

Manual

for planning and evaluation of

Sustainable Development

at the regional level

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FOREWORD

Sustainable development – which means a better quality of life for everyone, now and for the generations to come – is becoming an increasingly prominent topic in the policy-making agendas of many countries.

As many other countries, the Czech Republic has established an institutional framework for the promotion of sustainable development in a coordinated manner and has a national sustainable development strategy in place.

This is a long-term and a challenging agenda that knows no boundaries, that involves working through all levels of government. Having this in mind, the government suggested that the regional governors use the national strategy as a basis for regional policy-making.

The preparation of the national sustainable development strategy indicated that also capacities on the regional level have to be strengthened as effective sustainable development governance at all levels is a key to the realization of the goals of sustainable development.

In this context the introduction of sustainable development principles into regional and local development planning and a broader role and involvement of regional and local authorities in promoting the concept of sustainable development are necessary.

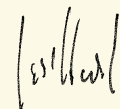
The respective public authorities together with the generous support of the UNDP have launched a pilot project in support to the preparation for sustainable development strategy in selected regions of the Czech Republic in 2004.

As part of this project, a methodology for strategic planning and sustainable development assessment at the regional level has been drawn up and developed during the preparation of two regional strategies for sustainable development.

I very much hope that this methodological handbook will serve as a useful tool for different regional and local institutions and stakeholders for evaluation of sustainable development context of the regions and for elaboration of sustainable development strategies at the sub-national level.

The regions play a crucial role in delivering sustainable development. Each of them has its own priorities and contributes to the objectives of the country as a whole. Regional and local stakeholders should decide themselves how to take a step forward important issues requiring action at the regional and local levels.

We all have a shared responsibility to make sustainable development a reality.



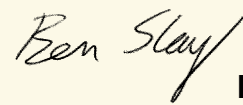
Jiří Havel

Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs and Chairman of the Government Council
for Sustainable Development of the Czech Republic

Although not all the hopes that were associated with the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro have been realized, the slogan ‘think globally and act locally’ that then passed into popular use has become one of the development community’s mantra. If the concepts of sustainable development and environmental quality can not be usefully disaggregated at the sub-national policy level, global development objectives like the Millennium Development Goals can not be met.

In many respects, the 1990s witnessed significant improvements in environmental quality and sustainable development in the countries that went on to join the European Union in May 2004. This

could not have happened if municipalities and regional governments had not acquired the authority, resources, and wisdom needed to reconcile environmental quality with economic progress. In a number of cases, this progress was made possible by the design and implementation of sub-national development strategies that were supported by UNDP. This book captures the general procedures and principles behind these strategies, with a particular emphasis on the UNDP – supported sustainable developments strategies that were designed during 2004–2005 in the Ústí nad Labem and Liberec regions of the Czech Republic. The formal approval of this strategy by the Ústí nad Labem regional government in February 2006 is a particularly important milestone in this regard. It is hoped that the information in this manual will be a useful tool for the design, implementation, and evaluation of sub-national sustainable development strategies in other regions and contexts.

**Ben Slay**

Director of the UNDP Regional Centre for Europe and CIS

This manual dealing with the planning and evaluation of sustainable development on a regional level is at present almost the only publication to provide a full set of guidelines on how to create a sustainable development strategy, and evaluate sustainable development on a regional level. This method of planning sustainable development was first put into practice when creating a sustainable development strategy for the Ústecký Region, the first and only region so far in the Czech Republic to produce such a document.

The Ústecký Region's sustainable development strategy aims to establish a framework for long-term development of the Ústecký Region, and a vision for the period up to 2020, along with the main priorities for that development. The aim in creating a strategy was to produce a document which, if adhered to and regularly updated, will go towards improving the quality of life of the inhabitants of the Ústecký Region.

When creating this strategy, we based it on the national sustainable development strategy for the entire Czech Republic, and drew inspiration from similar documents produced abroad, adapting specific aspects to the needs of the Ústecký Region. This development document was created as part of a wider discussion involving the public, official representatives and organisations from all social groups in the Ústecký Region.

The result of this consultation is a strategy which spells out the steps it is necessary to take for this region to become a pleasant place to live, work and rest, and a destination people will want to return to time and again.

The Ústecký Region's sustainable development strategy has been produced as part of a project called 'Support for the Creation of Sustainable Development Strategy in Selected Regions of the Czech Republic', given financial support and advice by the UNDP, The Ministry of the Environmental, The Ministry for Regional Development and The State Environmental Fund. Many thanks must go to these organisations. Without their financial and professional assistance, this document would have been considerably more difficult to produce.

**Jiří Šulc**

President of the Ústí Region

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Reasons for and Contents of the Book

Planning and evaluation of sustainable development at various levels of public administration is becoming a highly desired and preferred topic. Demand from representatives of relevant institutions and organisation for a detailed manual which would describe the stages of developing a high quality strategic plan and the use of sustainable development indicators was identified during the implementation of the pilot project 'Support to the development of sustainable development strategies in selected regions of the Czech Republic.' The project was run by Institute for Environmental Policy, a non-governmental non-profit organisation, under the auspices of the UNDP, and Czech Ministry for Regional Development and Ministry of the Environment in collaboration with the Regional Authorities of the Liberec and Ústí Regions, and was co-funded by the State Environmental Fund of the Czech Republic. The primary objective of the project was to test a proposed framework methodology in practice and to develop sustainable development strategies at the regional level.

This book presents a modified methodology that arises from practical experience with the reality of two different regions, and is the logical outcome of the activities focusing on sustainable development issues and instruments for its implementation at the regional level. By publishing it, we have therefore crowned and generalised the existing achievements and practical experience.

Whereas a detailed methodology for planning sustainable development at the local level – Local Agenda 21 – has already been developed, no such material has so far seen the light of day for higher levels. This book attempts to explain and describe a basic approach to this new subject matter as yet not sufficiently covered or practically enforced, in order to make the essence of the term 'sustainable development' understood and explain the set of procedures used for its implementation in the actual regions taking advantage of the specific instruments.

The European Union has made sustainable development its horizontal theme for the upcoming budget period (2007-2013), and is planning to disburse considerable sums from its Structural Funds for this period. Surprisingly enough, there has been no standard methodology in force up to now which could be followed securely by project designers.

The need for a standard-setting manual or methodology for planning and evaluation of sustainable development at the regional level is also given by the minimal interaction between the local and national levels of public administration – national, regional SD strategies are largely formulated in too vague terms, whereas the local processes often succeed in solving partial aspects while seldom inducing the necessary changes on a larger scale.

1.2 The Aim of the Book

This Manual does not aim to provide general information on the sustainable development (SD) concept. On the authors' experience, general texts dealing with SD are not familiar with the targeted practitioners at the local and regional levels, and are virtually useless to them in the practical sense. The principal aim of this Manual, therefore, is to transfer/share practical experience with actualising

sustainable development at the regional level with the logical overlap to the local and national levels. The user of the Manual will obtain a general set of information on planning and evaluation of regional SD.

The Manual thus focuses on all possible aspects of using the various available instruments for applying sustainable development. The Manual contains a set of steps in developing a strategic SD plan from the analytical stage to developing the draft proposal, including its public hearing and commenting, to the final stage of implementing the strategic targets. Separate chapters deal with the essence how to define priorities (strategic targets) properly based on partial studies in the analytical section in order to obtain the broadest possible range of relevant data and information:

- evaluation of existing strategies and concepts in light of SD principles applying the SIA (Sustainability Impact Assessment) method;
- employing quantitative and qualitative sociological surveys among the public and representatives of stakeholders;
- application of sets of SD indicators in order to describe the region's development trends.

It is vital for enforcing the SD concept to apply indicators for monitoring the planned priorities and development targets. A substantial section of this book deals with the advantage of using headline and programme indicators for evaluating the intensity of sustainable development.

The Manual further includes a description of the potential risks when using partial instruments to plan and evaluate SD at the regional level and how to avoid them, as well as a definition of possible obstacles in preparing and developing strategic plans and in assessing the quality of their implementation.

In addition, the Manual describes the relationship between a SD strategic plan at the regional level and the other existing policy documents and programmes at the local level (Local Agenda 21, Local Action 21) and at the national level.

1.3 The Audience for the Book

The Manual is addressing the following target groups:

- State Administration
- Regional Authorities
- Representatives of micro-regions
- Non-governmental non-profit organisations
- Representatives of municipalities of the 3rd class
- National park and protected area administrations
- Development agencies
- Regional and municipal politicians
- Government Committees for Sustainable Development

The Manual is based on Czech experience with implementation of sustainable development at the regional level and exercises Czech examples, pilot studies and reality. However, the method it explains can be used in any state and region with a similar system of public administration.

2. WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, AND WHY SHOULD IT BE ACTUALISED?

The concept of sustainable development can be seen as an idea, a philosophy, or political conviction or school of thought, based on a set of defined basic principles. Sustainable development principles tend to assume various definitions, but their message is always similar.



"Sustainable development is development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Gro Harlem Brundtland, World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987.

2.1 Why Sustainable Development? Is Its Practical Implementation Realistic?

The primary objective of implementing the concept of SD is to improve the quality of life and increase people's contentment. The point of implementing SD is to find an ideal, not even, linkage between the economic, social, and environmental aspects of society within the scope of good governance. The endeavour for a long-term development perspective is the essence. Representatives of all stakeholders in decision-making of relevant administrative bodies in order to achieve a more comprehensive management of society is a precondition for sustainability, especially so at the local and regional levels. It is not easy to achieve in a such manner development, of course, and it has only been practised to a negligible extent so far. Reasons for this are many, and three fundamental causes can be identified:

- 1) Unwillingness to make the concept of sustainable development tangible and widely known as such.
- 2) Unwillingness of individuals and organisations to change one's behaviour (attitudes), and unwillingness of public administration at all levels to make alternative, temporarily unpopular decisions.
- 3) Lack of experience with application of instruments (strategic planning and SD indicators) which have the potential to bring the SD concept in its full context to actualisation.

"Make sustainable development reality."

Kofi Annan (2002): World Summit on Sustainable Development – WSSD.

In order for the concept of SD to be implemented more efficiently, the following must be done:

- Define a target 'ideal' state of sustainable development.
- Reconsider the starting points, and try to change the general opinion on sustainable development.
- Consider the full context of SD in a new and better way.
- Change the standard language used for the matter of the subject.
- Provide the public with positive non-technical solutions and ideas rather than more bans and regulations.
- Start with 'everyday trifles.'
- Find a new attractive design for sustainability.
- Make the entire subject matter easier, pleasant, and light-hearted.
- Emphasise a strictly scientific approach and application of instruments that enable it.
- Avoid confusing 'sustainable development' with a scientific discipline open only to specialists.
- Prevent further diffusion of the SD issue.

When implementing the concept of SD in the actual societal conditions, logically, it becomes clear that it is essential to apply the individual specific SD principles to planning and, subsequently, decision-making processes. Often declared balance between the three dimensions of sustainable development – the economic, social (human and social capital), and environmental ones – is virtually unreasonable in practical terms, and one of the dimensions will always prevail depending on the characteristics of a given region.

Long-term endeavours for a more effective practical implementation of the concept of SD¹ has brought with it a number of positive changes (minor successes), especially in the form of strategic planning and evaluation tools for sustainable development:

- a new approach to strategic planning, modifications to the development methodology and form of documents;
- new requirements for work with transparent and measurable sustainable development indicators.

2.2 The Regional Dimension of Sustainable Development

For the last decade countries are experiencing a progress in its SD policy planning. Approaching the issues at the national government level was characteristic of the 1990s, motivated by the requirements of the international community – the UN Conferences in Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg. In many countries, this approach has resulted in the development of national SD strategies. Nevertheless it is evident that the strategies face serious problems: **insufficiently defined priorities for individual topics, unclear definition of relations between SD pillars, missing quantification of financial costs and administrative requirements needed to achieve the targets.** These deficiencies have resulted in a very weak practical effect of the SD strategies.

¹ Appendix 1: An overview of evolution of the SD concept.

The logical outcome of the situation is the interest of the medial segments between the national and local levels – the regions – in implementing policy solutions in the sustainability field. Institutions at the regional level have started to demand implementation of SD principles within their fields of authority. Regional authorities have been attempting to work the SD principles into their policy documents, including Regional Development Strategies and Regional Development Programmes.

2.3 Groups Concerned with Sustainable Development?

Sustainable development and its planning and evaluation concerns each inhabitant of the region, namely:

- Representatives of all sectors;
- Representatives of all types of organisations and institutions;
- Professional stakeholders;
- The public.

The initiative to exercise the sustainable development in a region may come from the state administration, local authorities, citizens group, or NGOs (non-governmental non-profit organisation) within the region, or from an external group. However, it is vital that the initiative has political support from the regional authorities, and that the process of implementation of sustainable development is formalised. Only then sufficient attention will be paid by all stakeholders, and the endeavour will be generally respected.

2.4 Instruments for SD Planning and Implementation at the Regional Level

Strategic planning and indicators are the basic tools that can make the concept of SD real in practical terms. The instruments complement one another and they must always be applied in tandem. By involving representatives of stakeholders and the public gives the SD implementation process weight and makes it possible to enforce it more strongly across the society.

2.4.1 Strategic Planning

Strategic planning guarantees that problems are solved systematically and that public budgets are spent efficiently. It is a valuable instrument for directing future progress in an area by means of knowledgeable definition of priorities and strategic targets which are necessary to attain in order to achieve desirable social change.

Sustainable development is a very complex matter, and its strategic planning will help find optimal linkage between all the aspects of development and progress and ensure their compliance with the sustainability principles. SD planning is difficult first and foremost because the concept is so vast. In order to keep a SD strategy realistic and implementable, the number of priorities and targets need to be limited to the most essential. The preconditioning factor is the emphasis on quality and objective evaluation of processes triggered by the adoption of the document, and on the openness and continual updating of the document in reaction to changes in each sector. A realistic and implementable document cannot contain everything, it must rather concentrate on expertly selected key topics. Its simple and comprehensible form then also facilitates substantial involvement of stakeholders and the public in the entire planning process. Strategic planning assumes numerous forms and it must be built on scientific principles in order to be effective.

Basic criteria in SD strategic planning:

- Long-term time outlook;
- Respect to the economic, social and environmental pillar within good governance framework;
- Simple, brief and comprehensible contents;
- Scientific approach and rationality;
- Openness;
- Aim at a framework and cross-section strategic plan across sectors.

2.4.2 Sustainable Development Indicators

Sustainable development targets are often broad and difficult to quantify, that's why specific measures must be developed for their implementation and monitoring the means of indicators. Global (Agenda 21), national and regional SD strategic plans therefore tend to be complemented with a set of indicators which make it possible to monitor whether the proposed measures actually lead to achieving the strategic targets, and thus to a change in a given aspect of reality. The indicators themselves are not capable of attaining or even supporting sustainability, but they can be useful information for the decision-making of various administrations and politicians, and may help achieve better public knowledge of sustainable development.

New questions posed by new principles and concepts called for new answers. The up to date information society emphasises the identification of associations on social processes and on sectors. There is an effort to aggregate information in order to express a problem made up by the synergetic effects of various processes by a single figure. Primary indicators need to be weighted against each other and to be more complex and predicating indicators need to be created. The use of transparent and measurable indicators is essential for good governance.

An indicator is a measurable and aggregated portion of information related to an aspect of sustainable development.

An indicator simplifies information about complex phenomena and processes.

An indicator facilitates communication among all stakeholders.

The hierarchy of complexity:

- **Primary data** – found in statistics or measured directly (e.g., NO_x concentration, or population of a region).
- **Indicators** – aggregated primary data (e.g. number of days per year with NO_x concentration exceeding the limit, or the number of people in the region threatened by social exclusion).
- **Aggregated indicators** (e.g. GDP, ecological footprint, etc.).
- **Indicator frameworks and sets of indicators** for a country, region, municipality, or a sector (e.g. ECI, OECD, UN).

