition and its regional management facility. This in turn strengthens self-responsibility and heightens motivation to implement the regional vision.

Aside from these effects, transferring wide-ranging decision-making powers can be expected to result in shorter project terms and swifter decision-making processes, stronger regional networks, and more intensive interaction and trust-building. If the regional budget can be operated on the principle of upfront payments rather than subsequent reimbursement, greater opportunities can be created to extend participation even to poorly capitalised development partners. Autonomous decision-making on rates of funding and allocation criteria creates new areas of scope for innovation.

Nevertheless, as the results of the LEADER audits by the European Court of Auditors show, programme coordinators must adhere to transparent methods and procedures so as not to give any foothold to cronyism or nepotism.

4.2.2 Organisational structure of development initiatives

Conclusions for the regional level

With regard to the organisational embedding of a development initiative, alignment with existing support programmes or pre-existing developments in the given region is conducive to successful implementation of a development approach. Equally, it is vital to ensure that regional development projects chosen for implementation are **straightforward and manageable** by avoiding duplication of structures induced by the proliferation of support programmes.

Other beneficial factors for enduring regional development are **strong partners and advocates**, some of whom may operate within the regional development process, while others exert a supportive influence outside it as members of relevant committees and institutions. The point at which the organisational embedding of the regional partnership can be deemed a success is when its work gains due recognition and support from the important political bodies in the region. Efforts should be made continuously to bring other strong partners into the cooperation arrangement.

One thing that became clear, not least with reference to the case studies, is the central importance to the entire development process of regional management as a coordinating institution. An additional success factor can therefore be seen as provision of the **regional management facility** with adequate **financial and human resources**, so that the requisite hours can be worked to ensure that the regional management facility is able to function effectively. To this end, it is also beneficial if regional decision-makers view regional management as an important task that must be properly resourced.

Since it appears desirable to establish a regional development agency for the coordination and management of existing and future support programmes and development goals, a further recommendation for successful regional development is that the idea of tapering funding rates for regional management, reducing to zero in the long-term, should be debated at an early stage in the context of current support programmes. Approaches for the organisation and financing of the regional management facility should be designed independently from these support programmes.

Conclusions for the national programme level

From the programme perspective, this is where the necessity arises for the **region to be freely delimited** to guarantee a high degree of compatibility with regional issues and requirements. Depending on the issue, the envisaged aim is to maintain functional regions which are defined in response to questions of regional development, and are conducive to various forms of transboundary and urban-rural cooperation. This opens up broader cooperation opportunities and win-win potential, which make for broad-based participation and thus increase the likelihood of implementation.

Experience from the Regionen Aktiv programme point to the ambivalent role of high funding allocations at the beginning of a development initiative. Although this practice accelerates the pace at which concrete activities can begin, it simultaneously reduces the pressure to cooperate and to integrate objectives. This can result in the coordination of self-chosen interests in isolation from the regional context, which must certainly be a matter for strong criticism, given the underlying need to achieve continuity and anchoring of the partnership within the regional institutional fabric. The extent to which higher funding allocations enable broad-based development is therefore dependent on the individual case. To that end, a chronologically and spatially tapered co-financing model appears to offer a better solution.

4.2.3 Organisation of project development and implementation

Conclusions for the regional level

For the implementation of projects, and hence of the desired development, the mere existence of a regional management facility is not enough. Its quality is also of crucial importance. Sufficient expertise in regional development and project implementation, analytical thinking, strategic action, tactical skill and communicative and methodological capabilities on the part of the regional management team and key regional stakeholder partners are all conducive to **competent process management**.

In this respect, it is recommended that a learning culture be established and constantly developed, whereby the stakeholders involved learn with and from one another, also making systematic and regular use of concrete **evaluation methods**. Experience shows that meetings held exclusively for the purpose of evaluating the process to date deliver the best results. The more actively the wider context of regional management can be linked into learning processes and associated processes of adaptation by means of interaction and networking, the greater the contribution of learning efforts to success.

