

PREPARE Gathering 2010

30 August - 3 September 2010, Ohrid



**-Networking in Rural Areas
-Common Agriculture Policy after 2013**

***“ELARD position on next LEADER round after
2013 “***

*by Mr. Panayiotis PATRAS,
ELARD President*



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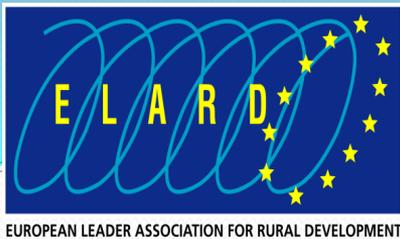
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LEADER approach today

– LEADER in the institutional framework of Community RD Policy 2007 - 2013.

a. Mainstreaming of LEADER approach

- The LEADER initiative, after having experienced for three programming periods, has reached a level of maturity enabling LEADER approach to become part of overall EU rural development programming by mainstreaming;
- Changing LEADER from a pilot initiative to a mainstream programme is good news as it recognises the strong contribution the programme makes in EU overall RD Programming;



LEADER approach today – LEADER in the institutional framework of Community RD Policy 2007 - 2013.

- However mainstreaming can often over-define activities resulting in *overlapping* and *loss of flexibility* and *autonomy*;
- Unfortunately there is little evidence so far that LEADER programme has been mainstreamed, in fact the LEADER “*bottom up approach*” is under severe threat of eradication by the administrative procedures issued.;

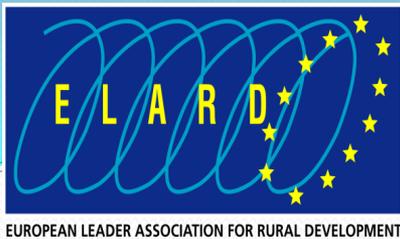


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b. The current regulatory framework and the resulting bureaucracy.

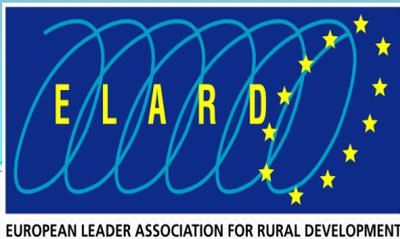
- The bottom up approach of local decisions being made within the framework of LEADER regulations is being *challenged* by the weight of the regulations of the current RDP being brought to bear;
- In reference to Regulation 1975/2006 with respect to Axes 3 & 4 and for part of Axis 2, although it indicates that "*administrations and control rules need to be adapted to [the axes] particular characteristic... special provisions therefore need to be established for these support schemes*";



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- Other examples that could be examined as “fields of simplification” that could allow better space to innovation include the:
 - operations outside the scope of rural development measures;
 - The complex projects;
 - The small scale projects;



LEADER approach today

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- **Innovation, flexibility and the ability to respond quickly to local need were the lauded aspects of previous LEADER round programmes and need to continue to be cornerstones. In that respect:**
 - LAGs should have autonomy;
 - There should be specific eligibility rules and simpler procedures under the RD programmes that substantially will contribute to the revival and a return to a “genuine LEADER approach”;
 - To the extent that it is legally possible, LAGs should have autonomy for managing flexibly the financial envelope (budget) of their local development strategy;



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LEADER approach post 2013 – a new delivery mechanism to be put in place

- The integrated and territorial approach to rural development that we support is closely related to LEADER approach;
- We wish to see that LEADER bottom up approach is central element of the post 2013 EU rural development policy;
- In the Post 2013 context, a clear focus has to be on developing proper accountability while at the same time ensuring flexible delivery on the ground so that the “LEADER” Approach can flourish once again.



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LEADER approach post 2013 – a new delivery mechanism to be put in place

- Next LEADER approach to be successful in exploring new approaches to specific problems that rural areas face, needs to be implemented through a delivery mechanism, tailored to serve the basic principles governing the LEADER approach;
- Therefore we suggest that integrated and territorially place-based rural development programmes, building on the experience of LEADER, shall be given common rules ;
- The new delivery mechanism for LEADER Axis it shall introduce a new multi-level and multi-sectoral governance approach to the development and implementation of rural policies;



LEADER approach post 2013 – a new delivery mechanism to be put in place

- We wish to see under this LEADER approach, that the LAG's are enabled to deliver not only the EAFRD rural development funds but also other appropriate publicly-funded programmes,
- As a long established infrastructure operating in a local context with national coverage, LDC's must remain central to the new delivery mechanism for LEADER and have a key role in broad, social, economic, rural and environmental development programmes at local level.



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Thank you for your attention!