2.4.3 Involvement of Stakeholders and the Public

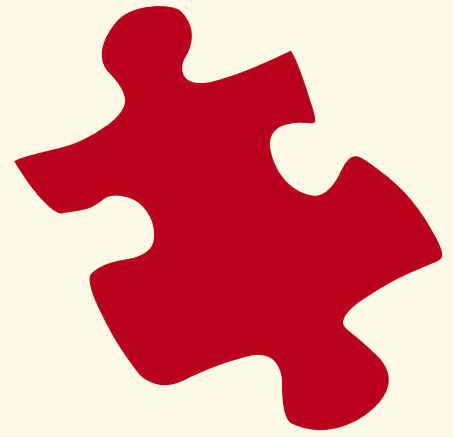
Participation of various stakeholders and public is one of the key components of implementing the concept of SD. It is strategic planning with the participation of all stakeholders that makes it possible to eliminate potential conflicts related to the implementation of the strategies. The objective is to reach a social consensus and wide participation in the process of practical implementation of sustainability. Therefore, in order to implement a strategic plan or the sustainability principles, the broadest possible range of information must be collected from those concerned by the entire process, thus positively affecting the success of the strategy.

The main sources of risk when working with the public:

- Unrestrained public participation may have a generally negative impact on the quality of the planning process.
- Work with public is time and money consuming.
- The public often tries to enforce unrealistic and irrational opinions.
- The occurrence of 'chronic complainers' and 'emotional enthusiasts' may have a negative influence on the public, seriously complicating the planning and implementation.
- Inappropriately, the public often tries to criticise the form (methodology) rather than the contents.

There are a number of efficient tools for eliciting opinions, attitudes and information as well as for guided participation of stakeholders and the public, which are described in the following chapters of this book.

3. MAKING A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL



Let us open this chapter by stating that strategic planning for sustainable development is most difficult right at the regional level, especially concerning policy and methodology. A lot fewer SD strategic plans have been right drawn world-wide for regions than for the national or local levels.

Contents and purposes of policy documents at different levels:

Global documents are primarily concerned with world views and philosophic strategies, and tend to be multi-disciplinary. They are drawn at a high level of generality, and it follows that they cannot include the implementation dimension apart from very general goals. Sufficient human resources are typically available for their development, but willingness to find political consensus is a serious problem here.

National documents typically follow a general, therefore free-to-interpret, 'upside-down' concept. They are much closer to the implementation dimension, still dispose relatively sufficient human resources, and political solutions are viable in truly developed countries that show an understanding for sustainable development.

Local documents are developed for use at a level of relatively close communities, which for the every reason tend to be well predisposed for strategic planning and broad social consensus as well as naturally predisposed for maintaining a certain level of local self-reliance; the frequent deficits of human resources can be overcome e.g. by means of networking.

Regional SD strategic documents, on the contrary, must be fully compatible upward, i.e. toward the national strategy, in order to succeed. They need to be comprehensive within the regional authorities, but also elaborated down to the very practical implementation framework; increased human resources cannot unfortunately fully compensate for the little chance of political agreement, which tends to be truly difficult to reach within the region due to the political rivalry between important positions. The most serious of all pitfalls, however, is the tight connection between the two opposite directions – toward the state as well as the municipalities – which is rather difficult to bridge by sociological methods and various forms of participation in the document preparation and 'debugging' processes.

The fundamental starting point of any strategic planning for sustainable development should be setting limits to the environmental pillar within which the economic system can develop in a way that ensures social equity and good quality of life. This approach to sustainable development can be summarised in the motto ‘economy is the means, the environment is the precondition.’

3.1 Defining the Objective of a Strategic Plan

Why draw a strategic plan for sustainable development:

- Ideal linkage between the basic aspects of society.
- More sophisticated governance – systematic dealing with problems.
- Long-term development perspective – implementation of long-term changes.
- Improved quality of life and increased contentment of citizens.
- Efficient spending of regional funding.

The doubts:

- Duplicity with other regional documents.
- Non-transparency of strategic and policy-related documents.
- Absence of legal coverage of sustainable development.

Unlike conventional regional policy documents, the point of the SD strategic plan is to define a comprehensive framework for the region’s long-term development which complies with sustainable development principles. The objective is thus to prepare a regional cross-section and umbrella document on which specific partial (sector-related) policies and action plans (action programmes) will be based.

Developing an entirely new policy document at the regional level may definitely seem a duplicity to some other development plans. The purpose and form of each of these documents, however, is quite different. These departmental conceptual documents are usually short-run documents covering few years at the most, and it does not deal with the long-term systematic progress of the region. Even more importantly, such programmes do not apply the sustainable development concept. Making such a new strategic plan has the advantage of being able to apply sustainable development principles without limitation, make use of latest methodology in its development, and bring forth, by means of participation and consensus, a long-term document for a twenty-year time frame. Such a document complies to the latest trends in regional politics.

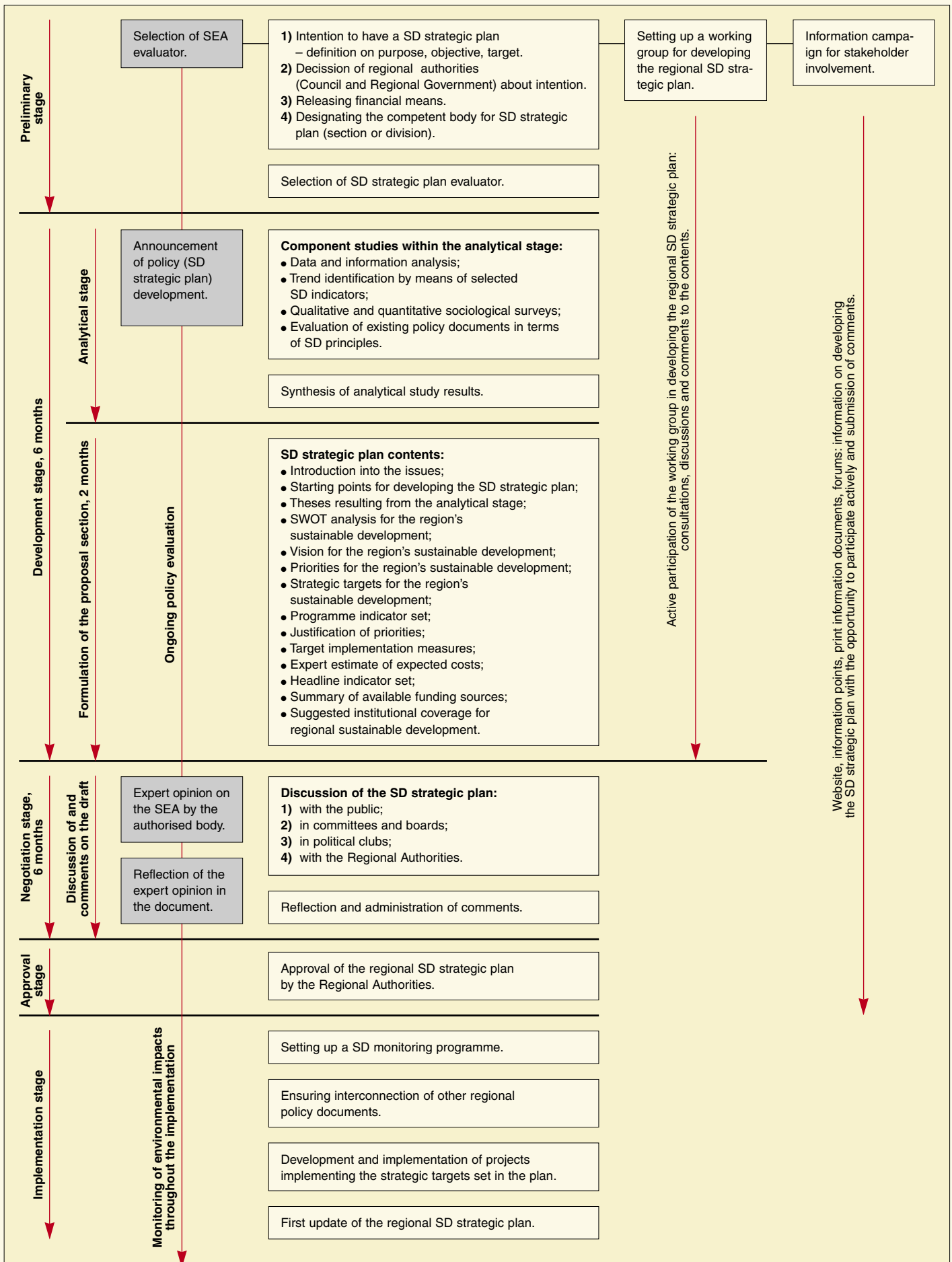
Another option could be an updating and amending of existing regional development strategies. Such an approach may seem easier and cheaper at first sight, but the process of updating tends to be more complicated in practice compared to developing a new document entirely. An existing regional development strategies will be bound by principles upon which it was produced and which are not compliant to the sustainability concept. Harmonising such documents, in practical terms, mean their complete rewriting, which is often further complicated by the obsolete formation of the documents.

The practical implementation of sustainable development remains a problem. The sustainable development concept can be transposed into the political and planning reality in three ways, synergic to each other in the ideal case. The groundwork is preparation of supra-departmental regional SD strategies, followed by a reflection of sustainable development principles and viewpoints in departmental policies and plans (not confined to environment conservation policy, but also in transport, energy, resource and other policies). Continually, sustainable development should be implemented at the local level as well (Local Agenda 21, Local Action 21), i.e., the level where the implementation of SD through specific projects is the most effective. These local activities are directed by the Regional Strategic Plan.

Local Agenda 21 and Local Action 21:

- **Local Agenda 21** is a development programme (strategic plan) at the local level (town, village, micro-region), implementing the SD principles and reflecting specific local issues. It is made with direct public participation, i.e. in co-operation with citizens, expert institutions, representatives of businesses and non-governmental organisations, and its objective is to secure long-term quality of life and the environment in the specified place.
- **Local Action 21** is a follow-up action plan aimed at an accelerated and effective implementation of specific strategic targets set in a development programme (strategy) by means of practical activities.

3.2 A Diagram for Strategic Plan Development at a Regional Level



3.3 The Form of a Strategic Plan: Make It Brief and Well-Arranged

The strategic plan will be intended for an assortment of diverse target groups ranging from local government representatives to the citizens of the region, and should therefore be composed in such a way that makes it easy to understand to each of these groups. A comprehensible document is more transparent and allows more stakeholders to participate in the planning process and the implementation itself.

Formal criteria for a good sustainable development strategic plan:

- A time period of at least 15 years.
- A modern, well-arranged, plain and brief strategic plan increases the chances of participation of all stakeholders.
- Framework and cross-section strategic plan – regional development is an issue across all sectors.
- Emphasis on instrument for monitoring and evaluation of the strategic plan implementation.
- Specific and quantified strategic targets enable more realistic and effective implementation; they are not dogmas, but outlined directions for future progress.
- A live document – it is going to be updated, or its contents will be included in related departmental documents when they are updated.
- The document is based on a broad range of credible information provided by official statistical institutions or organisations authorised to collect and interpret data.
- The document is prepared in an open participatory way together with an expert working group participates, it is discussed with stakeholders and the public.
- Consensual document – it respects the stakeholders’ opinions and public opinion.
- The document is grounded in the current social situation.
- The document is realistic and its implementation is viable.

For a good SD strategic plan, based on an extensive and detailed analytical section and periodically discussed with stakeholders, to be produced, a period of at least 14 months must be considered (see the diagram).

Risks and obstacles to making a good regional strategic plan:

Risk	Solution
Chosen homogeneity (heterogeneity) of the scope: it is very difficult to choose the right scale of detail in regional planning, i.e. how much detail to go into.	<p>A Regional Strategic Plan must not substitute local strategies – Local Agendas 21.</p> <hr/> <p>A Regional Strategic Plan must indicate broader context while keeping a specific content, it must not be general.</p>
Width of the scope: the broad issue of sustainable development inveigles into being too vague.	<p>The number of priorities and strategic targets must inevitably be limited to those essential to the future development of the region.</p> <hr/> <p>The strategic plan must define unambiguous specific and quantifiable targets.</p> <hr/> <p>Sustainable development indicators must be applied throughout the planning process.</p>

3.4 Who Invite to Co-operate and Why?

The strategic plan is intended for all the region's inhabitants, and must therefore be developed in a participatory way. The final version of the strategic plan should be a consensus of all the region's major groups. Using various techniques, all stakeholders are involved in the development of the plan and their needs are embodied in the proposal section of the strategic plan. The objective here is to avoid numerous conflicts in the course of the preparation and adoption of the document. At the same time, the share of citizens participating in the decision-making is increased, thus strengthening feedback on each step within the planning process.

Which groups to involve in the strategic plan preparation:

- **Stakeholders** who may have a significant influence on the region's sustainability: specific individuals and legal persons participating in the drafting and implementation of the strategy, who also actively or passively take part in decision-making processes in particular situations, space and time.
- **Major groups:** generally speaking, important groups which must not be overlooked in good governance, strategic planning and decision-making.
- **General public:** citizens, who have the right to participate in strategic planning and in supervision of its practical implementation.

The planning process must involve anyone with a potential influence on its result. It is especially recommendable to involve stakeholder representatives and major group representatives in the early, analytical stage of the strategic plan preparation. Their knowledge of environment may help in the data and information collection. Knowing the public opinion(s) related to the future and development of the region before formulating the proposal section of the strategic plan is also a great advantage.

3.4.1 How to Involve the Stakeholders and Public?

It is vital to conduct the planning process in such a form that makes it accessible for everyone and enables involvement of all major groups. There are a broad range of methods of involving stakeholders in strategic planning. At the regional level planning, methodology and procedures must be chosen that are capable of securing distribution of representative information to each target group and/or involvement of large numbers of the region's population. It is important to understand that individual approach is not viable at this level. The involvement of the target groups must therefore be formalised to some extent, and their views must inevitably be generalised for regional planning purposes.

The first step in order to involve target groups and secure collection of information for the analytical stage of the strategy preparation consists of **standardised sociological surveys**. The methods make it possible to collect representative information about the public opinion or the views and opinions of stakeholder representatives. Their objective is to map the views and opinions of target groups in respect of sustainable development. Two types of sociological surveys have to be applied:

- A qualitative sociological survey to yield information on opinions of selected stakeholder representatives (or expert public representatives).
- A quantitative sociological survey to identify the public opinion among the region's population.

Each of these is a specific source of information for the preparation of the proposal section of a good strategic plan for sustainable development. Both the forms must be carried out using standardised sociological methods, which are described in detail in the following sections of this book.

Setting up a **formalised working group** at the regional level is a good way of involving stakeholder and major group representatives in the entire process of developing a SD strategic plan. Representatives of these groups should be involved continuously in the planning process, and the primary task of the working group is to shape the contents of the strategic plan, but not to shape the methodology of its preparation or its form.

The structure and purpose of the working group:

- It consists of representatives of stakeholders and major groups.
- Experience rules a maximum of 30 members.
- Its composition must be varied to represent all sectors (areas) of development.
- Working group members are selected following a pre-defined key, and a supreme body of the region must participate in the selection process (profound knowledge of the social environment).
- The working group meets when a certain stage in the strategic plan preparation is completed, and the partial results are presented and discussed at each meeting.
- It comments on, consults on and influences the contents of the proposal section of the strategic plan; above all it takes part in:
 - a) preparing the SWOT analysis;
 - b) defining the vision;
 - c) selecting priorities and strategic targets;
 - d) selecting sustainable development criteria.
- It does not interfere with the methodology.

So-called **sustainable development forums** (opinion exchange meetings) are a good method for eliciting information concerning stakeholders' attitudes. At these meetings, the strategic plan can also be presented to a chosen major group, enabling its representatives to voice their views and opinions. In order for the strategic plan to be implemented, political support and approval at the regional level is necessary. That is why it has to be discussed by:

- Committees within the Regional Authority;
- Political Clubs;
- the Regional Authority;
- the Public.

Draft versions of the SD strategic plan are presented at the forums and their formulation is discussed.

Involving the public at the regional level is not easy. An overall **information campaign** consisting of a number of steps is a method attempting to address and involve the public. Attractive popularisation of the issues of sustainable development is a precondition for a successful public campaign.

The information campaign and public involvement requires:

- **Print information documents** (press releases, paid publicity): to inform the public about the process and objectives of the regional sustainable development strategic plan, and about the opportunities for public participation in its preparation.
- **Public inquiries:** to collect public opinion(s) regarding a specific point of the strategic plan, such as selection priorities and strategic targets of the sustainable development of the region.
- **Information points:** places where those interested can inform themselves about the process of the preparation and the current wording of each of the sections of the strategic plan, and to submit their comment in a pre-defined fashion.
- **Web sites:** a virtual platform at the regional level where people can familiarise themselves with the process of the preparation and the current wording of each of the sections of the strategic plan. Space is provided for discussions and opinions, and comments can be submitted from here.

