



Monitoring report - Åre Action Plan

ENCORE-conference 2006 in Åre, Sweden



Monitoring the Åre Action Plan

Introduction

It is our wish and hope that the Monitoring Report of the Åre Action Plan will remain in the history of ENCORE a milestone that marks the progressive improvement of Regional cooperation in Europe on environment and sustainable development policies as a process of governance. Participation, transparency and reporting are essential elements of such cooperation.

The Monitoring Report refers to each of the commitments contained in the Åre Action Plan and describes how each action has been implemented. First, the strategy, the priorities and the six areas of work that were specified in the Åre Action Plan are listed. The subsequent Tables show for each of the six areas of work how they were implemented. Each Table also gives an overall assessment of the results that were achieved.



Hans Lundqvist
President, County Council of Jämtland



County Council
of Jämtland



The following strategy was adopted by the participating Regions:

- to strengthen international political cooperation among the Regions of Europe by organising meetings of political leaders and Ministers;
- to strengthen the environment and sustainable development throughout Europe by promoting Agenda 21 at regional level in co-operation with citizens, organisations, enterprises, other governmental levels and other social and economic partners;
- to work in partnership with businesses at regional level and to involve educational and research institutions in this co-operation in order to acquire new environmental research and knowledge - and to implement this in both enterprises and public institutions;
- to co-operate with the European Commission in implementing the 6th Environmental Action Programme and to ensure that the practical experience of the Regions in implementing EU law is reflected in the future work of the Community.

To implement this strategy, the Regions will work on selected themes.

ENCORE priorities 2006 - 2008

The Conference agreed to the following priority actions for ENCORE for the period 2006 - 2008:

• Sustainable Development

- Sustainable tourism
- Education for sustainability
- Tools for sustainable development.

• Water

- Integrated River Basin Management
- Water Quality Management
- Application of the Water Framework Directive
- Flood Control.

• Soil Protection

- European Soil Protection Strategy
- Sustainable land use.

• Climate Change

- Renewable Energy and Energy efficiency
- Transport
- Adaptation to Climate Change Effects.

• Biodiversity/Natura 2000

- Implementation of the Fauna/Flora habitat directive.

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Six areas of work were identified

- Contacts with other networks and European institutions
- Implementation and monitoring of ENCORE decisions
- Promoting the Valencia Charter
- Seminars, workshops, (virtual) working groups, partnerships with other networks, research and exchanges of best practice..
- Partnerships between "old" and "new" Regions.
- Preparation of ENCORE 2008 – Zaragoza, Aragon (Spain).

Contacts with other networks and European institutions

What the AAP says	What has been done	What should be done	In brief
<p>The Conference welcomed the meeting of ministers from ENCORE Regions led by the President of Jämtland, Hans Lundqvist, with Commissioner Stavros Dimas, which took place in November 2005. The Conference asked the Steering Group to seek to organise such meetings with the Commissioner each year in cooperation with the host of the next ENCORE Conference.</p> <p>The Regions of Europe should seek dialogue and co-operation with the EU institutions in the preparation of policies, plans and indicators in the field of environment and sustainable development. The Steering Group was asked to pursue these matters with the European Commission and with the Committee of the Regions.</p> <p>There are a number of other bodies with an EU-wide mandate which includes environmental and sustainable development matters. The Conference asked the Steering Group to consider co-operation with such bodies if this could lead to benefits for the sustainable development work in the Regions of Europe.¹ The proposal by the Network of European Regions on Education for Sustainability (RES) to elaborate a work programme in partnership with ENCORE was received with enthusiasm.</p> <p>Similarly, the Conference supported the idea of having exchanges to strengthen relations between ENCORE and the global Network of regional governments for sustainable development (nrg4SD), created at the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg in 2002, in order to promote participation by ENCORE Regions in international partnerships for sustainable development, the so-called Type 2 outcomes of the WSSD.</p>			

Implementation and monitoring of ENCORE decisions

What the ÅAP says	What has been done	What should be done	In brief
<p>The Åre Conference asked the Regions of Europe to contribute actively to the monitoring of ENCORE activities carried out by the Regions in the period 2006 - 2008. The Steering Group was asked to work together with the Jämtland Region on the Monitoring Report of the Åre Action Plan that will be presented at ENCORE 2008.</p> <p>The Conference expressed its appreciation for the work by Tuscany on the FLAP Monitoring Report. The Report includes a description and analysis of the ENCORE activities that took place in the period in between the ENCORE 2004 and the ENCORE 2006 Conferences. The Report was accepted by the Conference.</p>			

Promoting the Valencia Charter

What the ÅAP says	What has been done	What should be done	In brief
<p>The Revised Valencia Charter was adopted by the Conference and signed by the participating Regions:</p> <p>In order to give maximum visibility to the new Charter, the Conference asked the Steering Group together with the depository Region of Valencia to publicise and promote the Charter as the Constitution of the European Regions for Environment and Sustainable Development Policies.</p>			

