

Thematic Group

Promoting the Transition to a Green Economy

3rd Meeting

Brussels, 17 May 2016



DRAFT REPORT

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Introduction

Presentation

Introduction

by David Lamb

The introduction summarised previous activity and expected outputs from the Thematic Group workshops. The outline of the day was presented

Key messages from the presentation:

- There should be a focus on outputs from the Thematic Group, and how we achieve these and move forward
- The development of good practice in projects and regions will continue
- Presentation of the factsheet 'what makes a good Green Economy project' will be undertaken.

Further reference: [Draft factsheet](#): 'What makes a good Green Economy project'

Session 1: Presentations on Regional & National Approaches

Presentation

Outline of regional and national RDPs

by Enrique Nieto

(ENRD CP)

Enrique presented an overview of the RDP Focus Areas 4 and 5, including information on the expected achievements, budget allocation and programming choices done at the EU level and in some selected case study regions.

Key messages from the presentation:

- 70 billion EUR are allocated to support Priority 4, while €11.8bn is allocated to Priority 5
- RDPs offer a set of tools that can be combined to address the specific needs of the territory.

Presentation

Case Study – Sweden

Rasmus Ole Rasmussen,
Nordregio

The second presentation looked at research work undertaken across Sweden, Norway and Finland by Nordregio including green growth, bioeconomy, innovation and entrepreneurship and on sustainable development

Key messages from the presentation:

- There are opportunities across a number of Green Economy themes, including bioeconomy, forestry, bioenergy and biogas
- A number of active projects look at the transition to green alternatives (including biodiesel in public transport) and the upgrading of bioenergy and biogas plants in Sweden.
- Industrial symbiosis within regions is a key driver of Green Growth in Sweden

Further reference: <http://www.nordregio.se/en/Publications/>

Presentation

Case Study – Wales

Clunie Keenleyside,
IEEP

Clunie presented an outline of initiatives in Wales designed to invest in Green Growth, and where funding had been applied to research and to support these initiatives.

Key messages from the presentation:

- The social and environmental policy framework has been updated with the creation of a new environmental framework (2016) and the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015)
- The environmental framework includes a new carbon budgeting framework that targets to achieve 80% reduction in GHG emissions by 2050
- Other target areas include targeted elements of farmland management – carbon, water (quality and quantity) and biodiversity (species & habitats)

Further reference: <http://www.wlga.gov.uk/sustainable-development-framework>

Presentation

Case Study – Veneto (Italy)

Francesca Ricardi di
Netro, Veneto
Agricolutra

A presentation was made on the Veneto region of Italy, which has activated a range of measures in the RDP to address Green Economy needs, particularly with regard to promoting innovative farm technologies and sustainable forest management (measure 2) and restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry (measure 4).

Key messages from the presentation:

- The key components of support for Veneto are investment, business start-up support and payment for agri-environment-climate
- Other areas of key support include payment for organic conversion schemes and the compensatory allowances scheme in mountain areas

Further reference: <http://www.regione.veneto.it/web/agricoltura-e-foreste/sviluppo-rurale-2020>

Interactive Session 2: Targeting Support

Group discussion

Where are the opportunities to target specific activity within the regional and national programmes?

Two discussion tables were set up around the same set of questions (see left column). Groups were then asked to share and comment on each other's findings. The following is a summary that takes into account recurring issues emerged during the group discussions.

The discussions focused on identifying **opportunities** for developing support.

The outcomes from the discussion are integrated with the afternoon session outcomes in Session 3, as the discussions took place in two phases. The first phase identified specific activity in the morning, while the afternoon session developed this further into a strategic approach.

Session 3: Opportunities within the RDPs

Presentation

Transferring best practice & the strategic approach

Ben Allen
(IEEP)

Ben presented the draft factsheet on Green Economy projects, highlighting the stages in the process of developing a project. This had been developed in the previous thematic group meeting, but had been refined and was presented to the group for their input and approval.

Key messages from the presentation:

- It is important to consider how ideas can be transformed into pilot projects, and then scaled up
- Multi-actor approaches should be considered, and the need for leadership

Further reference: [Draft factsheet](#): 'What makes a good Green Economy project'

Presentation

Developing Green Economy programmes

Clunie presented on how to address the Green Economy in programming, and the importance in particular of addressing the balance between environmental sustainability and economic outcomes. The focus was in considering the potential for both beneficiaries and managing authorities (and how this can be supported by NRNs).

Clunie Keenleyside
(IEEP)

Key messages from the presentation:

- Beneficiaries should understand why moving their business or community into the 'green economy' is a good idea for them and understand the potential impact on their long-term business opportunities
- Beneficiaries also need reliable, trusted and locally relevant sources of advice on best available technology, legislation, finance and how to develop their own ideas and plans
- Managing authorities should choose and consider all the available sources of funding
- Managing authorities should also look at the design and combination of different measures to tailor and target RDP support

Interactive Session 4: Strategic Approaches

Group discussion

Where are the opportunities to transfer best practice or to create a strategy for the Green Economy?