3.5 The Analytical Stage of Preparation: How to Use Data and Information Sources?

Any approach to sustainable development planning at any level requires, as the first step, mapping the status quo and a delineation of the limits and targets of sustainable development, that is, of the actual exploitable space for the activities and of the standard to be achieved. SD planning must be grounded in a credible and detailed analysis of the state of the three pillars – the economic, social, and environmental – within public administration, and in a description of their interrelations and mutual influences.

3.5.1 Assessing Existing Policies in Light of SD Principles

Assessment of strategies and plans in light of their impacts on sustainable development or, in short, Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA)², is a recent approach which can, if taken seriously, have a significant contribution toward implementation of SD principles in departmental policies, be it at the national, regional or local level, as well as being a source of information for developing a SD strategy.

It is essential for the authors' team of the SD strategic plan to become thoroughly familiar with all existing policy documents and to assess their compliance with sustainable development principles. Based on that, the quality of the existing policy documents, or planning processes so far undertaken at the given level, can be evaluated, data and information can be obtained from various sectors, and limits for realistic viability can be set for the proposal section of the SD strategy under preparation. The objective of the assessment is to compile a comprehensive study characterising the quality of the existing policy documents and their compliance with sustainability principles; this study constitutes one of the bases for the proposal section of the future SD strategy.

² **A definition of SIA by T. Devuyst (1999):** "SIA is a formalised process of determining, predicting and assessing the potential impact of any initiative, including variants, on the sustainable development of a society. The process includes a written report on the desired sustainability assessment, improving the government responsibility in decision-making."

A definition of SIA by the former UK Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions: "SIA is a systematic and repeating process carried out during the preparation of a plan or strategy that identifies and describes the extent to which the implementation of the plan or strategy will contribute to achieving environmental, social and economic objectives of sustainable development, and the purpose of which is an improvement in the implementation of the plan or strategy."

The main differences between EIA, SEA and SIA (See D. Devuyt,1999):

Type of activity	Environmental Impact Assessment – EIA	Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment – SEA	Sustainability Impact Assessment – SIA
Subject of assessment	Projects with a potentially significant environmental impact.	Policies, plans and programmes (PPP) with a potentially significant environmental impact.	Initiatives with a potentially significant environmental impact, such as legal standards, regulations, policies, plans, programmes and projects.
Reference	Environment policy.	Environment policy.	Sustainable development policy or concept.
Scope of assessment	Mainly the environmental perspective (e.g. water, soil, air, landscape, noise); occasionally social-economic conditions at the local level (the closest vicinity of the project).	The environmental effect assessment (e.g. on water, soil, air, landscape) is often complemented with an assessment of social-economic aspects at the regional, national or international level (depending on the extent of the potentially affected area).	Sustainability targets must be assessed at the relevant level (local, regional, national, or international). This applies to e.g. non-renewable resources, precautionary principle, attention to long-term effects and climate change, education and employment of local populations.
Method of implementation	Implemented by a relevant regional or national government authority in most cases.	Implemented by several relevant regional or national government authorities; by many government authorities in exceptional cases.	Implemented by several relevant local authorities as an experiment.
Methods of impact prediction	A wide range of quantitative impact prediction methods available.	Considering the indefinite nature of policy proposals and plans, qualitative impact prediction is typically made.	Sustainability impact prediction methods require further research. Key solution is found in generation of sets of applicable indicators to predict effects of various activities of the SD of a society.

SIA is currently one of the most appropriate methods of integrating the general principles of sustainable development into departmental strategic planning. By assessing the potential effects of strategic decisions, SIA enables integration of SD requirements into strategy or plan preparation. In near future, SIA is likely going to become mandatory for development of strategic and policy plans (similarly to the mandatory EIA documentation for investors in projects subject to the Environmental Impact Assessment Act).

Its subject of assessment – sustainability – is much broader and more comprehensive than in the case of EIA and SEA.

The following types of documents can be assessed for sustainability impacts:

- Acts of law, government decrees and regulations;
- Generally binding municipal regulations;
- Government memoranda, Municipal Assembly memoranda;
- Spatial plans of large areas, regions and municipalities;
- Programmes at the national, regional and municipal levels;
- Strategies at the national, regional and municipal levels;
- Projects.

Sustainability Impact Assessment Methodology

Since the sustainability assessment concept is a brand novelty, its methodology is still the subject for development and discussion. Numerous sources exist, nonetheless, which can be put to use in pilot assessment of regional strategic documents in respect of their impacts on sustainability.

First and foremost, SIA is a process. Its primary objective is to test the functionality of a plan, thus helping to make it better. Recommendations following from SIA should be taken into account by relevant authorities, especially the users and addressees of the plan; some may be accepted and others declined. Sustainability assessment (evaluation) is used for timely unveiling of conflicts hidden in the plan (strategy), it describes its potential impacts and works them into the preparation process for updates of the material. The evaluation output, therefore, reflects the nature of decisions that have (or had) to be made when preparing the plan. It is important to bear in mind that the assessment cannot substitute a final decision for which an authority in charge is responsible.

SIA should encompass the assessment of the following:

- Scope of the strategy (plan) in order to determine the degree of compliance with sustainable development targets;
- Alternative strategic plans for potential development and change that can take place in the region, including evaluation of the plan under assessment and its comparison to the alternatives;
- Strategic policies at higher levels and any related proposals.

The assessment takes place concurrently with the strategy (plan) preparation process. The two activities have to be independent of one another, but interconnected. In order for a sustainability assessment to help improve the quality of a plan in preparation, the two activities have to affect one another at a certain stage of the plan preparation. An assessment that only takes place after the plan has been finalised (or even approved) is a lot less effective as it cannot influence the process of developing the plan in any way. Still, it can contribute to assessing the functionality of the plan and provide some groundwork for its future revisions (modifications and amendments).

The interaction between a plan and its assessment does not end when the plan is finalised. It is vital to keep monitoring the effectiveness of the strategy (plan) and testing its functionality. The criteria that have been selected for assessing (evaluating) the strategy during its formulation can serve as the basis for future monitoring.

Focus on Assessing the Impact of a Strategy

A number of sustainable development definitions and criteria retain a great generality. The existing definitions of sustainable development are rather political, and a working, or 'operative' definition is missing which would lead to practical implementation of the sustainable development principles. The general sustainable development principles are difficult to exploit in impact assessment (SIA), as their practical value depends, to a high degree, on their interpretation.

SIA methodology attempts to overcome this deficiency by focusing on the impacts and targets of a plan, which are compared to defined limit values of sustainability (these values can be determined,

for example, using sustainable development indicators). Defined targets serve as a basis for testing the strategy. They should specify in what way the given plan (strategy) will contribute to achieving sustainable development. Therefore, all the proposed targets of the plan (strategy) should be measurable. The following stage of the SIA then evaluates the functionality of the plan (strategy) in relation to these targets.

Consequences of sustainability assessment for regional plans and policies at the regional level

The basic precondition for successful integration of sustainable development principles into plans and policy documents at the regional level is that the plans should be specific enough in their aims and fit for assessment. The assessment (evaluation) should contribute to elimination of insufficiently specified and unclear aims from the plan before they are finalised. Prospectively, all regional plans and policies should include and integrate the following:

- General principles of sustainable development derived from internationally and nationally accepted documents (UN: Agenda 21, Implementation Plan; OECD: Key Principles of Sustainable Development Strategies; possibly others);
- Specific sustainability criteria relating to the general principles;
- Sustainability indicators in order to define the limit values and targets for sustainable development.

Independent Sustainability Assessment

The absolute precondition for a successful assessment is its maximum objectivity. The following help achieve objectivity:

- a) assessment methodology (defining sustainability targets as criteria for the assessment);
- b) the institute of independent assessors (evaluators).

It is not very likely that the assessment could be carried out with objectivity by the same team that drafts (and is responsible for) the plan or strategy. The composition of sustainability assessment teams will differ from cases, they may also include academic institutions and consultancy offices, as well as one or two of the plan developers in order to secure the assessment team's proper understanding of the plan.

The Stages of Sustainability Assessment

Assessment of each regional strategic documents (strategies) is divided into three stages:

- a) Assessment of functionality, efficiency and strategic quality;
- b) Assessment against sustainable development criteria;
- c) Assessment against sustainable development principles.

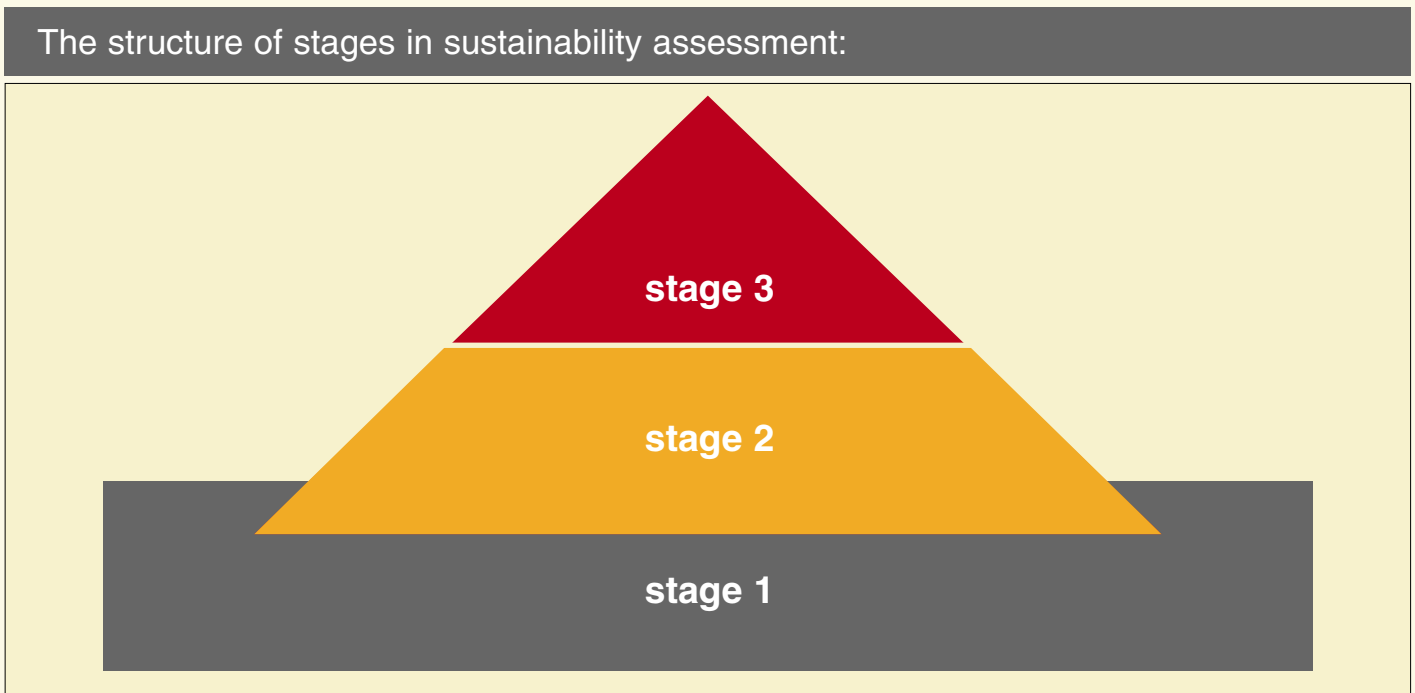
A summary table (tick-mark matrix) is the basis for evaluation in each stage. It summarises the assessment results in each stage according to common criteria. At the same time, the results of the assessment are described and interpreted in a separate text. The table and its interpretation may serve as the basis for the following:

- a) The strategy developer;
- b) The strategy customer (the regional authority);
- c) Possibly also the strategy receiver.

It also serves as a guideline for strategy evaluation, updating and improvement as well as implementation.

The Structure of Sustainability Assessment

Sustainability assessment follows a hierarchical pattern from specific evaluation of the reflection of sustainability criteria for each principle (Stage 2) to evaluation of the sustainability principles (Stage 3). The essence of the criteria and principle assessment is the evaluation of the functionality, or strategic quality of the document (Stage 1). The structure of each stage in sustainability assessment is shown in the following chart.



Categories and Evaluation Criteria for Stage 1

The primary evaluation, i.e. Stage 1 (assessing the functionality, efficiency and strategic quality) uses the simplest gamut of values: YES or NO. The point here is to provide a fundamental evaluation of a great many miscellaneous regional strategies for which a common basis had to be found. In accordance with generally accepted principles of strategic planning³, each policy material is tested against the ten following criteria:

- 1) Has it been approved by a regional authority;
- 2) Does it include a SWOT analysis;
- 3) Is it based on credible information and a status quo analysis;
- 4) Does it contain short-term (1-2 years) specific and quantifiable targets;
- 5) Does it contain medium-term (3-5 years) specific and quantifiable targets;
- 6) Does it contain long-term (beyond 5 years) specific and quantifiable targets;
- 7) Does it describe instruments (specific measures and tasks) for achieving the targets;
- 8) Does it include an overview of financial tools (funding sources) for implementing the targets;
- 9) Does it define indicators for monitoring the implementation;
- 10) Is it realistic and implementable.

³ e.g., Kirkpatrick, C., George, C., Curran, J. (2001): Development of Criteria to Assess the Effectiveness of National Strategies for Sustainable Development. Department for International Development, University of Manchester.

The question whether the strategic plan is realistic and implementable can be regarded as a summary and key criterion, even though only the entire tenfold will yield a complete evaluation of the strategy. It is a frequent deficiency of a great many strategies that they ‘lack a core,’ meaning the strategy does not contain any description of how the planned activities will contribute to actualising the targets that it sets. In more specific terms, the strategy fails to explain why the outcomes of the planned activities that it outlines should be better than the outcomes of similar activities undertaken in the past. An effective strategy, therefore, should be realistic above all⁴.

Categories and Evaluation Criteria for Stage 2

Stage 2 constitutes evaluation of a strategy against sustainable development criteria. As this stage of evaluation is more complex, it employs a five-grade gamut of A, B, C, D, and N to evaluate the reflection of each sustainability criterion:

- A = the criterion is fully reflected and applied;
- B = the criterion is reflected and applied to a satisfactory degree, but some improvement is needed;
- C = the criterion is reflected and applied only partially, and substantial improvement is needed;
- D = the criterion is not reflected and applied;
- N = the reflection of the criterion cannot be assessed due to a different direction of the strategy; the criterion is irrelevant for the subject of the strategy.

In addition to the score for each criterion, the basic evaluation table contains a brief evaluation text which summarises the reasons for the given score. In case a B, C, or D was scored, where partial or substantial improvement in the reflection of the sustainability criterion is needed, it is useful to describe a method for the improvement.

Basic evaluation table:

SD Criterion	Score	Evaluation text
A1		
A2		
A3		
A4		

Categories and Evaluation Criteria for Stage 3

Stage 3 is the ‘tip of the pyramid’ – an evaluation of the strategy in light of sustainable development principles. The evaluation of all the criteria corresponding to the SD principle in question are summarised at this stage, as shown in the table. In addition to the aggregate of evaluation scores, each line of the table contains a verbal evaluation of the reflection of each principle in the assessed strategy. This is the basis for an overall qualitative evaluation of each criterion. The table is an efficient way how to show the biggest weaknesses and strengths of the assessed documents in terms of SD principles. It also makes a brief suggestion for improving the reflection of the SD principles. The table is therefore the basis for SD strategic planning in strategic documents.

⁴ Booth, D., Lucas, H. (2001): Initial Review of PRSP Documentation. Report commissioned by DFID for the Overseas Strategic Partnership with Africa. ODI. London.

Evaluation:

SD Principle	Principle scores				Overall evaluation – Conclusion
	1	2	3	4	
A					
B					
C					
D					
E					

The table also shows how effective the strategy is in terms of reflecting SD principles. If, for example, all the criteria show an A or B for a given principle, the principle has been reflected to a satisfactory degree. On the contrary, scoring mostly Cs or Ds indicates the need for a substantial improvement in the principle. A summary of recommendations is provided in the right-hand side column of the table.