Partnership between “old” and “new” Regions

What the AAP says	What has been done	What should be done	In brief
<p>The Regions are invited to present to the ENCORE Steering Group initiatives that they would like to develop under the ENCORE umbrella, in particular in relation to the implementation of the Valencia Charter and to the priority themes listed in Article 12. So far, the following activities have been announced:</p>			

Preparation of Encore 2008 - Zaragoza, Aragon (Spain)

What the AAP says	What has been done	What should be done	In brief
<p>The Conference welcomed the offer of the Spanish Region of Aragon to host the next ENCORE conference in 2008 and asked the ENCORE Steering Group to work with Aragon to organise a successful conference. Following changes introduced in 2004 and 2006, the organisers were asked to create the circumstances to guarantee a high level of interactive debate and ample opportunities for Ministers and political leaders to meet.</p>			

Seminars, workshops, (virtual) working groups, partnerships with other networks, exchange of best practice and research on specific themes and topics

What the AAP says	What has been done	What should be done	In brief
<p>The Regions are invited to present to the ENCORE Steering Group initiatives that they would like to develop under the ENCORE umbrella, in particular in relation to the implementation of the Valencia Charter and to the priority themes listed in Article 12. The following activities have been announced:</p> <p><i>Thematic seminars/workshops:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil Protection. • Climate Change Expert Seminar • Education for Sustainability • Water scarcity issues and drought management. • Water Management and Agencies • Sustainable Tourism <p><i>Thematic (virtual) working groups</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual working group on climate change • Virtual working group on biodiversity <p><i>Partnerships with other Networks</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network of European Regions on Education for Sustainability (RES) • Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (nrg4SD) • Regional Competences in the Member States <p><i>Exchange of best practice</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange of best practice on Adaptation to ClimateChange Effects • MUGI 21 - Computer Application for Monitoring and Evaluation of LOCAL ACTION PLANS • Regional Greenhouse Gases Inventory 			

Seminars/Workshops

Theme	Leading region	What the AAP says	State of the art	In brief
<p>Soil Protection.</p> <p>Climate Change Expert Seminar</p>	<p>Basque Country, Spain</p>	<p>This two-day international conference aims to present international progress made with respect to combating climate change and to foster debate on potential future action in the field. It will also serve as a framework for encouraging the formulation of proposals to be incorporated into the Basque Plan to Combat Climate Change while increasing awareness by involving all interest groups.</p> <p>Participants will debate issues offering potential answers to climate change and will examine progress in the fight against climate change as part of sustainable development. One of the main subjects of debate will be how to promote different international actions in order to improve the global response to climate change.</p> <p><i>Activity:</i> Expert Seminar.</p>		
<p>Education for Sustainability</p>	<p>Umbria and Emilia Romagna, Italy</p>	<p>Continued cooperation and exchange of information among Regional authorities specialising in education for sustainability.</p> <p><i>Activities:</i> The Network of European Regions on Education for Sustainability (RES) plans to organise two meetings per year, one in Brussels and one in a participating Region, in order to develop and implement its work programme. Currently, the focus is on launching the website</p>		

Seminars/Workshops

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<p>Water scarcity issues and drought management.</p>	<p>Emilia Romagna, Italy.</p>	<p>of the RES and on preparing a database of education centres in Europe. RES Working Groups on specific themes will be activated through the website. Teaching materials will be made available through the website as well.</p> <p>To draft an Action Plan on water scarcity mitigation measures in the context of the Water Framework Directive. The Action Plan will be based on the Report that was presented to the Water Directors Meeting in Austria in June 2006 that describes water scarcity mitigation measures and practices implemented in Europe and in non-EU Mediterranean countries in order to provide and share information. It is a living [dynamic??] document that will need continuous input and improvements as application and experience build up in all countries of the European Union and beyond.</p> <p><i>Activities: Workshop</i></p>		
<p>Water Management and Agencies</p>	<p>Basque Country, Spain</p>	<p>A new Water Law will be adopted in the Basque Parliament. Its three main objectives are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement the European Water Framework Directive; - Coordinate water management tasks between different levels of administration and between different institutions; -Take into account the financial aspects of water as an environmental resource. 	<p>Hosted on November 8th - 10th 2006 in Zaragoza, Spain</p>	

Seminars/Workshops

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Sustainable Tourism	Jämtland, Sweden Valencia, Spain	<p>The entity responsible for (the coordination of) water management issues will be the Water Agency. The aim of the workshop is to learn about the experiences of other agencies around the world and to establish permanent links between those agencies and their experts.</p> <p><i>Activities:</i> Workshop.</p> <p>To compare small scale tourism in Jämtland and mass tourism in Valencia</p> <p><i>Activities:</i> One seminar in Jämtland and one seminar in Valencia.</p>	<p>The small-scale tourism seminar was hosted in Östersund, Jämtland in April 2008. No contacts with Valencia.</p>	
Waste - a resource	Bavaria, Germany		Hosted on October 9th in Brussel	