There were further discussions which built upon the morning session, developing approaches in line with the steps towards targeting the RDPs to create successful projects.

The feedback identified a number of actions and examples under each heading.

Ideas, business plans advice

- A one stop shop for supporting green projects facilitates implementation (for example in Sweden, where one portal is available to advise on all the financial opportunities with all the funds.)
- We should share information and raise awareness about the benefits of the green project for beneficiaries (in economic, environmental and social terms). NRNs play a key role with targeted communication to key stakeholders.
- Promote generational renewal. Young people are overall more open to thinking out of the box and implementing new business practices in the area of the green economy. They are often more environmentally concerned.

- It is good to have clear practical goals (Such as the examples presented on Wales, Aland)
- Allow the piloting of innovation. Support ideas, and work with the entrepreneurs. Operational groups also provide opportunities in this area.
- Share experiences to trigger innovative ideas.
- Allow for a certain degree of failure.
- Include all aspects of innovation (e.g. traditional methods of working with nature)
- Activities implemented can support piloting, through peer to peer exchanges.
- Innovation in business models can be shared
- Evaluation of good practices – where do they work best

Skills acquisition

- Use of advisory service to raise awareness on the potential of implementing new green practices. Important to do so as from the beginning of the programming period.
- Improve knowledge and skills on precision farming and big data among farmers. It is an area that shows great potential in economic and environmental terms.
- Quality and availability of advisory services
- Transfer AKIS – Seminar, demonstrations
- Feedback on the benefits from the farmers
- Target skills as well on the management of natural resources (soils)
- Consider the “Train the trainer” approach to enhance the skills of main stakeholders. Take advantage of organisations and cooperatives to apply this training.

Finance for investments

- Support investments on technology that reduce the use of inputs at farm level (pesticides, fertilisers)
- Enable supporting investment in projects which are riskier (often innovative) (through LEADER, Financial instruments, EIB, EFSI)
- Smart use of selection criteria to target RDP investments to those projects that contributes to the Green economy (Projects with environmental and sustainable benefits get higher % of support in Belgium, for example)

- Key is to target investments. Design green criteria in the RDPs (eligibility, selection criteria).

Cooperation and organisation

- Target support to cooperation among stakeholders on green projects aimed at accessing markets and improving the quality of production (e.g. organic products)
- Cooperation among Member States as a key feature to ensure complementarities among the different green strategies
- At local level, involve farmers in the implementation of green projects through the LDS (LEADER)
- Use the ESPON territorial model
- May not be relevant to have strategic definitions
- Make strategic use of cooperation respecting green criteria.
- Support regional Operational Groups with components related to the green economy

Market access/Quality

- Foster innovation as a key element for accessing new markets.
- Use the RDP to create new markets. For instance, the afforestation measure can form the basis for new businesses in Biomass energy production
- Development of broadband to shorten the distance between producers and consumers. Skill acquisition is also very much needed.
- Improve information on the green products which enable access to markets or improve market presence (transparency with consumers).
- Using environmental sustainability as a quality mechanism
- Creation of learning networks (for example in Belgium)
- Complementarities with other sector (tourism – hydroelectric)

Supportive territorial environment

- Find good examples to put in the 'green box' – Soil and water maintenance, connection between territorial and local.
- Tuscany RIS3 on food is a good territorial example
- Agrispin is a model for innovation support services.

Final Discussion and Conclusions

Conclusion & Next Steps

The overall outcomes from the discussions were as follows:

- Apply a multi-actor approach in the development of the green strategy (to unblock ideas, resources)
- Ensure the link with Leader Local Development Strategies
- Look for a holistic approach and consider other policy areas (e.g. regional strategies) and even countries (example of Nordregio).
- Take into account the economics of the green economy but also the sustainability of the strategies.
- Collaboration between different authorities involved in the RDP should be encouraged to promote integrated strategic planning (break silos).
- Look at integrated models on spatial planning (for example in Wales)
- Ensure that sectorial strategies are in line with the Green Economy.
- Priority and needs: Links with local and regional embedded innovation
- Develop strategies for parts of the green economy at national level – e.g. Bioeconomy.
- Identify the specific green needs and assess how RDPs can contribute (e.g. P4 conservation, P5 efficiency).
- Consider the time and geographical scale in the strategies
- Break the strategy into different components
- Complementarity: Build on the basis on what exists now.
- Define the role of the RDPs in the strategic plan. Consider this role for future RDP amendments
- Involve stakeholders. Map economic and environmental stakeholders.
- Connect the strategy with the local level. (e.g. define priorities for Local Development strategies).

These have been adapted into the final factsheet to be presented at the Rural Seminar to the wider stakeholder, and project examples will be developed using some of the examples given. Key countries will also be invited to attend the Rural Seminar, such as Wales and Sweden.

Annex 1: Workflow for the Thematic Group