Sustainable development principles and criteria used in assessment:

A. Responsibility toward future generations:

- A.1 Assessment of long-term impacts and promotion of long-term visions;
- A.2 Inter-generation and inter-regional solidarity;
- A.3 Environmental quality improvement for the sake of the future generations;
- A.4 Application of the precautionary principle.

B. Integration of economic, social and environmental targets:

- B.1 Development of the social and economic potential of the region in an environment-friendly fashion;
- B.2 Promotion of an active social policy;
- B.3 Promotion of environment protection and resource conservation;
- B.4 Promotion of trans-boundary co-operation.

C. Participation and consensus:

- C.1 Involvement of important stakeholders in developing and implementing the strategy;
- C.2 Securing public participation in local government decision-making;
- C.3 Transparency of strategic targets and clearly defined responsibilities;
- C.4 Securing information, communication, awareness and training regarding sustainable development.

D. Environment protection and resource conservation:

- D.1 Minimising negative impacts on the environment and public health;
- D.2 Promotion of renewable resources;
- D.3 Public health improvement;
- D.4 Application of the polluter-pays principle.

E. Organisation and management:

- E.1 Application of the subsidiarity principle;
- E.2 Establishment of a funding system for target implementation;
- E.3 Building capacity for target implementation;
- E.4 Setting up a system of measurable targets, monitoring and indicators.

3.5.2 Quantitative and Qualitative Sociological Surveys

One practical method of the involvement of stakeholders and public in strategic planning is the application of quantitative or qualitative sociological surveys during the analytical stage of the strategic plan preparation. Sociological surveys are standardised and representative queries which enable collection of information regarding a pre-defined social phenomenon. In this case, they inform about the target group opinions regarding the development of a region and its compliance with sustainability principles.

The aim of the sociological surveys should be above all the following:

- Collect information from representatives of stakeholders (expert public) regarding the existing and perceived potential for future development of the region, including its compliance with SD principles.
- Learn from public opinion regarding the image of the region where the public live and work.

The target group of the public must not be directly confronted with the term 'sustainable development', which is not comprehensible to the majority of people. The set of questions has to be formulated so that it deals with individual subject areas and provides a reflection of the sustainability principles. The information gathered in this way then represents the opinion of the target group. A well-drawn questionnaire along with a standardised and representative survey may yield a great deal of interesting information regarding the public views of the issue. Important output of the public opinion analysis is then worked into the strategic plan.

Qualitative sociological surveys

The objective of a qualitative survey conducted under strategic planning is to obtain a sufficient amount of very expert views and information, understand them and elucidate the meaning that the respondents attach to the information given regarding development trends in the various spheres of the region's social activity. In contrast to the quantitative one, the qualitative survey looks at a great amount of varied information from a limited number of individuals (respondents) in the sample; it may be difficult if not impossible to generalise the results (output) obtained. But the qualitative survey will never represent any public opinion, and generalisation of its output is not the point. A qualitative sociological survey process starts with monitoring and collecting data carried out with a sample of carefully pre-selected individuals – representatives of expert stakeholders.

Subsequently, potential regularities in the collected data are identified, their meaning is exposed, and preliminary conclusions are formulated. The qualitative survey represents a non-numeric survey and interpretation of the sample of the individuals opinions (a target group). The difference between a quantitative survey and a qualitative one is thus in the method of sample (population examination segment) construction. Whereas the purpose of the sample in a quantitative survey is to represent a population of individuals, the purpose of the sample in a qualitative survey is to represent an issue or a topic.

The information collection techniques used in qualitative surveys do not differ greatly in principle from those employed in quantitative surveys. During the analytical stage of strategic planning, it is

useful to use the technique of **non-standardised expert interview** following a prepared scenario. This is a dialogue between two experts, the inquirer and the respondent, for which the inquirer only has a very sketchy outline, which does not include any list of questions, their wording or sequence. Instead, it consists of subject areas. Therefore it is necessary for the inquirer to be well-versed in the issues in question.

An adequate sample of expert stakeholder representatives who are actively involved in specific development activities should be selected for the purposes of preparing a sustainable development strategic plan for a region. The size of the sample will depend on the population size of the region. The sample should be selected in co-operation with a regional authority (regional government or nature protection office), who tend to already have databases of such persons in use.

The sample should represent the following circles:

- Regional authorities and autonomous authorities;
- Local government and autonomous authorities of important municipalities or municipality associations in the region;
- Regional Academic Institutions (Universities);
- Important businesses and business development agencies;
- Important social institutions and organisations;
- Important environment protection institutions and organisations;
- Important non-governmental non-profit organisations in the region.

The representatives should be selected according to the following criteria:

- Permanently settled and active in the region;
- Coming from various social circles: public administration, business and non-profit sectors;
- Expert in their field;
- Actively interested in the regional scene.

A qualitative survey is the first step in involving expert public in the preparation of a strategic plan. Following are the general aims of an expert interview:

- Identify the extent of knowledge of the sustainable development issue and of its actualisation at the regional level;
- Collect opinions regarding the status quo of the various segments of social life in the region and their potential to progress toward sustainability.

A secondary aim and a valuable outcome is the:

- compilation of a database of experts interested in active participation in implementation of sustainable development.

Expert interviews tend to be very time-demanding. A typical interview may take about one hour.

A suggested scenario (general outline) for an interview with example subject areas:

Part A: Sustainable regional development – *a conversation mainly related to the status quo of the region:*

- Do you consider the status quo of the region (including the development trends) sustainable in the long run?
- In which segment of social activity is the state most critical?
- Is a substantial change in the status quo toward sustainability realistic and implementable within 10-20 years?
- What is currently blocking the change toward sustainable development?
- Are there any positive examples of methods, decisions, or measures in the region that could help the practical implementation of sustainable regional development?

Part B: Partnership in the region – *a conversation mainly relating to co-operation between public administration and the civic society:*

- Is it easy to start partnerships on specific projects in the region?
- What role should the regional governments and municipalities play in order for the SD principles to be effectively implemented in practice?
- What role should NGOs and the public play in order for the SD principles to be effectively implemented in practice?
- What is the role of municipalities in effective practical implementation of SD principles?
- Are there any functioning positive examples of successful Local Agenda 21 processes in the regions?
- What methods of co-operation do you regard as the most effective (tried and tested)?

Part C: Existing regional policy documents – *a conversation mainly relating to the quality of strategic plans, the actualisation of their targets, and the overall implementation of SD principles:*

- Can you evaluate the quality of the region's policy documents?
- What areas do they cover sufficiently and what areas insufficiently?
- Do you know the strategic targets of the priority areas and the proposed measures of any of the existing policy documents of the region?
- Do the strategic targets of the documents comply with SD principles?
- Which priority area strategic targets and proposed measures for their implementation do you object to, and in which area is the situation most critical?
- Does the zoning documentation of the region's municipalities respect SD principles?

Part D: Priority strategic targets of the region's sustainable development – *a conversation mainly relating to definition of strategic targets and their importance for future progress:*

- What priorities would you have in the region's economic development?
- Can you describe and estimate the future development of the region's social problems?
- Can you describe and estimate the future development of the region's environmental problems?
- Can you describe a comprehensive development path for the region respecting all the above stated subject areas?
- Please define the basic conditions under which the region's development could be considered sustainable.

Quantitative Sociological Surveys

The objective of a quantitative survey is to study a limited amount of information in many individuals. The purpose is to generalise the output for the entire population: to identify the so-called public opinion.

A quantitative survey is typically carried out in the following basic stages:

- 1) Definition of a social phenomenon, and formulation of the objective of the sociological survey as a whole;
- 2) Decision regarding the size of the population (public) sample in order to achieve representative results;
- 3) Preparation of the questionnaire for the information collection;
- 4) Decision regarding the information collection technique (method) to be used;
- 5) Testing;
- 6) Survey execution;
- 7) Data analysis and interpretation, conclusions, generalisations.

The two initial steps pertain to what is going to be surveyed: what is the subject of the survey. In practical terms, the decision regarding the population and the sample is especially important in quantitative surveys. The sample is a group of units that are actually studied. The population (or the basic set) is a set of units for which the conclusions of the survey are assumed to hold. The size of the (15+) population sample is determined by the population of the region. The structure of the sample has to reflect the composition of the society as much as possible, so that the conclusions can be declared generally valid for the entire population of the region. Various sample construction techniques are therefore used:

- **Quota selection** imitates the well – known features of the population in the sample structure. Nevertheless, it has some shortcomings, especially in that not all of the population's features are known. Quota selection can therefore only be used with populations with a sufficient degree of information available.
- **Random (probability) selection** assigns each individual of the population an equal probability to be chosen for the sample. In other words, each household (or each individual person) within the target population has an equal chance of being included in the survey. Random selection has the advantage of representing all known and unknown features of the population. What is more, it can be estimated how greatly a randomly selected sample differs from the actual population. There are various ways of executing random selection.

An interview, or an assisted completion of a prepared questionnaire, is the most effective, but one of the most expensive methods of information collection for strategic plan preparation. The information is collected in direct interaction with the respondent, the interview can be made face-to-face or via telephone using random number generation and further quota selection. A group of field inquirers (operators) has to be trained for the execution of the survey.

More extensive questionnaires can be used in this technique. The maximum time required for the respondent to complete the questionnaire should not exceed 30 minutes. Closed questions have to be given preference when preparing the questionnaire, i.e. questions with options available; open-end questions can rarely be used⁵.

⁵ Appendix 2: Sample questionare for a qualitative survey among the general public in a region in relation to preparing a sustainable development strategic plan.

Designing questionnaire questions is a rather complex issue, which is why it should be done in co-operation with sociologists. In principle, you should ask yourself the following for each question:

- Is the question really indispensable?
- Does the question really measure what I want to measure?
- Will each member of the sample understand the question? Will each one understand it the same way?
- Is the respondent able to give the required information?
- Is the question suggestive?
- Does the question ask two things at the same time?
- Is the list of answer options to a closed question complete? Are the options mutually exclusive?
- Is it really necessary to use an open-end question?
- Does the question ask for too generalised information?
- Are the answers of all the respondents of the same weight?
- Is this question embarrassing, worrying, can the respondent feel threatened answering honestly?
- Do the questions actually give all the information for testing the hypotheses?
- Can preceding questions distort answers to subsequent questions?
- Are the questions asked in a logical sequence?
- Does the sequence of questions facilitate successful completion of the interview (questionnaire)?
- Does the questionnaire (interview) design comply with the requirement for anonymity?
- Is the questionnaire or interview perhaps too long?
- Are answers to questions the only information that the respondent is supposed to record?

3.5.3 Analysis of Relevant Data, Identification and Evaluation of Trends

Data analysis is a regular component of strategic planning. Conventional statistical data and information analysis maps the status, basic phenomena and facts essential to the preparation of the proposal section of a strategic plan for sustainable regional development. Such analysis has to be based on an extensive and varied data basis. It comprises, first and foremost, a set of tables and diagrams, complemented with a narrative description. An objective evaluation of the state of the region in specified areas is another part of the analysis. The analysis forms the basis for a SWOT analysis for sustainable development.

The data analysis has to characterise the state of all the development areas: economic, social, and environmental; and enable evaluation of their sustainability.

It is always useful to obtain a data set in time series for each indicator, which allows definition of realistic development trends for each phenomenon. The time series have to contain identical years for all the examined and analysed subject areas (e.g. 1990, 1995, 2000, and data for the last two years prior to the strategic plan development), so that the developments in all the segments of the regional social activity can be compared. Such time series and development trends are the basis for setting of priorities and definition of strategic targets, as they define the limits for their realistic quantification. A strategic target value must not be set in a way that does not respect the current

development of the phenomenon represented by the indicator. Sources of all data have to be quoted in order to maintain the analysis transparent.

Data Sources

At the international level, there are well organised and established systems of data collection and evaluation, provided by institutions like United Nations or Eurostat. National systems of data collection are more or less harmonized with the international standards. At the regional and local level in the most countries, however, the situation is less coherent. Regional and local authorities face serious problems when pursuing to aggregate useful data for sustainable indicators. Therefore, credibility has to be considered when selecting data. Not all sources, and not all data can be used in the analysis.

Selection of Indicators for Trend Identification in Terms of Regional Sustainability

Defining a set of indicators should be part of your analysis. Such an indicator set will allow characterisation of the representative development trends in respect of sustainability principles. Such indicators then describe the trends in light of regional development sustainability and thus characterize problem areas which form the basis for priority definition in the proposal section of your strategic plan.

Unfortunately, the current structure of data collected by authorised institutions seldom meets the needs for compiling sustainable development indicators for towns or regions. Change in the basic routinely monitored data must be initiated in this respect, presenting a long-term task for the relevant public administration bodies.

3.5.4 Synthesis of All Data for Preparation of the Strategy Proposal Section

Synthesising all the partial studies within the analytical stage of plan preparation is an important step in strategic planning. All information sources have to be analysed thoroughly, and a comprehensive overview of the status quo of the region has to be drawn, including limitations to the region's potential development based on sustainability principles. The synthesis of all data sets boundaries for the proposal section of the strategic plan. The analytical section is a data fundament for the proposal section and the discussion of its final wording. All studies within the analytical stage have to be made available to all those who wish to participate in developing the proposal section: stakeholder and major group representatives.

Cornerstones for data synthesis and proposal section development:

- Knowledge of the existing policy documents in the region;
- Knowledge of the regional situation as seen by local experts;
- Knowledge of the regional public opinion;
- Data and information base quantifying the status quo and limits in all development areas;
- Knowledge of the basic development trends.

As the analytical stage of the strategic planning tends to be extensive, the great exactingness of the work must be borne in mind, as it requires weighing up the individual pieces of information and finding connections among them. The synthesis is expected to result in formulation of theses for drafting the SWOT analysis and a definition of priorities: key issues in the region and strategic targets for the formulation of the proposal section.

3.6 Formulating the Proposal Section

The stage when the strategic plan is formulated is a key part of the strategy development. This stage employs all the information collected during the analytical stage, i.e. all its partial studies. The point of this stage of strategic planning is to formulate a vision for the region's sustainable development, select and define priorities and strategic targets, and establish sets of programme and headline indicators (where the team of authors collaborates with the working group in the ideal case). The stage results in a draft strategic plan ready for publishing and subsequent public discussion. The draft strategic plan development offers great space for discussion and involvement of stakeholders. The proposal section then undergoes numerous modifications and changes during the discussions and public commenting procedure. The proposal section has to be compiled based on public consensus. All the stakeholder groups have to identify themselves with the text, otherwise the practical implementation of the sustainable development concept is likely to fail.

3.6.1 Structure and Contents of the Proposal Section: The Key to the Strategy

When formulating the proposal section of a sustainable development strategic plan, it must always be considered how realistic and implementable it is. Beyond a future outlook – a target state, the proposal section has to include tools by means of which the target state is to be reached. A sustainable development strategic plan, however broad in its scope, cannot encompass every issue. Informed selection of its contents is necessary.

It is a frequent deficiency of a great many strategies that they 'lack a core', meaning the strategy does not contain any description of how the planned activities will contribute to actualising the targets that it sets. In more specific terms, the strategy fails to explain why the outcomes of the planned activities that it outlines should be better than the outcomes of similar activities undertaken ad hoc in the past. An effective strategy, therefore, should be realistic above all.

To maintain good navigation throughout the text, the proposal section should not contain too much verbal ballast, only keeping in the essential. Straightforwardness and good structuring of the text are a great plus.

The contents of a good proposal section:

- 1) Introduction into the issues;
- 2) Starting points;
- 3) Theses resulting from the analytical stage;
- 4) SWOT analysis for the region's sustainable development;
- 5) Vision for the region's sustainable development;
- 6) Priorities for the region's sustainable development;
- 7) Strategic targets for the region's sustainable development;
- 8) Programme indicators;
- 9) Justification of priorities;
- 10) Measures to be taken;
- 11) Expert estimate of expected costs;
- 12) Headline indicators;
- 13) Summary of realistically available funding sources;
- 14) Suggested institutional coverage.