In that case, this approach also favours regional development projects that are set up in such a way that multiple stakeholders (e.g. agriculture and nature conservation) benefit from them simultaneously. Hence, a cooperation endeavour (based around learning) can also encourage **win-win coalitions**. Cooperation and win-win situations are, themselves, also to be seen as success factors since they can have self-amplifying effects and further heighten the willingness to engage in cooperation.

Conclusions for the national programme level

A useful dimension of programme design has proved to be the integration of the competition principle, since this aids the establishment of competent process management. However, competitions can also give an undue advantage to regions that are already relatively well positioned. The specified selection criteria are crucial in this regard. At this juncture, it remains a matter of debate whether such regions should be used as beacons, or whether it is preferable to target disadvantaged regions for support.

That aside, there are various conceivable competition elements which may range from a competition for approaches for inclusion in a support programme to a variety of project competitions within a programme, e.g. for the release of additional performance-based reserves. Overall, the inclusion of competition elements can be expected to achieve substantive objectives more effectively and efficiently since participation in the competition will result in

the professionalization of processes and a better public image thanks to public relations work. Competitions force local partners to develop their own methods for the drafting, discussion and assessment of approaches and methodologies, thereby developing a more professional system of process management.

In this connection, thought should also be given to various self-evaluation instruments as obligatory programme elements, in order to institutionally embed as many impulses as possible aimed at stimulating learning processes, and ultimately to create **learning regions**. Evaluation of the projects supported and how the regional partnership is developing not only has a beneficial effect on the quality of project selection, support and evaluation; it also helps to establish transparency about the coalition's own strengths and weaknesses and to legitimise the regional development process.

Self-evaluation, thematic focus groups and network meetings as instruments for evaluation, qualification and networking, also highlight the necessity for programmes to be **learning programmes**. It would of course be desirable to establish an information system that permits experience from the model regions to be relayed immediately to the ministry. The same purpose could also be served by evaluation reports (mid-term, progress and final reports) from the regional partnerships. To ensure that such active knowledge transfer, e.g. via network meetings and focus groups, among the stakeholders envisaged in the programme architecture (regions, flanking research, head office and ministerial level) is effectively structured, it makes sense to adhere to a uniform programme design across (regional) borders from the outset. In order to establish high-quality project and process management, it is advisable to run flanking qualification programmes for both professional and voluntary stakeholders.

4.2.4 Organisation of the involvement of societal groups

Conclusions for the regional level

As the previous sections have made clear, the establishment of coalitions is essential for a successful regional development process. A basic precondition and hence a success factor of any self-managed development process in this regard is the **transparency, openness and flexibility** of processes. Flexible responses to the unexpected, and the involvement of new stakeholders, ideas and practices, along with the straightforward and easily comprehensible organisation of procedures within the regional development process, all add to the legitimacy of the process. Accordingly, helpful personal qualities in the responsible stakeholders are openness, mental flexibility and the ability to compromise.

A further recommendation to enhance the legitimacy of the overall process is to obtain the **broadest possible involvement** of different interests and stakeholders. As a precondition of this, local people, especially societal groups of importance in the region, need to be kept informed about the development process on a regular basis and motivated to play their part. When care is taken to ensure that everyone within a region, across interests and genders, has equal opportunities to be involved in the process, and to allow sufficient time and opportunity to build a consensus on important steps along the way and forthcoming decisions in the regional development process, then broad participation can be a factor in the success of regional development.

Closely related to the aspect of keeping the population informed is continuous and effective **publicity of successes** achieved. If care is taken to achieve milestones, compile impact reports (listing the positive effects already achieved), and disseminate these in a targeted way through public relations work, critics will be silenced and the necessary moral and financial support for the regional development process can be attracted with greater ease.

