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The partnership principle and the ENP

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- Introduction
- The Partnership principle on paper
 - in the ENPI Regulation
 - in the CBC implementing rules
 - in the Mediterranean sea basin CBC programme
- The partnership in practice
- How to go forward, proposals





Introduction: the ENP approach

- The ENP as an important geopolitical instrument : **flexibility!**
- Promoting the **convergence** of ENP Partners with EU norm, standards, best practices and legal requirements
- “Positive **conditionality** automatically inherent in the approach” (COM(2006) 724 final)
- **Environment:** a test case, concrete
- Existing tools: the **Aarhus Convention** (supporting partnership and access to decision making on envt) and the **Strategic Environmental Assessment** protocol to the ESPOO convention (Kiev 2003).





The Partnership principle on paper: The ENPI Regulation (1)

- Consistency with community policy: one of the main principles of the ENPI Regulation; (Art. 5)
- Regional Funds (Council Regulation 1083/2006) used as a model (Art 11)
- Art 4, ENPI regulation simplifies (flexibility!) but keeps the essential elements:
 - Involvement of national, regional and local authorities and social partners, civil society and other relevant bodies... (Art.4.2)
 - in the preparation, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects (Art. 4.3)





The Partnership principle on paper: the ENPI Regulation (2)

- Cross Border Cooperation: innovative tool that should have real potential for promoting bottom-up and participatory approaches
- Partnership principle is mentioned in relation to:
 - The establishment of the CBC operational programmes (Art 9.4)
 - The selection of the actions to be supported by Community assistance under the CBC (Art.9.9)





The Partnership principle on paper: the CBC implementing rules

- No clear requirements and mechanisms for public consultations and involvement of civil society in the draft CBC implementing rules
- Final version “improved” with adequate participation of the civil society in the Monitoring Committees is mentioned in Art 11.2
- Still no explicit mention of the partnership principle as such
- Information and visibility (Art 42) focus on use of community financing and opportunities under the joint operational programmes





The Partnership principle on paper: the Mediterranean Sea Basin CBC programme

The Partnership Principle is “ the essential condition to ensure the Programme’s effectiveness, to contribute to a better governance of the local development process and to guarantee coherence and an effective inclusion in the dynamics interesting the Mediterranean Basin”.

- local and regional partnerships among the public and private actors (horizontal partnership);
- local and national partnerships where local actors and national authorities engage in a constructive dialogue (vertical partnership);
- among countries, through the Programme’s joint bodies;
- among different countries: through project implementation
- between the European Commission and the countries





The Partnership principle in practice (1)

- Lack of transparency and clarity, rules unclear and continuously evolving
- Timing, deadlines.... overlaps!
- Partnership dependent on the government good will, and often seen as “equal access to funds” ONLY.
- Lack of information, particularly in local languages. Poor role of EU Delegations.
- Difficult access to ENPI documents, even for NC governmental bodies
- Mechanisms for structured consultation (National NGO Committees for European Integration) existing in some countries (e.g. Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan) but not always properly working.





The Partnership principle in practice (2)

CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme:

- Lack of access to information during the elaboration of the operational programme: no “direct line” to work with civil society during the preparatory phase.
- Few or none consultations on Programme priorities in the NC, generally at late stage (Jordan, Tunis was cancelled).
- Selective list of invitations
- Very few consultations in EU MS (Italy)





The Partnership principle in practice (3)

CBC programmes for Eastern Europe:

- SEA and CBC draft programmes rarely available. Only a summary of the SEA, and generally not in local languages.
- No public participation in the scoping stage of SEA elaboration (definition of areas to be assessed, objectives).
- SEA done as a formal requirement, not comprehensive. (e.g. programme: Hungary/ Slovakia / Romania/Ukraine)
- Few consultations run in NC, not systematic. Without basic documents
- Late advertising of consultations, selective list of invitations and therefore very poor civil society participation (e.g. Romania)





The Partnership principle: how to go forward?

The need to improve implementation of the partnership principle has been recognized by the European Commission in the ENP Plus communication (COM(2006) 726 final):

“ We must encourage partner governments to allow appropriate participation by civil society (...) in the preparation of legislation, the monitoring of its implementation or in developing national or regional initiatives related to the the ENP’ (p.7)





PROPOSALS (1)

INCREASED NGO CAPACITY

- Use “support measures” (ENPI Regulation Art. 16.1)
- Small grants, microprojects (ENPI Regulation, Art.15.k)
- Twinning projects (with NGOs based in the EU)
- Regional Capacity-Building programmes (e.g. Med Horizon 2020)
- NGO access to TAIEX seminars





PROPOSALS (2)

IMPROVED INFORMATION

- Seminars on the ENP and ENPI in the field.
- Better access and timely dissemination of official drafts
- Official documents translated into local languages

MECHANISMS FOR STRUCTURED PARTICIPATION TO DECISION MAKING

- National NGO Committees for European Integration in each country are set up and are operational
- Observer status for civil society representatives in the ENPI Sub-Committees
- Civil society participation to Monitoring Committees





PROPOSALS(3)

NETWORKING

- Build NGO platforms to support coordination of civil society organisations and facilitate exchange of information (by the NGOs)
- NGO Fora (supported by the EU):
 - Regional forum (Euromed NGO Platform and equivalent in the ENP East)
 - Interregional (overall ENP Forum)
 - Sectoral (ENPI environmental Forum similar to new NGO Forum for Pre-Accession countries)





Conclusion

- Flexibility versus conditionality, EU's role needs to be increased
- Increased role and capacity of the EU Delegation to deal with NGOs, to disseminate information, promote policy dialogue and monitor implementation of the partnership principle in each ENP country.
- Development of indicators to assess proper implementation of the partnership principle (e.g. in the COM progress reports)
- A pre-condition for Governance Facility reward.





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Thank you...

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