Introduction into the Issues

The point of this part is to make a brief introduction into the issue of sustainable development and the reasons for its practical implementation at the regional level. This part has to quote a definition of sustainable development including an overview and description of each of the principles on which the contents of the strategic plan is based. It is also useful to list the national and international policy documents that are binding for the development of the regional strategic plan. The context of sustainable development in the country, and especially internationally, can also be mentioned.

The objective is to establish a subject framework for the contents of the proposal section of the strategic plan.

Starting Points

This part provides answers to the following questions:

- Why is the regional sustainable development strategic plan being developed?
- Who shall benefit from the strategic plan?
- What is its meaning and purpose?
- What is its time frame?
- What is its position among the regional policy documents?
- Who has participated in its development?

Theses Resulting from the Analytical Stage

This part is a connecting link between the partial studies and analyses in the analytical section and the proposal section. It comprises the most significant findings and information relating to the issue of sustainable development and defining the boundaries for the contents of the proposal section.

The partial separation of the proposal part from the massive analytical studies is an advantage here. The proposal part can then be used as a separate piece of writing while maintaining the essential reference links to the analytical part.

SWOT Analysis for the Region's Sustainable Development

A strategic analysis technique based on consideration of the internal factors of the analysed subject (region in this case): the strengths and weaknesses; and the environmental factors; opportunities and threats.

The region's strengths and weaknesses are factors contributing to, or impairing, the internal quality of the region. Opportunities and threats, on the other hand, are external factors, which cannot be entirely controlled at the regional level. They can be identified, however, in an appropriate analysis, such as an analysis of influential economic, social and environmental factors.

Vision for the Region's Sustainable Development

A brief but comprehensive definition of the target state towards which the region's development is supposed to make progress and which shall be achieved by consistent implementation of the SD strategic plan.

Priorities for the Region's Sustainable Development

A definition of priorities related to the essential subject areas in relation to the future sustainable development of the region. The priorities have to be defined aptly and unambiguously, and divided into four segments for the sake of clarity: economic, social, environmental, and good governance. Their numbers have to be well-proportioned in order to maintain implementability.

A maximum of 20 SD priorities should be chosen for a region and a 20-year time frame; five for each segment. They are the subject of attention throughout the implementation, and it shall be the sole interest of the regional representatives to focus on these same points.

Strategic Targets for the Region's Sustainable Development

Each of the strategic plan priorities is elaborated into specified and quantified sustainable development strategic targets. The quantification of the targets is done for the medium time frame of five years, and for the long-term time frame of 10-20 years. The target value need not be regarded as a dogma, but can serve as a direction for desirable, sustainable development.

When defining and evaluating the targets, the following rule should be observed:

Are any target set (yes/no); if they are, then are they:

Specific?

Measurable?

Achievable? Agreed on by partners?

Resourced? Realistic?

Time-scaled?

Programme Indicators

Strategic targets have to be accompanied by programme indicators. Their task is to monitor the practical actualisation of the strategic targets. A programme indicator provides feedback and allows inspection.

Justification of Priorities

Each of the priorities should have a brief justification appended to say why it has been included in the strategic plan.

Measures to Be Taken

The strategic targets are completed with measures to be taken in order to achieve them. These are a listing of specific activities by means of which each of the strategic targets will be brought closer or achieved. These activities have to be implementable at the regional and local levels of public administration. The measures may concern the entire range of the region's social groups, not only its body of authority. It must be borne in mind that the strategic plan is a regional document, not just one for the region's public administration, such as the Regional Authority.

Expert Estimate of Expected Costs

The strategic plan has to include a summary of costs of implementing its individual measures, and an expert estimate of the total expected costs associated with the actualisation of its strategic targets.

Headline Indicators

To generalise and compare the economic, social and environmental changes, to communicate with the public, and to furnish the politicians, it is useful to complete the strategic plan with a set of sustainable development headline indicators related to the selected priorities and thus capable of documenting (monitoring) their implementation in time.

For clarity, it is useful to provide the connections between the set of headline indicators and the priorities by means of a matrix table. The connection between an indicator and a priority is then evaluated with the plus and minus signs.

Summary of Realistically Available Funding Sources

The strategic plan has to include a summary of funding sources to cover the projects implementing the defined strategic targets. An overview of percentage shares of the costs on the public budgets at the given stage of strategic planning is absolutely indispensable here; it is broken down according to the priorities set and strategic targets defined.

Suggested Institutional Coverage

This is a suggestion and description of the regional level management to secure the practical implementation of the sustainable development strategic plan. The set of specific tasks for the SD governance should also be described at this point, especially defining responsibilities for the implementation of the strategic plan and its constituent targets and priorities.

An example of a complete elaboration of a strategic plan priority:

Priority: Air quality improvement in relation to public health prevention by means of reducing emissions of pollutants from stationary and linear sources of air pollution.

Strategic Targets:

1) Reduce the proportion of areas of impaired air quality to 5,5 % of the region area by 2020.

Measures:

- Achieve all targets set by the regional air and energy policy documents:
 - 1) Regional programme for reduction of solid air pollutant, sulphur dioxide and nitrous oxide emissions;
 - 2) Integrated regional air quality improvement programme;
 - 3) Regional energy policy;
 - 4) Regional programme for reduction of emissions contributing to global climate change.
- Develop Air Quality Improvement Plans for each municipality in the areas of impaired air quality.
- By means of targeted fundraising, raise funds to enable the development of the Air Quality Improvement Plans.
- Secure technical and specialist support to the development of the Air Quality Improvement Plans.

2) Reduce PM₁₀ emissions by 40 % by 2020; reduce NO_x emissions by 50 % by 2020 (both measured in tonnes per square kilometre).

Measures:

- Strictly enforce the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Act, and other legal regulations related to air protection.
- Promote and operate best available, state-of-the-art technologies.
- Achieve all targets set by the regional air and energy policy documents.
- Support the use of renewable energy sources.
- Support the use of alternative fuels in public transport systems.
- Introduce latest combined heat and power systems.
- Make efficient use of emission trading.
- Reduce the losses in central heating systems, and make efficient use of waste heat.
- Increase the total area of biomass cultivation for energy purposes.

Justification of the Priority: *In spite of the noticeable improvement in the region's air quality over the last 14 years in result of the country's economic transition, there are still numerous area with impaired air quality. Compliance with the EU environmental legal requirements, the Air Quality Framework Directive 96/62/EC and related subsidiary directives (1999/30/EC and 2000/69/EC), and the national legal requirements for environment protection, as well as compliance with the National Environment Programme are imperative. Use of renewable energy sources and alternative fuels complies with the recommendations of the Integrated National Emission Reduction Programme and the Regional Energy Policy. More low-traffic zones in urban areas will contribute to improving the air quality in the centres of towns and villages.*

continued

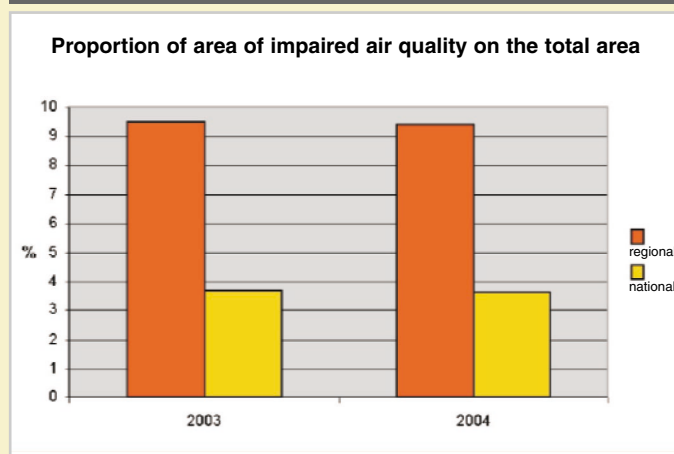
An example of a complete elaboration of a strategic plan priority:

Strategic target	Level	Short-term goal by 2010	Target state by 2020
Reduce the proportion of areas of impaired air quality (% of total area)	regional	9 %	5,5 %
Develop Air Quality Improvement Plans for all municipalities in areas of impaired air quality	regional	YES	
Reduce PM ₁₀ emissions (t/sq km) (by X %)	regional	10 %	40 %
Reduce NO _x emissions (t/sq km) (by X %)	regional	7 %	50 %

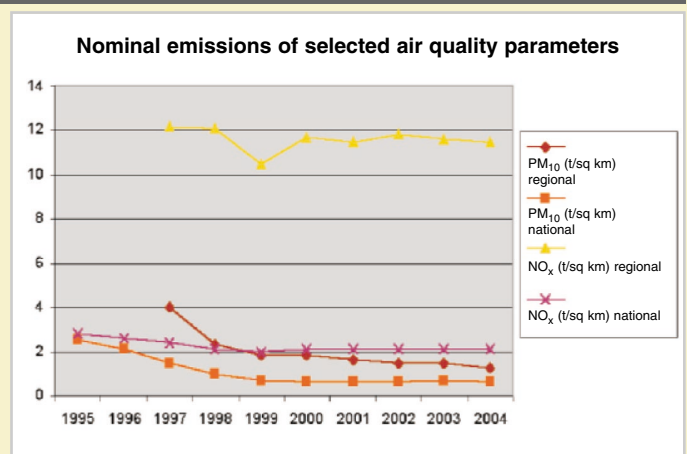
Development trends:

Programme indicator	Level	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Reduce the proportion of areas of impaired air quality (%)	regional									9,5	9,4
	national									3,7	3,6
Nominal PM ₁₀ emissions (t/sq km)	regional			4,0	2,3	1,8	1,8	1,6	1,5	1,5	1,3
	national	2,5	2,1	1,5	1,0	0,7	0,6	0,6	0,6	0,7	0,6
Nominal NO _x emissions (t/sq km)	regional			12,2	12,1	10,5	11,7	11,5	11,8	11,6	11,5
	national	2,8	2,6	2,4	2,1	2,0	2,1	2,1	2,1	2,1	2,1

It is useful for clarity to illustrate the trends with diagrams, quoting sources for all data:



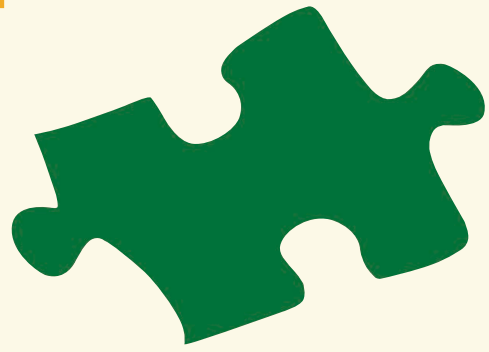
Areas of impaired air quality for health protection and for ecosystems (vegetation) as per Air Protection Act. (source: Ministry of the Environment)



(source: State Statistical Office)

(adapted from the draft Sustainable Development Strategies of the Ústí and Liberec Regions)

4. APPLICATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS



Sets of sustainable development indicators are typically used in assessing sustainability. When developing specific indicator sets and when working with the indicators, it is important to follow a sequence of codified principles, such as is described below.

Principles of applying sustainable development assessment indicators according to Bellagio⁶:

1) Leading visions and targets

Sustainability assessment should:

- Be led by a clear vision for sustainable development and targets defining such a vision.

2) Holistic perspective

Sustainability assessment should:

- Include an overview of the system and its components;
- Consider the welfare of the social, environmental and economic subsystems, their states as well as directions and degrees of changes in such states, the welfare of their components, and the interactions between the components;
- Consider both positive and negative impacts of human activity in a way that reflects both costs and benefits to human and ecological systems, both in the financial and non-financial sense.

3) Basic elements

Sustainability assessment should:

- Consider justice and inequities in the current population, and work duly with aspects such as resource use, over-consumption and poverty, human rights, and attitudes to services;
- Consider ecological preconditions for life;
- Consider economic development as well as other, non-market activities contributing to human (social) welfare.

4) Appropriate scope

Sustainability assessment should:

- Define a long time enough frame so that both human and ecosystem time scales are reflected, so that both the needs of future generations and those of the present generations are respected;
- Define a broad enough scope so that both local and remote impacts on people and ecosystems are included;

⁶ In: Hardi, P., Terrencem, Z. (ed.): Assessing Sustainable Development: Principles in Practice. IISD 1997, pgs. 2 – 4.

continued

Principles of applying sustainable development assessment indicators according to Bellagio:

- Start from historic and current conditions so that future conditions (where we are going and where we can get) can be predicted.

5) Practical orientation

Sustainability assessment should be based on:

- An explicit set of categories or an organising framework connecting the visions and targets with assessment indicators and criteria;
- A limited number of key themes for analysis;
- A limited number of indicator or their combinations, so that a more distinct signal of movement toward sustainability can be given;
- Standardised measurement wherever possible to allow comparison;
- Relevant comparison of indicator values with targets, reference values, ranges, thresholds or trend directions.

6) Openness

Sustainability assessment should:

- Make the methods and data used available to everybody;
- Explicitly express all judgements, speculations or uncertainties in data and their interpretations.

7) Effective communication

Sustainability assessment should:

- Be designed to meet the needs of the audience and users;
- Be based on indicators and other instruments that are stimulating and lead to involvement of persons with decision-making authorities;
- Strive for clarity of structure and clear and comprehensible language from the very start.

8) Wide involvement

Sustainability assessment should:

- Gain a wide representation of key professional, technical and social groups, including youth, women and indigenous peoples in order to ensure diversity and variability of values;
- Ensure participation of the implementers in order to establish a firm link between the principles approved and the resulting work.

9) Ongoing assessment

Sustainability assessment should:

- Build capacity for repeated measurements in order to identify development trends;
- Be interactive, adaptable, and responsive to change and uncertainty, since systems are complex and often change;
- Adjust targets, working boundaries and indicators depending on new information;
- Support the development of collective education and feedback in decision-making.

10) Institutional capacity

Sustainability assessment should be managed by means of:

- Clearly defined responsibilities and provision of ongoing support in decision-making;
- Building institutional capacity for data collection, management and documentation;
- Development of sustainability assessment at the local level.

4.1 Indicators as Indispensable Tools for Planning and Evaluation: Their Definition and Application

Indicators, being a very efficient tool, should be used for increased efficiency of planning and for evaluation of sustainable development of the regions. The term is used to denote an indicator of the development in a selected subject of study, obtained through continuous monitoring, recording and evaluation of a set of precisely defined data⁷. Since sustainable development is the focus here, the subjects studied are closely related to the issue.

A well-chosen SD indicator reflects, among other things, the aspects of social justice, interests of the local economy and environment conservation, as well as an effort to strengthen the role of the local autonomous administration or to secure local needs at the local level. The indicators allow identification of problem areas and point the way to their rectification. At the same time, they help define the boundaries for the region's development.

Application of the indicators has the advantage of providing a picture of the effectiveness of regional policies. The indicators are used in monitoring the effectiveness of planning and decision-making processes as well as concrete projects trying to implement the SD concept. They clearly describe and quantify negative and positive change. They allow regions to compare their results, exchange their experience, and apply solution that have proved successful thanks to indicators applied, not only nationally, but across other European regions.

The basic elements of sustainability that dictate selection of indicators:

- Equity and social inclusion (accessibility of adequate and affordable basic services for all, such as education, employment, energies, health, housing, training, transport);
- Local administration – authorities – democracy (participation of all groups within a local community in local planning and decision-making processes);
- Local-global relations (meeting a significant proportion of local needs locally from production to consumption and waste; meet those needs that cannot be met locally more sustainably);
- Local economies (harmonise local skills and needs with availability of employment and other facilities so that they pose minimal threats to the environment and resources);
- Environment protection (assume the ecosystem creation approach; minimise resource and soil usage, waste generation and pollutant emissions, protect biological diversity);
- Cultural heritage and quality of man-made environments (protection, conservation and rehabilitation of historic, cultural and architectural values, including buildings, memorials, and events; increase and maintain attractiveness and functionality of spaces and buildings).

The indicator set can be used both for strategic planning itself and for monitoring in order to evaluate the degree of practical implementation of the plan.

⁷ Appendix 3: Database of SD indicators at the local and regional levels: Structure of the Indicator Sheet.

Approaches to developing indicators for social complexes (municipalities, regions, countries):

- **The expert approach** – appropriate indicators for measuring the development trend are defined by experts.
- **The public approach** – appropriate indicators for measuring the development trend are defined by the public.

It is useful to employ both the approaches in developing indicator sets. It can be said with some simplification that the programme indicator set is typically compiled by experts, while it is important to determine the headline indicator set in co-operation with the public.