For the latter purpose, the recruitment of high-profile promoters as project champions is advised. What is meant by this are effective individuals of above-average capability who substantially drive forward the regional development process. What matters is that they are accepted as pivotal figures in the regional development process. Furthermore, they must demonstrate great personal commitment but also the ability to delegate tasks. If these project champions can be involved, activities can be stimulated and projects implemented through the personal input of these promoters which would not otherwise have been realised.

Conclusions for the national programme level

To establish transparency and broad participation at regional level, the programme design should draw upon the previously-mentioned principles of **competition** and **free delimitation of the region**.

A further necessity, in order to maintain transparency and active involvement over longer periods of time, is the appropriate **institutionalisation** of the regional partnerships. Any technical and procedural conditions specified as prerequisites for a project application (e.g. association membership) should be weighed up carefully in the light of motivational considerations on widening participation.

4.2.5 Legal and financial embedding of the development initiative

Conclusions for the regional level

It should have become clear from the above that successful implementation of a development approach depends significantly on the set-up of the national as well as the regional framework. A success factor, and hence a task area for the regional development initiative, is programme implementation in the greatest possible spirit of partnership between the various levels concerned, in order to generate an optimal mix of 'hierarchical incentives' along with a high degree of scope for (bottom-up) action and decision-making by the regions themselves.

To foster the development of trusting cooperation between the levels, it is obviously necessary for administrative structures and the various programme-implementation responsibilities to be comprehensible and clearly regulated, even within the local partnership. Moreover, the terms of programme implementation should actually confer on the regions a high degree of scope for action and decision-making. To better manage the partnership between superordinate levels and the regional level, programmes to date have established offices which link up the regions. As a result, they can articulate their position more effectively when consulted by superordinate levels, while the burden of coordination is reduced.

Conclusions for the national programme level

From a national perspective, the thematic area of 'programme implementation in partnership' refers to the means adopted in the attempt to bring behaviour into line with the aims of the programme.

As the experience from Regionen Aktiv shows, the initiator of that programme was only able to improve the implementation of regional evaluation systems recording programme-compliant behaviour and qualify the regional systems of objectives by retracting the bottom-up approach, i.e. by applying the 'golden bridle' approach of linking the allocations of funds to the development of qualified systems of objectives, as required by the programme, and the completion of uniform evaluations. The results of the LEADER evaluation by the European Court of Auditors point in a similar direction. In that respect, the tension between central control and self-control can be resolved by accepting the need for a 'hierarchical shadow' to ensure that regional partnerships assigned with major responsibilities cooperate by aligning themselves with the state's objectives. Ultimately, cooperation in all of the programmes is initiated by means of funding, so there will be a mix of cooperation and hierarchical incentive-based control.

4.3 Overview of the success factors and the question of transferability

It must be emphasised that an **assessment** of the approaches' **efficiency** is always dependent on how much added value through participation it is intended to achieve. If the aim is to generate self-sustaining processes, lengthy negotiation processes for example and the costs they generate are of different import than in cases where a purely technical objective is being pursued. The form and characteristics of the participation to be achieved are ultimately dependent on the fields of action and on the projects' complexity.

A second fundamental aspect of regional development work is that a stronger focus needs to be placed on emphasising existing **visions** in the region. Regional development processes in rural areas do not just present **problems**; they can also tap into endogenous potential and **opportunities**. If in a particular region issues are predominantly perceived as problems, solution-oriented mediation should be used to transform the impetus for action posed by the problem into a positive driving force for change.

