

SPECIFIC PRINCIPLES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

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Abstract: In time, the content of the rural development concept has met different interpretations, but the main aspect is that sustainable development aims to eliminate disparities regarding the access to resources, both for poor or marginalized communities and future generations. The reason for choosing this theme, of rural development, comes from the particular characteristics of this issue in current life and the major importance of this topic in our life. The study aims to point out some specific principles and characteristics of sustainable development, as a review from different sources. Over the next few years, increasing importance will be given to achieving the sustainable development of rural areas, this responding to the demands of ecological services.

Key words: development, rural, features, principles

INTRODUCTION

Currently, the term "rural" (rural area, rural population, rural environment) characterizes an assembly that is differentiated from urban one and also conventionally delimited by statistical and administrative units. Of course, the criteria for defining the urban or rural character of a community or space reveal different adopted conceptions, which, synthetically, can be summarized in three: economic, sociologic, and geographic, as presented in figure 1[2,9].

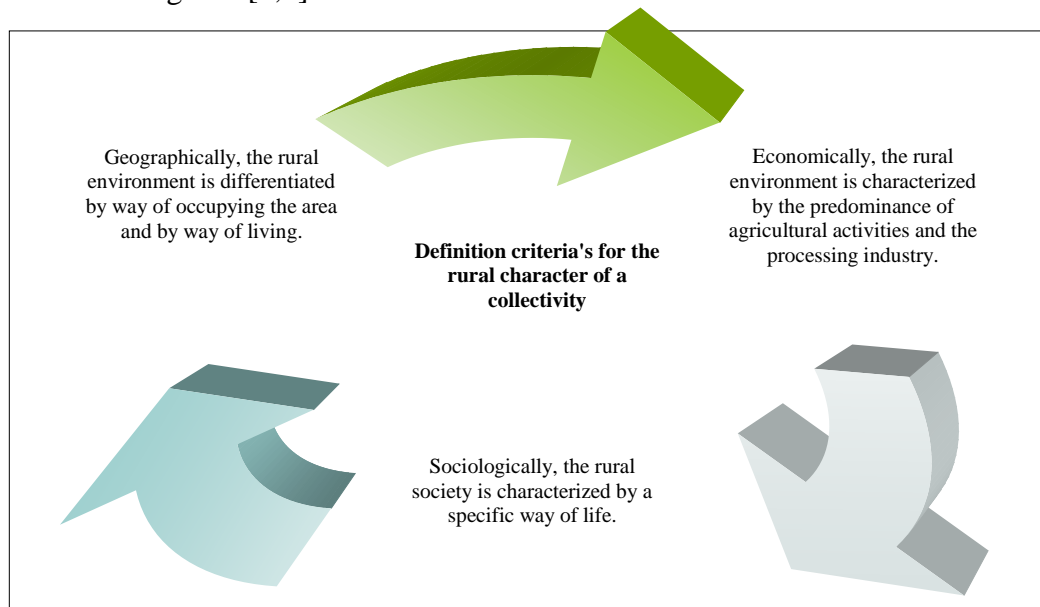


Figure 1. Definition criteria's for the rural character of a collectivity

Source: author's processing works according to various bibliographic sources [2,9]

Sustainable development [4] means satisfying the needs of present generations, with care on ensuring the ability of future generations to ensure their needs (see table 1). This is a general objective of the European Union; it refers to maintaining the Earth's ability to sustain life in all its diversity. For this purpose, must be promoted a dynamic

economy, which will provide jobs, education, protection of health, accent on cohesion and land and environment protection.

Table 1.

The concept of sustainable rural development–sintesis

Author	Definition
Goodland R. and Ledec G.	"sustainable development is a model of the structural and social-economic transformations that optimize the economic and social benefits currently available, without jeopardizing the potential for similar benefits in the future... Sustainable development involves the use of renewable natural resources so that they are not finished or degraded or not be diminished their usefulness for future generations... it also implies the finishing of non-renewable energy resources at a rate that ensures a high probability of the transition to renewable energy sources..."
Lynam J.K. and Herdt R.W.	"the ability of a system to maintain its output at a level approximately equal to or greater than its historical average."
Pearce D.	"the criterion of sustainability requires conditions necessary for equal access to the basic resources, which will be valid for each generation."
Tolba M.K	"sustainable development aims: help for the very poor, because they have no option but to destroy their environment; the idea of a safe development, within the constraints imposed by the development of natural resources; the idea of cost-efficiency development, which uses different economic criteria from traditional approaches, which means that development must neither degrade the environment nor reduce long-term productivity; important issues related to health control, appropriate technologies, food safety, clean water and shelter for all."
Haveman Cf. R.	"sustainable development can also be defined as the intact preservation of the consumption potential of marketable goods and natural resources per capita of future generations."
Brundtland report of the World Commission for Environment and Development	"sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."
Council of Europe	"sustainable development means meeting the needs of present generations, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Source: author's processing works according to various bibliographic sources