Requirements for working indicators:

Significance	The indicators have to be significant in the given context. The environment and sustainable development are the issue here, a great variety of data may therefore be significant.
Representation	It has to be clear what subject or phenomenon the indicator or the data represent. An appropriate geographic scale has to be set, or an appropriate time scale for measurements or sampling the analyses of which form the basis for the indicators.
Uniqueness	The data obtained have to be unique, must not be redundant, repetitive, or duplicating any other existing information. Each indicator has to be distinctly specific and original and must not replicate what is known from other sources.
Measurement, Obtaining	It has to be technically feasible to obtain the groundwork data. The technical aspects of measurement and sampling are one of the key issues to pay attention to when designing monitoring systems and planning measurement schedules. With indicators constructed using statistical data, it is an evident precondition that such data exist and are easily available.
Cost-effectiveness	The data obtained have to be unique, must not be redundant, repetitive, or duplicating. Obtaining, processing and providing any data always costs something. Information is never free of charge. Data collection, monitoring system operation, and information sources maintenance tends to be quite expensive. In many cases, such expenses do not match the benefits provided by the information system, data or indicator. The requirement for cost-effectiveness is one of the fundamental, but often ignored ones.
Minimum negative environmental impact	The observed subject may be damaged or even destroyed by sampling and measurement.
Correction	No data are absolutely correct and some error must always be considered, even though often it is minor. Indicators have to be correct, meaning they must not be charged with excessive error.
Dependance	The data have to be verified in terms of their reliability, confirmed by several independent measurements, and the results may have to be obtained using significantly different methods. Data control and quality assurance is an entire important line of work.

continued

Requirements for working indicators:

Comparance	Most measurement, sampling, statistical surveys etc. have internationally standardised procedures. The standardisation, often ruled by internationally accepted documents, guarantees comparability between data on an international scale and over prolonged periods of time. Correct and dependable data, however, are a precondition of comparability.
Transparence	Data collection and indicator definition processes have to be transparent. There has to be clarity as to what methods have been used, how the calculations were done, and so on.
Comprehension	All data and indicators assume a user, someone who takes interest in them. For any use, all data have to be comprehensible, unambiguous, and easy to present.
Communication	No data, and thus no indicators, make sense on their own; they only become meaningful in a context. The possibility to communicate the meaning of any data or indicators is an important criterion in their evaluation.
Timing	Data and indicators seldom have a timeless meaning. In most cases, it is crucial to have them available at a given point of time, which mostly means as quickly as possible.
Utilisation	The purpose of any information – fully including data and indicators – is not its separate existence, but their utilisation. Information is a type of goods that only has a price as long as there is any interest in it.

Development and application of indicators and their sets is limited by the availability of original data. The form and contents of the indicators currently observed and recorded couldn't be in full compliance with the latest trend. In addition, the quality of the set of observed indicators changes depending on the level at which they are monitored. Some indicators could be always monitored at the national level, while the situation at the regional level would be worse, and it could be virtually impossible to obtain any data at the local level or the quality and reliability of the information are rather low.

Monitoring new and specific indicators is typically very costly. A gradual reform of national and regional monitoring programmes along with addition of certain indicator sets and an orientation on aggregate indicators is therefore needed. Primary data need to be weighed up mutually, and indicators with more complex meanings have to be developed.

4.2 What Types of Indicators to Use and for What Purposes

A range of indicator types is recognised according to their intended use. When selecting them, it is important to think what the indicator should answer and to what use the answer is going to be put. It is ideal for planning and evaluation of sustainable development to set up two independent indicator sets with specific intended use:

- **A programme indicator set**, its primary objective being the monitoring and evaluation of implementation of the strategic targets;
- **A headline indicator set** for communication with the public, generalisation and comparison of changes associated with the implementation of the strategic plan.

The indicator sets have to clearly reflect the connection between:

the indicator	development in the area represented	regional public administration	what it answers and what purpose it serves
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4.2.1 Programme Indicators

Each defined target within the strategic plan should have an instrument for monitoring and evaluation of its implementation: a so-called programme indicator. A programme indicator is tailored design for a strategic target. A set of such programme indicators is drawn for a regional sustainable development strategic plan depending on the number and nature of strategic targets.

Defining a so-called indicator framework for a strategic plan:

- The indicator has to report the change achieved over a period of time. They have to be connected to a specific subject area (strategic target) within the planning process (i.e. each of the indicators should have the reasons for its development explained).
- The number of indicators should be limited and their users (i.e. planners, politicians and the public) should be clear about their purpose, meaning and design.
- The indicators are more effective if connected to a target or reference value.
- The indicators can be used for comparison and measurement of success of various plans, policies, sectors, and even countries. The indicators therefore provide the makers of the plans or the decision-makers with valuable feedback.

An example framework programme indicator set for a region is shown in the table below. Please bear in mind that a programme indicator is always designed to fit the exact need for a description of implementation of a specific strategic target.

The Economic Pillar

- Degree of economic activity of the regional population (%)
- Proportion of businesses in the region certified under ISO 14000 and EMAS (%)
- Share of small-scale and medium business on the total regional GDP (%)
- Share of manufacturing businesses registered in the region on the total number of businesses (%)
- Share of tourism-oriented investment on the total investment in the region (%)
- Share of individual automobile transport on the total transport performance in the region (%)
- Share of ecologically farmed agricultural land on the total area of agricultural land in the region (%)

The Social Pillar

- Long-term unemployment in the region (%)
- Proportion of allocated applicants for welfare jobs to job applicants not allocated (%)
- Inhabitants of the region above 15 years of age with primary or no education (%)
- Number of completed housing units per 1 000 inhabitants of the region
- Share of renovated town and village centres on the total number of towns and villages in the region (%)
- Deceased by cause of death per 100 000 inhabitants (%)
- Number of socially undesirable deeds per 1 000 inhabitants (%)

The Environmental Pillar

- Share of investment into nature and landscape protection on the regional GDP (%)
- Proportion of broadleaf forest in the total woodland of the region (%)
- Total area of disused desolate places and buildings in the region (hectares)
- Area of newly built-up places in the region per annum (hectares per year)
- Nominal emissions of solid pollutants (PM₁₀) (tonnes per square km)
- Proportion of municipal waste reused for material or energy on the total amount of waste (%)
- Share of municipalities with populations under 2 000 equipped with sewerage and a final wastewater treatment facility (%)

Good Governance

- Proportion of municipalities in the region with a functioning Local Agenda 21 (%)
- Proportion of regional budget funds spent on public welfare projects (%)
- Debt service indicator (%)
- Tax yield (CZK/person)
- Share of investment expenditures on the total expenditures by autonomous administration bodies (%)
- Share of municipalities with zoning documentation on the total number of municipalities in the region (%)
- Share of extended authority municipalities (third-degree municipalities) with a sustainable development strategic plan on the total number of third-degree municipalities (%)

(adapted from the draft Sustainable Development Strategies of the Ústí and Liberec Regions)

4.2.2 Headline Indicators

A set of so-called headline indicators is useful for communication with the public, media presentation, and generalisation and comparison of changes associated with the implementation of a strategic plan. The headline indicators have to meet the following criteria:

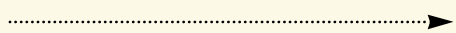
- They are comprehensible to media, politicians, and the general public;
- The set contains a limited number of indicators;
- They represent all the pillars of sustainable development;
- They are capable of describing trends;
- They allow comparison.

Selection of headline indicators is conditioned by the fact that they have to have a clear connection with all the dimensions of sustainable development. As the issue of sustainable development covers a broad range of topics, making it difficult to captivate the attention of media, politicians and the general public for prolonged periods, they have to retain comprehensibility. That is the reasons why key indicators should be sought with the purpose of providing clear and simple information about selected factors within each of the segments of sustainable development.

4.2.3 Priority and Headline Indicator Matrix

A matrix, or a table, allows easy and quick navigation in correlation between a priority and a headline indicator, where the minus sign denotes a negative correlation, and the plus sign stands for a positive correlation. A combination of signs appraises the correlation between a priority and a relevant indicator. The first of the signs denotes a positive (+) or negative (-) development in the priority (as set in the strategy), while the other evaluates the resulting movement direction of the indicator.

Priority ● Headline indicator	The Economic Pillar					The Social Pillar				
A) Development of new small-scale and medium businesses	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
B) Economic revival via new environment-friendly technologies	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
C) Development in the primary sector	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
D) Reducing transport needs at the source	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
E) Tourism development	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
A) Reduction in unemployment	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
B) Increasing education and qualification of population	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
C) Renovation of villages and towns	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
D) Improvement in public health	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
E) Reinforcement of social capital	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Per capita GDP (USD in purchasing power parity)	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Number of businesses per 1 000 inhabitants	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Public transport performance (passanger-km)	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
General unemployment (%)	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-
Life expectancy at birth (men/women)	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Proportion of inhabitant with completed college education (%)	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Incidence of allergies per 1 000 inhabitants	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Number of detected criminal offences per 1 000 inhabitants	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Number of housing units per 1 000 inhabitants	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Share of rural population (%)	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Proportion of investment in environment protection (%)	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Share of area of impaired air quality on the total area of the region (%)	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Share of specially protected areas on the total area of the region (%)	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Industrial waste generation per unit of GDP (kg/1 000 USD in purchasing power parity)	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Tilled agricultural land (%)	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Forested land (%)	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Participation of population in municipal elections (%)	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Number of NGOs per 1 000 inhabitants	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Share of municipalities with an environmental policy (%)	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++



continued

Share of municipalities with an environmental policy (%)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Number of NGOs per 1 000 inhabitants												
Participation of population in municipal elections (%)												
Forested land (%)	+	+	+		+							
Tilled agricultural land (%)	+				+							
Industrial waste generation per unit of GDP (kg/1 000 USD in purchasing power parity)	+			+								
Share of specially protected areas on the total area of the region (%)	+				+							
Share of area of impaired air quality on the total area of the region (%)	+	+										
Proportion of investment in environment protection (%)	+		+	+	+							+
Share of rural population (%)												
Number of housing units per 1 000 inhabitants			+	+								
Number of detected criminal offences per 1 000 inhabitants												
Incidence of allergies per 1 000 inhabitants		+										
Proportion of inhabitant with completed college education (%)												
Life expectancy at birth (men/women)		+	+									
General unemployment (%)												
Public transport performance (passanger-km)												
Number of businesses per 1 000 inhabitants			+	+								
Per capita GDP (USD in purchasing power parity)	+		+	+								
Priority Headline indicator	The Environmental Pillar											
A) Increased investment in environment protection												
B) Improved air quality												
C) Renovation of desolate areas and buildings, remediation of ecological burdens												
D) Reduced waste generation												
E) Bolstered ecological functions of landscape												
Good Governance	Good Governance											
A) Public involvement in public affairs												
B) Establishment of grant programmes												
C) Improved attitude of municipalities to environment protection												
D) Establishment of sustainable development governance												
E) Reduction in total debt of municipalities												

(adapted from the draft Sustainable Development Strategies of the Ústí and Liberec Regions)

4.3 Monitoring Systems: Monitoring, Control and Evaluation of SD Strategic Plan Implementation

The purpose of a monitoring system is to enable observing and controlling the implementation of a sustainable development strategic plan under the actual conditions in a region. Monitoring programmes have to be set up at the regional level based on proposed sets of programme and headline indicators; their task is to collect data in standardised ways in order to refill the sets periodically. It should be clear who is responsible for refill the indicators and how and where from the data are obtained.

The essential steps in setting up a working regional monitoring programme:

- Define sets of headline and programme indicators.
- Unify fragmented and isolated activities in data collection in one point – introduce a systematic approach.
- In case a needed indicator is not being monitored, identify (establish) an institution accredited for data collection which shall start dealing with it and define a standardised methodology.
- Inform stakeholders on the existence of a monitoring system, and popularise its purpose and meaning among the public.
- Make the monitoring system indicators available to the region, micro-regions, and municipalities.

The monitoring programme should be managed by the supreme regional body of administration, such as the Regional Authority, whose task, beside collecting the data for the indicator sets and compiling them into databases, will be to use the indicators to supervise the implementation of the strategic plan and to the benefit of its own decision-making processes. It will guarantee annual publishing of updated indicator sets and trends in such a way that the relevant groups – public administration, stakeholders, the public, etc. – have sufficient and comprehensible information available. A regional yearbook is a good means of data publication.

4.3.1 Updating the Strategic Plan Based on Indicators

A sustainable development strategic plan is an open document capable of responding to social change in terms of indicator application. That is one of the reasons for opening up the discussion of implementing sustainable development with pre-defined periodicity in order to update to strategic plan based on new facts and information. The regularity of the updating process may follow the election pattern of the regional autonomous administration.

5. PUBLIC DISCUSSION AND COMMENTING OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN



The process of commenting on the proposal section of the SD strategic plan is initiated, and the entire process administered, by a supreme regional body of administration. The objective is to enable stakeholder and major group representatives to express their views regarding the contents of the draft strategic plan before its final approval. The aim is, among other things, to discuss individual comments and reply to all relevant queries.

The role of regional administration in the planning process:

- Initiate planning and policy processes;
- Advocate and implement interests of the citizens it represents;
- Use a number of legal and financial instruments to direct the activities;
- Manage property to various degrees;
- Influence services and facilities that co-influence the quality of local life;
- Work with the public, influence and educate the public, inform and consult them;
- Initiate and organise co-operation among stakeholders.

When developing a strategic plan, it must be borne in mind that the public discussion and commenting process is very time-consuming and it grows longer with the number of stakeholders participating in it. Comments are dealt with writing for each round of the negotiations. The commenting process has to be transparent. A summary treatment of comments should form a mandatory part of the strategic plan. Any citizen should be entitled to verify whether and how their comments have been reflected. In case they have not been reflected, they have to be given an opportunity to assert their opinion in the subsequent round of the negotiations. The comments should be presented to the makers of the strategic plan in writing and each one should be registered in a list of comments with a note regarding whether or not it has been reflected and why so.

The objective of discussing and commenting the strategic plan is to achieve participation and consensus across sectors and across stakeholders and major social groups.

The mechanism of an ongoing commenting process and negotiation in working groups:

- A group of stakeholder and major group representatives is formalised into regular working group sessions during the strategic plan development period.
- The working group is established at the beginning of the process and has to be involved in the entire planning process sufficiently.
- Working group members are well-informed about the strategic plan development process and able to initiate its enforcement at the regional level and its practical implementation.
- The work of the working group provides the makers of the strategy with valuable feedback on partial steps and their results.

It is practical to use virtual (electronic) commenting via the region's web site to facilitate the ongoing negotiation process.

Partial discussions of draft strategic plan with stakeholder and major group representatives and the public:

- Public discussions and hearings;
- Negotiations in committees;
- Negotiations in political clubs;
- Negotiations in the Regional Authorities Bodies;
- Approval by the Regional Authorities Bodies.

Comments are continually administered throughout all rounds of the negotiation process.

6. CONCLUSION: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGY IS NOT THE END BY FAR



When all comments on the sustainable development strategic plan have been administered, the document has to be presented for approval to regional authorities. Any comments made by these bodies have to be elaborated into the final version of the SD strategic plan.

Adequate institutional conditions have to be provided in order to secure the implementation of the regional SD strategic plan.

The primary task of such governance framework is to co-ordinate all policy documents of the region and their horizontal as well as vertical interconnection. In co-operation with official statistical organisations and those authorised for data collection and evaluation, the management should launch a monitoring programme based on defined programme and headline indicators of sustainable development, and update the strategic plan periodically, such as once every election period, based on the monitoring programme. In addition, the communication systems to reinforce information transfer and allow public participation in decision-making processes should be established.

Main tasks associated with efficient implementation of a strategic plan:

- Securing interconnection with other policy documents in the region and their harmonisation in order to comply with the sustainable development strategic plan.
- Introducing a monitoring programme and monitor the implementation of the SD plan by means of indicator sets.
- Regular updates in connection with social change and achieved results.
- Regular evaluation of regional SD indicators.
- Answer whether the set targets are being achieved.
- If not, analyse the reasons, modify measures, funding, etc.
- Achieving positive changes and results at the local level is crucial for the SD plan to succeed.
- Initiate changes at the national level: based on own experience with SD implementation, shape the contents of national policy documents in collaboration with the other regions.