Thematic (virtual) working groups

Theme	Leading region	What the AAP says	State of the art	In brief
Virtual working group on climate change	North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany	<p>To present Regional activities in the field of Climate Change; to provide a platform of communication between Regional experts and decision makers; to extend and intensify networking and co-operation between Regions; to share best practice; to develop and refine Regional strategies.</p> <p><i>Activities:</i> Establishing a working and information platform on the ENCORE website; sharing information on best practice; identifying projects with a common interest.</p>		
Virtual working group on biodiversity	Tuscany, Italy	<p>To present Regional activities in the field of Biodiversity and Protected Areas and to share best practices; to confront different approaches and different outcomes in the planning and management of protected areas and ecological networks; to increase networking and co-operation between Regions in order to develop regional strategies for connected areas and projects of common interest.</p> <p><i>Activities:</i> Providing a platform of communication between Regional bodies and establishing a working and information platform on the ENCORE website; sharing information on best practices; defining projects with a common interest.</p>		

Partnership with other Networks

Theme	Leading region	What the AAP says	State of the art	In brief
<p>Network of European Regions on Education for Sustainability (RES)</p>	<p>Umbria and Emilia Romagna, Italy</p>	<p>The Network of European Regions on Education for Sustainability (RES) was created in 2005 at the initiative of the Italian Regions of Umbria and Emilia Romagna. A first meeting took place in Brussels in September 2005. This initiative is in line with the priority actions in the Valencia Charter. Moreover, it gives the European Regions the opportunity to react in a coordinated manner to the challenges put forward by the United Nations at the beginning of the UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) and to the Strategy for Education on Sustainable Development of the UN Economic Commission for Europe.</p> <p><i>Activities:</i> The (RES) will host two annual meetings that will be open to ENCORE participants. ENCORE Regions are invited to join the RES and to participate in the initiatives developed through the RES website (www.regionres.eu). Working Groups will be activated on the website about the themes identified during the meeting in Brussels in September 2005. A plenary meeting will be organised in Brussels at the end of 2006 and one in Perugia in 2007. The RES will work on the drafting of a Charter on the Role of the Regions in Education for Sustainability in Europe.</p>		

Partnership with other Networks

Theme	Leading region	What the AAP says	State of the art	In brief
Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (nrg4SD)	Tuscany, Italy; Basque Country, Spain; Flanders, Belgium; North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany.	<i>Activities:</i> To be announced.		
Regional Competences in the Member States	Tuscany, Italy.	The Final document of the Research Project on Regional Competences in the Member States by Tuscany, Italy, is available on the ENCORE website. Regions are asked to contribute to the research by updating the information using the website forum.		

Exchange of best practice

Theme	Leading region	What the AAP says	State of the art	In brief
<p>Exchange of best practice on Adaptation to Climate Change Effects</p>	<p>Tuscany, Italy</p>	<p>To make available information about adaptation measures to the effects of climate change.</p> <p>The EU will publish in 2006 a Green Book on adaptation to the effects of climate change. The Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions, chaired by Tuscany, is setting up an exchange of information under the leadership of the French Region, Ile de Réunion. These activities will be coordinated with the ENCORE Working Group on Climate Change.</p>		
<p>MUGI 21 - Computer Application for Monitoring and Evaluation of LOCAL ACTION PLANS</p>	<p>Basque Country, Spain</p>	<p>MUGI 21 is a computer application designed to help municipal officers and technicians to make it easier to manage and monitor Local Agenda 21. The MUGI 21 application is user-friendly and consists of a number of screens accessed by forward and back buttons. The application contains forms to enter information and reports to extract information, depending on the user's requirements. It also features explanatory notes on screens and help messages which appear when the cursor stops on a field. This instrument could be a useful tool to gather and exchange information on Local Agenda 21 processes. A virtual working group could exchange their experiences in order to adapt this tool to local needs.</p> <p><i>Activities:</i> Exchange of Expertise and Best Practices.</p>		

Exchange of best practice

Theme	Leading region	What the AAP says	State of the art	In brief
Regional Greenhouse Gases Inventory	Basque Country, Spain	<p>One of the environmental priorities of the Basque Country is to combat Climate Change. Therefore, the Region has created a Climate Change Office. Its first task is to elaborate a Climate Change Plan. The Plan will have two main lines of work: mitigation and adaptation. The Basque Country has made an Inventory of Greenhouse Gases for 2004 and 2005. The methodology is based on IPCC, and adapted to the regional characteristics.</p> <p>The proposal is to offer a common methodology to calculate the Inventory, in order to allow the making of comparisons among Regions.</p> <p><i>Activities:</i> Exchange of Expertise and Best Practices.</p>		