In time, the content of the rural development concept has met different interpretations. Thus, within the U.E., the following phases of approaching the concept can be distinguished:

- the initial phase, which lasted from the founding of the Common Market until the mid-1970s, when rural development was connected with agricultural development. This approach was justified by the fact that agriculture was considered as a kind of social buffer capable of maintaining population migration from rural areas within the absorption capacity of the other sectors;

- the second phase, from the second half of the 1970s to the first period of the 1980s, when the rural problem was seen in the context of regional policies, and the solutions were found through extra-agricultural interventions, such as integrated rural development open to different economic activities and services. In this phase also appeared the instruments that made possible the intervention for the socio-economic development of the less developed regions: European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Fund (ESF), European Fund for Agriculture Guidance and Guarantee - Guidance Section (EAGGF);

- the third phase, after 1985, in which the problems of agriculture were addressed in terms of integrated rural development, the emphasis being placed on the environment, its links with agriculture and forestry gaining both positive and negative meanings.

Sustainable development aims to eliminate disparities regarding access to resources, both for poor or marginalized communities and for future generations, trying to ensure each nation the opportunity to develop itself, according to its own social and cultural values, without denying other nations or future generations the same right.

The reason for choosing this theme, of rural development, comes from the particular characteristics of this issue in current life and from the significant importance of this topic in our life. The aim of the study is to point out some specific principles and characteristics of sustainable development.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In achieving the goal of this scientific paper, meaning to point out some specific principles and characteristics of sustainable development, the authors have pursued several stages regarding the logistics of the work:

- data collection,
- analysis and interpretation of the data collected,
- and, last but not least, the interpretation of the data.

Authors have used a multicriteria analysis to pursue the aim of the paper, using different sources of information.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The Cork conference was a new step in recognizing the role and importance of capitalizing on the resources of the European rural area. Following the debates, the *Final Declaration of the Conference* has launched ten *priority principles* of rural development programs in the European Union (see figure 2 also). These principles were mentioned and considered essential by several authors to [6,10,11,12]:

1. Rural preference. It means stabilizing the rural population (preventing rural migration), fighting poverty, stimulating employment, and promoting equal opportunities, increasing the capacity to respond to increased demands for a better quality of life, for health, safety, personal achievement, rest, and a higher general level of well-being.

2. An integrated approach-Rural development policy needs to be defined through a multidisciplinary approach concept and with the cross-sectoral application.

3. Diversification-Supporting the diversification as those who benefit from community support: investments, technical assistance, business skills, adequate infrastructure, education, training, integration advanced techniques, and technologies, strengthening the role of small cities as integral parts of rural areas and key developing factors.

4. Sustainability-Policies must promote rural development that supports the quality and attractiveness of European rural heritage.

5. Subsidiarity-it is necessary for rural development policies to respect the principle of subsidiarity. They must be as decentralized as possible and based on partnership and cooperation between different levels (local, regional, national, and European). The result is necessarily broad participation and a punctual approach, which will strengthen the creativity and solidarity of the rural communities.

6. Simplification-The rural development policy, especially its agricultural component, requires a radical simplification of the specific legislation. This will not lead to a re-nationalization of Community agricultural policies but will mean a greater coherence of what is achieved today through too many channels, a limitation of the basic rules and procedures of E.U. law, greater subsidiarity of decisions, decentralization in implementation of the policies and a more flexible environment.

7. Financing-The use of local resources should be encouraged by promoting rural development projects at the local level. By using the rural credit techniques, aimed at reducing financial constraints for small and medium-sized enterprises, promoting productive investments, and diversifying rural economies, additional support is needed to mobilize synergies between public and private funds better. In this regard, it is necessary to encourage the more active involvement of the banking sector and other financial intermediaries.

8. Active Management-It is necessary to encourage the strengthening of the administrative capacity and the increase of the efficiency of the local, regional administrations and the groups at the community level; the provision of technical assistance, training, better communication, partnership, experience exchanges, and information through networked systems between regions and between different rural communities in Europe, also have active management.

9. Evaluation and research-The monitoring and evaluation of the beneficiaries of financing must be carried out in such a way to ensure the transparency of the procedures, guaranteeing the excellent use of the public money, stimulating the research and innovation, as well as real public debates. Partners should be consulted on the entire issue regarding the approval and implementation of sustainable rural development projects.