Activities for SD institutional framework at the regional level:

- Regular evaluation of the regional SD strategic plan implementation.
- Assess, comment on and propose measures to ensure interconnection and cohesion of long-term and medium-term economic, social and environmental strategies, policies and programmes and any other such documents at the regional level.
- Prepare background information for regional representatives for their work, thus providing interconnection between activities at the regional and national levels in terms of sustainable development.
- Monitor how the regional authority fulfils its role in implementing and enforcing the targets of the SD strategic plan, and make suggestions to the regional representatives to eliminate any deficiencies identified.
- Initiate, co-ordinate and manage co-operation between the regional bodies of authority, major stakeholders, and other legal entities and individuals active in sustainable development of a region.
- Prepare background information for regional representatives in response to suggestions and comments made by municipalities or Municipal Sustainable Development Councils, legal entities, and citizens within the region.
- Initiate and prepare background information for regional representatives regarding collaboration with other regions and municipalities as well as other entities in terms of sustainable development.
- Initiate and prepare background information for regional representatives regarding collaboration with regions of other countries and municipalities as well as other entities in terms of sustainable development.
- Initiate and co-ordinate updating of the SD strategic plan, and present its outcome for the representatives' approval.
- Recommend the most suitable projects in tenders announced by the regional authority.

6.1 The Horizontal Connection between the SD Strategic Plan and Other Regional Policy Documents

The sustainable development strategic plan is a long-term framework policy document of the region. Once it is approved by the regional authority, sustainability as a principle and as priorities should be reflected in all existing departmental strategic and policy documents and all activities. That is how the required interconnection between the primary segments of the society will be achieved too.

6.1.1 Approval of the SD Strategic Plan by the Regional Authority

Approval of the SD strategic plan by the Regional Authority is a precondition for positive evaluation of the success of the strategic planning process with direct public participation. Only after approval by the region's supreme body (as well as municipality at the lower level) a strategic plan is formally binding, which means, among other things, that its validity and binding nature has been certified for a prolonged period of time.

6.2 The Vertical Connection between the Regional SD Strategic Plan and the Local and National Levels

The regional SD strategic plan has to accept the basic trends toward the sustainable development of the society as set out by the National Sustainable Development Strategy. The principal problems of the country have to be reflected in the priorities of a regional SD strategic plan. Clearly defined and specific strategic targets and related proposed measures at the regional level have to contribute to the improvement of the overall national situation.

Strategic plans of regions and municipalities have to be interconnected likewise. Municipalities, within their scope of authority, have to take adequate part in dealing with the essential problems affecting the entire region (e.g. high unemployment rates, depopulation of rural areas, and inappropriate species, age and spatial composition of woodlands).

6.3 Implementation Is When It All Begins

After the strategic plan has been developed and approved, the sustainable development begins to be applied in reality. Actions plans and subsequent sets of development projects therefore have to be developed in order for the practical measures for target actualisation to be implemented.

Several types of sources can be used for funding the implementation of the set priorities and strategic targets as well as the practical measures of the SD plan according to national conditions e.g.:

- Regional budget;
- Financial instruments under the departmental policies – non-budgetary funds and support funds of the ministries;
- Financial instruments of the international institutions;
- Foundations.

7. REFERENCES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, AND ABBREVIATIONS

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List of Abbreviations:

- **CSO** Czech Statistical Office
- **ECI** European Common Indicators
- **EIA** Environmental Impact Assessment
- **EU** European Union
- **GDP** Gross Domestic Product
- **NO_x** Nitrous Oxides
- **OECD** Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- **SD** Sustainable Development
- **SEA** Strategic Environmental Assessment
- **SIA** Sustainability Impact Assessment
- **TISSUE** Trends and Indicators for Monitoring the EU Thematic Strategy on Sustainable Development of Urban Environment
- **UN** United Nations
- **UNDP** United Nations Development Programme

Appendix 1: An overview of the evolution of the concept of SD

Historically and internationally, the main milestones of the evolution of concept of sustainable development are:

- **1972:** The first definition of ‘sustainable development’ published in *The Ecologist*.
- **1972:** The first report by The Club of Rome (‘Limits to Growth’) documented that the current pattern of industrial society was not sustainable in the long term.
- **1980:** A global environment conservation strategy (IUCN, UNEP, WWF) defined the close interconnection between economic progress and environment conservation.
- **1984:** Worldwatch Institute, Washington D.C., published its first yearbook ‘The State of the World – Toward A Sustainable Society’.
- **1984:** International Conference on Environment and Economics (OECD) – Concluded that environment and economics should be mutually reinforcing. Helped shape *Our Common Future* (see below).
- **1987:** World Environment Commission published its report ‘Our Common Future’ and the term ‘sustainable development’ became a common term on the global community’s agenda.
- **1991:** IUCN, UNEP, and WWF publish their ‘Caring for the Earth – A Strategy for Sustainable Development’.
- **1992:** UN Commission on the Environment and Development (UNCED), nicknamed ‘Earth Summit’ in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, dealing with the global problems of humanity with a record-breaking participation of major countries of the world, accepted the ‘Declaration on the Environment and Development,’ which contains 27 principles of sustainable development and a detailed instruction for its implementation: the Agenda 21.
- **1992:** The Committee for Sustainable Development (CSD) established under the UN with the mission to implement the UNCED documents and monitor their enforcement.
- **1995:** The CSD set up a group of experts in order to develop and evaluate SD indicators. Their work has resulted in 134 SD indicators and a methodology for their use.
- **1997:** The United Nations General Assembly (UNGASS), dedicated to the fifth anniversary of the UNCED, stated insufficient progress in implementing sustainable development world-wide.
- **2001:** OECD recognizes that sustainable development is an overarching sustainable development worldwide. Ministers of economics, finance, and environment.
- **2001:** Council of Europe Meeting in Gothenburg; European Union Sustainable Development Strategy accepted.
- **2002:** The Rio + 10 Conference in Johannesburg at the tenth anniversary of the UNCED.
- **2005:** The European Commission presented its assessment report on the current results of the EU Sustainable Development Strategie.

Appendix 2: Sample questionnaire for a qualitative survey among the general public in a region in relation to preparing a sustainable development strategic plan

S1. Let us first look at regional issues. I shall read you a list of aspects of one's life, and will you please use the five-grade scale to tell us how serious a problem they represent in your region. Grade 1 in the scale denotes 'the least serious problem', and grade 5 is 'the most serious problem'.

	least serious				most serious	don't know
01. Crime and security	1	2	3	4	5	9
02. Sports and culture opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	9
03. Business opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	9
04. Road repair and maintenance	1	2	3	4	5	9
05. Standard of living of the population	1	2	3	4	5	9
06. State of the environment	1	2	3	4	5	9
07. Unemployment	1	2	3	4	5	9
08. Housing opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	9
09. Wages (salaries) in the region	1	2	3	4	5	9
10. Transport and accessibility	1	2	3	4	5	9
11. Agricultural progress	1	2	3	4	5	9
12. Industrial progress	1	2	3	4	5	9
13. Quality of health care	1	2	3	4	5	9
14. Availability of schools and school facilities	1	2	3	4	5	9
15. Foreign investment	1	2	3	4	5	9
16. Prices of goods and services in the region	1	2	3	4	5	9
17. Supply of goods and services in the region	1	2	3	4	5	9
18. Tourism	1	2	3	4	5	9
19. Coexistence of ethnic groups	1	2	3	4	5	9
20. Integration of foreigners into the society	1	2	3	4	5	9
21. Social differences in the population	1	2	3	4	5	9
22. Cross-border co-operation	1	2	3	4	5	9
23. Others, please specify:	1	2	3	4	5	9

Now let's take a look at economy.

1) Do you think it right that the development of the following should be strongly promoted in your region?

1 = I certainly do 2 = I rather do 3 = I rather don't 4 = I certainly don't 5 = I can't judge

A. Mining industry	1	2	3	4	5
B. Heavy industry	1	2	3	4	5
C. Light industry	1	2	3	4	5
D. Automotive industry	1	2	3	4	5
E. Conventional agriculture	1	2	3	4	5
F. Ecological agriculture	1	2	3	4	5
G. Tourism	1	2	3	4	5
H. Agri-tourism	1	2	3	4	5
I. Services	1	2	3	4	5
J. Another aspect of economy, please specify:	1	2	3	4	5

2) Is the proximity of a national boundary used sufficiently for attracting funds for regional development (e.g. trade, tourism, job creation, etc.)?

1 = Certainly yes 2 = Probably yes 3 = Probably no 4 = Certainly no 5 = I can't judge

3) In your opinion, should the conventional industries (mining, chemistry, machinery, fuels and energy) in your region be:

Promoted and preferred	1
One-sided promotion of these industries presents a risk to the region	2
Only thriving businesses should be promoted	3

4) In your opinion, which of the following will determine the influx of investment in your region?

1 = Certainly yes 2 = Probably yes 3 = Probably no 4 = Certainly no 5 = I can't judge

A. National and international promotion of the region	1	2	3	4	5
B. Good infrastructures (road and rail networks, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
C. Opportunities for further qualification, and labour re-training	1	2	3	4	5
D. Efficient public administration	1	2	3	4	5
E. Supply of investment locations	1	2	3	4	5

5) Can you evaluate the quality of the following aspects in your municipality (village or town)?

1 = Very good 2 = Good 3 = Average 4 = Bad 5 = Very bad 6 = I can't judge

A. Unemployment	1	2	3	4	5	6
B. Options for professional re-training and additional training	1	2	3	4	5	6
C. Opportunities for and support to new business enterprise	1	2	3	4	5	6
D. Municipality's management of own property	1	2	3	4	5	6
E. Funding from sources other than municipal / regional budgets	1	2	3	4	5	6

6) Do you expect your household's income and thus standard of living to decrease in one the following periods?

1 = Certainly yes 2 = Probably yes 3 = Probably no 4 = Certainly no 5 = I can't judge

A. Within 2 years	1	2	3	4	5
B. In 2-5 years	1	2	3	4	5
C. In more than 5 years	1	2	3	4	5

7) What would be the main reason for the expected decrease in your household's income?

Losing your job	1
Changing your job	2
Lower wages from your existing employer	3
Retirement	4
Maternity leave	5
Another reason, please specify:	6

8) Which sort (features) of products do you prefer?

Environment-friendly products despite of their higher price	1
Other features of products although they are not environment-friendly	2
I don't really care	3

9) Which mode of transport do you take most often? Please do not chose more than 2 options.

Car	1 → jump to question 9.1
Bus	2 → jump to question 10
Train	3 → jump to question 10
Municipal public transport	4 → jump to question 10
Bicycle	5 → jump to question 10
Walking	6 → jump to question 10

9.1 What is the main reason for your using a car as the most frequent mode of transport?

Comfort	1
Speed, time savings	2
Cost savings	3
Difficult accessibility of public transport	4
I dislike public transport vehicles	5
Others, please specify:	6

10) Which of the listed types of infrastructure should be promoted the most for future development of your region? Which should be the second in line?

<input type="checkbox"/> Motorways and expressways
<input type="checkbox"/> Railway network
<input type="checkbox"/> Telephone and internet networks
<input type="checkbox"/> Gas networks
<input type="checkbox"/> Water mains and sewerage
<input type="checkbox"/> Second-class, third-class and local roads

11) Provided that you are employed or an entrepreneur, can you estimate the stability or security of your job in the following periods?

1 = Very stable 2 = Stable 3 = Unstable 4 = Very unstable 5 = I can't judge

A. Within 2 years	1	2	3	4	5
B. In 2-5 years	1	2	3	4	5
C. In more than 5 years	1	2	3	4	5

12) Would you have great difficulties finding a new job close to where you live?

1 = Certainly yes 2 = Probably yes 3 = Probably no 4 = Certainly no 5 = I can't judge

12.1 And why do you think you would probably have difficulties finding a new job?

High unemployment where I live	1
My age	2
Insufficient qualification or education	3
Great demands on my part	4
Another reason, please specify:	6

Now let's take a look at social affairs, schools and healthcare.**13) Which of the following healthcare and social services are you missing in your region?**

1 = Yes 2 = No 9 = Don't know

A. Accessibility and quality of general practitioners where you live	1	2	9
B. Accessibility and quality of specialist physicians where you live	1	2	9
C. Regional hospital with comprehensive healthcare	1	2	9
D. Home care centres, various establishments for the health-impaired	1	2	9
E. Alternative and field social services, home care in social affairs and healthcare	1	2	9
F. Spa and rehabilitation facilities	1	2	9

14) In your opinion, is sufficient care given to the following issues in your region?

1 = Certainly yes 2 = Probably yes 3 = Probably no 4 = Certainly no 5 = I can't judge

A. Prevention of serious diseases	1	2	3	4	5
B. Prevention of injuries	1	2	3	4	5
C. Prevention of anti-social deeds (crime, drug abuse, addictive gambling)	1	2	3	4	5

15) Do you strive to have a healthy lifestyle?

1 = Certainly yes 2 = Probably yes 3 = Probably no 4 = Certainly no 5 = I can't judge

16) Do people in your vicinity try to help diminish the differences between minor ethnic groups and the majority population?

1 = Certainly yes 2 = Probably yes 3 = Probably no 4 = Certainly no 5 = I can't judge

16.1 What makes you think so? Can you give an example?

.....

17) In housing, what is the most important issue to you in the short term? What is the second most important?

<input type="checkbox"/> Renovate obsolete housing	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Increase the number of new flats	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduce the high costs of living	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Set up social housing facilities	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Deregulate rent	_____

18) Are you planning to move in the future?

City to countryside	1	_____
Countryside to city	2	_____
To a different city	3	_____
To a different village	4	_____
I will stay here	5	_____
I can't judge	9	_____

18.1 What will be the most likely cause of the moving?

Job change	1	_____
Better environment	2	_____
Better housing options	3	_____
Proximity of relatives	4	_____
Lower costs of living	5	_____
Another reason, please specify.	6	_____

19) Where you live, how do you rate the following?

1 = Very good 2 = Rather good 3 = Rather bad 4 = Very bad 5 = I can't judge

A. Accessibility of kindergartens	1	2	3	4	5
B. Accessibility of primary schools	1	2	3	4	5
C. Accessibility of secondary schools	1	2	3	4	5
D. Accessibility of colleges	1	2	3	4	5
E. Quality of educational institutions	1	2	3	4	5
F. Leisure facilities	1	2	3	4	5

20) Which leisure facilities are you missing in your region?

1 = Yes 2 = No 9 = Don't know

A. Sports facilities and events	1	2	9
B. Tourism opportunities	1	2	9
C. Theatres	1	2	9
D. Concerts	1	2	9
E. Cinemase	1	2	9
F. Museums, art galleries and art exhibitions	1	2	9
G. Libraries	1	2	9
H. Education courses and events	1	2	9
I. Social events	1	2	9

21) How do you rate the quality of cultural heritage maintenance in your vicinity?

1 = Very good 2 = Rather good 3 = Rather bad 4 = Very bad 5 = I can't judge

22) In your opinion, what tourism development potential does your region have in terms of the following?

1 = Very good 2 = Rather good 3 = Rather bad 4 = Very bad 5 = I can't judge

A. Quality of the environment	1	2	3	4	5
B. Sports and recreation facilities	1	2	3	4	5
C. Cultural and historical heritage	1	2	3	4	5
D. Tourist infrastructure (hotels, guest houses, restaurants)	1	2	3	4	5

22.1 Do you consider your region suitable for a full and rewarding life for your children?

1 = Certainly yes 2 = Probably yes 3 = Probably no 4 = Certainly no 5 = I can't judge

Now we shall take a look at the environment for a change.

23) Large tracts of your regions are protected areas of nature, limiting development and other activities to some degree. How do you view the limitations due to nature and landscape protection?

They are a great obstacle in the region's development	1
I respect them although they limit me	2
The protected areas are beneficial to the region	3
I can't judge	9

24) Do you think that you have enough information regarding reasons for environment protection in protected areas and outside them?

1 = Certainly yes 2 = Probably yes 3 = Probably no 4 = Certainly no 5 = I can't judge

25) Do you consider further expansion of protected areas in you region desirable?

1 = Certainly yes 2 = Probably yes 3 = Probably no 4 = Certainly no 5 = I can't judge

26) Which three areas of environment protection should receive most funding?