PROGRAMM LEVEL

LEGAL AND FINANCING EMBEDDING

REGION

ORIGINATION CONTEXT

- Affectedness
- Interest
- Common perception of problem
- Vision
- Sense of regional identity
- Freedom in delimitation of region
- Transparent transfer of financial and administrative decision-making powers

ORGANISATIONAL-STRUCTURE

- Involvement of complementary stakeholders
- No duplication of structures
- Regional development agency
- Spatially and temporally phased co-financing model for regional management
- Transparent organisational procedures
- Information system for near-term feedback of experiences from the regions

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

- Explicit self-evaluation meetings
- Streamlined and focused project portfolio
- Commitment to self-evaluation
- Qualification measures for salaried and voluntary participants
- Holding competitions

PARTICIPATION

- Effective public communication of achievements
- Clear and easily comprehensible processes
- Scope to involve new stakeholders and ideas
- Involvement of high-profile project champions
- Sufficient time and opportunities to achieve consensus on important decisions
- Scrutiny of technical implementation requirements in light of motivation-theory considerations

Figure 2: Success factors in territorial development

It is clear that the **interaction of top-down and bottom-up** aspects is also a key factor of success in the context of development cooperation. Top-down **aids** to ensure efficient organisation in regional initiatives are always warranted if this external support enables intensive facilitation of development processes and thus compensates for self-management insufficiencies. In this context it is worth mentioning basic duties of government for which there is **little scope for action at the local level** and where bottom-up approaches are less meaningful; these include for example health and education programmes. Hence not all the issues in regional development can be addressed either at national government level or through regional development processes alone. The role of national government and an understanding of the duties of the regions must be defined on the basis of the issues being addressed.

At this point, consideration must be given to the **political-organisational constitution** of the region. The more decision-making powers are to be transferred to a region the better their administrative and self-governance structures must be. What kind of structures exist in the region? In how far can these be self-sustaining and act in a transparent and autonomous manner? The functional niche of the development initiative in the partner country must be found. Once this is done a great variety of topics for intermunicipal cooperation will become conceivable. Of course the **socio-cultural constitution** of a region also plays a role amongst the success factors. Does the region have the necessary social capital to allow for the implementation of the desired processes (of regional development)? There must be a basic understanding of and motivation for cooperative processes in the region. Many of the partner countries do have institutions such as municipalities, cooperatives, producer associations and private enterprises. However, they are not well networked and do not necessarily work efficiently. Improved local networking is often hampered by the fact that the local people may not be aware of the potential offered by the principles of participation and decentralisation. Therefore, in the context of development cooperation, incentive systems to encourage improved **cooperation in a spirit of partnership** would be yet another one of the success factors.

In addition to a process of awareness-raising, the socio-cultural constitution of a region also concerns the regional stakeholders' status and level of qualification. The importance of **people as a key factor of success** is evident in that ultimately all processes and their design are dependent on individuals. Analysis of the stakeholder constellation and of the level of trust between stakeholders as well as the culture of cooperation reveals the conceivable organisational solutions. Regional culture thus generates certain conditions that must be integrated by the organisational structure to be established. Regional culture determines the intensity of cooperation and bottom-up (and thus also top-down) approaches and the extent to which these are expedient. Obviously, a strong sense of community amongst the regional stakeholders is very helpful. One of the success factors on the path to greater awareness and participation would appear to be the targeted provision of information about local development processes to **key persons** by way of personal meetings and excursions, as well as their **involvement** by way of enabling exchanges with 'related' functionaries and by contributing tangible solutions to problems. In this context attention must also be paid to programme elements promoting voluntarism. The capacity to build on early achievements and the **commitment** these achievements generate amongst stakeholders must not be stifled by excessive bureaucracy, especially in the very formative early phase of programme-induced initiatives. In addition to the involvement of regional key persons, the ability to **delegate tasks** to local stakeholders is similarly crucial in the context of development cooperation. The persons responsible for regional management should thus see their role as promoters who stimulate activities in many areas and then let go, hand over, and let individual initiative play its part.

Finally consideration should be given to the role of the **regions as intentional antagonists** of centralised authoritarian countries. The political situation in, for example, Tunisia in early 2011 underscored the need to **involve civil society** in formulating regional development objectives, at the very least, if development processes are to have long-term stability.