Equity implies a fair distribution of costs [14]and benefits of development, both among the rich and the poor, and between generations and nations. The long-term approach means taking into account the needs of the next generations and designing equitable development scenarios, which are based on the planet's limited natural resources. [1,2,3,5,13,15] Systemic thinking calls for understanding the complex interactions between the subsystems of the planet, the propagation effects between the local and the global, and the multiple interdependencies between the environment, economy, and society.

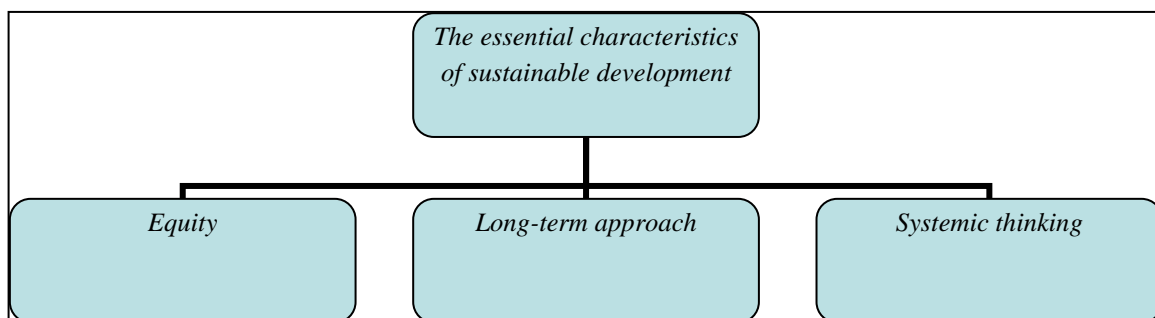


Figure 2. The essential characteristics of sustainable development

The principles of sustainable development under ecological conditions are: (see figure 3)

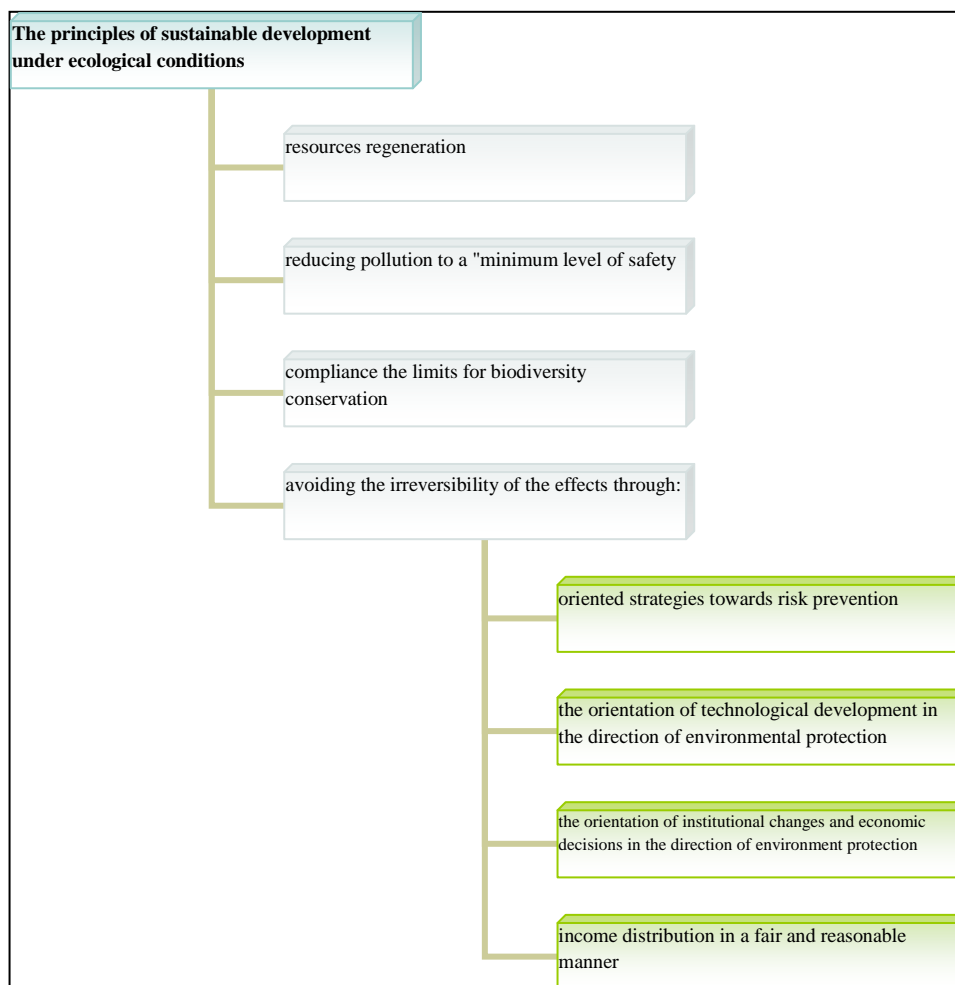


Figure 3. Principles of sustainable development in ecological conditions

The measures of the rural development policy are of two types: accompanying measures and modernization and diversification measures of agricultural holdings. The accompanying measures include:

- early retirement. Financial support is provided for farmers and agricultural workers over 55 years, which withdraw themselves from commercial activities before the legal retirement age. The support is conditioned by fulfillment of specific requirements, by seniority in work, and/or the participation in a social insurance scheme.
- organic farming. Financial support provided for promoting agricultural production methods that aim to protect the environment and conserve rural heritage.
- exploitation of disadvantaged areas. Financial support is provided for farmers from underprivileged areas (such as mountain areas) or those with specific environmental problems, to ensure continuity of land use, a fair standard of living for farmers, conservation of the environmental landscape, and environmental protection.

In the British view, the future of European agricultural and rural development policy implies reduced support for agriculture. The British point of view proposes to treat agriculture similar to the other economic branches. This means that in the next 10-15 years, farmers should make business decisions based on market signals and consumer requirements, not based on subsidy signals. In the British view, a sustainable Common Agricultural Policy would be characterized through:

- creating a neutral economic environment for the agricultural sector, like the other sectors of the economy;
- integrating agriculture into E.U. competition policy, together with the other

sectors;

- the purpose of the agricultural policy to protect the environment and promote rural development;

- in the long term, the application of non-distorting measures for agricultural production;

- import tariffs for agricultural products progressively aligned at the level of the other sectors;

- elimination of price support, export refunds, and other subsidies to the producer or the consumer;

- the social benefits granted to farmers will be available on the same basis as for other members of the company;

- E.U. agricultural expenditure will be based on the current Pillar 2 and will allow a reduction in total agricultural expenditure.

France's position has a great openness to a reform that will provide a new political framework for European agriculture. Even though the French Memorandum, signed by 12 states, to which Romania and Bulgaria joined, seemed to support the position of the countries receiving European funds for agriculture, its debate resulted in obtaining support from four other states. The proposals are short and medium-term, but the vision is in the long term.

Romania must have a medium and long-term vision for what it wants, what it can achieve, and how it can achieve. Modulation would not advantage Romania with agriculture dominated by many small and medium-sized farms that need financial support to reach an optimum economic dimension for the capital accumulation needed for investments. The reorientation of the population from rural to non-agricultural activities requires time for information and vocational training. The agriculture of Romania has not been restructured to the extent that it will become competitive in the short term. [7,8,9]

E.U. rural areas are an essential part of the Union's image and identity. Based on a standard definition, over 91% of the E.U. territory is rural and constitutes the home of over 56% of the E.U. population. Moreover, the impressive variety and beauty of the landscapes give the E.U. its unique character - from mountains to steppes, from extensive forests to large fields.

The trends that mark the rural areas will cause a drastic decrease both in the number of people engaged in agriculture and also of the farms. In terms of income and regional employment, agriculture (and forestry) will no longer be the basis of the rural economy of the U.E. On average, 5.5% of the employed population will be employed in this sector, and the value will be more than 20% in very few regions. The long-term trend will be marked by a further decrease in the number of farmers at a rate of 2-3% per year. The new activities and sources of income will be carried out on and off farms. Among other things, the production of renewable raw materials for non-food uses in specific sectors of the market or in the energy sector may represent a new opportunity for agriculture and forestry and contribute to job creation in the rural area.

CONCLUSIONS

Rural from Europe is undergoing a profound change, which will most likely accelerate if the Eastern European candidate countries become fully integrated into the Union. The rural area of Europe is rich. It provides us with essential raw materials. The value of the places of rest and recreation that they offer, remarkable by their beauty, is obvious. Like our lungs, it is a battlefield for climate change. Many people are attracted to the idea of living and/or working here, provided they have access to appropriate services and infrastructure. This means that the Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs and the

Gothenburg Strategy for Sustainable Development are just as relevant to the rural as to the urban environment.

Over the next few years, increasing importance will be given to achieving the sustainable development of rural areas, thus responding to the demands of ecological services. The three long-term rural development objectives for the period 2014-2020 are:

- favoring the competitiveness of agriculture;
- ensuring the sustainable management of natural resources and combating climate change;
- achieving a balanced territorial development of rural economies and communities, including job creation and maintenance.

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