Nature and landscape protection	1
Air protection	2
Water protection	3
Ecological and energy agriculture	4
Ecological reuse of waste	5
Environment-friendly and alternative energy technologies	6
Remediation of environmental burdens, and renovation of disused desolate areas and buildings	7
Environment-friendly and alternative transport	8
Education, awareness raising and training in environmental issues	9

27) How often do you use nature in your region to spend your leisure time?

Very often	1
Occasionally	2
Rarely	3
Never	4

28) How content are you with the quality of the environment where you live in terms of the following?

1 = Very satisfied 2 = Rather satisfied 3 = Rather dissatisfied 4 = Very dissatisfied 5 = I can't judge

A. Water resources	1	2	3	4	5
B. Sewerage and wastewater treatment	1	2	3	4	5
C. Air quality	1	2	3	4	5
D. Noise	1	2	3	4	5
E. Waste collection and disposal	1	2	3	4	5
F. Traffic	1	2	3	4	5
G. Municipal greenery	1	2	3	4	5
H. Quality of nature and landscape around the town or village	1	2	3	4	5

29) What is greatest threat to the environment in your town or village?**30) What, in your opinion, is the greatest potential cause of endangering the quality of the environment in your region?****31) Are you interested in the happenings in environment protection in your area?**

I don't follow it, or only accidentally	1
I follow it and take part passively (I follow issues, sign under petitions, participate in events, etc.)	2
I participate actively (in meetings, organising meetings, field work, projects, NGO work, etc.)	3

31.1 If you participate in environment protection passively or actively, give an example of what you do:**32) Do you take the following energy-saving measures in your household?**

1 = Certainly yes 2 = Rather yes 3 = Rather no 4 = Certainly no 5 = I can't judge

A. Buying energy-saving appliances	1	2	3	4	5
B. Having insulated or going to have insulated the dwelling thoroughly	1	2	3	4	5
C. Saving energy and water	1	2	3	4	5
D. Using or planning to use an alternative energy source (geothermal, solar, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
E. Using or planning to use renewable energy sources (fuelwood, biomass)	1	2	3	4	5

33) Do you separate waste in your household?

Yes	1 → jump to question 34
No	2 → jump to question 33.1

33.1 Why do you not separate waste?

No separation bins nearby	1
Don't know of a collection point nearby	2
Don't have the time, too much work	3
Not fun	4
Think it pointless	5
Another reason, please specify:	6

34) Which types of household waste do you separate?

1 = Yes 2 = No

A. Glass	1	2
B. Paper	1	2
C. Plastics	1	2
D. Food leftovers	1	2
E. Food cartons	1	2
F. hazardous waste	1	2

And finally, let us take a look at public administration and local administration.

35) Which three issues should the regional authority and elected bodies in your region focus on in the near future?

Housing (construction and supply of flats / houses, maintenance, infrastructure connections)	1
Transport (fares, density and diversity of services, road repair)	2
Environment protection (air quality, reclamation and remediation, waste)	3
Healthcare (health facility operation and accessibility, quality of healthcare, prevention)	4
Unemployment (new job creation, re-training)	5
Social affairs (social facilities, minorities and difficult social groups)	6
Security and crime (police, traffic safety, fire brigades, crisis intervention centre)	7
Education (supply and accessibility of education facilities, quality of teachers, out-of-school events)	8
Business and investment (promotion of business enterprise, preference of prospective businesses, motivation, investment opportunities)	9
Democracy (communication with public, civic society involvement, improved inspection, less red tape)	10

36) How do you rate the co-operation of public administration bodies with citizens?

1 = Very good 2 = Rather good 3 = Rather bad 4 = Very bad 5 = I can't judge

37) Do you participate actively in the public affairs in your town or village? This does not mean going to the elections or passive membership in a group, etc.

Yes, regularly	1 → jump to question 37.1
Yes, occasionally	2 → jump to question 37.1
No	3 → jump to question 38

37.1 In what ways do you participate in the public affairs?

1 = Yes, regularly 2 = Yes, occasionally 3 = No

A. Go to elections or referenda	1	2	3
B. Submit direct queries, requests and comments to the local authority	1	2	3
C. You are a member of an NGO	1	2	3
D. You participate in a local planning process	1	2	3
E. You organise local demonstrations or petitions, or take part in them	1	2	3
F. You work for a municipal assembly or its committee	1	2	3

38) Should the authorities of local (municipal) autonomies be further strengthened at the expense of the state public administration bodies?

1 = Certainly yes 2 = Rather yes 3 = Rather no 4 = Certainly no 5 = I can't judge

39) What is the most important thing to do in rural development? What is the second most important?

- Co-operation between municipalities
- Seeking sources of funding and investment
- Developing civic society
- Increasing professional level of municipal representatives
- Job creation in the rural areas
- Increasing the attractiveness of countryside as a place to live, especially for young families

40) Do you feel that you can influence public affairs sufficiently, i.e. participate in specific activities, in preparing policy and strategic documents, in decision-making, etc?

1 = Certainly yes 2 = Rather yes 3 = Rather no 4 = Certainly no 5 = I can't judge

Appendix 3: Database of SD indicators at the local and regional levels: Structure of the Indicator Sheet

SUMMARY

1. DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 ID number
- 1.2 Indicator name
- 1.3 Segment
- 1.4 Sub-segment
- 1.5 Definition
- 1.6 Unit
- 1.7 Keywords 1-3
- 1.8 Indicator set

2. QUALITY OF INDICATOR

- 2.1 Detailed definition
- 2.2 Related indicators
- 2.3 Reason for monitoring and practicability
- 2.4 Completeness and representativeness
- 2.5 Validity
- 2.6 Uniqueness

3. DATA

- 3.1 Data identification
- 3.2 Data name
- 3.3 Data sources, data suppliers
- 3.4 Scale
- 3.5 Reliability, correctness
- 3.6 Comparability in time
- 3.7 Comparability in space
- 3.8 Frequency of monitoring
- 3.9 Cost

4. DATA PROCESSING

- 4.1 Data processing breakdown for indicator calculation
- 4.2 Relevant documents

5. ADMINISTRATION

- 5.1 Author of indicator
- 5.2 Reference
- 5.3 Other information
- 5.4 Date of last update to the methodological sheet

DESCRIPTION OF CATEGORIES

1. INDICATOR DESCRIPTION

1.1	ID number	Serial number of indicator.
1.2	Indicator name	Brief name.
1.3	Segment	Name of the segment of sustainable development at the local or regional level.
1.4	Sub-segment	Name of the sub-segment of sustainable development at the local or regional level.
1.5	Definition	Brief definition of indicator. What does it measure or monitor?
1.6	Unit	Unit or dimension of the data constituting the indicator.
1.7	Keywords 1-3	One to three keywords or reference words characterising the essence, method of and reason for monitoring the indicator, such as contentedness, citizens, questionnaire survey.
1.8	Indicator set	Is the indicator part of an indicator set or classification system? E.g. ECI, TISSUE, OECD, etc.

2. QUALITY OF INDICATOR

2.1	Detailed definition	Elaboration of the brief definition in 1.5 notions and concepts listed in the brief definitions are detailed here so that the indicator cannot be interpreted ambiguously.
2.2	Related indicators	List the numbers of directly related indicators (monitored within the same process).
2.3	Reason for monitoring and practicability	Objective description of main reasons why the indicator should be monitored. What new information does it bring, and to what user? What is its relation to 'local sustainability' and its aspects? How usable is it?
2.4	Completeness and representativeness	Does the indicator really cover the area sufficiently, and does it justify the reason for monitoring? Or is it to be combined with other indicators to provide a complex picture of reality? E.g. Subjective evaluation of availability of public spaces and services to citizens by means of a questionnaire survey is to be combined with measurement of actual accessibility by means of a GIS. Similarly, the indicator 'mobility and local passenger transport' is being surveyed via a questionnaire among the city population, thus its results are not representative of the total picture of mobility in the city as they do not include transiting traffic and visitors. It is to be completed with other indicators regarding city transport.
2.5	Validity	Are the data that make up the indicator an objective and valid measure of the indicator and subject intended for monitoring? Do they represent the entire indicator sufficiently? E.g. Data for the indicator 'citizens' contentedness' are examined by means of a questionnaire survey among population above 18 years of age. The indicator thus does not represent the contentedness of the ENTIRE city population, but only its major-age segment. This fact has to be stated in the note.

continued

2. QUALITY OF INDICATOR

2.6	Uniqueness	Is the indicator unique, does it not give redundant information, does it not repeat or duplicate existing information? E.g. The number of businesses in a town is routinely monitored and published by the CSO. An indicator like this would therefore be redundant. But the share of EMAS-certified businesses on the total number of business with more than 10 employees is new information, and is therefore a good indicator.
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3. DATA*This section is repeated for each data that make up an indicator (Section 3.1) – copy and complete separately.*

3.1	Data identification	ID (see point 1.1) – x (a,b,c,d).
3.2	Data name	This field contains the name of the data, e.g. city population.
3.3	Data sources, data suppliers	What is the source or who is the supplier of the data? E.g. Statistical office, survey, report, etc. State contact information and a website, if one exists.
3.4	Scale	What is the scale on which the data are monitored? What are the boundaries of the area? E.g. municipality, district.
3.5	Reliability, correctness	How correctly are the data collected and measured? How dependable are they? How much are they burdened with error?
3.6	Comparability in time	Are there any time series for the data? How comparable are they in time? Has the methodology of their monitoring changed, affecting comparison? Any past modifications to the data collection methodology have to be noted here.
3.7	Comparability in space	How well are the data comparable across spaces? E.g. Between towns, between a town, a district, a region and a country.
3.8	Frequency of monitoring	How often do data measurements take place? When are the data published? E.g. results of previous year's statistics published in March.
3.9	Cost	What is the cost of obtaining the data necessary for monitoring the indicator?

4. DATA PROCESSING

4.1	Data processing breakdown for indicator calculation	What is the procedure for calculating the indicator from the above mentioned data? Quote the formula.
4.2	Relevant documents	Quote reference to all relevant documents, institutions, etc. related to the calculation of the indicator (e.g. a questionnaire, a questionnaire survey method, a methodological sheet from a different server,...).

5. ADMINISTRATION

5.1	Author of indicator	If an author exists, list the contact information, references to the author or organisation, etc.
5.2	Reference	References to the use and results of the indicator by other organisations.
5.3	Other information	
5.4	Date of last update to the methodological sheet	

AN EXAMPLE INDICATOR

1. INDICATOR DESCRIPTION

1.1	ID number	1
1.2	Indicator name	Division of passenger transport by trip method.
1.3	Segment	Transport.
1.4	Sub-segment	Local mobility.
1.5	Definition	Percentage of using each mode of transport between all trips.
1.6	Unit	%
1.7	Keywords 1-3	Transport; population; questionnaire survey.
1.8	Indicator set	ECI, TISSUE

2. QUALITY OF INDICATOR

2.1	Detailed definition	This indicator identifies and describes the mobility of population of the area in question. It identifies travel of population older than 18 resident within the defined area using various means of transport.
2.2	Related indicators	List the numbers of directly related indicators (monitored within the same process).
2.3	Reason for monitoring and practicability	Transport is a key factor influencing the urban environment. The indicator informs about the share of unsustainable travel in the city. The results can be used for improving the area's transport system.
2.4	Completeness and representativeness	The indicator is monitored by means of a questionnaire survey among a sample population of the city, its results therefore are not representative of the entire urban mobility as they exclude transiting and visiting traffic. It is to be complemented by other indicators regarding local mobility in the city, monitored within the same questionnaire.
2.5	Validity	The indicator is examined by surveying a sample of 18+ population. The data pertain to a typical workday, so the indicator does not describe weekends and exceptional traffic conditions.
2.6	Uniqueness	

3. DATA *This section is repeated for each data that make up an indicator (Section 3.1) – copy and complete separately.*

3.1	Data identification	1.a
3.2	Data name	Number of journeys made by a mode of transport per day.
3.3	Data sources, data suppliers	Questionnaire survey.
3.4	Scale	Municipality, micro-region, region.
3.5	Reliability, correctness	Corresponds to the quality of the questionnaire survey (selection of respondents and inquirers, correctness of responses, method of processing), and timing of the questionnaire survey (season, exceptional traffic conditions).

continued

3. DATA

3.6	Comparability in time	Yes.
3.7	Comparability in space	Yes, with similar geographical areas (e.g. town or village).
3.8	Frequency of monitoring	Three years.
3.9	Cost	The entire questionnaire survey costs 1300 USD.

4. DATA PROCESSING

4.1	Data processing breakdown for indicator calculation	Share of journeys made by a mode of transport on the total number of journeys.
4.2	Relevant documents	Questionnaire (reference), survey method (reference), population sample selection method (reference).

5. ADMINISTRATION

5.1	Author of indicator	ECI, TISSUE
5.2	Reference	The organisation.
5.3	Other information	
5.4	Date of last update to the methodological sheet	18 May 2005

Appendix 4: UNDP pilot project 'Support to the development of sustainable development strategies in selected regions of the Czech Republic'

A pilot project titled 'Support to the development of sustainable development strategies in selected regions' took place in the Czech Republic and the whole of Central Europe between April 2004 and May 2005. The project was under the auspices of the UNDP and Ministries of the Environment and Regional Development of the Czech Republic, and co-financed by the The State Environmental Fund of the Czech Republic. It was implemented by the NGO Institute for Environmental Policy. The NGO invited potential partners from among the regional authorities of the Czech Republic to participate in the project, and eventually the Liberec and Ústí Regions applied. The project was one of the last events in the Czech Republic funded by the UNDP.

The project had been planned in total compliance with the UNDP mandate for sustainable development of humanity and with the Czech sustainable development priorities defined by the Czech Republic Strategy for Sustainable Development, developed concurrently and approved subsequently by the Government. The National SD Strategy clearly proved that regional capacities need reinforcing in order for the SD principles to be integrated into regional development planning. The project was implemented in compliance with global processes of progress toward sustainability, and it added to the support that the UNDP had granted to the Czech Republic in relation to sustainability under the project 'Toward Sustainability in the Czech Republic: Building National Capacities for Sustainable Development.'

The purpose of the project was to develop a pilot sustainable development strategy at the regional level and test the proposed methodological framework in practice. When developing the regional strategies, the priorities and strategic targets defined by the National SD Strategy were reflected. Policy documents on sustainable development have so far only existed at the national level and only rarely developed at the local level in towns and micro-regions under Local Agendas 21.

The principal result of the project:

- Application of a newly proposed methodology for strategic planning and evaluation of sustainable development at the regional level.

Component results of the project:

- Pilot development of regional SD strategic plans for the Liberec and Ústí Regions for 2006–2020.
- Documentation of the status quo concerning activities related to Czech regional sustainable development with the objective of establishing conditions for its strategic planning and practical implementation.
- Reinforcement of the position of regional and local institutions and organisations in regarding the planning and implementation of sustainable development at the regional level.
- Development of pilot projects to establish conditions for implementation of strategic plans.
- Raising the awareness among stakeholder and major group representatives as well as the general public of regional SD priorities.
- Summarisation and presentation of results at a nation-wide conference and at workshops in other regions of the Czech Republic with the objective of capacity and know-how provision for them to develop their own SD strategic plans.

The regional SD strategies will serve as framework documents for all existing policy documents in the regions, both those derived from law (such as the Regional Development Programme, Waste Management Plan, etc.) and those developed from the initiative of the regions (such as the Nature and Landscape Conservation Strategies). The regional SD strategies define the priorities and strategic targets for regional development in two existing regions while harmonising all aspects of quality of life: economic, social and environmental in the context of good governance. The strategies propose indicator sets for monitoring social change resulting from the implementation of the documents.

The proposed strategic planning methodology made use of experience with policy planning of regional sustainable development tried and tested in practice abroad. The general methodological framework can be applied, without any significant modifications, in other regions and wherever applicable in connection to preparation of SD strategies at other levels (municipal, micro-regional, or national). Experience gained in implementation of initiatives and processes leading toward sustainability at the local and regional levels were applied when preparing the strategies in question.

Based on the experience gathered from the above described project, the methodology for strategic planning and evaluation of sustainability was updated and completed, and is presented and described in a summary form in this book.