Territorial development in rural areas is a complex approach that must be adapted to the individual situation at hand. Its attractiveness arises from its ambition to generate structures. In terms of strategy it would appear expedient to search for (selection) criteria for different organisational solutions for territorial development rather than to seek specific minimum requirements. Regional conditions will determine the degrees of freedom for organisational design that will be desirable and feasible.

Given the ever louder calls for ‘result orientation’ in development cooperation, which demands swift and tangible results on globally defined issues, clearly much work remains to be done to convince stakeholders of the merits of a revival of explicitly territorial and structure-generating approaches in development cooperation.



5 Informative internet platforms

ELER / GAK:

Europäische Politik zur Entwicklung des ländlichen Raums 2007-2013 (ELER)

http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rurdev/index_de.htm

EU-Gesetzgebung zum Europäischen Landwirtschaftsfonds für die Entwicklung des ländlichen Raums (ELER)

http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/agriculture/general_framework/l60032_de.htm

Gemeinschaftsaufgabe Agrarstruktur und Küstenschutz (GAK)

http://www.bmelv.de/DE/Landwirtschaft/Direktzahlungen-Foerderung/GAK/gak_node.html

LEADER / ILE, Deutsche Vernetzungsstelle Ländliche Räume (DVS)

<http://www.netzwerk-laendlicher-raum.de/service/die-dvs/>

EFRE / GRW:

Europäischer Fonds für regionale Entwicklung (EFRE)

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funds/feder/index_de.htm

Gemeinschaftsaufgabe Verbesserung der regionalen Wirtschaftsstruktur (GRW)

<http://www.bmwi.de/BMWi/Navigation/Wirtschaft/Wirtschaftspolitik/Regionalpolitik/gemeinschaftsaufgabe.html>

Regional development for nature conservation:

Idee.natur / chance.natur (BfN)

<http://www.idee-natur.de/>

chance.natur / Naturschutzgroßprojekte (BfN)

http://www.bfn.de/0203_grossprojekte.html

Man and the Biosphere Programme (UNESCO)

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/man-and-biosphere-programme/>

Das MAB-Programm (Deutsche UNESCO-Kommission e.V.)

http://www.unesco.de/mab_programm0.html

Projekt des Landes BW zur Erhaltung und Entwicklung von Natur und Umwelt (PLENUM)

<http://www.lubw.baden-wuerttemberg.de/servlet/is/47045/>

Urban-rural cooperation:

Aktionsprogramm „Modellvorhaben der Raumordnung“ (BBSR)

http://www.bbsr.bund.de/cln_016/nn_21268/BBSR/DE/FP/MORO/moro__node.

Initiativkreise Europäische Metropolregion in Deutschland (IKM)

<http://www.deutsche-metropolregionen.org/>

Metropolregionen (BBSR)

http://www.bbr.bund.de/nn_600826/BBSR/DE/Raumentwicklung/RaumentwicklungDeutschland/LeitbilderKonzepte/Fachbeitraege/Metropolregionen/01__Metropolregionen__Start.html

Netzwerk der europäischen Ballungs- und Großräume (METREX)

http://www.eurometrex.org/ent1/DE/About/about_METREX.asp

Stadt-Umland-Konzepte (Institut für Raum und Energie)

<http://www.raum-energie.de/index.php?id=48>

Träger der Regionalplanung / Raumentwicklung in Deutschland (BBSR)

http://www.bbr.bund.de/nn_22518/BBSR/DE/Raumentwicklung/RaumentwicklungDeutschland/LandesRegionalplanung/Fachbeitraege/Regionalplanung/04__Links.html

Pilot projects/Best Practices:

Regionen Aktiv

<http://www.regionenaktiv.de/>

Regionen der Zukunft

http://www.bbsr.bund.de/nn_21920/BBSR/DE/FP/MORO/Initiativen/WettbewerbRegionenZukunft/05__Veroeffentlichungen.html

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